

CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC IN ONTARIO, 2008-2010

RIGHTEOUS ROCKERS...UP IN CANADA:
CHRISTIAN ROCK MUSIC IN ONTARIO,
2008-2010

By

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Lay Abstract

This dissertation looks at Christian rock in Southern Ontario, drawing on interviews with over 30 Ontario based Christian rock musicians, as well as participant observation of close to a dozen Christian rock performances conducted from 2008 to 2010.

The dissertation focuses on issues related to how Christian rock is practiced (with particular focus on performance), how Christian rock influences identity over time and how Christian rock reflects aspects of both subcultures and new social movements.

The research adds to understandings of Christian rock, and the use of identity and practice in religion, music and youth culture. It also explores similarities and differences between subcultures and new social movements particularly in relation to issues around practices and identity.

Abstract

This dissertation, a study of Christian rock music and musicians in Southern Ontario, Canada, examines issues related to religion, music and youth culture. In doing so it explores similarities and differences between subcultures and new social movements particularly in relation to issues around practices, identity and authenticity.

The dissertation begins with examinations of the literature on subcultures and social movements, followed by brief looks at the literature on fields, habitus, legitimacy, individual and collective authenticity and identity, issues of authenticity within popular music and Christian rock music literatures. Following this it looks at the research methods used, detailing the interviews with Christian rock musicians and participant observation conducted from 2008-2010.

The substantive chapters of the study look at practices and the uses of space, Christian rock identities over time and finally the question of whether Christian rock should be categorized as a subculture or a new social movement.

The first of these chapters examines how spaces, particularly performance spaces are used within Christian rock, how these connect to worship, entertainment and art, and how these attempt to manifest themselves as transgressive.

The second substantive chapter looks at how Christian rock musicians enact their individual and collective Christian rock identity in recruitment, participation and exiting of Christian rock. In doing so, it looks at how identities

and the goals associated with those identities connect to Howard and Streck's Christian rock typologies of separational, integrational and transformational (Howard & Streck, 1999).

The third substantive chapter examines whether Christian rock should be considered a subculture or a new social movement by looking at how it deals with recruitment, mobilization, insiders and outsiders, structure, leadership, strategies, goals, uses of space and material cultures. In doing so the dissertation argues that Christian rock is composed of many different identities and approaches. It then explores the specific identities and approaches of Worshipcore and Worship Rock.

This is followed by a conclusion and brief post-script detailing speculation around the changes that have occurred since the research was conducted.

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Christian Rock Music in Ontario

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List of Abbreviations

C.C.M.	Contemporary Christian Music
C.C.C.S.	Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies
C.M.C.	Christian Marketing Canada
C.R.T.C.	Canadian Radio and Telecommunications Commission
D.I.Y.	Do-It-Yourself
G.M.A.	Gospel Music Association
H.M.	Heavenly Metal
J.P.U.S.A.	Jesus People U.S.A.
L.G.B.Q.T.	Lesbian Gay Bisexual Queer Trans

Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction

Christian rock exists at an intersection of the fields of religion and music/popular culture and represents a hybrid subfield of shared identities, practices and norms. The story of Christian rock is the story of the ongoing struggle for acceptance within the fields of Christianity and rock music. In this story, musicians and fans continuously struggle to create a sense of Christian rock's legitimacy within both Christianity and rock music, with varying degrees of success. This narrative mirrors contemporary evangelical culture's ongoing struggles for legitimacy and identity (Howard & Streck, 2000, p. 6).

In what follows I will look at the history of Christian rock in North America and how Christian rock struggled for legitimacy from the 1960s to the end of the 1990s. Much of this history will focus on Christian rock in the United States, and as I go I will also examine the differences between Christian rock in Canada and the United States. I will begin by briefly looking at twentieth century North American Christianity.

20th Century North American Christianity

In part, the story of Christianity within North America centres on the conflict and competition between established and new Christian approaches. For Protestantism in the United States, where there is a historic lack of state-affiliated churches, the struggle for members in an open religious market has led to internal conflicts between approaches. In the late 19th and early 20th century some denominations of Christianity came to embrace modernity via attempted integration of certain elements of modern science and

Darwinism. These mainline liberal denominations¹ were viewed with suspicion by those who saw modern science and evolution as antithetical to Christianity. These dissenters were labelled fundamentalists because they held a belief in the literal truth of the Bible².

The conflict between mainline denominations and fundamentalist reflected two different approaches to Christianity: one prized established theological, liturgical and institutional lineage and consistency (Catholicism, Orthodox, mainline Protestantism); the other emphasized the rejection of these traditions as false in order to reclaim and recreate the earliest forms of Christianity (i.e. conservative Protestants like Baptists, Pentecostals, and other fundamentalists and charismatics³). These newer groups claimed legitimacy by putting forth their form of Christianity as authentic and therefore as being the only true

¹ Mainline denominations are those who are seen as already established and are part of the religious mainstream, with membership often drawn from social, political and economic elites. They are often viewed as more liberal. Examples of mainline denominations in Canada include most Anglicans, United Church members and Presbyterians.

² Fundamentalists are those who believe in the Biblical fundamentals, namely that: “God has revealed himself to us through the Bible” (Schaeffer, 2007: p. 22).

In the late 19th and early 20th century, as Darwinian evolution came to dominate the natural sciences, a conflict arose within Christianity between those who accepted contemporary science and those who rejected it as an attack on Biblical teachings. Those who sought to defend Christianity against science came to be known as Fundamentalists after the World’s Christian Fundamentals Association which first came to prominence defending those principles (Rawlyk, 1990: 158).

Fundamentalists are often conflated with evangelicals: those who view evangelism and proselytization as the central goal of Christianity.

Evangelical fundamentalists tend to believe the following:

- 1) the belief that the Bible is the inerrant word of God,
- 2) the belief in the divinity of Jesus Christ, and
- 3) the belief in the efficacy of Christ’s life, death and physical resurrection for the salvation of the human soul (Davison Hunter in Howard & Streck, 1999, p. 55)

³ Charismatic Christianity places an emphasis on miracles and speaking in tongues as regular signs of belief. These are often referred to as “signs of the spirit”

An example of a newer charismatic group is that of the Toronto Airport Vineyard Congregation. Dubbed the “Toronto Blessing”, this group’s “signs of the spirit” included spontaneous outbursts of “hysterical laughter” and “animal noises” by the “blessed”. The phenomena received much attention in the 1990s, with people making the trip to the church to witness the occurrences first hand. The occurrences were to drop off when the congregation was censured by the Association Vineyard Churches (Stringer, 2005, pp. 231-231).

Christianity⁴. These two approaches to legitimacy would play an important role in the struggles of Christian rock.

Following World War II a period of growth, partially fuelled by the baby boom, came to North American churches. During this time congregations increased in numbers and many congregations engaged in large building projects as signs of success and growth (Bibby, 1987). For some, this was not to last. By the 1960s numbers began to dwindle, particularly within mainline congregations, as members died or left the church⁵. It therefore became necessary for these churches to attract new members while retaining current ones.

Alongside this decline in religious participation there emerged theories of secularization which postulated that in the modern world, with an increase in scientific understanding, technological innovation and general quality of life, religion was declining towards irrelevance (Berger, 1967). Secularization theories made their way into popular culture via **Time Magazine's** April 8, 1966 issue asking the question "Is God Dead?", while in Canada, Pierre Berton wrote the then controversial best-seller **The Comfortable Pew** (1965) detailing how he saw the contemporary church as culturally irrelevant, relying on outdated practices with regards to worship, social outreach and evangelism (Rawlyk, 1990: p. 210).

Many Protestants (both conservative and mainline) attempted to fight this crisis through further calls to tradition. For these groups, the perceived problem was a failure

⁴ The continuing process of reform within Christianity is closely connected to the Protestant approach to Christianity. One way Protestants have attempted to legitimize themselves is by claiming to go back to old practice. Examples include Martin Luther's rejection of indulgences as unbiblical, the adult baptisms of various Baptist groups, etc.

⁵ The trend was not reflected within most Canadian conservative protestant churches (Bibby, 1987).

caused by loss or decline in proper religious conduct. In conservative circles this renewal led to an increase of an absolutist black and white style morality. This moral simplification was seen as attractive by many and, by the 1970s, it led to greater activism in the emerging Christian right⁶ (Fetner, 2008).

Other Christian denominations responded to the perceived decline with attempts to remain relevant and attract new members⁷. For Catholic and mainline Protestant denominations, the period saw an increase in the use of folk music and other simpler, popular musical forms (Stringer, 2005: pp. 211-212). For Catholicism, the change to folk forms was a by-product of the second Vatican Council, which also saw the introduction of other languages into the mass (pp. 209-239).

One thing that churches were keen on doing was retaining and recruiting youth. One idea was to provide Christian alternatives to various forms of mass produced youth culture, in this case, popular music (Luhr, 2009).

Jesus Freaks and Youth Evangelism in the 1960s

Rock 'n' roll first emerged in the 1950s as a hybrid of African American (particularly rhythm and blues) and white musical forms (mostly country). By the early 1960s, rock 'n' roll had given way to pop-rock. Pop-rock became something of a unifying youth cultural force. It was a form of popular music which was:

...consciously created and produced using amplification, electric and electronic musical instruments, sophisticated recording equipment and other sound manipulation devices. (Regev, 2011, p. 561)

⁶ While the Christian right exists within Canada, its influence is significantly less. This is partly due to demographics. Within Canada, evangelicalism has remained a fairly stable minority, representing roughly 8% from 1871 to the present day (Bibby, 2008). In the United States, the evangelical population is significantly larger consisting of approximately 26% (Pew, 2007).

⁷ For example, the United Church of Canada created a new creed in 1968 (United Church, 2018).

Pop-rock was characterized by the accepted presence of both males and females, though the roles they had were differed: females were commonly seen as fanatics given to hysteria, etc., while male participants were seen as more level-headed, and used the music to bond with male peers and attract females (McRobbie and Garber, 1975/1997).

During the early to mid 1960s there was little separation between the pop and rock. By the end of the decade, driven in part by the emergence of rock criticism, rock and pop were separated along lines related to authenticity, race and gender⁸. What emerged was an “ideology of rock” which often stressed seemingly contradictory characteristics like “innovation”, “self-expression”, “authenticity”, “versatility”, “complexity” and “simplicity” and placed ultimate value on “long-lasting” over the immediacy and transience connected to pop⁹ (Von Appen & Doehring, 2006: pp. 31-33). Rock came to see itself as THE legitimate, relevant art form.

The rise of rock at the end of the 1960s coincided with the rise of the hippie counterculture. Fuelled by demographic change, the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights Movement, hippies were young people who attempted to challenge various elements of the status quo with art, drugs, alternative lifestyles and “non-traditional” forms of

⁸ Strictly speaking pop was often identified as inauthentic, feminine and black, while rock was seen as authentic, masculine and white (Keightley, 2001). As such, rock often marginalized musical contributions of women (Von Appen & Doehring: p. 24) and excluded black musical forms, such as soul, blues and later hip hop (p. 34). It also tended to marginalize the contributions of women (p. 34).

⁹ Emblematic of this difference is the privileging rock gave to the album over the single. Albums were supposed to be major artworks, while singles were viewed as disposable (Von Appen & Doehring). Peter Buck, in his liner notes for R.E.M.’s b-sides and rarities compilation **Dead Letter Office** said this about singles:

...the thing that I like best about singles is their ultimate shoddiness. No matter how lavish the packaging, no matter what attention to detail, a '45 is still essentially a piece of crap usually purchased by teenagers. (Buck, 1987)

spirituality¹⁰ (Bebergal, 2014: p. 25). In reaction to the rise of the hippies came the so-called Jesus Freaks (Howard and Streck, 1999: p. 29).

Among the most prominent influences on the Jesus Freaks was Francis Schaeffer, the “spiritual father of the Jesus movement” (Schaeffer, 2007: p. 208). Schaeffer, a missionary turned intellectual, founded the L’Abri Christian community in Switzerland in 1955. There he “evolved into a hip guru preaching Jesus to hippies”, preaching against “middle class Christianity”, and “plastic Christians” who did not understand those on the other side of the generation gap (p. 208). Schaeffer came to view much of secular youth culture as “doing God’s work”:

They were preparing men’s hearts, in “pre-evangelism” and “tearing down the wall of middle-class empty bourgeois apathy.”...All we needed to do was provide the answer after the counterculture rebels opened the door by showing people that life without Jesus was empty. The great thing was that since Jimi Hendrix saw the problem – “the problem” was materialistic middle-class life without eternal values – listening to Jimi Hendrix became essential to “understanding our generation” and “reaching them.” (Schaeffer, 2007: p. 212)

Similar to the hippies, the Jesus Freaks espoused an anti-materialist and anti-consumerist ethos, while embracing an evangelical, often eschatologically¹¹ focussed Christianity. In a modern world where all options seemed available meaning was hard to find, which led some to Christianity (Ellwood, 1973, p. 71).

Active Jesus Freaks came either from the counterculture or from active, Christian youth organizations (i.e., Young Life, Youth for Christ, Campus Crusade) that used the counterculture as a tool for evangelism (Di Sabatino, 1994: pp. 22-23). The use of the

¹⁰ These non-traditional forms of spirituality ranged from so-called Eastern mysticism to the Manson family cult (Turner, 2006).

¹¹ Eschatology relates to religious understandings of the end of the world. In particular it is connected to Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions (Pearson, 2006, p.2).

counterculture by the Jesus Freaks led to the creation of the Jesus Movement which, like the counterculture, was seen as a response to the lack of certainty and instability of the modern world (Ellwood, 1973). Also like the hippie counterculture, this approach to Christianity espoused a tension with science, and suspicion of history, and saw themselves as inheritors of Schaeffer by bringing theological critique to straight society as a means of evangelizing. The movement became an attempt at creating a sort of “counter-counterculture” (Luhr, 2005: p. 74), which appealed to suburban church kids, high school and college students, and members of various contemporary cults and communes. Over time the Jesus People would attempt to create a communalistic Edenism, with a separate culture (pp. 8-20), and became heavily involved in various artistic and multi-media endeavours as means for evangelism. Among these were the hippie vernacular Bible and the creation of Jesus Rock.

The Jesus rock of the 1960s was often institutionally affiliated with Love Song emerging from Calvary Mesa Chapel in California and Resurrection Band coming from Chicago’s Jesus People USA. Within Canada, where Jesus freak activity existed in Toronto, Brantford and Montreal, the music tended towards acoustic folk forms rather than rock music (Di Sabatino, 1994).

In their evangelism, Jesus Rock acts often played alongside secular acts and saw themselves as operating in relation to the rock music counterculture.

When we began in 1968, there was never any intent to create an industry and our music had to compete with everyone from the Allman Brothers to Frank Zappa for airtime. (Luke Kane, Personal Communication, October 16, 2009)

Many artists emerged during this time that played alongside secular rock bands including Resurrection Band, Love Song, Agape, and All-Saved Freak Band. Of the early acts, it was Larry Norman who came to be seen as THE founding figure of Christian rock.

Coming from an evangelical background, Norman attempted to use music and street culture as a tool of evangelism. Often attempting to interact and witness¹² to random people on the street, Norman used contemporary music and language to communicate to people about his religious beliefs. Further, Norman's lyrics would come to define many issues central to the Jesus People Movement from the political to the eschatological. In 1969 Norman recorded and released "I Wish We'd All Been Ready" a song which went to become an anthem¹³, while in 1972 he would release the anti-Vietnam song "Six O'Clock News" and the protest song "The Great American Novel". Norman proved to be a reluctant figurehead (Norman, 1987), and, while he often claimed to be an originating figure of Christian rock, he remained something of a maverick, never getting comfortable within Christian rock (Thornbury, 2018)¹⁴.

1970s and the Struggle for Christian Rock

During the 1970s Christian rock's popularity would continue to grow, though not without complications as it was the centre of a cultural fight within conservative

¹² Within evangelical Christianity witnessing is the act of sharing one's religious/spiritual experience with a non-believer in the hopes of converting them. This is usually done one on one.

¹³ Some would later connect the origins of Christian rock to various end of the world claims, particular Hal Lindsey's **The Late Great Planet Earth** (1970) (Linton, 2000). Lindsey's "The Late Great Planet Earth" became emblematic of a popular evangelical culture that was overly concerned with the end times, becoming one of the top selling books of the 1970s, a documentary narrated by Orson Welles, and inspiring the more contemporary "Left Behind" series, which takes its name from a line in Norman's song "I Wish We'd All Been Ready".

¹⁴ Indeed, Norman's cultivated status as an outsider was the subject of many of the obituaries that appeared following his passing in 2008. Since his passing his legacy has remained controversial (Thornbury, 2018, pp. 246-249)

evangelicalism. By the end of the decade, rock would have a stronger presence within Christianity.

The decade saw the emergence of the American religious right as a political movement (Stowe, 2011: p. 214). It also saw an increase in evangelical cultural production meant to create a popular evangelical culture as an alternative to popular secular culture. During this period the number of Christian bookstores, the most prominent Christian retail space, doubled in the United States (Luhr, 2009: p. 71). These stores sold books, clothing, artwork, greeting cards and records. As stores stocked more Christian rock records (Thompson, 2000: p. 41), sales increased from 5% of store sales in 1975 to 60% in 1978 (Radwan, 2006: p. 4). Increasingly, Christian rock came to be seen as completely separate from mainstream secular rock, as networks of coffee bars, youth group clubs and festivals (beginning with the Explo'72 festival held in Dallas) arose throughout North America (Joseph, 1999). Similarly, there was a rise in Christianity's presence in the popular culture with the success of the rock musicals *Godspell* and *Jesus Christ Superstar*¹⁵.

During this period, the presence of rock instruments within Christian spaces, while often unexpected, was just as often embraced by young people:

We had these groups come through church that, they had drums and they had electric bass and horns and things, and I think people would have been nervous calling it rock but it was certainly rhythmic and had the same instrumentation... And a lot of these kids who became believers started bringing in electric guitars

¹⁵ The June 21, 1971 issue of *Time Magazine* featured a cover story on the increase of Christianity in popular culture entitled "The Jesus Revolution" (Sanneh, 2018). While welcomed by some, the increase in Christian content was often perceived within conservative evangelical circles as heretical and blasphemous. *Jesus Christ Superstar* was held under particular scrutiny for its depiction of the relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene, and its omission of the resurrection (Thompson, 2000: p. 26).

and drums and stuff into the church. So we had our own bands starting immediately and coffeehouses started happening in the area and we had our own inchoate Christian rock scene going. That was pretty cool to be a part of actually... Yeah, I got involved really quickly.

(Thomas McClintock, personal communication, August 27, 2009)

Some thought the mere presence of rock instrumentation, that is material objects associated with secular rock music, in church spaces gave Christian rock some legitimacy. This kind of legitimacy was expanded by the promotion of musicians who had achieved any level of success in secular rock such as Pat Boone, Dion DiMucci, Noel Paul Stookey of Peter, Paul & Mary, Barry McGuire, Johnny Rivers, B.J. Thomas, Richie Furay of Buffalo Springfield and Poco, Joe English (one-time drummer of Wings), and Mark Farner of Grand Funk Railroad (Joseph, 1999: pp. 47-92).

It was in the lyrics that Christian rock was legitimized as Christian. During this period Christian rock was fairly narrowly defined in terms of accepted lyrical focuses: worship oriented songs, evangelism songs and eschatologically focussed songs. Other types of lyrics were looked down upon, particularly criticism of secular or Christian institutions.

This early music represented a means by which youth could engage with their faith and their peers without necessarily having to sacrifice one for the other. Many saw this is a good thing, whereas others worried about the souls of the listeners.

Fear of Christian Rock

The central issue concerning the Christian rock of the 1970s was the moral panic around the use of the rock idiom within Christianity. Drawing on early criticism of rock music that connected it to mass hypnosis, Satanism and communism (Nekola, 2013: pp.

411-415), early books like Bob Larson's **Rock and the Church** (1971) and Frank Garlock's **The Big Beat** (1971) arose as Christian rock started to acquire legitimacy. As concerned Christians, Larson and Garlock attempted to delegitimize Christian rock acts, painting rock music as something akin to "a pagan virus" (Berbegal, 2014, p. 23). These individuals were deeply sceptical of Christian rock's origins in the counterculture and used this scepticism as a starting point for a wider critique:

Born suddenly were urban legends about witch doctors from the jungle hearing rock and saying that it sounded like their tribal attempts to call spirits out of the trees. There was talk about the droning beat hypnotizing youth to engage in unspeakable acts of violence and lasciviousness. And some concerned Christians looked for evidence of Beelzebub in satanic symbols and "backward masking" (messages supposedly heard when an album was played backwards). (Thompson, 2000: p. 30)

Those who opposed Christian rock did so on the basis that while the musicians might have good intentions, they were unknowingly using the devil's tools. The critics of Christian rock tended to question the sound of rock and a culture of rock which promoted sex, juvenile delinquency, violence and non-Christian spirituality.

Unlike western hymns, rock music was seen as a degenerate move away from the high art musical traditions of Europe (Garlock: p. 22). Because rock 'n' roll originated as a hybridization of Black and southern white American secular and religious musical forms¹⁶ (Mosher, 2008), it was placed under great scrutiny. Some, such as Christian

¹⁶ Many early rock and roll performers like Buddy Holly and Elvis Presley came from religious backgrounds. Some, such as Chuck Berry were the children of ministers, while others like Jerry Lee Lewis and Little Richard would find themselves training for ministry (Mosher: 2008). Christian rock pioneer Larry Norman saw Christian rock music as an attempt of re-sanctify what he considered church music (Norman, 1987). Much like how Soul Music was seen as a secularization of sacred music (African-American Gospel): Norman saw Christian rock a re-sacralising of secular music.

cartoonist Jack T. Chick saw the rock beat as being derived from pagan¹⁷ African ceremonies conducted by witch doctors (1978)¹⁸. An oft cited story involved a missionary in Africa whose children often listened to secular rock music. When one of the local converts heard rock music he asked the missionary why the missionary's children were listening to music similar to music the convert had heard during local pagan rituals (Chick, 1978, p. 25).

Other stories suggested that rock music put listeners into trances akin to demonic possession¹⁹. Paradoxically the music, with its loud guitars and drums was seen as agitating rather than calming, and, as such, was viewed as harmful to one's faith, unlike hymns or the western classical tradition which were seen as aids to faith (Larson, 1971: pp. 75-81).

To critics of Christian rock, the culture of rock music was as problematic as the sound. Rock music was viewed as the domain of the immoral: of drug users, atheists, and worse (Jones, 1994); where participants: "advocate promiscuous love, decry war, wear freaky clothing...long hair... [and] are fiercely anti-establishment" (Larson, 1971: 28). Rock musicians were seen as purposefully leading children away from traditional, Christian values by advocating for sexual impropriety, criminality and alternative or occult religious practices.

¹⁷ Within much of conservative evangelical Christianity, anything labelled as pagan was often connected to Satanism (Bebeg, 2014).

¹⁸ When confronting this criticism of the rock beat as being "African" in nature, it is difficult to avoid questions of racism. It is fairly clear in reading much of the early material on Christian rock, there is a sense from both the con side (Larson: 1971) and the pro side (Lawhead: 1981) that its African roots were problematic because of the connection to paganism.

As well, it is never specified as to what area of Africa these beats emerged from, as if Africa were a monolithic united entity. There are clearly racist conceptions at play.

¹⁹ These days, Bob Larson is a well-known exorcist who, in 2011, attempted to exorcise the bassist of Norwegian Black-Metal band Mayhem (Adams, 2011).

The sexual nature of rock culture was seen as manifest in the coded language used by participants:

...by which more explicit lyrical images are conveyed. Terms like “engine”, “motor”, and “machine” are all sexual euphemisms...”funky” refers to sexual odours; a “gig” is a reference to sex orgies; “groovy” is a description of the physical position of intercourse; “groupies” are prostitutes who ply their wares in the company of rock stars; “get off” signifies the goal of lovemaking. (Larson, 1980, p. 15)

These aims of rock music could be sexual as in the acceptance of homosexuals (Larson, 1980: p. 19), S&M sex practices and non-marital sex (p. 47)²⁰. The often reported behaviour of bands was also suspect particularly with their promiscuous lifestyles.

In addition some musicians were seen as promoting just juvenile delinquency and violence. This was a common threat in rock music from Link Wray’s “Rumble”²¹ to the Beatles “Run For Your Life” and the Rolling Stone’s “Street Fighting Man.” The promotion of criminal behaviour within rock music was often tied to the promotion of drug use (Larson, 1980). Drugs came to be seen as an integral part of rock culture, with many bands seen as openly advocating for drug use (p. 28). This drug use often led to an interest in esoteric spiritual practices.

The promotion of alternate forms of spirituality such as cults, eastern religions, mysticism and the occult and Satanism²² (Nekola, 2013: pp. 409-410) were seen as

²⁰ Bob Larson viewed disco as problematic in part because it emerged from gay and black subculture (1980: p. 50).

²¹ Link Wray’s 1958 track “Rumble”, an instrumental, was banned on American radio because it was seen as dangerous, not just for its title but also for the ominous nature of the music (Doyle, 2010).

²² Satanism and the occult would become central images within heavy metal. However, some have argued this was often misconstrued.

In 1971 early rock critic Lester Bangs argued that the third Black Sabbath album “Masters of Reality”, while dabbling in occult imagery, was actually relatively orthodox in its outlook. Indeed, to him the album represented an attempt at depicting a supernatural-oriented Catholic viewpoint (Bangs, 1971)

dangerous to the soul of the listener (Larson, 1980: pp. 30, 47). Occult motifs in rock music were particularly prevalent in lyrics and graphics²³ (Peters, Peters & Merrill, 1986: pp. 18-20). There arose various urban legends including those about the Rolling Stones engaging in the ceremonial sacrifice of former member Brian Jones and the satanic pact made by Led Zeppelin. In the educational Christian comic book **Spellbound** author Jack T. Chick²⁴ attempted to provide a behind the scenes look at the creation of rock music, which involved pre-recording druidic calls to prayer, satanic blessings of master tapes, and requests for Satan to corrupt as many people as possible with the finished record (Chick, 1979). Based on the testimony of a supposed record company insider, the story was later proven false (Plowman, 1979), but was still widely believed into the 1980s. Rather than being dismissed, these tales were taken as proof of the evil inherent in rock music (Garlock: pp. 39-79).

For critics who saw rock as antithetical to Christianity; the use of rock within Christianity was downright scandalous. Rock was seen as intrinsically connected to the cultures and practices that produced it. By association, Christian rock was viewed with disdain:

Christ-Rock (sic) seems to me to be first of all a total contradiction in terms. Jesus Christ has nothing to do with rock & Roll. 2 Corinthians 6:14-16²⁵ tells us to have no fellowship with unbelievers, wickedness, darkness, Belial, or idols.

²³ Coupled with the fear of the occult in rock music was the moral panic around backmasking. Backmasking was a way of using backwards recordings and seen by many as a means to transmit hidden occult or satanic messages.

²⁴ Jack T. Chick was a cartoonist best known for producing black and white comic strips known as “Chick Tracts” and later full-colour comic books which espoused the evil of rock music, Catholicism, and various other dangers (Chick, 1979).

²⁵ Do not be mismatched with unbelievers. For what partnership is there between righteousness and lawlessness? Or what fellowship is there between light and darkness? What agreement does Christ have with Belial? Or what does a believer share with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God... (2 Cor. 6:14-16 New Revised Standard Version)

How can Christ be unequally yoked with the perverse paganism of rock?
(Garlock: p. 275)

The origins of the music, the culture of practitioners and the problems of content were viewed as ingrained in the form as a whole. Because of their call to actively save others from damnation, critics felt it was their duty to break the stranglehold of rock culture on the young. The use of rock within Christianity was seen as exploitative in that it fooled people into conversion to a kind of false “groovy Christianity” (Larson, 1971: pp. 39-42) that would not save them from damnation.

In Defence of Christian Rock

Combating critics were those who argued in favour of Christian rock. These were mostly Christian writers who attempted to put the music into the context of contemporary youth culture. The most well-known²⁶ early defence was made by **Campus Life**²⁷ music critic Stephen Lawhead in his book **Rock Reconsidered** (1981). As a writer at a Christian youth magazine Lawhead was often asked questions by young people and their parents about whether rock and Christianity were compatible.

For Lawhead, there was nothing inherently evil about rock music. He argued that critics were most offended by the “image” of rock music, which could be changed depending on how rock was used (Lawhead: p. 26). However, rather than treating all rock music as valid, Lawhead encouraged listeners to be “discriminating” by viewing the music as art to be evaluated in terms of aesthetic quality and message. In this sense good

²⁶ This work was often cited in my research by both interviewees and secondary sources as a major turning point in the legitimation of Christian rock within evangelical circles.

²⁷ **Campus Life** was a magazine affiliated with the Youth for Christ evangelical program. In 2006 it changed its name to **Ignite Your Faith**. In 2009 it ceased printing and today operates only as a website (Campus Life, 2015).

art was art that paid attention to uniqueness”, “craftsmanship”, “maturity”, “intelligence”, “wholeness”, and “spontaneity” (p. 126-128). In keeping with this, Lawhead divided all music up into the following four categories: ““bad art with a false message", "good art with a false message", "bad art with a true message" and "good art with a true message"” (p.128). The message related to the lyrics contained in the song. For Lawhead, the Christian listener’s goal was to find music in the fourth category wherein finding “truth” in rock content was more important than whether an artist was Christian (pp. 123-136). It was thought that the discerning Christian could find good music to listen to within both Christian and secular rock.

Similarly, Peters, Peters and Merrill’s **What about Christian Rock?** (1986) attempted to provide a more balanced understanding of Christian rock music in general based on music, lyrics, and culture/lifestyle of the music’s creators. In doing so they created what they called the “Ten Commandments of Music”:

Your music shall not destroy peacefulness in your heart.
Your music shall not cause disunity in the body.
Your music shall not cause ungratefulness.
Your music shall not disagree with the word of God.
Your music shall not be sordid and cheap.
Your music shall not destroy hope in your heart.
Your music shall have lasting value.
Your music shall communicate knowledge.
Your music shall contain wisdom.
Your music shall be sung in the name of the Lord (1986: p. 49-61)

For Peters et al., there was a sense that Christian music needed to provide something and to aid one in one’s faith.

Among performers, Larry Norman was the most outspoken in defending the Christian use of rock music. His label, Solid Rock, often addressed issues related to

Christian rock's legitimacy in liner and record sleeves. A typical Solid Rock inner sleeve of the 1970s contained an overview of the use of popular music throughout history by evangelists like Martin Luther, 17th-18th century hymn writer Isaac Watts and Salvation Army founder William Booth (Norman, 1976). For Norman, the connection to history represented not only a way of defending his own activities against critics, but also attempted to legitimize Christian rock by placing it within a larger continuum.

Norman used his defence of Christian rock as a way of communicating with his audience. Norman saw the purposes of Christian rock as ultimately relating to both evangelism ("MY music has always been for the non-Christians") and art: "I think every Christian album should be special and beautiful...The songs [of Solid Rock artists] really do contain a spiritual depth and an artistic depth" (Norman, 1976). Much like Lawhead, Norman thought that while bad music could easily be ignored, good art could aid others in their faith. Norman wanted to reach the rock fan by making good rock music. Paradoxically, his music would mostly end up appealing to other Christians.

The 1970s was a period in which Christian rock or Jesus Rock struggled for its own survival, particularly from critics within Christianity who questioned its validity. Both critics and supporters of Christian rock attempted to delegitimize the other side by questioning motives and sources: arguments against Christian rock related to rock music as a form and the rock culture of the 1970s, arguments in favour of Christian rock saw it as an art form that would appeal to youth whose quality was based on skill and intent. By the 1980s, Christian rock would become a firmly established industry within white evangelical Christianity.

1980s and the Rise of Contemporary Christian Music

The 1980s saw rise of the politically active religious right, most prominently displayed through televangelists like Pat Robertson and Oral Roberts, and the newsletters of James Dobson's **Focus on the Family** become more central within white American evangelicalism (Luhr, 2009). During the decade, Christian rock shifted its focus from achieving internal legitimacy within Evangelical Christianity²⁸ and instead became a means of recruitment and retention of young people (Schaeffer, 2012: p. 55). The decade would see the not only the rise of Contemporary Christian Music (also known as C.C.M.) but also the rise of various subgenres such as punk, folk, dance pop, reggae, and metal²⁹ (Schaeffer: p.59). Much of C.C.M. would come to focus on mainstream success and legitimacy by presenting itself as a healthy alternative (Larson, 1980: p. 91) to an increasingly controversial popular music landscape³⁰. At the same time, the mainstream would question Christian rock's legitimacy, seeing the genre as suffering from cultural

²⁸ By the beginning of the 1980s, many critics of Christian rock would either be marginalized or come to change their position. For Bob Larson, rock was no longer immediately questioned. Instead, performers were to be judged based on motives and lyrical content (pp. 99-100)

Others, like televangelist and Jerry Lee Lewis' cousin Jimmy Swaggert would continue to attack Christian rock, as in Swaggert's book: **Religious Rock: A Wolf in Sheep's Clothing** (Sanneh, 2018).

²⁹ Among other genres the 1980s saw the rise of Christian metal, which was initially created as an attempt to co-opt metal for "evangelical purposes" (Brown, 2005: p. 118). Bands such as Stryper (who made a point of throwing Bibles into the audience at concerts) and Stryken attempted to use the LA glam-metal scene as a means to evangelize to young people. These bands were often openly questioned, as their androgynous appearance confused conservative Christians (Luhr, 2005).

Other metal bands used the genres obsession with "Evil" by using images of evil and the apocalypse to scare them towards Christianity (Luhr, 2005). There was a musical rebellion which emphasized the apocalyptic to appeal to thrash/speed metal affiliated youth while also presenting a message that they saw as appropriate to their beliefs (Brown: p. 134).

³⁰ The Parents Music Resource Centre or P.M.R.C., formed in 1985 was a committee founded by various "Washington wives" that attempted to clean up popular music from what they saw as an increase in sexual and violent content (Joseph, 1999: pp. 3-4). Their ultimate legacy was the introduction of the Parental Advisory label found on many CDs (Weinstein, 1991: p. 249).

and stylistic lag wherein they were always out of date with the latest trends (Radwan, 2006)³¹.

The 1980s saw an increase in methods of manufacture and label distribution, greater presence in Christian book stores, greater support of Christian rock in television, radio, and magazines and a larger and more established fan base (Thompson, 2000: pp. 87-166). During this time, Christian rock labels such as Word, Myrrh, Maranatha and Sparrow came to represent a large portion of the Christian music marketplace with larger sections in Christian bookstores while also making in-roads into the secular marketplace through distribution deals with major labels³².

Alongside a more established label system, Christian rock became more established, with a variety of magazines, radio and television covering the music. Covering more than the earlier youth oriented magazines like **Campus Life**, **Contemporary Christian Music** (aka **C.C.M.**³³) and **Heavenly Metal** (aka **H.M.**) exclusively covered Christian music³⁴. While Christian radio was a long running format

³¹ The legacy of these conflicts remains to this day.

There are some parts of the Church that feel rock, Christian or not, is evil and “of the devil”, however I believe it is growing in acceptance... I feel that Christian rock is being accepted more and more in the secular world as viable music, but many may still see it as being poor musically simply because of the Christian label. Unfortunately there has been a bit of a name made for Christian rock like that, and now it must be overcome. But progress is definitely being made. (John Knotts, Personal Communication, May 11, 2009)

³² The California based Christian independent label Exit Records, whose acts included the 77s and Charlie Peacock, signed a distribution and promotional deal in the mid-1980s with Island records, home to U2 (Joseph, 1999: p. 169-176). The move was initially seen as a major development for the label and artists, but the reality ended up being far less glamorous what was than imagined.

³³ The magazine **Contemporary Christian Music** or **C.C.M.** as it is now called was formed in 1978 and quickly became the biggest Christian music magazine. Eventually the name C.C.M. would become an alternate name for the genre. Interestingly the magazine was both the largest promoter and critic of the genre, often devoting space to questioning the legitimacy of Christian rock (Joseph, 1999: p. 15-16).

³⁴ This increase in coverage became a centre of controversy when, in 1986, a group of musicians wrote a letter to C.C.M. questioning the need for reviews on the basis that one couldn't evaluate the products of the spiritual activities of others (Sanneh, 2018: p. 11).

in the United States, it was remained a relatively small presence in Canada. During this time, significant airtime was given to Christian rock in the United States, and, by decade's end, stations would emerge that were devoted entirely to Christian rock (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 240, n. 89).

Within Canada, the 1980s were also a time of growth. Successful Christian music labels like Word opened a Canadian division, while festivals were held and more Christian venues were created. However, bands like 11:59, Mandate and Fourth Watch would remain marginalized as Canadian bands often lacked for larger opportunities due to limited access to larger markets, and radio.

The increased presence of Christian rock led to two outcomes: a rising celebrity culture and an internal backlash to this culture within Christian rock.

The Rise of Christian Celebrity

The 1980s were an era that saw the rise of Christian music celebrities. During this time it became common to see screaming teenagers at concerts and for Christian music magazines to feature glossy photo spreads (Hogan, 1999). Some viewed Christian music critically, believing that it was becoming too similar to the mainstream celebrity culture, sacrificing humility for popularity. Christian rock was becoming an arena of consumption (Luhr: p. 195).

During this period, the standard bearer for C.C.M. was Amy Grant (Romanowski, 1992). As an adolescent she began writing religious songs and released her first album in 1977 at the age of 16. Over time Grant became a star within Christian circles (Joseph,

1999: p. 197). Due to this success Grant became a symbol of Contemporary Christian Music for many:

Are you familiar with the artist Amy Grant? ... She's the leader, she's kind of the first one who stepped out and started writing Christian rock. I don't know if you're aware of that. She's kind of the first one. She started coming into our church. (Ruth Powers, personal communication, May 7, 2009)

Her prominence within C.C.M. reflected a rise in the participation of women as participants in Christian rock. For many Grant's popularity gave her the status of a trailblazer, an opener of new horizons.

By the mid-1980s, Grant was attempting to crossover into the mainstream (Romanowski, 1993: pp. 47-62)³⁵. These attempts at mainstream success led to a certain amount of backlash; suddenly fans were writing letters questioning her faith (pp. 62-63). For many non-fans she became emblematic of what was wrong with Christian music. She was seen as "the big devil of conformity... [she was] what Christians were supposed to listen to" (Matthew Webster, personal communication, September 23, 2009). She came to embody one side of the split within Christian rock that led to a redrawing of C.C.M. boundaries. Christian rock saw the creation of different approaches, different understandings of what was acceptable and what was not. (Powell, 2002: pp. 373-379).

The Rise of an Alternative

Emerging from the Jesus Movement of the 1960s and 1970s, the Jesus People USA (or J.P.U.S.A.) organization began as a travelling ministry before establishing a communal lifestyle in Chicago that continues to the present (Beaujon: 14). Having

³⁵ She would breakthrough in 1990 with the album "Heart in Motion" which featured the hit "Baby Baby" (Romanowski, 1993: p.62)

already pioneered Christian rock through their sponsorship of early Jesus rock band Resurrection Band (aka Rez Band), the community started a print publication called **Cornerstone**, which ran in print from 1971-2003 and continues today as a website (Cornerstone Magazine, 2017). The publication offered a different approach to Christian culture, one that primarily focussed on issues of social justice (i.e. issues of race, poverty, etc) that was often seen as more liberal than the culture of the conservative evangelical mainstream (Young, 2012: p. 507). Through this, J.P.U.S.A. would found the Cornerstone Festival in 1984. The festival, which ran until 2012, provided a space for Christians who saw their faith differently than conservative evangelical or mainline churches (Wilson, 2010). As such, J.P.U.S.A. and Cornerstone became influential to the American emergent church movement (Young, 2012, p. 517)³⁶.

Cornerstone and other festivals³⁷ provided a platform for edgier “2nd Wave” bands such as Undercover, the Choir, Altar Boys, Crumbacher and the 77s that would come to define Christian alternative rock (Wilson, 2010). These bands were instrumental for many contemporary Christian youth:

From the hair, to the clothes, to their lyrics, most people couldn't understand it all, but we teenagers sure did. From the beginning, we got it right. It wasn't about A&R, marketing, or album sales, nor was it about shoving God down our throats. It was about honesty and integrity. Here were people on stage at a church who could tell us straight out the honest-to-God truth...about God. (p. 9)

³⁶ The emergent church practices a form of Christianity often seen as theologically liberal. In this understanding of Christianity, the presence of God is believed to be everywhere, even among sinners, that God transcends, that faith is mysterious, that salvation is not just for believers, etc. It is a form of Christianity that is often seen as being post-modern in approach (Young, 2012: 517).

³⁷ The late 1970s and early 1980s saw a rise in Christian rock festivals such as the U.S.'s Icthus festival (Howard & Streck, 1999, pp. 1-3), the Greenbelt festival in the U.K. (Thompson, 2000, p. 37) and Canada's Greenfest (Jeske, 1986).

These bands, influenced by early Jesus Rock and current musical trends like punk and new wave, attempted to bring new sonic and lyrical content into Christian rock (p. 8). Not necessarily interested in entertainment or evangelism, they were interested in “art” and truth” which allowed for a questioning of not only society and its institutions but of oneself. Over time, these bands were seen as representing a different approach in other ways, particularly by being open about their sins and bringing a perceived humanity into Christian music that allowed for “brokenness” (p. 9).

The three approaches of the 1980s (evangelism/ministry, entertainment and art) would become the cornerstones of Christian rock into the 1990s. These three categories will be further explored in later chapters.

Success in the 1990s

The 1990s were a period of great growth and unprecedented success for Christian rock. With the introduction of Soundscan³⁸ technology early in the decade, accurate sales figures became available (Joseph, 1999, p. 193)³⁹. Christian rock emerged as a major segment of the music market⁴⁰, and bands like Collective Soul, Jars of Clay and Sixpence None the Richer saw secular success while making few concessions to secular taste.

³⁸ Soundscan replaced the previous album charting system that relied on rough estimates of numbers from music retailers. With Soundscan sales numbers were compiled for the first time using scanner technology, allowing for greater accuracy in counting albums sold (Joseph, pp. 193-194).

³⁹ In 1995 it was found that purchasers of C.C.M. were:

76% females

59% in their 30s or 40s

85% white

90% attended church 4 times/month, 64% attended 7 times/month (Howard & Streck: p. 241)

They tended to attend Protestant churches: 27% Baptist, 26% non-denominational, 14% charismatic or Pentecostal, 5% Methodist, 5% Lutheran and 4% Presbyterian (p. 241), with the bulk of the American audience coming from conservative evangelicalism.

⁴⁰ In 1995 alternative rock/rap group DC Talk's album Jesus Freak sold 86,000 copies in its first week. This was significantly more than chart debuts of secular artists such as Beck and Porno for Pyros (Boehlert, 1996).

However, it's legitimacy as rock was still questioned by the secular music press (Boehlert, 1996). By the end of the decade there would exist Christian television channels that would devote time to Christian rock videos⁴¹, subgenre magazines, and an increase in festivals.

At this time, there arose a controversy regarding liturgical music as two approaches to congregational singing vied for supremacy: the traditional approach which relied on organ dominated hymns versus a new approach to worship which saw an increase in the use of rock instrumentation (Ingalls, 2008: p. 105). The contemporary form was popularized through publishing companies Maranatha, Vineyard and Hosanna Music and, alongside the shift in instrumentation there was a shift in lyrical style. Whereas hymns tended to be more formally narrative and descriptive, worship songs tended to be more personally oriented between the singer and God. This often took the form of worship ballads (p. 120)⁴². The conflict ended with contemporary worship music coming to dominate many churches. It would also eventually become significant within Christian rock.

During this period, Christian music was centred in Nashville, Tennessee, and drew on many of the resources put in place by the country music industry. Sometimes referred to as "Nash Vegas" due to its perceived false glamour, Nashville became the object of scorn by those claiming to possess a more independent, "underground" spirit (i.e. labels

⁴¹ The 1990s saw the rise and fall of the American channel Z-TV which was the first all Christian music video channel (Gow, 1998).

⁴² The musical and lyrical forms of contemporary worship music would be parodied by South Park in the episode "Christian Rock Hard". In the episode, Eric Cartman forms a Christian rock band called Faith +1 with which he hopes to receive a platinum album in order to win a bet. The character wrote Christian songs by changing the word "Baby" to "Jesus" (Stone & Parker, 2003).

such as Tooth & Nail⁴³, Solid State, etc.). Nashville was seen as where one went to make money, not necessarily to evangelize or create art (Lindenbaum, 2012).

By the end of the decade there would be over 5000 Christian rock stations in the United States (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 240, n. 89). In contrast, it wasn't until 1993 that the Canadian Radio-Television & Telecommunications Commission (C.R.T.C) allowed for the creation of all religious radio stations; an all Christian rock radio station would only emerge in 1999 with the creation of Winnipeg's Freak FM (Canada Press NewsWire, 1999)⁴⁴. This difference in radio presence highlights a major difference between the United States and Canada during the period. While the Canadian industry grew it was not seen as large enough to sustain a full-time, professional Christian rock band. Instead, it was believed that Canadian bands had to go to the United States. When there, bands like Vancouver's Hocus Pick were suddenly able to engage in large tours and achieve greater success (Chiose, 1996).

At this point in time there remained a mixture of scepticism and acceptance of Christian rock within the mainstream. Sceptics viewed Christian rock as a con, an attempt to trick people to convert or worse⁴⁵ (Hunter & Whinna, 2004). Similarly there

⁴³ To some extent the antagonism between the two is false. Tooth and Nail in particular were affiliated with various Nashville-based Christian labels, and at one point were owned in part by secular music label EMI (Beaujon, 2006: p. 63). The antagonism that exists between C.C.M. and "underground" Christian rock is connected to rock music's quests for authenticity and legitimacy, particularly in relation to the ideology of rock.

⁴⁴ The station would change ownership hands and formats a few times in the intervening years, becoming a secular alternative rock station in the early 2000s, and then Christian Station again in 2008 under the name of Ignite FM. (Canadian Communications Foundation, 2018)

⁴⁵ In the United States Christian rock was sometime used by the religious right as a means of recruiting and maintaining membership among young people. Lauren Sandler's 2006 book **Righteousness: Dispatches from the Evangelical Youth Movement** connected Christian youth musical and political activity via the "Rock For Life" organization, which is a Pro-Life counterpart to the Pro-Choice movement's "Rock For Choice" organization (2006: p. 170).

remained a conflict within Christian rock as to how people were supposed to go about making the music, whether they should aim to proselytize, facilitate worship, entertain or create art.

Conclusion

The history of Christian rock was one of ongoing struggle for internal and external legitimacy. In this context, Christian rock participants attempted to obtain internal (within itself and wider Christianity), and external (within the secular rock field) legitimacy.

Christian rock emerged as a tool for Christians to use in achieving various collective and individual religious goals. Struggles for legitimacy within Christianity related to differences in theological understanding, in denominational goals, and in the ongoing competition for adherents. The struggles of denominations often reflected those found within Christian rock, allowing the history of Christian rock to act as a mirror or “microcosm” of the evangelical Christian experience (Howard & Streck, 2000: p. 6). The struggles for legitimacy within Christian rock often related to competing needs to engage with the Christian world or the secular world, as individuals negotiated between religious and musical goals. These negotiations led to a divide within Christian rock wherein some participants came to prize the maintaining of difference and exclusion from others within the general environment (a la subcultures), while others came to see their goals as proselytism, openness and inclusion with the wider world (a la social movements).

These differences led to Christian rock becoming a field with dominant and secondary narratives outlining a centre and a periphery with artists creating music within the same field targeting different audiences, and with different underlying goals: evangelism, worship, entertainment and art. These goals were enacted through practices and the ongoing creation of identity particularly around issues related to the struggle between religion and music.

In what follows I will examine Christian rock in the context of Southern Ontario from the years 2008-2010. In doing so I will be looking to answer the following questions:

- How do Christian rock musicians negotiate the morally conservative values of Evangelicalism with the aesthetics of rock music? Are these differences reconciled and if so, how? Or is the struggle between Evangelicalism and rock music a part of the ongoing creation of Christian rock? Is the Christian rock form (and identity/identities) now firmly entrenched and naturalized within Evangelicalism? How are these negotiations reflected in terms of identity and practices of participants?
- How do identities and practices of Christian rock resemble the models of subcultures (whose goals are retaining membership and defending against outsiders) and new social movements (whose goals are the promotion of a cause and the achievement of practical aims in relation to that cause)? To what extent do the goals and ethics of Christian rock musicians reflect subculture or social movement approaches?
 - To what extent do Christian rock music participants view themselves as authentic? View other Christian rock musicians as authentic? View the musical form as authentic?

In looking at these questions, I will be examining Christian rock partially through the prism of subcultures and new social movements. As such, I will look at subculture and social movement literature focussing on their approaches to issues of practice, and identity.

Secondly I will apply other theoretical perspectives in sociology to Christian rock to arrive at a richer understanding of the social and cultural features of the phenomenon. Bourdieu's work on fields and habitus helps in the understanding of how practices are constructed and enacted in relation to music as well as allowing the comparison of subculture and new social movement practices. In looking at identity I will look at various approaches to individual and collective identity, how this is tied to music and religion. I will also examine some of the literature on Christian rock, paying particular attention to Howard and Streck's work on Christian rock as a "splintered art world", a fragmented field consisting of various different identities, goals and practices.

Following this I will review my methods and how I conducted my research. I will then look at practices of Christian rock musicians, particularly in relation to issues of space, and use of rock music as a tool (i.e. How do Christian musicians engage in Christian rock?)⁴⁶.

In the next chapter I will look at collective and individual identity and legitimation within Christian rock: How does Christian rock effect their views of themselves? Of other Christians? I will also look at how individuals come to join, participate, engage and leave Christian rock.

⁴⁶ In looking at these spaces, a difference should be noted between Christian rock concerts and rock concerts performed by Christians. A Christian rock concert for my purposes is one that is promoted or performed within a Christian context (i.e. a church, Christian coffeehouse) or is sponsored by a local Christian radio station or magazine. These concerts are generally more explicitly related to religious organizations and often lead to more overt religious scripts either on their own initiative or as per the contract (Luhr: p. 156). Rock concerts performed by Christians are concerts performed in secular arenas where the performers are Christian. The two approaches will have different scripts and goals.

Finally I shall look at Christian rock in relation to subculture and new social movement theory: which best describes Christian rock? In doing so I shall look at practices and identity of Christian rock musicians in relation to recruitment and mobilization, insiders and outsiders, structure and leadership, strategies and goals, and uses of spaces and material cultures. I will also use the scenes of Worshipcore and Worship rock as means of looking at the characteristics of subcultures and social movements found in Christian rock.

Finally, I will conclude with a summary of key findings, the contributions the dissertation makes to the literature, and possible topics and paths for future research.

Chapter 2: Subculture and Social Movement Literature

Introduction

While usually seen as different, the lines between subcultures and social movements can be thin. The predominant distinguishing feature between the two is this: subcultures are primarily based on a pursuit of a collective, unique identity and set of practices whose aim is to protect its continued existence. Social movements strive to be public, to actively make changes in the world through their existence and practices. Social movements are often affiliated with the political (i.e. workers rights, gay rights, women's rights, racial equality), while subcultures are often associated with marginalized youth and music cultures (Goth, punk, gamer).

Christian rock musicians are engaged in a field that attempts to create, sustain and legitimize collective and individual identities, generating collective social actions¹ (often focussed on evangelism) and facilitate individual religious expression. Different approaches of Christian rock display characteristics of subcultures and new social movements, raising questions as to which Christian rock most closely resembles. In looking at Christian rock in relation to subcultures and new social movements the questions emerge: to what extent does Christian rock (and its different approaches) exist as their own field(s) aimed at the protection of a unique identity a la subcultures? To what extent is Christian rock a tool used for the achievement of religious goals such as proselytization, worship and exhortation (Howard & Streck, 1999, pp. 49-72), or more

¹ Melucci defines collective action as: "the product of purposeful orientations developed within a field of opportunities and constraints" (Melucci, 1989: p. 25). Collective action is action organized by groups of actors negotiating their goals via their means within their environment or field (p. 26).

overtly political activities such as Christian charities, non-government organizations and advocacy organizations (i.e. Rock for Life, World Vision) a la social movements?

In what follows I will look at the development of subcultural and social movement theories as it relates to Christian rock. Following this I will compare subcultures and social movements in relation to issues related to identities (insider/outsider distinctions) and practices (recruitment, mobilization, structure and leadership, use of space and material cultures) and the similarities between the two (strategies and goals). This comparison will reveal similarities/convergences and differences/divergences between the two types of collective social actions.

Subcultures

Developing from the early ethnographies of the University of Chicago², early subculture research attempted simply to understand groups that seemed to exist outside of mainstream society. Drawing from the works Mead, Cooley and others, early ethnographers viewed cities as a laboratory of modern life where basic social interactions and relationships between groups could be studied (Prus, 1996: pp. 113-118). Early subcultural studies included those of immigrants (Thomas and Znaniecki's **The Polish Peasant in Europe and America** (1920/1984)), hobos (Anderson's **The Hobo: The Sociology of the Homeless Man** (1923/1961)), criminals (Sutherland's **The Professional Thief: by a Professional Thief** (1937)) and jazz musicians (Becker's **Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance** (1963)).

² Chicago School ethnography began as an attempt to map out life in the modern city and provided models for the study of the lived experiences and practices of contemporary urban society in a similar fashion to early anthropological study of "foreign" cultures, like those of Franz Boas (Prus, 1996: p. 106).

In its early forms subcultures related to a “set of interactionally linked people characterized by some sense of distinctiveness (outsider and insider definitions) within the broader community” (Prus, 1997: p. 41). In this context insiders were understood as those accepted and seen as members of a subculture, share distinctive, sometimes deviant characteristics that defined their individual and collective identities and access to stocks of knowledge needed for subcultural membership. The distinctive identity of subcultural insiders was enacted in relation to the values, activities and spaces that members individually and collectively engage in (Johnston & Snow, 1994: p. 474), including those that differentiated them from mainstream culture (Wilson, 2006: p. 22). For subcultures, outsiders referred to those outside the subculture. These were often conceived as a kind of “them” that actively engage in opposition to the “us” of subcultural insiders.

In creating an insider identity through the maintenance of distinctiveness, subcultures often engaged in public transgression of the norms of the dominant society. These actions continuously created a sense of community amongst insiders, where distinctiveness was cultivated by groups of reflective, self-aware social actors. This distinctiveness became tied into identity as insiders identified with other insiders and saw subcultural outsiders as a common antagonist. Insiders thus developed their own practices, forms of knowledge, and understanding (including forms of slang, style of dress, and forms of consumption) which allowed for both the exclusion of outsiders and the further development of group identity and concepts of authenticity manifest as subcultural capital. Sometimes this distinctiveness came via the shared practice of music, where musical subcultures emerged.

Early Musical Subculture Research

For early musical subculture studies, the focus was often on the deviance of groups who were perceived as dangerous outsiders from the mainstream (Williams, 2007: pp. 573-574). Subcultural research would often return to the problem of the “outsider from the mainstream” becoming “insider within the subculture”. While music has often provided an opportunity for unique, deviant activity, it was not until the rise of modern studies of youth culture that popular music became commonly associated with subculture (Frith, 1978/1983: pp. 189-190).

Outsiders (1963), Becker’s work on jazz musicians, provided a sense of how activity in music could form the basis of an outsider group identity. In the work, Becker looked at jazz musicians as deviants and drew on his own experiences playing jazz (p. 80). In doing so he noted that jazz musicians often partook in various substances such as marijuana, and used their own “hip” slang, displaying a deviance that separated them as subcultural insiders from “squares” or the unhip outsiders who made up the mainstream of American society (p. 85). “Squares” were seen to lack taste, good ears, and the ability to learn the “beat” (p. 89), and stifled the free self-expression of jazz musicians by pressuring them into creating easier, more popular forms (pp. 91-92). Boundaries between insiders and outsiders were created between the hip and unhip, with the hip serving as a deviant community of subcultural insiders.

While all communities of music could be defined as being in some ways subculturally inclined, with verbal, musical and stylistic cues that outsiders (i.e. those “too old” to get it) would not understand, for others, only those artists and genres

dominated by the lower classes were indicative of subculture. With the Birmingham School's subcultural research, a focus on issues of class attached explicit political connections to the concept of subculture. .

British Musical Subcultural Research

Formed in the 1960s, the University of Birmingham's now defunct "Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies" (or C.C.C.S.) used European neo-Marxist and post-structuralist theory to redefine media and subcultural studies. While still viewing subcultures as subsets of larger structures (Wilson, 2006: p. 22), researchers at the C.C.C.S. primarily viewed subcultures as arenas of class resistance rather than arenas of localized deviance (Bennett & Kahn-Harris, 2004: p. 5).

Researchers at the C.C.C.S. saw resistance enacted through style related to dress, music, ritual and group slang (Williams, 2007: pp. 576-578). The researchers viewed these subcultures as resistant because of the reappropriation and repurposing of cultural elements, which was referred to as bricolage³ (Hall, 2007).

Drawing on the works of semioticians like Saussure, C.C.C.S. researchers attempted to understand the appropriation of cultural artifacts. Examining ways in which meaning was created linguistically, structuralists made note of the often arbitrary connection between signifier (word) and signified (object). Post-structuralists went further, argued that signifiers had no fixed meanings, and differences in meaning vary

³ Bricolage is the "reordering and recontextualisation of objects to communicate fresh meaning" (Wilson, 2006: p. 22). In other words, it is the reuse of objects in unintended, meaningful ways that often challenge understandings of the meanings of not only the objects but the economic processes around the objects.

from person to person⁴. In a similar way, Stuart Hall argued that meanings of cultural objects were contingent on encoded and decoded meaning. Here encoded meaning was the meaning intended by the broadcast/creator, decoded meaning was the way meaning was interpreted by the recipient. Conflict often arose in the ways individuals might decode things in unintended, counter-intuitive ways to those of the encoders (Hall, 2007).

By decoding cultural messages and artifacts in unintended ways, subcultural practitioners engaged in counter hegemonic⁵ activity. This action was often incredibly symbolic in nature, taking cultural items and reappropriating them to fit other codes or to be used as an extreme mirror to the dominant culture (Hebdige, 1979). Through this use of cultural artifacts, working class youth were able to challenge their environment and class station, for example the use of garbage bags and safety pins by punks for articles of clothing (Laing, 1985: pp. 91, 96). In this context, subcultures came to be seen as a way:

...to express and resolve, albeit 'magically', the contradictions which remain hidden and unresolved in the parent culture, to retrieve some of the socially cohesive elements destroyed in parent culture. (Cohen, 1972, p. 23 cited Bennett 1999: p. 601)

Subculture was a means of reclaiming elements from a parent/dominant culture that had broken down, wherein individuals resisted through the consumption of style.

In the book **Subculture: The Meaning of Style** (1979), Dick Hebdige argued that subcultures emanating from the working classes presented a more authentic view of

⁴ The post-structural understanding of language differs from that of symbolic interaction mostly in relation to shared meanings. For symbolic interactionism and other related theoretical disciplines, shared or assumed meaning is integral to creating an internalized other whereas for post-structuralists, shared meaning is something of a myth. Meaning can change depending on who is interpreting, the context, etc., and is therefore not strictly fixed (Potter, 2000: pp. 151-183).

⁵ Gramscian hegemony is the notion that the ruling classes, having cultural control over lower classes, are able to make the ideas of the ruling class acceptable to the lower classes without threat of coercion (Wilson, 2006: p. 23).

subculture, as they were more invested in using style in acts of resistance. Hebdige primarily looked at the British subcultures of punk and mod to demonstrate how their use of style was able to create lifestyles using repurposed mainstream artifacts that were seen as transgressive and counter-hegemonic (p. 91). For Mods, this was demonstrated through antagonisms with rockers; while for punks the struggle they were engaged with was directed at models of middle class propriety and civility.

In C.C.C.S. studies of subcultures, issues of class and race played a crucial factor in determining subcultural authenticity. Those subcultures made up of the white working classes (i.e. punk, mod), or of people of colour (i.e. reggae) were viewed as more “authentic” in part because they were seen as spectacular, transgressive and counter-hegemonic. Musical cultures associated with the white middle class like glam and disco were seen as commercially driven and therefore inauthentic subcultures (p. 98).

Criticisms of the C.C.C.S. Approach and Subculture Alternatives

Over time the C.C.C.S. research definition of subcultures as spectacular and transgressive became seen as problematic. In part this was because the appropriation of mass manufactured items as a demonstration of class resistance still operated within capitalism (Bennett, 1999: p. 602), but more to the point it was a problem because the C.C.C.S. definition focussed on male, young and transgressive subcultures at the expense of other genders, ages and the mundane.

In relation to gender, the C.C.C.S., with the exception of McRobbie and Garber’s work on bedroom cultures (1975/1997) tended to focus on male dominated subcultures at the expense of female subcultures. Studies of female subcultures often focussed on

teenybopper issues such as tween and teen girl bedroom culture (Lincoln, 2004) or the use of music television by teens (Coates, 2003: pp. 68-77)⁶.

Another area ignored by the Birmingham school's studies of subcultures relates to subcultures of older participants. In a 2002 study, Joe Kotarba found that many individuals retained their fandom and participation into adulthood through the attending of shows, purchasing of music and engagement in fan communities. That is to say, music related subcultures are not strictly for the young.

Finally there was the issue of the mundane in subcultures. In **Unspectacular Subculture? Transgression and Mundanity in the Global Extreme Metal Scene**, Keith Kahn-Harris examined the normal or ordinary aspects of Extreme Metal (2004: pp. 107-118). While this type of metal was commonly associated with acts of murder, Aryan racism, and other forms of extreme behaviour (Moyhnihan and Söderlind: 2003), there existed a tremendous amount of behaviour that was part of the "everyday experience of the scene" (Kahn-Harris: p. 112). These behaviours included collecting, music listening and interacting with other members of the subculture. Kahn-Harris argued that mundane or unspectacular practices of the subculture were the most used.

Having addressed deficiencies in the C.C.C.S. approach to subcultures, contemporary subculture research has addressed issues of gender, age and the mundane. In addition, much work has been done in relation to spectacular and unspectacular musical subcultures like heavy metal (Weinstein, 1991), country music (Peterson, 1997),

⁶ For studies of teen girls a central issue was the culture created around the most common, autonomous female space: the bedroom. In the bedroom, teen girls could determine who enters, the decoration of walls, which music should be played (Lincoln, 2004: pp. 101-102) and/or which television program should be watched.

punk (Moore & Roberts, 2009), rave (Wilson, 2006), and dance clubs (Thornton, 1996). However, some saw the problems with the C.C.C.S. approach as requiring the discarding of the concept in favour of scenes and neo-tribes.

Scenes and Neo-Tribes

Will Straw viewed the idea of scene as more useful in the understanding of unique group activities within spaces (1991/1997: p. 494). The concept originally drew from slang usage like “making the scene” or “that’s not my scene” (Irwin, 1977: p. 67). Early on Irwin viewed a scene as an “explicit or shared category” with variable levels of commitment (pp. 67-68). He divided them between activity scenes and lifestyle scenes.

Activity scenes were those that centred on certain activities (i.e. bar, dance or sport scenes), which allowed for collective involvement and participation without needing to be totalizing (pp. 27-46). Lifestyle scenes were “24 hour scenes” (p. 56) that included “full life design, world view, and an identity for the individual” (p. 230). The level of involvement and commitment in these types of scenes were more totalizing, similar to subcultures. The difference between these scenes and subcultures was that scenes were available to anyone, and therefore were not viewed as being as special or exclusive as subcultures (pp. 229-230). Instead scenes allowed for a more fluid recruitment, membership, and fewer questions relating to authentic identity and behaviour.

Scenes also provided a way of looking at social spaces. Scenes existed as spaces for individuals with similar interests or engaged in similar activities to connect to each other (Glass, 2012: p.698). These spaces could be physical (local, translocal or global), or created online (virtual) (Williams, 2007: pp. 582-583).

This context displays the development of the concept of the musical scene. Musical scenes could be understood as the “relationship between musical practices unfolding within a given geographical space...” where individuals “develop identities, beliefs, styles, practices and artifacts” (Glass, 2012: p. 697). Musical scenes usually existed as restricted production spaces where individuals create for each other rather than for popular appeal. In this sense, scenes are areas in which there is both a stabilizing of communities (through the continuity of geography), as well as the discontinuity of competing styles. An example of this type of scene could be so-called Indie music. Indie music ostensibly stood for Independent music, meaning music not produced by major record labels. Indie was often seen as a composite of marginal local scenes, stressing a D.I.Y. ethic free of commercial desires over stylistic difference (Azerrad, 2001). Within indie there existed an ideology that was “stratified”, “hierarchical” and beholden to certain rockist traditions, particularly notions of authenticity (Bannister, 2006, p.78). Indie musicians and labels held themselves up as the antithesis to corporate, major label music. Theirs was not a commodity, but a lifestyle. Within the indie music scene bands were often known for sharing bills, labels, and gear, while being supportive in a way that was seen as resistant to the dominant culture (Bannister, 2006).

For others, such as Andy Bennett, the problems of the concept of subculture were corrected by the concept of Neo-Tribe. Unlike subcultures, the neo-tribe:

... it refers more to a certain ambiance, a state of mind, and is preferably to be expressed through lifestyles that favour appearance and form (Bennett, 2001: p. 128).

Seen as the result of “modern hyper capitalism”, the neo-tribe allowed for a fluidity of identity and group attachment that enabled constant change (p. 606). Rather than focussing on the use of spaces over longer periods of time (a la scenes), the neo-tribe represented “temporal gatherings characterised by fluid boundaries and floating memberships” (Bennett, 1999: p. 600). Neo-tribes were groups composed of stylistically like-minded individuals that existed only for a particular, temporary moment.

What then is the major difference between scenes, neo-tribes, and subcultures? Scenes existed within spaces as communities with unique identities and practices. While seemingly not as concerned with questions of boundaries, they still developed their own codes of behaviour, and practiced a separation between insiders and outsiders. Neo-tribes on the other hand represented something that stressed a temporary and fluid nature. The neo-tribe could easily change, being beholden to no real fixed identities or practices. In comparison, subcultures represented communities with shared identities and practices whose goal was often the protection of said identities and practices.

A Better Understanding of Subcultures

Having looked at the various approaches to subcultures and the alternate approaches of scenes and neo-tribes, I come full circle to the issue of subcultures and what characteristics are needed for a subculture. Subcultures focus on inactive recruitment, clear distinctions between insiders and outsiders, sets of unique shared practices used within shared spaces and an emphasis on authenticity and legitimacy.

Subcultures place an emphasis on insider/outsider distinctions, which often makes recruitment difficult. It is important that those who wish to join demonstrate that they

have access to some knowledge of the subculture, of some kind of subcultural capital, lest they be seen as fakes or “poseurs”. Subcultural capital (Thornton, 1996) can be defined as an “accumulated subcultural knowledge signalling status in the form ‘hipness’” (Bader & Scharenberg, 2010: p.79), often embodied in style (i.e. Haircuts, record collections) or through knowledge or taste (Bennett, 1999: p. 612). Subcultural capital is a means of understanding how subcultures are organized, which individual characteristics are seen as positive, which are not, and determining who is seen as an insider and who is seen as an outsider or poseur (Thornton, 1996: p. 105).

For subcultures the separation of insider from outsider is of supreme importance. However, it can often be difficult to determine who is an authentic insider and who is inauthentic (Muggleton, 2000: p. 48). In these situations style is less important than perceived authenticity in relation to one’s “true self” (p. 78). Subculture members will often lay claim to insider status by connecting the subcultural identity to their pre-insider self; that is they claim to have identified with characteristics of the subculture before joining. These claims enable members to be seen as moving beyond fashion, to internalize the subculture.

The shared practices of subcultural participants are also central to subcultures. One type of shared practice common to subcultures is the appropriation and use of cultural items in unintended ways. This reuse of culture, referred to as bricolage, enabled punks to reuse and re-encode cultural symbols to engage in irony and parody (Hebdige, 1979). For example punks not only took items and reappropriated them as fashion but shifted the meaning of rock music itself, taking it from a safe entertainment form and

(re)turning it to a rebellious form. Similarly, sci-fi fans will reappropriate and use what is seen as “junk” culture, and imbue it with shared meanings that require subcultural participants to look at the objects differently. This difference helps to separate insiders from outsiders.

Similarly, the use of common spaces provides subcultures with areas to interact or engage in subcultural practices. While these spaces have traditionally been local , physical spaces (i.e. clubs, conventions, community centres, churches, bars, homes, etc.), in recent years these spaces have been created within the virtual world of the internet in the form of chat groups, fan-created websites, Facebook groups and more recently boards like Pinterest, 4chan and Reddit. These spaces have emerged as ways for individuals to discuss common activities and interests. Subcultural spaces serve as areas used to police and maintain subcultural boundaries, in order to maintain the independence of the subculture. With the increase of virtual subcultural spaces, there has been an increase in boundary policing. It has become relatively common in these kinds of communities for groups to have different definitions of what it means to be a subcultural insider (i.e. gamergate and the questioning of the authenticity of female video gamers).

This boundary policing relates to questions of who is and who should be seen as authentic within the subculture. These issues often relate to the preservation of authentic collective and individual identity. This authenticity is determined both internally and externally. Internal authenticity connects to a sense of self and whether individuals, when

self-reflective, view themselves as being authentic or true to themselves⁷ (Vannini and Franzese, 2008). This self-legitimation is often done by comparing oneself to others. This often requires a measurement and comparison of subcultural capital, wherein one engages in a continuous evaluation of oneself in relation to others. This evaluation in turn relates to external authenticity or how practitioners individually and subcultures collectively are viewed by other insiders and outsiders. Authenticity of subcultures can be evaluated by insiders who may come to evaluate the subculture as inauthentic or illegitimate. As well subcultures and their participants can be evaluated by outsiders as they were by researchers within the Birmingham school.

However, in the post-modern world, concepts like authentic can often become problematized. For many studying subcultures the concept of “inauthentic authenticity” can come into play, wherein authenticity claims are expected to be made by subcultural practitioners, regardless of how they feel about themselves (Muggleton, 2000: p. 102). However, what remains important is the claim to authenticity rather than the relation of authenticity to some internalized “true self”.

Subcultural questions relating to recruitment, separating insider from outsiders, identity, uses of culture and space, and use of authenticity as a means of legitimation help to demonstrate why the concept of subculture, despite criticisms, remains somewhat useful. In what follows I will look at some of the literature on social movements with the aim of comparing the two.

⁷ The notion of self reflective assessing oneself relates to Cooley's looking glass self, wherein individuals use an imagined, internalized other to create a sense of self that is influenced in part by how they want others to see them (Cooley, 2006: p. 184).

Social Movements

Early studies of social movements often drew from the works of Karl Marx and placed emphasis on the collective power of the “mob”⁸ as an agent of class conflict. For structural social movement theorists (particularly those engaged in political and structural sociology) the major problem was the emergence of social movements (Melucci, 1989: p. 3). As Marxists, they explained social movements as the outcome of ongoing class conflict, particularly those related to collective economic grievances. In that sense, social movements were seen as composed of class conscious individuals, attempting to create a “class for itself” (Morrison, 1995: p. 311). Those interested in structural oriented social movements focussed on issues related to politics, resource mobilization, and organizational structures through the use of political process theory and resource mobilization theory.

Political process theory attempted to deal with why social movements arose. For political process theory, the aim of movements was engaging in political action, particularly with the state (Polletta & Dianni, 2006: p. 16). Political process theory stressed movement consciousness (recognizing themselves as a group with limited power), organizational structures (in relation to movements and allies as well as those

⁸ Gustav Le Bon's **The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind** (2002) set the initial parameters for the study of mass social action. By the end of the 19th century, the European masses had emerged as a major political force. Le Bon was seemingly reacting to the legacy of the so-called “Age of Revolution” in which crowds toppled the established traditional orders, demanded food, universal suffrage, and other rights. It also saw the rise of non-aristocratic dictators, like Napoleon, whose effect on the world stage was seen as upsetting to the natural order (Sutherland, 1985).

Le Bon saw crowds (the manifestation of mass collective social action) as akin to a behemoth with the collective intelligence of those involved being fractions of that held by the solitary individuals comprising the crowd (Le Bon, 2002: 8). With diminished reasoning capabilities, crowds were liable to act upon their basest impulses, sometimes engaging in criminal action or giving rise to a crowd appeasing demagogue a la. Napoleon Bonaparte (p. 77).

they are acting against) and political opportunity (an opportunity to act) (Carroll, 1997). As a means of studying social movements, political process theory also called attention to counter-movements and repression in the form of constraints, blockages and impediments, and reframed social movements as integral parts of the democratic political process (Polletta & Dianni: p. 17). The model provided a means of understanding how social movements affect political change, particularly on an economic level. Over time, this became complicated as the political expanded from the economic to identity politics (Melucci, 1989: p. 3).

Resource mobilization theory looked at “how” social movements were created and engaged in activity. Here the focus shifted to the organizational aspects of movements, wherein social movements manifested as extensions of social action (Della Porta & Dianni, 2006: p. 14).

The focus of resource mobilization was “issue framing”, which was the means of determining how issues were made visible and important. Through the social construction of grievances and demands, movements engaged with the larger society and in particular with those in power (i.e. institutions or counter-movements) being struggled against. In understanding the framing of issues, resource mobilization theorists focussed specifically on the prepared aspects of movement activity, such as the behind the scenes work that went into organizing meetings, marches, etc. (p. 15).

In looking at the behind the scenes work of social movements, resource mobilization theorists also looked at social movement organizations. Social movement organizations were key in the mobilization of members and other resources and in

directing movements towards goals (Earl, 2015. p. 36). These organizations were needed to maintain social movements in times of inactivity, creating a means of institutionalizing movement and creating ongoing strategies and roles for leadership (pp. 37-38). These organizations also aided in the creation of events that raised movement profile and supported the continuation of ongoing movement activity (p. 38). Modern protests would be near impossible without the aid of professional organizers, which allow for greater coordination, division of labour, decision making structure and procedures for implementing accountable decisions.

Social movements can be understood as collective agents linked by “dense informal networks” engaged in “conflictual relations with clearly identified appointments” (Polletta & Diani, 2006: p. 20). This conflict was engaged via advocacy and activism in the promotion of a cause or goal that attempted to bring about larger change. In doing so, social movements provided a “distinct collective identity” with emotional and normative character and resonance (p. 20). While having some similarities to subcultures, social movements differed more fundamentally in relation to goals: for movements goals were outward looking, trying to spread a message and change the larger society, whereas subcultures were inward looking, attempting to protect the unique group identity and practices.

Traditionally, structural-change oriented social movements of political process and resource mobilization focussed on specific legislative causes or issues (e.g. Labour rights, civil rights, etc.). In contrast new social movements, which emerged out of increased globalization and post-modernism, aimed at bringing widespread change to

meanings in culture and civil society by presenting different ways of life (Polletta, 1997: pp. 442-443).

New Social Movement Theory

A key figure in the conceptualization of new social movements was Italian social theorist Alberto Melucci. Melucci saw social movements as...

A form of collective action (a) based on social solidarity, (b) carrying on a conflict, (c) breaking the limits of the system in which action occurs. (Melucci, 1985: p. 795)

Along these lines, new social movements symbolically challenged the dominant culture by providing alternative lifestyles that were seen as ends in themselves, engaged in invisible networks and treated the local as global (Melucci: pp. 5-6). Within this context, new social movements sought recognition for new identities and lifestyles (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: p. 286), and centred around struggles over “identity politics” in which movement actions reflected beliefs and identities (2001: pp. 283-284) and were not necessarily focussed on institutional change. The challenges that new social movements made were often symbolic in nature.

It was the importance of the symbolic that led to the new social movement focus on identity and culture. The symbolic challenges of new social movements were challenges to the status quo, challenges that were aimed at the world as it was usually understood and accepted to be. For new social movements the world was not good enough, in terms of material, political resources and culture. As such, many new social movements were concerned with affirming stigmatized identities and bringing forth marginalized values and understandings. Within new social movements, collective

identities represented “an individual’s cognitive, moral and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice or institution” (Polletta & Jasper: p. 285). The collective identity, or ties to others in the movement related to perceptions of shared status expressed through names, narrative, symbols, verbal styles, rituals or clothing (p. 298). Here identities were seen as outcomes which changed individual member biographies and were often deployed strategically (p. 296).

In looking at the characteristics of new social movements I will look at movement recruitment and mobilization, differentiation between insider and outsiders, structure and leadership, strategies and goals and use of space and material cultures.

Recruitment within new social movements relies on the identification of participants with the identity attached to the movement. Once connected with others practicing the same identity, there becomes an incentive to mobilize and to protect the attached lifestyle.

Within new social movements, membership is based on interaction in various, submerged networks, where collective identity is an outcome of the negotiations, conflicts and decisions between actors within (insiders) and outside (outsiders) movements (Melucci, 1996: p. 4). For new social movements, there is often little difference between insiders and outsiders: strictly speaking insiders are those who identify with the stigmatized identity while outsiders could be anyone from those allied with the new movement to those involved in counter-movements. However, to be labelled an insider there is stress placed on authenticity via engagement in the movement: authentic movement members are active movement members.

For new social movements, social movement organizations are less centrally structured, generally existing to co-ordinate various identity-oriented movements towards common goals (Earl, 2015: 42). Unlike older social movements which tend to organize vertically along hierarchical lines, new social movements are often composed of small groups that relate to each other horizontally, as relative equals. New social movement groups are "...submerged in everyday life, which require a personal involvement in experiencing and practicing cultural innovation" (Melucci: p. 800). These groups:

...emerge only on specific issues, as for instance the big mobilization for peace, for abortion, against nuclear policy, etc. The submerged network, although composed of separate small groups, is a system of exchange (persons and information circulate among the network; some agencies, such as local free radios, bookshops, magazines provide a certain unity). (p. 800)

For these groups, the movement and actions engaged within it are often goals in themselves (p. 801). These attempts are then instigated through invisible networks which are not constantly active. Instead, the groups often surface at various points or major events and manifest themselves at those times. This can be seen through the myriad movements that come together to protest against G8, IMF and WTO summits. For these groups, attempting challenges on symbolic grounds and making the change sought part of their practice; the informal formation of movements is another part of the challenge.

Central to new social movement strategy is the notion of conflict, as activists struggle "for symbolic and cultural stakes, for a different meaning and orientation of social action." (1985: p. 797), and, in doing so, new social movements aim to change people's lives while actively pursuing greater changes (p. 797). New Social movement struggles engage with:

who decides on codes, who establishes rules of normality, what is the space for difference, how can one be recognized not for being included but for being accepted as different, not for increasing the amount of exchanges but for affirming another kind of exchange. (Melucci: p. 810)

The struggle for normative change gives New Social Movements a chance to redefine reality wherein, through their actions, other understandings and worlds are aimed for and seen as possible (p. 812). Conflicts are undertaken with opponents or counter-movements who prevent the resolution of the problem or problems that movements aim to address (p. 794).

For new social movements, space is an area for members to collectively challenge and readdress the world and themselves. From the protest site to the movement office, the use of space by new social movements is strategic (Polletta, 2006). New social movements use space within the public sphere in which debates can be undertaken. Similarly, new social movements use material cultures as a means of mobilizing insiders and allies and as a means of challenging established societal behaviours and practices.

Ultimately for new social movements the focus is on promoting and normalizing supposedly deviant identities rather than simply changing legislation or organizational practices. The change is attempted through the potential normalization of certain behaviours and fashions. There arises a parallel between subcultures and new social movements, though the ultimate goals remain different: for subcultures the goal is protection and maintaining of identity, for new social movements the goal is to promote and expand those at-risk identities.

Comparing Subcultures and New Social Movements

In examining literature on subcultures and social movements, it is important to look at the similarities and differences between the two. In differentiating between subcultures and social movements some saw the main difference lying at the organizational level (Johnston & Snow, 1998: p. 478), with social movements having clearer organizations than subcultures. Others have argued that movements are composed of subcultures (Piotrowski, 2013)⁹; while for some there are more similarities than differences between the two types of social activity. Instead these have argued that subcultures and new social movements can overlap (Moore, 2007).

Because of their engagement with identity politics, new social movements are seen as closer in character to subcultures than they are to more traditional social movements which are more oriented towards material interests. For new social movements, politicization involves a shift from the transgression of subcultures towards displays of protests. These protests, which aim to air grievances and press demands, are targeted in a way that transgression and evasion aren't.

In fact, subcultures and social movements often blended into each other, as was the case with punk and LGBTQT activism. Punk was an oft cited example of a subculture whose activities overlap with those of social movements. Punk actions that related to social movements included Rock Against Racism, straight edge and Riot Grrl (Moore & Roberts, 2009: pp. 278-284). When engaged in social movement activities, punks often

⁹ On another level, Piotrowski argues that engaging in social movements in communist Poland was so difficult that those engaged in such activities ended up creating subcultures (2013). This continued following the collapse of European communism when a distrust of organizations caused those movements to remain a small culture outside of the mainstream.

engaged in social movement approaches to framing and mobilization (p. 289). As well, punk aimed to challenge the dominant logic of society through lifestyles (Johnston & Lio: p. 464). Using fashion as a mark of identity, punk challenged dominant narratives through style and member interaction.

For the L.G.B.Q.T. communities, identities, and practices initially resembled more protective subcultures. Over time, these communities became more politically active and took on the form of social movements. This shift from subculture to movement orientation meant becoming more openly contentious in challenging the political and legal establishment, and the larger society for recognition of their difference and their rights to equality. In doing so, the community relinquished some characteristics of subcultures such as an internally focussed use of space, practices and identity.

Having examined some of the literature on subcultures and social movements, it is now important to compare the similarities and differences between the two. In understanding these differences, the following areas are of importance: recruitment and mobilization, distinctions between insiders and outsiders, structure and leadership, strategies and goals, use of space and material cultures.

Recruitment and Mobilization

Within subcultures, recruitment and mobilization are undertaken in a manner that is relatively inactive. Subcultures are less interested in bringing in more people as new recruits may undermine their uniqueness. Instead the stress is placed on group purity, requiring a firm distinction between insiders and outsiders. Mobilization for subcultures is merely the engagement of subcultural activity.

For new social movements recruitment is generally undertaken via existing social networks (Somma, 2009: p. 291), often composed of individuals who are particularly focussed on identities and are interested in collective empowerment (Hirsch, 1990: pp. 244-245). That is, by bringing in people with common beliefs and “similar life-style preferences”, a larger movement can be created which hopefully will bring about larger change (Staggenborg, 1987: p. 789). Recruitment is then a question of aligning recruit identity with the movement they aim to affiliate themselves with (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: p. 291)¹⁰. For new social movements recruitment requires bringing visibility and, with that, a clear statement of movement identity.

New social movements rely on relatively autonomous social networks that come together only at certain points of time, for certain events as a matter of strategy or as a means of mobilization. These networks are unique in that:

- (a) they allow multiple memberships
- (b) militantism is only part-time and short-term
- (c) personal involvement and affective solidarity is required as a condition for participation in many of the groups. (Melucci, 1985: p. 800)

For new social movements, requirements for membership and participation are less stringent than those of subcultures. The mobilization of social networks around highly publicized events serves multiple functions: generating publicity, recruiting others to the cause, communicating the message/ethos of the group, identity work, challenging adversaries, re-affirming member solidarity and togetherness, and legitimating group actions and goals.

¹⁰ Conversely, people often leave movements when their individual identity no longer aligns with that of the group. (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: p. 292)

Separating Insiders From Outsiders

Insiders are those who are accepted as members within a subculture, often through the accumulation and use of subcultural capital, embodied through common stocks of knowledge, attitudes and uses of style (Thornton, 1996). Insider/outsider distinctions are central to subcultures, as strong differentiation between the two allows for a firmer sense of insider identity. Subcultures define themselves both by what members have in common with each other, but also by what separates them from others (outsiders). Coupled with distinctiveness are the often extreme emotional responses of surrounding subcultural activities including insider alienation, conflict and the sense of threat that can crop up for both insiders and outsiders.

Insider/outsider distinctions in new social movements are more difficult to discern as movements attempt to bring people in, in order to mobilize around a common cause. As well, there is the sense that, via protest and symbolic challenge, the movement is excluding or “othering” outsiders by using identity politics (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: p. 291). Individual outsiders can often be recruited and become insiders fairly easily, though for those involved in counter-protest the crossing of this line is difficult. Of course, there are different levels of acceptance within movements depending on one’s commitment and activity (Polletta, 2006).

Structure and Leadership

Subcultures, because of their focus on commitment to group identities, often have more rigid but less explicit structures, with leadership roles taken on by those seen as most committed to the subculture, or those who display the most subcultural capital

(Thornton, 1996). Conversely, subcultures also often have little in the way of explicit or formal structures, with organizing often occurring informally within the group.

In general, social movement structures are institutional. These institutions, which often operate with each other in relation to institutional hierarchies, provide continuity for movements, allowing for the creation and maintenance of permanent leadership, ease of organizing, raising movement profile and supporting the collective identity (Earl, 2015: pp. 37-38). They often underlay or provide frameworks for social movement mobilization via determining which actions should be taken. Social movement organizations often focus on the mobilization of resources, of matching resources to grievances and working strategically (p. 36).

Because they often focus on long term struggles, new social movements tend to favour stable social networks over organizations (p. 48). Therefore, new social movement structures are often decentralized in nature, operating as a series of horizontally interacting, non-permanent hubs that are based on networking with other groups in a way that lacks “organizational continuity” (pp. 41-44). New social movements are often organized through virtual networks.

Strategies and Goal

Subcultures and new social movements are both interested in protecting identities. Both are engaged in conflict with the outside world with regards to unique identities.

For subcultures, strategies and goals aim towards the maintenance and preservation of the unique, subcultural identity. In this context much social action is directed “towards the group” (Piotrowski, 2013), in particular towards maintaining the

strong bonds found within the subculture. The ultimate interest of subcultures therefore lies in defence, in maintaining their uniqueness from what they perceive as a hostile world (Hebdige, 1979). Because of concerns over subcultural survival, there often exists an ideological orthodoxy that is seen to strengthen this identity and retain the subcultural attachment of individuals (Piotrowski, 2013).

For politically oriented social movements, action tends to focus on policy and/or political change. Because of this focus, these movements are more likely to compromise or moderate claims. As such, there exists a stronger separation of movement and individual identity (Piotrowski, 2013).

For new social movements, strategies and goals differ significantly from more traditional social movements. As the aims of the movement are more rooted in social behaviour than in institutional practice, their goals tend to mirror their practice and the practice becomes the goal itself (Melucci, 1985: p. 812). This is because new social movements challenge society on a symbolic level. Here the main goal is to change what identities are seen accepted within the society.

In comparison to the defensiveness of subcultures, new social movements take a more proactive approach to identity. New social movements view the outside world as not altogether hostile to their identity, and believe attitudes towards the identity politics of the movement can be changed (Melucci, 1996: p. 28). These new movements question the definitions of codes and understandings of reality by offering an alternative via individual and collective social action (Melucci, 1985: p. 812). The goals and strategies lie in offering an alternative, dissenting voice in a pluralistic society. They attempt to

address issues of power by experimenting and redefining power relationships (Polletta, 2006).

New social movements also stress the importance of a shared collective identity as a means of creating solidarity (Polletta, 2002: p. 8). Solidarity is created through a collective identity that requires a strong connection to individual identity to be maintained over the long term. Instead of attempting to defend themselves, new social movements attempt to recreate themselves and expand their acceptance.

Use of Space and Material Cultures

Within subcultures, subcultural space is a treasured commodity. The protection of subcultural space is stressed in order to ensure the maintenance of subcultural independence. Within subcultural spaces, subcultural practices are collectively embodied by the group (Williams, 2007: p. 582). For subcultures, participants are most authentic (that is most true to themselves) within subcultural spaces (p. 583). There exists a danger of the space being co-opted by outsiders, which is why subcultural spaces, both physical and virtual, are heavily monitored and protected. The use of material cultures within subcultures is usually seen as a means of appropriating material, and creating or solidifying the unique subcultural identity through style. This appropriation via bricolage is often seen as transgressive in nature.

For social movements, space represents areas where they can challenge and readdress the world. The use of space is politically strategic, from organizational spaces to protest areas (Polletta, 2006). Protest areas enable movement participants to interact with the mainstream world, and publically engage in movement activity. Spaces of social

movement activity are becoming increasingly virtual. The use of material cultures in social movements is fundamentally oriented towards larger, external goals. Examples include engagement in sloganeering, or recruitment and increasingly directed at communication with potential members or allies.

Conclusion

In looking at the differences and similarities between subcultures and new social movements, I hoped to gain a better understanding of both, in order to apply both models to Christian rock in relation to identities (insider/outsider distinctions), practices (recruitment, mobilization, structure and leadership, use of space and material cultures) and the overlap between the two (strategies and goals). In doing so, I provided brief definitions for both subcultures and new social movements that will be used throughout the rest of this work.

Subcultures are sites of social actions where recruitment is inactive and there is little in the way of formal organization structures. Here, differentiation between insiders and outsiders is clear, where a sense of belonging is paramount and where ideological orthodoxy prevents compromise in the separation of insiders from outsiders. In this context goals are directed inwards, towards the group who attempt to create their own spaces and cultures in which to act. For subcultures the major challenge is to protect and maintain their uniqueness in relation to threats from inside and outside the subculture.

In looking at social movements I examined old vs. new social movements. Old social movements refer to both the practice and identity of movements whose focus was politically and institutionally oriented. That is, old social movements focussed on

changing legislation or institution. New social movements engage in work promoting the normalization of a particular identity and the practices that go with that identity. While sometimes aimed at the level of political and institutional change, the main goals are oriented towards the preservation and normalization of a marginalized identity. New social movements engage actively in recruitment, often utilizing organizations and networks as help to mobilize individuals drawn from broad coalitions of various actors (Piotrowski, 2013). Within new social movements collective identities are less all encompassing, distinctions between insiders and outsiders are less rigid. Here there is a greater possibility for compromise in order to reach others, get into public spaces, and ultimately bring about the intended change: to normalize their identity.

In looking at Christian rock, I will focus on the differences between subcultures and identity-driven new social movements as, I believe, comparing the two provides a means of understanding the fractured, multifaceted field of Christian rock. The differences and similarities between subcultures and new social movements provide a means of looking at issues within Christian rock related to practices, field, habitus, capital, identity, and legitimacy/authenticity.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Perspectives

Introduction

In the previous chapter I examined the similarities and differences between subcultures and new social movements. In so doing I drew comparisons with regards to identities (insider/outsider distinctions), practices (recruitment, mobilization, structure and leadership, use of space and material cultures) and the overlap between the two (strategies and goals).

In looking at practices and identities, it is important to understand how the two relate to each other. Identities, both collective and individual, are formed and reproduced through social practices. Social practices, in the strategic, symbolic and expressive sense, embody the recognition, negotiation, and performance or deployment of identities. These practices can be found spatially situated in both virtual and real or material spaces. In subcultural spaces non-conformity and transgression are actualized or performed in the same way that these spaces allow for resistance, challenge and protest with social movements.

Both subcultures and social movements often have an uneasy or contentious relationship with their social environment. For subcultures, this takes the form of non-conformity, transgression or resistance, while new social movements will advocate, protest or antagonize. Legitimacy becomes a central problem that both have to secure with respect to identities and practices. Legitimacy is striven for both externally in terms of the above cited actions, and internally as being essential for collective self-reproduction, and for maintaining social cohesiveness and continuity.

Subcultures and new social movements diverge with respect to identities and practices. For subcultures, identities and practices pertain primarily to self-preservation and protection, particularly with regards to collective boundaries, social closure, and exclusion of outsiders who threaten to dilute the subculture's distinctiveness.

For social movements, identities and practices concern the reproduction and pursuit of the cause via the articulation of grievances and demands. Movements are outward oriented and socially inclusive inasmuch as they are about achieving change (or preventing change on the part of others). For movements, in other words, identities and practices are ultimately politicized. This politicization is divided into two dimensions: advocacy and activism. Advocacy denotes the espousal and promotion of a particular point of view, usually in the context of pursuing (or resisting) social change to address some problem in the world. Activism always involves advocacy but is distinct in that it also entails challenging and confronting an adversary, some agency (typically government or other powerful institutions) that is singled out for blame at having caused or failed to prevent and/or resolve the problem that is the target of the cause. While Christian rock exhibits signs of advocacy, it may not be activist in this sense.

Having looked at the similarities and differences between subcultures and new social movements in the previous chapter, I will now look at other theoretical issues related to fields, habitus, legitimation, collective and individual identity within subcultures and new social movements, issues of authenticity related to popular music, and conclude with a look at the literature on Christian rock.

Bourdieu, Field & Habitus

In looking at Christian rock practices and identity I will be using some of the concepts of Bourdieu, such as field, habitus and legitimation. The concepts of field and habitus will allow me to look at Christian rock practices, how they are objectified and constrained.

For Bourdieu, fields, such as religion, culture industries and journalism represented a “separate social universe having its own laws of functioning independent of those of politics and the economy (Bourdieu, 1996: p. 162). In this context fields presented:

...a network of social relationships that is organized around a particular practice and is relatively autonomous from the social structure at large. (Moore, 2007: p. 440)

Within fields can exist subfields; for example in music fields or genres that contain smaller fields or subgenres. Similarly, fields could overlap with one another, forming hybrid fields. Here boundaries, content and identity of fields could be “flexible, changeable and transient” (Graham Knight, personal communication, October 7, 2017).

Fields operated not just as separate social universe, but as sites of competition:

A field is something like a game in which agents who occupy different positions in a social hierarchy compete to augment or defend their capital by following rules and strategies that have been worked out over the history of the particular field. The field is a source of constant struggle and conflict, and as a result, its hierarchical positions, tactics, and stakes have developed internally, as a consequence of its idiosyncratic history. (Moore, 2007: p. 440)

Bourdieu saw fields of cultural production as operating as a kind of reversed version of the economic field. Here economic capital did not give one a better placement in the field. Instead social capital was used, its importance found in how it was accumulated,

invested, and spent in fields of cultural production (Bourdieu, 1993: pp. 29-73). The value of social capital was based on the value that was agreed upon by those within the field and, as such, its value was often open to negotiation (Thornton, 1996).

Within fields there were struggles for capital using the fields' unique logics of practice or habitus. Deriving from Bourdieu, habitus could be understood as:

...a set of dispositions which generates practices and perceptions...the result of a long process of inculcation...which becomes a 'second sense' or a second nature. (Johnson, 1993: p. 5)

For Bourdieu, habitus was a way of addressing debates around agency and structure and their greater influence on action. With habitus, Bourdieu posited that past dispositions and practices constrained present and future practices, that agency was constrained by structures and that those structures were in turn formed by the actors within the field. Essentially, habitus created a set of established practices that dictated what was acceptable and unacceptable within a field (Bourdieu, 1993: pp. 64-72). Within the parameters of habitus, agents attempted to position themselves in relation to the social capital they held. Here all social actions implied a "position taking" in relation to existing works and positions in the field" (Chan, 2013: p. 545). One of the ways of position taking was via claims to legitimacy within fields.

Practices of Legitimacy Within Fields

Struggles within fields often take the form of internal criticism and challenge to others within the field to determine who is legitimate. Legitimacy within the field is a form of social capital that can aid one's positioning, while accepting or rejecting the legitimacy of others helping determine their positioning.

In general, legitimation can be understood on two levels: as a means and as a goal. As a means, legitimation serves the function of establishing the field in question. As a goal, legitimation provides a common focus for the field.

Bourdieu argued for 3 principles of legitimacy (1993). The first principle, the “specific principle of legitimacy”, refers to those who “produce for other producers” or engaged in art for other artists (p. 50). The second principle, the principle of legitimacy related to “bourgeois’ taste and to the consecration bestowed by the dominant class and by private tribunals”, referring to those in a field with positions of power (i.e. critics, academics, and salons) who have the authority to see if a work is ethically and aesthetically acceptable or unacceptable within the field (p. 51). The third principle, “the principle of legitimacy which its advocates call ‘popular’”, refers to legitimacy via the choice of product by a mass audience. These principles of legitimacy relate to the goals that exist within each field’s habitus.

The issue of legitimacy and goals within fields also relates to types of production relating to scale. Bourdieu’s notion of restricted scale refers to those objects aimed at an elite. The first two principles of legitimacy (specific and appeals to the tastes of the powerful) could be seen as relating to products produced on a limited scale elite audiences. Bourdieu’s notion of large-scale production refers to cultural products intended for mass audiences, much like the final principle of legitimation argues for legitimizing on a mass scale (Bourdieu, 1993: p. 51).

Limited scale, relating to notions of “art for art’s sake” and the official “consecration” of art or artist could be seen as relating strongly to subcultural notions of

legitimacy, as struggles for legitimacy in subcultures comes more from within rather than from without. In part, this is related to subculture's antagonisms to the larger culture, and the struggle for survival that prided a certain type of identity that related to the subculture above all others. Similarly, restricted production that attempted to limit growth, appealed to a smaller audience (which was sometimes seen as more discerning), particularly related to the appeal to art for art's sake and legitimacies of taste, which were relevant to a subcultural approach.

The principle of mass taste relates to large-scale production intended for mass audiences. Those engaged in large-scale production attempted to expand their markets and appeal to as many people as possible. In general this could be seen as tying to a new social movement approach which attempted to spread its message and identity.

The principles of legitimacy of product and practices for fields influence the formation of identities within these fields. That is the goals and practices of a social group influence the negotiation of collective and individual identities of group members.

Authenticity & Negotiating Individual Identity

Having looked at fields, habitus and legitimation, I will now look at issues relating to individual identity. Individual identities are those identities that make people feel unique or different from others (Williams, 2007: p. 586). In the symbolic interactionist tradition, issues of identity relate to notions of the self, particularly in relation to the ongoing negotiation between the individual as subject (I) vs. the individual as object (me) (Owens, Robinson & Smith-Lovin, 1990: p. 478). Here, to see oneself as an object is to internalize the feedback given by others (peers or the general environment) (Stets 2006: p.

203). As such, identities can often be seen as structurally related to network ties (p. 206), or related to the internal dynamics of the self (pp. 204, 209). In looking at individual identities, it is important to look at how identity is negotiated using a lens of authenticity in relation to the self, peers and general environment and to concepts of core, master and post-modern identity.

Identity can be understood as a continuous life project involving an ongoing process of evaluation and re-evaluation (Rabinow, 1984). The never-ending negotiation of identity requires the on-going interaction of some outside stimulus, or with the “me” formed by exterior stimulus and the “I” reacting to the “me”, serving as a buffering agent to internalize the reactions of others, which then changes elements of the “I”. The adoption of identities often relates to a process involving identifying and cataloguing identities, identifying perceptions of the self, comparing these identities and adjusting accordingly (Stets: p. 209).

The role of peers in the negotiation of self relates to those seen as being close to the individual (including friends, shared group identities). In subcultures and social movements peers are usually fellow participants or insiders. The general environment relates to those one does not know, whose responses are not readily internalized (i.e. strangers, acquaintances). These are people who are considered to be outsiders. The feedback from peers and the general environment are filtered through the “me” in the negotiation and creation of identity.

The identities created are constantly evolving, using various selves to reflect various interests and roles in an attempt to create a self that reflects a perceived unity or

core self¹. In this context the remaking of identity becomes a means of dealing with the outside world through the attempted minimization of identity issues. At this level individuals often relate how they see themselves (actual) to how they wished to see themselves (ideal), and adjust accordingly (p. 204). Often this idealized version relates to a so-called core self.

The core self is often seen as the identity that is most permanent, most valued and defended. This core identity is often understood as how individuals see themselves, composed of the traits they value most and those weaknesses they find most difficult to lose. This is often thought of as the authentic self.

Authenticity, a term often associated with “being real” (or with notions of purity, naturalness and genuineness), can be understood as a form of legitimacy, one that is often found within discussions of identity (Vannini & Franzese, 2008) or popular music discourses (Barker & Taylor, 2007). At the level of identity, authenticity is tied to on-going evaluation of personal and group (p. 1634). In this context, authenticity is negotiated and mediated through interaction:

Like all symbols, authenticity is interpreted by individuals and mediated through interaction with significant others. (p. 189)

Authenticity is a way of evaluating an individual or group’s reliability and credibility (Williams, 2006: p. 177). Evaluations of authenticity can be understood as a continuum

¹ This conceptualization of identity raises an important and challenging question: if the unity of the self is a construction, the outcome of negotiation, then what is it that engages in the negotiation process? What part of the self negotiates the relationships between the other parts of the self? If these parts are all socially derived, then the Meadian “I” cannot do this; it must be an aspect of the “Me.”

One way to tackle this conundrum is to see the already existing unity of the self, the outcome of past negotiations, as a kind of reflexive or meta-Me, a provisional assemblage of identity parts that does the negotiating but in doing so also gets modified to some extent.

ranging from extremely authentic to extremely inauthentic (Dupont, 2014: p. 561). One way of looking at authenticity is in relation to notions of trustworthiness in both behaviour (“being” authentic) and motivation/action (“doing” authenticity) (Brekhuis, 2008: pp. 1065-1066).

Being authentic relates to notions of true or real self, tying to one’s identity, basis of self-concept and self-values (Vannini & Franzese, 2008: p. 1624). Here the authentic self can relate to a “consistent set of values across disparate contexts” (Brekhuis, 2008: p. 1068). In “being authentic”, these personal values can crossover from the private to public spheres, with an expectations that one should always adhere to them. An example of being authentic relates to the use of rock music by adults and how this connects them to their youth (Kotarba & Vannini, 2009). In this case, middle aged adults (attempted) a connection of the self via the music and values of their youth which they had seen as authentic, for and by the individual in question.

“Doing authenticity” relates to two issues: the tensions between individuals and society and the problem of post-modernity, where an authentic or core self is seen as illusory (Vannini & Franzese, 2008: p. 1626). The first approach to “doing authenticity” relates to practicing authenticity which places an emphasis on action in relation to the thoughts and actions of others (Brekhuis: p. 1068). In doing authenticity one is attempting to maintain boundaries in determining who is authentic and who is not.

The practice of authenticity can be a motivational force leading to positive outcomes such as lack of stress through successful impression or emotional management or negative outcomes such as self-deception, emotional fatigue or anger (Vannini &

Franzese: pp. 1627-1629). Similarly, the management of identity is a way of addressing these stresses. Identity can be differentiated and performed in different contexts either through contextual evaluation or ranking (Owens, et al.: p. 481, 488).

With regards to the ranking or hierarchy of identities, some identities often those seen as category or group based (i.e. religion or race), tend to dominate all other identities emerging as a core or “master identity”² (Armata & Marsiglio, 2002: p. 46). A master identity:

A master identity rises to prominence within the self in a way that reorganizes the self structure to conform to the expectations associated with this master identity...The existence of a master identity suggests...the engulfment of the self by a particular identity. It also highlights individuals’ efforts to manage their self structure by pointing to the high degree of zeal an individual must possess to transform an identity into a master identity. (Armata & Marsiglio, 2002: p. 48)

This “master identity” serves as a reference for resolving other identities in that if identity conflict³ arises, the master identity trumps others. For religious individuals, the “master identity” allows them to resolve conflicts they encounter in navigating the secular world by placing their religious identities above all others. For those who are including towards science, science can override strict religious identity, but allows for a claim to spirituality instead (Ecklund, 2001: p. 260). The master identity allows for the subordination of other identities, but also allows for performative choice of other

² The master status can be defined as an identity or status “which, in most or all social situations will overpower or dominate all other statuses” (Aspinall & Song, 2013: p. 148). Originating in the work of Everett C. Hughes, master status often refers to negative labelling by outsiders that can become attached to an individual’s labelling of self (1971/2008: pp. 141-150).

³ Role conflict looks at “structurally defined expectations” of roles and how these come into conflict or are seen as “incompatible social roles” (Merton, 1968 [1949]: p. 170). One example provided, that of the “Catholic Communist”, demonstrates the difficulty in reconciling the individual’s Catholic faith with his/her Communist beliefs and actions (The two often being seen as mutually exclusive, with the Catholic Church having an antagonistic relationship with Communism, and with Communism’s noted atheist slant).

identities. Sometimes seen as being reflective of a post-modern fractionalization of self, the appeal of having various identities is found in the sharing of features of identification with others (Owens, et al. p. 490).

The post-modern conception of identity sees identity as no longer stabilized but fractured, allowing individuals to play and consume identities (Owen et al.: p. 493). Within a post-modern world, authenticity becomes nigh impossible: one cannot truly display a true self if no such thing exists. This stress can lead to accusations of insincerity (Vannini & Franzese: pp. 1625-1630). Within the post-modern world, where people have fewer fixed roles than in days past (i.e. career, family), necessity requires that individuals are able to choose identities that they see as defining themselves. This understanding allows for the use of identity as a costume that can be put on and taken off on a whim or by necessity, as a performative experience that is constructed and laboured over by individuals.

The use of identity allows for the achievement of effects: from recognition to approval and support from desired insiders or outsiders, to strategic advantage and opportunity for further action. The ongoing dialogue to achieve these ends is key in determining which identities, collective and individual, are deployed at which time.

Ultimately, the negotiation of identities is useful if it brings some benefit to those engaged in creating and maintaining the identity. This can cause anxiety and stress when engaged in different social environments. The ongoing negotiation of individual identity is a key characteristic in understanding the collective identity of participants of subcultures and new social movements.

Negotiating Identity in Subcultures and New Social Movements

Collective identities are those identities shared by many people. Collective identities work in relation to “an individual’s cognitive moral and emotional connection with a broader community, category, practice, or institution” (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: p. 285). In turn:

Collective identity describes imagined as well as concrete communities, involves an act of perception and construction as well as the discovery of pre-existing bonds, interests, and boundaries. It is fluid and relational, emerging out of interactions with a number of different audiences (bystanders, allies, opponents, news media, state authorities), rather than fixed. It channels words and actions, enabling some claims and deeds but delegitimizing others. It provides categories by which individuals divide up and make sense of the social world. (p. 298)

In this sense, identity encompasses many aspects of community, including that which helps keep the community together (“bonds, interests and boundaries”), how it views the outside world and changes in relation to it. While some of these traits are similar to individual identity (issues related to fluidity, legitimation, and categorization), ultimately collective identity is a means by which individuals are brought together (Owens, et al., 2010: p. 490). In what follows I will look at collective identities in relation to subcultures and new social movements.

Within the context of subcultures and new social movements, collective identities can be understood as ways of maintaining group commitment through the ranking of the group identity over that of the individual. The more an individual participates in the group, the greater their sense of collective identity becomes until it takes on characteristics of a master identity. Here collective identity becomes a tool used to maintain participant commitment and motivation, allowing for increased shared values,

goals, ethics, means and practices within the group. In this context collective identities also allow for connections, providing members with identity alignment as an obligation to their peers, as a way of demonstrating motivation and commitment to the group and regeneration and reproduction of motivation through the motivation and retention of members. In part, this is because in both subcultures and new social movements, the environment is a site of struggle, either to maintain boundaries and identities (subcultures) or to advocate for a better future (social movements). This struggle is often enacted through claims to authenticity.

Authenticity within subcultures and new social movements can be tied to collective identities in the form of authentic groups and authentic members (Brekhus, 2008: p. 1067). Issues related to authenticity reflect perceived divisions and contentions formed in subcultures and movements. In what follows I will look at the different uses of collective identity for subcultures and social movements.

The collective identity found within subcultures is often totalizing, influencing all other identities that members have. Because of the centrality of this identity, members are often required by the subculture to engage in continuous self-questioning/evaluation to keep themselves and others in line. This is a way for members to self-police in order to retain the unique subcultural identity. For subcultures, the marginalized nature of the collective identity is both positive and negative. It is negative in that it makes members feel threatened. It is positive in that it strengthens resolve to retain the unique identity. This uniqueness in turn allows for the creation of a collective culture, with its own mores, folkways, etc. (Prus, 1997).

One of the ways subcultures maintain a unique collective identity is through acts of transgression. Transgression allows for a sense of intentional deviance from the norm. The transgressions can be anything from a unique appearance to the philosophy or ethic that separates the subculture from the “masses”. For the Scandinavian Black Metal subculture, transgression is carried out through belief and practice. Usually espousing a rampant Anti-Christian stance, members will often openly claim to practice Satanism or neo-paganism, or engage in violence against individuals or institutions (including the burning of Norwegian churches) (Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998 [2003]: pp. 235-247)⁴. This spectacular transgression allows for the easy maintenance of a set identity that is to some extent easily differentiated from the mainstream.

Transgression can also be tied to ethics. One example of an ethical subculture can be found in punk D.I.Y. cultures, where the element of “Do-It-Yourself” is central to both the creation and maintenance of the subculture as a transgression against corporate capitalism (Moore, 2007: pp. 438-474). In turn, these ethics lead to a rigorous self-examination via self-reflection, assessment, and dialogue of members in order to maintain the high ethical mandate of the group.

⁴ For those within the Black Metal scene, much of the impetus for joining and remaining within it was as a reaction to what they saw as the complacent society around them. They wanted to be part of some-being authentic as being creative, rejecting the status quo: self-reflection, self-discovery, originality thing that allowed them a communal individualism as well as a means of reacting against the society they found themselves in. As such they attempted to find the most aggressive music they could, which combined with an affinity for non-traditional philosophies/religions and a different appearance thru the use of corpse paint (a white make-up that attempted to emulate the colouring of skulls). It should be noted that most of the practitioners of this form came from comfortable, middle class backgrounds (Moynihan & Söderlind, 1998 [2003]).

Authenticity within subcultures⁵ can relate to the perception of outsiders, particularly in relation to measurements of transgression, as was discussed when looking at the Birmingham school. The tensions of subcultural identities within subcultures are often tied to claims of authenticity via ideology, as authenticity is determined by subcultural tastemakers (Vannini, 2004: p. 6). Subcultures center on notions of authenticity providing the means to develop an internal hierarchy via embodied cultural capital (Bannister, 2006: p. 80). Subcultural capital can be a way of recognizing authenticity, separating authentic insiders from inauthentic poseurs (Williams, 2007: pp. 585-586).

New social movements differ with old in part because they are less involved in traditional (i.e. Marxist) politics (Owens et al., 2010: p. 490). New social movements instead focus on acquiring recognition for new identities and lifestyles (Polletta and Jasper, 2001: p. 286). Collective identity in new social movements relates to shared identities, ethics, and goals. For these social movements, there is a stress placed on inclusivity and shared identity stressing “meaning based bonds” (Owens, et al: p. 494). These bonds are not totalizing, but allow for looser alignments and flexibility between and within groups (Bernstein, 1997: pp. 531-532). Here there is less stress placed on maintaining boundaries as boundaries are a product of the marginalization which works to spur members on. New social movements will often use identity strategically and ethically. Strategic deployment of identities for new social movements can be done to

⁵ Within subcultures, authenticity often stands “for being creative, for rejecting the status quo, for the values of self-reflection, self-discovery, originality...” (Vannini & Williams, 2009: p. 6). These traits are seen by those in the subculture as existing in opposition to the mainstream.

empower, as a goal or as a strategy through deployment, critique, or education (Bernstein, 1997). The need for strategy within movements stems from the necessity of causes or overall movement goals. These goals are what the movement seeks to achieve.

“Identity for empowerment” draws on existing identities or creates new identities which are then used to mobilize. This empowerment is enacted through the coming together of people under the common banner of shared identity (Bernstein: p. 537).

“Identity as goal” attempts to challenge views of other, often stigmatized identities, recognize new identities and deconstruct restrictive identities (p. 537). The goals of new social movement identities rest in the acceptance and change of identity within the larger society.

“Identity as strategy” looks at how identity works as collective action, particularly in relation to identity “deployment”, “identity for critique” and “identity for education” (p. 537). “Identity for deployment” relates to the use of individual people to represent the “values, categories and practices” related to the cause as a whole (p. 537). “Identity for critique” relates to the use of identity to confront “the values, categories and practice of the dominant culture” (p. 537). “Identity for education” relates to the use of identity to challenge the perception of the group in question, and uses “unconventional themes” to gain sympathy (p. 537).

The role of ethics in relation to new social movement identities lies in the determination and perpetuation of goals. The movement must attempt to align their identity with how it views and problematizes the world on moral and ethical grounds. Movements in turn unite members through commonality, but attempt to advocate outside

to peers and the general environment. Their very marginalization provides the goal of an obstacle to overcome. The goals of new social movements rest on raising awareness and destigmatizing, in an attempt to continuously promote the cause.

For social movements, authenticity collectively relates to how outsiders perceive them: are they a real social movement? Are they a tool of some other group? At the member level, authenticity can be seen as a struggle for an idealized, authentic self that can be presented to others. Inauthenticity within social movements can lead to outsider criticism, and failures in strategy and social movement ethics. In this way, social movements also need to struggle against poseurs. The pagan community, a “loosely structured network” of practitioners (Coco & Woodward, 2007: p. 481), represents a mixture of social movement and subculture (p. 486). Within this community is a conflict between serious, authentic collective “us”, and individual and collective “fluffy bunny” “them” (pp. 480-481). “Authentic” pagans view a “fluffy bunny” as someone who is “warm and fuzzy (p. 480),” “pragmatic, profiteering, dabbling, modern, superficial, peripheral to community, playful, and using multimedia to further practical and capitalist values” (p. 499). The “fluffy bunny” presents an other against which pagans measure their authenticity (p. 503). One of the areas in which conflict exists with those labelled “fluffy bunny” is in relation to questions of teaching and payment. For those who are most “serious”, teaching for profit is seen as inauthentic. Instead the “authentic pagan lifestyle” is portrayed as being “negotiated around spiritual ideals” (481). “Serious” believe payment in teaching “the craft” should be based on recognition for the teacher’s abilities, not for the service itself (p. 489). As a participant named Laura put it:

“They don’t like you charging to teach the craft; it’s all right if you’re charging for tarot readings or something like that but if you charge to introduce people to witchcraft you’ll get into trouble.” (p. 498)

The ongoing “moral projects of the self” engaged in individually by pagans involves the weighing and possibly renegotiation of values and judgments, and the continued development of shared collective values as members of the pagan community (p. 499).

Ultimately, tensions around authenticity within subcultures and new social movements revolve around issues relate to how the group is seen by outsiders and within, to whose “authenticity claims” are evaluated and judged as good (Williams, 2006: p. 182). These questions of individual and collective authenticity are central to much discourse within fields of music.

Identity and Authenticity⁶ in Popular Music

Within discourses of popular music, questions around identity and authenticity are often central. In music fields, collective and individual identities are tied to music cultures, particularly those of youth music. Within youth music cultures, struggles focus on or revolve around being seen as authentic or inauthentic in one’s commitment to the musical identity. Similarly, identities attached to music performers are often related to notions of authenticity, for instance whether the performers are seen as credible in their genre. These attachments to genre are seen as claims to certain types of cultural capital, particularly in relation to elite musics such as classical or world music. In looking at identity and authenticity in music I will look at notions of representational, cultural and

⁶ In regards to authenticity related to identity, evaluations of authenticity are both interactional/social and adversarial. This is because authenticity is judged in relation to self and others (Vannini and Williams, 2009), or, as stated by Lewin & Williams, is tied to a moral quest that one takes towards ones own values and self discovery (p. 6).

personal authenticity in music (Barker & Taylor, 2007: p. x), followed by an examination of the ideology of rock.

Representational authenticity relates to music which is “exactly what it says it is: (p. x). This is particularly related to performance (both live and recorded): Was the music heard a reflection of what was played? Was it altered at some stage? This type of authenticity looks at how close the music heard represents a lived experience versus how much it represents a manipulated experience. Personal authenticity relates to music that “reflects the person or people making it” (p. x). It asks how much the music being made reflects the real person (true self) making it? Does the music tell us anything about their life? This type of authenticity connects the content of the songs directly to the person writing or performing and asks to what degree the art reflects the experience of the artist. Cultural authenticity relates to music that reflects certain cultural traditions (p. x). This kind of authenticity asks whether the music relates to a cultural tradition. If so, to what degree are those performing the music tied to that tradition? This type of authenticity connects performers to traditions via ethnicity, class, gender, religion and other cultural characteristics.

These types of authenticity are displayed in country music via how authenticity in country music is tied to the way the music is played/recorded (representational), the lifestyle of the performer (personal) and the roots of the music being played (cultural) (Peterson, 1997). In terms of representational authenticity, country music has historically gone through various stylistic trends which have laid claim to various levels of authenticity. Some, like the so-called country-politan movement of the Nashville Sound,

placed an emphasis on “better production” and was often viewed as inauthentic in comparison to more authentic “straightforward” or “traditional” forms. Personal authenticity, relating to the lifestyle and biography of the performer favours those individuals who are seen as living their songs. An early example in country was that of Jimmie Rodgers song “T.B. Blues”, a self-penned song written about a condition that was part of the lived experience of early country music listeners (Barker & Taylor, 2007: p. 101-134). Cultural authenticity in country related to the connection that performers have to the rural experience. That is, those who have a rural background are seen as more authentic than those who grew up in urban areas. Discussions of cultural authenticity are often applied to genres attached to issues of race. For instance R&B and Hip Hop are generally seen as being black, whereas Country and rock are generally seen as white (Barker & Taylor: p. 97). As well, there is a tendency when looking at authenticity in music to view people of certain ethnic, racial or class backgrounds as automatically “more authentic” (2007: p. 157). This differentiation was also seen in the Birmingham school’s work on subcultures wherein subcultures attached to certain races (i.e. black) and classes (i.e. poor) were seen as more authentic than others.

Within rock, the struggle for authenticity is often played out through the “ideology of rock.” In the mid 1960s, the form now known as pop-rock saw mass acceptance as evidence of a meritocracy wherein the best music succeeded on the charts (Keightley, 2001: p. 119). By the late 1960s, aided by the rise of rock criticism, a break had occurred wherein the best rock music was that which was seen as the most serious, significant and legitimate (p. 109). The so-called “ideology of rock” drew on the ideologies of folk

music (pp. 120-125) which saw pop as a field that was crass, over-commercial, insincere, not original and manipulative (Coates, 2013: p. 131).

The ideology of rock attempted to differentiate rock from other popular music forms. Simon Frith, in looking at the ideology of rock, highlighted attitudes towards Bruce Springsteen as being emblematic of the ideology as a whole:

The recurring term used in discussions of Springsteen, by fans, by critics, by fans-as-critics is 'authenticity'. What is meant by this is not that Springsteen is authentic in a direct way - is simply expressing himself - but that he represents 'authenticity'. This is why he has become so important: he stands for the core values of rock and roll... (Frith, 1988: p. 97)

The ideology of rock strives for authenticity via "real" self expression that addresses personal and political issues in a "real way" (Barker & Taylor: p. 160) and ends up seeing itself as the only "real music" (p. 191)⁷.

In the ideology of rock, there is an emphasis placed on both musical and personal authenticity. Musical authenticity in rock relates to representational and cultural authenticity. Representational musical authenticity prizes the playing of instruments, while culturally the ideology prizes that music is derived from art (i.e. prog, art-pop) or folk (i.e. blue, country) traditions (Frith, 1983: p. 41). Personal authenticity relates to the writing of material by performers.

As was mentioned before, rock music culturally derives from art and folk traditions. Similarly, there are two poles that rock tends to operate at: those seeking spiritual, political or personal enlightenment or those drawing on a Dionysian impulse

⁷ The strict adherence to the ideology of rock is sometimes referred to as rockism. Critics of rockism view it as restricting "responses to music, making it hard for us to enjoy styles that spurn the trappings of authenticity" (Barker and Taylor: p. 257).

that sees the pursuit of chaos as an end in itself (and therefore as the only true enlightenment) (Jones, 1994). This often comes at the expense of women and people of colour in genres like pop, disco, funk, R&B, etc.

Within the ideology of rock, the pursuit of music for anything other than self-expression is looked down upon. Sales are fine so long as they remain within the framework laid out by the ideology. Those that do not strictly adhere to such structures are seen as “selling out”. Selling out can be understood as selling beyond one’s initial fans who then lose their sense of ownership; that is selling out can be seen as “selling to outsiders” (Babović, 2016: pp. 69-70).

Within rock music, issues related to authenticity, legitimacy and identity are central to the debates within the ideology of rock. Similarly, the ideology’s focus on authenticity can be found within Christian rock as well, as it is a struggle that is central within Christianity (Keightley, 2001: p. 131). In what follows I will outline the Christian rock literature and how it relates to issues of practices, identity, authenticity, legitimacy and transgression.

Christian Rock Music Literature

The field of Christian rock represents a hybrid of religious and musical fields. In this context there are competing understandings around issues of practices, identity, and authenticity that inform our understanding of Christian rock⁸.

⁸ Other areas looked at in Christian rock literature include origins and history (Stowe, 2003; Romanowski, 1992; 1993), to recruitment (Reid, 1993; Shaeffer, 2012), lyrical (Livengood, et al.: 2004; Radwan, 2006) and video content (McKee, & Pardun, 1996; Gow: 1998; 1999; Morgan et al., 2012).

Practices within Christian rock often revolve around issues of proselytizing and making claims to authenticity. In **Metal Missionaries to the Nation: Christian Heavy Metal Music, 'Family Values' and Youth Culture, 1984-1994** (2005), Luhr looked at the use of metal as a means of proselytizing to Christian and non-Christian youth. Metal evangelicals, like the Christian metal band Stryken, saw themselves as engaged in a conflict with dominant, mainstream culture. These bands claimed the mantle of “disenfranchised populists” (p. 107) and legitimate heirs to the authentic rebelliousness of metal (p. 103). Christian metal bands of the 1980s and early 1990s attempted to reconcile young people to conservative institutions and practices through a youth culture that offered an intense religious experience, personal salvation, and a strict moral code, all with a “rebellious edge”! (p. 118). This rebellious edge often came in the form of incorporating a metal appearance of long hair and leather wear (in the 1980s this often took on a somewhat androgynous bent), which was often seen as problematic within church circles (p. 122), but for practitioners was seen as necessary to engage in a metal “state of mind” (p. 123). For Luhr, the importance of Christian Metal was in its ability to promote “white middle-class values such as family, marriage and ‘traditional’ gender roles” while laying claim to rebellious identities (p. 125).

Similarly, other Christian musicians successfully make identity and authenticity claims to specific music genres. The article **Respecting Religion in Youth Music Subcultures: Inclusivity, Individuality and Conflict Avoidance Strategy** (Abraham, 2014) looked at how Christian punks negotiated issues of authenticity and insider/outsider divisions within punk scenes. In the article, punk scenes were generally maintained as

secular spaces, but religious ideas were allowed to circulate (p. 90), as “the expression of deeply held but socially unpopular beliefs” (p. 88) that were seen to represent punk. Christians were accepted as “people of faith” (p. 90) so long as they allowed for the maintenance of punk “autonomy, free from coercive institutional oversight” (p. 89). Christian punks could participate in punk scenes and were generally accepted as legitimate punk practitioners.

Amy McDowell’s articles **Warriors and Terrorists: Antagonism as Strategy in Christian Hardcore and Muslim “Taqwacore” Punk rock** (2014) and **“Christian But Not Religious”: Being Church as Christian Hardcore Punk** (2017b) looked at the practices of Christian hardcore punks and how they could be seen as authentic. McDowell argued that, for many Christian hardcore practitioners, attempts were made to create an alternative to established churches by rejecting traditional hierarchies, and meeting in non-traditional environments such as pubs, warehouses, skate parks, etc (2017b: p. 60). Because of their non-traditional practices, these Christian hardcore participants saw themselves as opposed to the “inauthentic” mainstream church (p. 9). Perceived as authentic hardcore punks, they were better equipped to evangelize. Interestingly, McDowell argued that Christian hardcore had been embraced by both traditional evangelical institutions⁹ and hardcore punks because hardcore Christians were seen as authentic (p. 260).

⁹ Some activities of Christian hardcore participants were instigated by and connected to evangelical institutions (McDowell, 2014: p. 256), such as those who were aided by groups like Youth for Christ (p. 258).

For non-spectacular Christian rock, it was sometimes difficult to determine authenticity. One of the ways this was determined was through lyrics. In the article **Contemporary Christian Music: Where Rock Meets Religion** (1992), Jay Howard looked at lyrical content of songs that addressed and criticized both the secular world (p. 125-127) and the church (p. 127-129). Here the authenticity came from being an outsider to both. However, this point of view is not held within all of Christian rock. Instead there exists an internal conflict centring on identity, practices and authenticity that, from Howard's point of view, turned Christian rock into a "splintered art world".

The Splintered Ideologies of Christian Rock

Within Christianity there exists a plurality of denominations, meaning there is no single understanding or authority in determining what a Christian identity entails. Collective Christian identities are neither unified nor consensually formed. Instead these identities are open and subject to contention and redefinition by those that share the identity. As well there exist many normative expectations about how Christian identity is put into practice that contradict one another. This plurality of meanings provides an opportunity for different practices to co-exist under the umbrella of Christian identity and for individuals to oscillate between these different practices as their experiences change and their self-identity shifts. The plurality creates conflict within Christianity, a conflict that is in part laid out in Howard and Streck's ideology of Christian rock.

For Howard and Streck, the multiple constructs of Christian identity provide a means of understanding Christian rock. The 1996 article **The Splintered Art World of Contemporary Christian Music** first saw them conceptualize Christian rock as a

splintered art world¹⁰. Howard and Streck came to see Christian rock as relating to two key points: The first was that the genre often stressed its message or lyrical content over the music. That is to say, the lyrics are one of the ways in which music was often determined to be Christian (along with the religion of the artist and or the organization). Secondly they argued that C.C.M. represented a “splintered art world”: C.C.M. was a field with many internal differences in terms of practices and goal (Howard & Streck, 1996). In regards to the latter point, Howard and Streck argued that Christian rock was splintered into three different ideal types: Separational, Integrational, and Transformational (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 20). These three types represented competing points of view, goals, practices and justifications of participants who were often in conflict with each other (p. 40). In defining the three types, the authors drew on the work of noted theologian Reinhold Niebuhr’s **Christ and Culture** (1951) by using his concepts of “Christ against Culture”, “Christ of Culture” and “Christ Transformer of Culture” as a starting point in understanding the different approaches¹¹.

The separational approach drew on Niebuhr’s concept of “Christ against culture”, and viewed Christianity as oppositional to the wider, secular culture (1999: p. 16). For Niebuhr, “Christ against culture” was best exemplified by Old Order Mennonites who reject much of the modern world (Niebuhr, 1951: p. 56). For those that fall under the

¹⁰ First introduced by Becker, an art world was defined as:
...the network of people whose cooperative activity, organized via their joint knowledge of conventional means of doing things, produces the kind of art works that art world is noted for. (1982 [2008]: p. xxiv)

For Becker art worlds encompassed those involved in the creation of art works, from artists to dealers to critics to those who consume the art in question.

¹¹ The notion of Christ’s relation to culture is one that sees Christ as the model for the church and Christianity as a whole. It’s something of a depersonalized understanding of Christ.

separational umbrella, the world was often seen as strictly divided between right and wrong with no in between (1999: p. 49). Those engaged in the separational saw themselves as separate from the world by their faith, and faith related actions and inactions (p. 50). Even so, the separational in Christian rock saw rock music as inherently neutral: a tool with which to recruit and retain members (pp. 51-52). Historically, the original goals of separational practitioners were to evangelize (p. 55) but when those attempts often failed they moved on to provide music for worship and exhortation for believers (pp. 60-64). As separational was the earliest approach to emerge within Christian rock those espousing separational ideals often acted as the primary gatekeepers of the label “Christian rock”, and ended up judging integrational and transformational. In this context the Christian rock industry often followed the separational model.

The second approach of Howard & Streck, integrational, related to Niebuhr’s “Christ of Culture” (p. 82), and saw no tension between Christianity and the world (Niebuhr, 1951: p. 83). Niebuhr saw this approach as most closely tied to liberal, mainline Protestantism which viewed Christianity as something of a cultural enterprise rather than as a mission (p. 84)¹². Emerging from the separational approach, integrational musicians attempted to crossover to the secular marketplace (using tools of the secular industry like labels and distribution) to reach the widest possible audience (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 78). For integrational Christian rock music, the main focus was on

¹² Cultural Christianity refers to those who are affiliated with Christian practices and institutions often through family or other connections, but are seen as having little to no interest in evangelism and scriptural literality. They are often compared to Biblical Christians, who actively study and attempt to follow so-called scriptural teachings. Biblical Christians in general tend to be more fundamentalist in leaning, while Cultural Christians are generally seen as being part of mainline denominations. The concept of Cultural Christianity is often used by practitioners of Biblical Christianity as a pejorative against those they see as unrepresentative of real, or authentic Christianity.

entertainment or “positive pop” (p. 76). Integrational artists attempted to provide a wholesome alternative with a Christian world view to the secular world (pp. 98-100), that was sometimes referred to as “sanctified entertainment” (p. 84). Integrational artists also attempted to minister or evangelize to insiders in the secular music industry through the example of their lifestyle and personal interactions (p. 103). According to Howard & Streck integrational was seen by the separational as legitimate in part because of their attempt at grounding their musical practice in religious-based goals (i.e. Personal ministry). Otherwise, integrational crossover artists were sometimes seen as inauthentic sell-outs who placed personal fame and success over their religious duty.

Howard and Streck’s final type, transformational, referred to Niebuhr’s “Christ Transformer of Culture”¹³ which viewed culture as open to change or redemption through Christianity (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 119). In this case, Christ (and therefore Christianity) was seen as being able to change the surrounding culture. For those engaged in the transformational change could be brought about either in others or themselves (p. 43). Howard and Streck viewed transformational musicians as those whose music existed on the margins, and were often consciously interested in producing music as art (p. 12). The first transformational rationale was to produce “art for art’s sake” (p. 135), within which art was seen as a reflection of their understanding of God as

¹³ Where “Christ of” and “Christ against culture” could be seen as being opposite poles on a spectrum, between separation from the world and active participation within the world, “Christ transformer of culture” existed in the middle of the spectrum alongside “Christ above culture” and “Christ and Culture in paradox” (p. 42).

The notion of “Christ above culture” saw the work of Christians as sometimes being in contact with the surrounding culture, but usually transcending or placing itself above that culture (1951: p. 116-146). For those that saw “Christ and Culture in paradox”, the relation of the world to God and man was ultimately based on the perception of humanity’s fall into sin. For those that held this view, the sinful nature of humanity meant that all human individuals and institutions fell short of perfection, regardless of their actions (Howard & Streck, 2000: p. 117).

creator, and an example they were attempting to follow (p. 130). In this context transformational practitioners often saw the creation of music as an end in itself (p. 136). The second transformational rationale was that of “revealing truth and presenting possibilities”¹⁴ (p. 139), an action that was predicated on an on-going reflection of the self and the world in what becomes a kind of “contemplative criticism” (p. 140), which often stressed the problems of the songwriter. Lyrically, this approach often placed an emphasis on the human condition, seeing the world as more “grey” than “black and white”, and attempting to “reveal truths” and “present possibilities”(p. 139).

Transformational originally arose in reaction to separational and integrational; the transformational approach saw the world as less divided between good and evil than separational (p. 49). Within Christian rock, the transformational artists were often criticized for their “lack of absolute faith” via their questioning of assumed truths (p. 128). Those practicing this approach saw the separational and integrational as being naïve in that their world was seen as “black and white” separated between sin and salvation. For the transformational, there existed a grey in between in which most of humanity resides.

Howard and Streck’s three types could be seen in a few ways: theologically through Niebuhr, politically, and chronologically in relation to legitimacy. Politically, the types could be categorized as conservative (separational), moderate (integrational) and left-leaning (transformational). The three types could also be applied chronologically: Christian rock began with the separational approach, trying to evangelize, and then

¹⁴ The notion of truth as used by transformational practitioners could best be understood not in terms of absolute truth, but as smaller truths about the struggles of the human condition.

attempted to integrate into the secular music industry only to give rise to the transformational, which provided an amalgam of the two approaches, without the extremes (p. 17).

In looking at the work of Howard and Streck, it is important to understand how it relates to the subculture/social movement distinction. While much of separational exists within the subculture framework, through its attempts to recruit through evangelism it crosses over into areas that are similar to movements. Integrational seems to fit within the framework of social movements, except in its subcultural traits such as their retention of their unique identity within the larger rock world. For transformational there are elements of both subcultures and movements. Indeed, one could argue that Howard and Streck's types allow us to see identities as representing the subcultural within the movement and the movement within the subcultural.

Similarly, I can compare Howard and Streck's types to Bourdieu's types of legitimacy. In doing so, the first principle relating to art for art's sake is closest to transformational, and the third principle relating to the popular is closest to integrational. It could also be argued that separational relates to consecration by those with taste, or in this case, those acting as gatekeepers to Christian rock, such as record companies, bookstore owners, and promoters¹⁵.

¹⁵ Howard and Streck also addressed issues related to the commodification of all types of Christian rock with what they called "The Materialist Critique" (p. 149). The critique looked at the uses of Christian rock, focussing on the continued internal struggle over co-optation (p. 157) and commodification (pp. 159-160). In doing so, the materialist critique addressed issues related to the three approaches wherein separational participants sold religion (p. 174-178), integrational participants used positive pop as a watered down form of religion allowing for the easier sale of Christianity to outsiders (p. 168-170), while transformational practitioners struggled to maintain artistic freedom in what the authors saw as a separational dominated marketplace (p. 159-160).

Conclusion

In the previous chapter I examined the similarities and differences between subcultures and social movements, particularly in relation to practices (recruitment and mobilization, structure and leadership, use of space and material cultures), identities (distinctions between insiders and outsiders) and those traits that affected and are affected by both (strategies and goals). In turn I looked at Bourdieu's work on practices in relation to fields, habitus, scale and legitimacy. Following this I looked at work on collective and individual identities and how they relate to struggles for authenticity. This in turn led to an examination of the struggle for authenticity in rock music played out in relation to the "ideology of rock". I then looked at the literature on Christian rock in relation to practices, identities, and authenticity and saw how Christian rock is not a unified whole. Following this I looked at Howard and Streck's competing ideologies of separational, integrational and transformational. These types related more directly to identities in as much as they represented different modes of individual orientation to the music-religion nexus. The orientations also allowed me to see Christian rock as tending towards a movement or subculture but at the same time allowing for the possibility of oscillation towards the other position; i.e. seeing the subcultural within the movement and the movement within the subcultural.

In what follows, I will look at the methods used in conducting my research. Following this I will examine practices and uses of space that participants within the field of Christian rock engage in after which I will examine the struggles and questions regarding identity that are central to Christian rock participation, in part through the lens

of Howard and Streck. Finally, I will look at Christian rock as a whole and see which elements it possesses of subcultures and which of new social movements. .

Chapter 4: Methods

Introduction

In conducting my research on Christian rock music in Ontario from 2008-2010, I employed different qualitative methods including a series of open-ended interviews which focussed on the personal beliefs of musicians in relation to their musical activity, how their faith affected their musical listening and playing activity, while also looking at how this activity was self-defined and negotiated. Alongside these interviews I engaged in some participant observation of Christian rock events, and read the existing literature on Christian rock music.

This chapter will consist of an overview of the methods I used, why I used them and challenges that I encountered. I will outline my research in relation to background, research questions, ethics, interviews, participant observation, secondary research, transcribing and coding.

Background

I became interested in studying Christian rock in the summer of 2007 while taking a course on the sociology of subcultures (Sociology 721) taught by Dr. Michael Atkinson at McMaster University. I decided to research the topic at the time for several reasons: I had grown up around Christian rock, listening to it at home and attended events as a child and I had family members who still participated as performers, organizers and fans. I was aware of some of the struggles regarding issues of legitimacy and authenticity related to Christian rock. The term paper I wrote focussed on whether or not Christian rock could be considered a subculture and relied primarily on secondary research material taken from

interviews and articles on Christian rock. Having written my term paper on the subject I considered continuing the research for my thesis. It formally became my dissertation topic during my second year.

I proceeded to read all the literature I could find on Christian rock. During this reading I came to realize that some aspects of Christian rock reflected subcultures, while others seemed to relate to social movements. From there I began to formulate research questions.

Research Questions

In the early stages of my research, it was important to formulate research questions. Drawing on my subcultures paper, I was interested in elements related to subcultures, identity, and authenticity.

In researching the earlier term paper one issue that arose related to the problem of reconciling the values of evangelism with the values of rock music. I was interested in understanding if and how these differences were reconciled, and if they were reconciled I was interested in knowing how these reconciliations were reflected in the identities and practices of participants.

- How do Christian rock musicians negotiate the morally conservative values of Evangelicalism with the aesthetics of rock music? Are these differences reconciled and if so, how? Or is the struggle between Evangelicalism and rock music a part of the ongoing creation of Christian rock? Is the Christian rock form (and identity/identities) now firmly entrenched and naturalized within Evangelicalism? How are these negotiations reflected in terms of identity and practices of participants?

Having already looked at Christian rock using aspects of subcultural theory, it was suggested that Christian rock could also be compared to new social movements as

Christian rock practitioners were engaged in outwardly directed activities such as evangelism that did not fit with subcultural approaches. In differentiating between subcultures and new social movements I came to believe that issues and differences in goals and values were indicators in examining differences between the two.

- How do identities and practices of Christian rock resemble the models of subcultures (whose goals are retaining membership and defending against outsiders) and new social movements (whose goals are the promotion of a cause and the achievement of practical aims in relation to that cause)? To what extent do the goals and ethics of Christian rock musicians reflect subculture or social movement approaches?

In addressing goals and ethics, I was initially interested in issues related to various forms of authenticity, particularly those of Do-It-Yourself (DIY) ethic. As research progressed, the issue of D.I.Y. became less critical, while issues of authenticity related to identity and practice became more paramount. I therefore removed an earlier question “To what extent is Christian Rock Music produced using a D.I.Y. ethic?” and focussed instead on the perception of authenticity in Christian rock in relation to the self, other musicians and the musical genre.

- To what extent do Christian rock music participants view themselves as authentic? View other Christian rock musicians as authentic? View the musical form as authentic?

Having determined the research questions, it became an issue of how to answer the questions, what methods to use and what type of permissions were required.

Ethics

In dealing with ethical concerns related to my research I applied for approval from the McMaster Research and Ethics Board. Ethics issues I took into consideration predominantly related to issues of deception and issues of confidentiality. These were

dealt with by creating a research plan that involved no deception and by giving interviewees pseudonyms. In this context the chance and extent of possible harm to participants in conducting my research was viewed as relatively minimal.

Interviews

Having cleared the ethics stage, I began to work on interviews. The first step in this process was recruitment followed by conducting the interviews themselves. I will now discuss these two stages and then I will look at issues I had related to interviewing.

Recruitment

Recruitment began by using the following resources: myspace.com, and local evangelical networks.

The website MySpace¹ is an international networking site which often specialized in music promotion, allowing for the self-categorization of artists. In my research it quickly became the most used recruitment tool. I searched for Christian rock bands by searching using the search terms “Christian” or “Christian rock”, then looking for all matches within Ontario. Upon finding matches on MySpace I sent potential recruits an internal message that informed them of my research and contact information. At the same time, I was engaged in recruitment through other means such as word of mouth through evangelical networks and snowball sampling.

¹ In the mid to late 2000s, a number of musical artists got their break on Myspace, most notably Lily Allen. The site at one time redefined how bands interacted with their fans, providing a way for fans to access free music.

Since the late 2000s, Myspace has lost its place as a chosen distributor of music online for musicians. Instead, the impetus has shifted to Soundcloud (which allows for the uploading and downloading of individual songs as they are finished) and Bandcamp, which allows musicians to sell albums or songs at prices they determine. As such, the information I gathered via Myspace can be seen as representing a distinct moment in time.

Currently the music industry has stabilized around streaming as the model for recording distribution, with physical sales remaining as part of niche markets.

Potential participants were presented a letter outlining the ethics guidelines set up through the McMaster Research and Ethics Board (See Appendix A). When these were agreed to, participants signed a confidentiality agreement (See Appendix B). This agreement informed participants that they would remain anonymous, with their names changed to pseudonyms.

Initially I aimed at interviewing both performers and fans. As research progressed, I came to seek musicians almost exclusively, with other participants being individuals that were engaged in Christian rock in a professional capacity. I did this because these individuals seemed to be most invested in Christian rock and the questions surrounding it. As well, musicians often spend time interacting with fans or are fans themselves and so were able to provide a fan's perspective in those ways. Ultimately, I found that the questions being raised in the research predominantly related to issues around the creation and maintenance of Christian rock via identities and practices, and found the perspectives of musicians most useful.

Conducting Interviews²

Interviews were conducted face-to-face, via telephone or via e-mail depending on proximity, availability and preference of participants. Most interviews were conducted by telephone, due to issues of distance and ease of scheduling, as it was often difficult to

² In all I conducted 33 interviews, of which 9 were done in person, 12 were conducted by phone and 12 were conducted by e-mail. Of these, most were with men (28 men to 5 women) and most were between the ages of 18 and 40 (18-30 year olds: 15, 31-40 year olds: 11, 41-50 year olds: 2, 51+: 5). People mostly came from a protestant background, though 17 did not site a denomination, citing themselves as non-denominational which reflects the rejection of institutionalized religion that was often espoused (Apostolic: 1, Associated Gospel: 2, Baptist: 4, Catholic: 2, Christian Reformed: 1, Evangelical: 3, Non-Denominational: 17, Pentecostal: 3). This stance on religious institutions will be looked at in greater detail in chapter 6.

meet up with interviewees. Interviews were conducted at an agreed upon time, and usually took about an hour.

In conducting the interviews, I asked participants for permission to record the interview using a digital recording device. In the case of phone interviews, I used a speaker phone in order to record both sides of the conversation. Interviewees were informed that they could withdraw at any time, and that data collected on them would be destroyed if they so choose.

In conducting interviews, I asked about the activities, attitudes and biographies of those previously or currently involved in Christian rock. I interviewed some performers and other participants (including those in the Christian music business) who were involved in one capacity or another in days past (1970s-1990s), as well as interviewing those currently involved. I ended up interviewing 31 local performers, of whom 8 participated prior to the 21st century, with the remainder being more recent participants.

The interviews consisted of several open-ended questions intended to address issues related to the participants history, understanding of the genre, and opinion on issues related to the role of Christian rock in their lives and the lives of others (for questions see Appendix C). Following the script of questions, I made sure to touch on various topics pertaining to personal history, musical activities and interests, and general attitudes towards the genre. These issues were addressed in whatever order the conversation most naturally allowed, which is to say the script was far from set in stone. The interviews were “active”, giving respondents room to address their thoughts and issues related to Christian rock (McDowell, 2017a: p. 228)

The interviews provided me with some understanding of meanings behind Christian rock practices, but, with regards to identity they provided me with an understanding of the personal narratives³ of participants, the collective narrative of Christian rock, and the individual and collective meanings and identities that have been created. In this context it gave me an insight into how people are recruited, how they actively participate and for some how they leave Christian rock.

Issues Related to Interviewing

The use of interviews in conducting research was not without its problems. In what follows I will look at interview issues related to recruitment, gender, denominations, separation of spheres, my own beliefs and problems with telephone interviews.

At times, recruitment was difficult, as some individuals contacted and expressed interest did not participate mostly due to inability to schedule an interview. As with such survey and interview type research, there was a problem of those who did not participate: Are those not interviewed adequately represented in the sample of those interviewed? Or do they represent opinions uncovered?

A specific issue that came up in recruitment was the issue of gender. Of the 33 people interviewed, only 5 were women. I would argue that rather than this being a problem of sampling that this was simply a reflection of the reality: among rock

³ With regard to personal narratives, the notion of Christian testifying or witnessing was of particular benefit to the research. For Evangelical “born again” Christians, a primary concern was converting people to their religion. In part witnessing does this by transmitting one’s life story; a person testifies their life story, transforming both themselves and their listener (Harding, 2000: p. 35). Confessions of past indiscretions were also central to the testifier’s contention that he/she became a new person through a born-again conversion (Erzen, 2007: p. 991). Witnessing was the telling of one’s path to and subsequent journey with (to use Evangelical parlance) Christ. I believe that there may have been attempts by the interviewees to witness to me, which would have allowed me to gain an understanding of their personal history as expressed through their faith.

musicians the presence of women is the exception rather than the rule (Bayton, 1997: p. 38). In rock music, women are often excluded in part because they do not feel they will be taken seriously (p. 47). Those that do participate:

[Women] encounter hostile male musicians, prejudiced promoters, patronising disc jockeys, obstructive technicians⁴ who sneer and make sexist jokes at their expense, inhospitable masculinist working conditions, unimaginative marketing by record companies, and exploitative media coverage. They also face harassment and put-downs because they are women. (p. 46)

For women in rock there existed an entrenched sexism that is hard to escape⁵, and as such, only a small number of women participate.

Another issue in relation to recruitment was that of religious affiliation. Most of the participants could be categorized as Protestants of some form or another; Catholic Christian rock musicians are few and far between. In my interviews I found one individual who identified as Catholic. For this individual participation within Christian rock was sometimes viewed with suspicion. He tended to focus his activities within Catholicism, away from much of the rest of Christian rock.

We have chosen to minister more within Catholic circles as we feel God is calling us there. There are very few artistically relevant Catholic artists and the need is strong. Because of this choice, we are not as known outside of the Catholic Church, even though we have won two Canadian Gospel Music Association Awards. (Michael Foley, personal communication, May 7, 2009)

⁴ One of the main sources of conflict for female musicians remains the venue sound engineer, often referred to as the “soundguy” (the role is very rarely taken by women). This individual determines how the music sounds through the venue equipment, and as such has great control over how the artist sounds. Many women in rock have experiences with sound engineers who don’t take them seriously by challenging their ideas, questioning their musicianship, or by displaying a kind of nonchalant incompetence wherein they do not try to get a good sound (Babović, 2016). In the past 20 years women have attempted to take control of this aspect of performance by educating each other on technical knowledge via fanzines like “Hey Soundguy” and “Rockgrrl” (p. 90).

⁵ Female musicians often encounter audience members, most often male, who shout at them to “Show us your tits” (Bayton, 1997: p. 46). In the late 1990s, this prompted the all-female rock band Sleater-Kinney to subvert this via their slogan “Show us your riffs.” The slogan attempted to place the emphasis on the music rather than on gender (Babovic, 2016).

While a useful interview, it ultimately did not allow for a full picture of the role of Catholicism in Christian rock.

As was stated earlier, recruitment was greatly aided by the internet. This also led to problems with the establishment of boundaries between researcher and participants. For example, I created a MySpace account for the purpose of recruiting interviewees and finding concerts for study. This account was created explicitly for research purposes and not personal purposes, like a P.O. Box made for a from-home business. A few interviewees attempted to add me on other social networking platforms such as Facebook, a site I use for personal relationships and correspondence. I politely declined the requests as I felt it was important to keep my research and personal areas separate.

Another issue in interviewing was that of my own faith: in talking to participants, the issue of faith was an area of concern. Having grown up within evangelical circles, I understand a lot of the language specific to such groups, and my affirmations (either vocal or gestural) to statements made by participants may have given them the impression that I am an insider. I did not explicitly address such impressions. I am unsure how to self-categorize with respect to religion⁶. That said I was able to use my status as an outsider with insider knowledge to communicate with participants.

As was previously stated, I conducted most interviews by telephone. These interviews allowed for an ease in scheduling and only required an agreed upon time. At times there were difficulties with these conversations, such as mishearing or

⁶ There is some potential irony in studying religious individuals and not having a firm grasp of one's own religious identity.

misunderstanding. I also needed to be vigilant in asking for further clarification to make sure I understood what was being said. The latter was partly beneficial in that it allowed me to get more elaborate answers.

Local Christian Rock Events

Alongside interviews, I attended eight local Christian music events over a period of a year and a half. These ranged from small coffeehouse and rock-club shows, to larger festivals and youth conferences held in larger halls and churches⁷.

In attending these performances, I contacted the venue to obtain permission to conduct participant observation research and to contact the performers in the hopes of conducting interviews. I was able to conduct a few interviews at these events before or after performances, depending on the performers' preference.

With these events I wanted to look at Christian rock practices, at how music was (re)created in a live setting, and how the reactions of musicians and audiences were framed by their religious belief. By observing events in different venue types I was able to see what scripts were directed at different audiences. These differences allowed for a comparison between different Christian rock events and between Christian rock events and mainstream secular rock.

Secondary Research

Alongside the primary research conducted through interviews and participant observation, I also conducted some secondary research on Christian rock, particularly focussing on issues related to legitimacy, goals, identity, and practices in the United

⁷ In all I collected 30 hours worth of field notes.

States. I found the context and observations proved invaluable in understanding the local participants of Ontario, both in terms of similarities but also in terms of differences. This research effectively supplemented what I learned through interviews and participant observation.

It should be noted that there were various areas that I did not look at due to issues of time and relevance. This included Christian music internet platforms, song lyrics and the relationship between Christian rock and advocacy groups. I did not look at internet platforms in part due to their translocal nature (that is, not focussed in Ontario). There were to the best of my knowledge, no internet platforms dedicated solely to Christian rock in southern Ontario. I did not look at lyrics in depth mostly because I was interested in how participants thought of themselves and how Christian rock was produced, not so much in what was produced. While some information could be gleaned from lyrics, I thought it better to ask directly. Finally, I did not look at the relationship between Christian rock and advocacy groups in any depth due to issues of time. However, a study of Christian rock using these methods could potentially prove fruitful in the future.

Transcription & Coding

As was previously stated, most interviews were conducted in person or by phone, with some being done via e-mail. For both the in-person and phone interviews, transcribing the interview was key. To facilitate subsequent transcription, during an interview I would note what I considered to be notable answers and follow-up questions that the interview prompted. Following the interview, I reviewed the audio recording and transcribed it using the program Express Scribe.

In coding, I took a grounded approach (McDowell, 2017a), allowing patterns and themes to emerge around issues like: authenticity, identity, practices, and the typology of Howard & Streck. I read through all interviews, making a list of all questions that I asked and noting down summaries of the answers for each question by participant. This allowed for quick comparison of answers, how much they diverged and how much they were similar. Alongside this I looked for passages that corresponded to the six categories related to the difference between subcultures and new social movements: recruitment, insider/outsider, goals, space, material cultures, and structures. I also looked for trends that emerged within the data (particularly in relation to unexpected findings that are duplicated across interviews or events).

Similarly, I read through the participant observation notes, looking for and noting trends and differences between events. In coding, I looked for information in interviews and participant observation on the following topics related to the difference between subcultures and new social movements: recruitment, insider/outsider, goals, space, material cultures, and structures.

Upon completion of this reading of the data, I went over the results and highlighted particularly interesting quotes and findings in relation to both the categories and discovered trends. This inductive approach allowed the data to drive the research, forming the basis of the individual chapters, as they provide the framework within which I explored the field(s) of Christian rock music.

It should be noted that in what follows, I will be using the following terms in the manner used by Robert Coombs in **Mastering Medicine** (1978: p. 12): “few”, “some”,

“many”, “most” and “typically” wherein: “few” will refer to not more than 10 percent of the respondents, “some” will refer to more than 10 percent but less than 25 percent, “many” will refer to more than 25 percent but less than 50 percent, “most”, a “majority”, and “typically” will refer to more than 50 percent.

Conclusion

The research was conducted from 2008-2010 and, as such, represents a snapshot of the Ontario Christian rock scene that applies to that period. It is possible that Christian rock has changed since this research was undertaken, particularly in relation to the declining popularity of rock music among young people, uses of technology and continuously changing models of music distribution. As well, the research being presented is locally based, and as such can be compared with Christian rock in the United States or in the rest of Canada, but should not be taken as representative of those areas.

The methods used in this study (interviewing, participant observation, secondary research) were chosen as they are most useful for understanding the motives and actions of participants, or the practices and identities of Christian rock which are central to the research questions outlined above.

With these questions and this methodology in mind, I will now discuss the results of my research, looking in turn at the practices of participants and their use of space and issues related to identity, legitimacy, and authenticity.

Chapter 5: Practices and Spaces

Introduction

Within Christian rock there exists a tension between those who aim to promote or facilitate worship (separational), those who aim to entertain (integrational) and those who aim to create art (transformational). The practices related to worship, entertainment and art are means by which goals and identities are made known to others. These different practices take place within different Christian rock spaces where individuals and groups separate themselves from others. The practices manifest in relation to recruitment and mobilization, distinctions between insiders and outsiders, differences in structure and leadership, strategies and goals, and uses of space and material cultures.

The role of practices within subcultures and new social movements are central as practices are the behaviours seen by insiders and outsiders that come to define the field. For this study, practices refer to ways in which people act within the field of Christian rock and the habitus or collective practices related to Christian rock.

The use of space in Christian rock is one where space is strongly tied to practices as well as issues of scale. In looking at scale, I will use Bourdieu's concepts of restricted and large scale production (Bourdieu, 1996: p. 50-51). Restricted production refers to production done for "other producers", and is connected to art that is legitimized via other artists or tastemakers. In contrast, large scale production attempts to reach as many people as possible and can be seen as connecting legitimation via popularity (p. 141).

In what follows I will be drawing on interviews and first hand participant observation data to look at questions related to Christian rock practices in relation to

worship, entertainment and art. In looking at spaces I will look at non-performance and performance spaces in Southern Ontario, with a greater focus on performance spaces where collective practices, identity and legitimation are negotiated. I will show how different spaces are used in the pursuit of worship, entertainment or art.

I will begin by looking at the state and structure of the contemporary field, followed by an examination of practices and uses of space (both non-performance and performance, with an emphasis on the latter). Following this I will look at how different related to worship, entertainment and art effect issues of scale, the importance of music vs. lyrics, performance scripts and the potential transgressiveness of Christian rock.

Christian Rock in the Early 21st Century

In looking at Christian rock practices and spaces it is important to look at contemporary Christian rock as a field in North America. In what follows I will compare Christian rock institutions in the United States and Canada as practiced from 2000-2009.

In the early 21st century, Christian rock was attaining greater success. In the United States, Christian popular music split between Christian Hit Radio and Christian Rock Radio while the lines between Christian rock and mainstream rock blurred with bands like P.O.D., MxPx, and Jars of Clay being played on both (Livengood , et al. 2004: p. 120). Various Christian labels affiliated themselves with secular labels. For example Word Records became attached to Warner Music in 2002, Sparrow was purchased by EMI in 1992 and by 2002 Tooth & Nail was half-owned by EMI¹.

¹ During this time C.C.M. consumption in the United States was predominantly by 25-44 year olds, with more females buying than males at a ratio of 40:60. 84% of those consumers were white. (Livengood et al.: p. 121)

In Canada, religious media remained a rarity, with the Christian rock market seen as 1/20th the size of the United States (John Lemon, Personal Communication, May 26, 2010). It was a very different entity than in the United States:

Christian music in the States is accepted, whereas in Canada it's still very underground, if that's the right word, or in the infant stages of what it can be. Whereas in the States you drive anywhere across the border you can pick and choose between 6 different stations, whereas here in Ontario I can name 6 stations in all of Ontario that do 100% Christian music (Nathaniel O'Doyle, Personal Communication, July 15, 2009)

Within Canada, independent music production and distribution remained the dominant form of Canadian Christian music production. It also remained relatively small scale, usually distributed by David C. Cooke (which acquired former distributor Christian Marketing Canada or C.M.C. in 2008).

By 2010 the Christian industry in America was in decline as traditional sales declined. However, within Canada, musicians were viewed as better positioned than their American neighbours:

The one thing that Canada has maybe been fortunate in is we've never had a large record label industry in Canada, we've always been more independent, artists doing it on their own and therefore I don't think they've suffered quite as much by the downturn of record labels where, if you have downsizing artists that used to have contracts with record labels and would rely on that system sort of have to pick it up and do it themselves. (John Lemon, Personal Communication, May 26, 2010)

This D.I.Y. element of Christian rock in Canada was born out of necessity, but it also meant the many formal structures did not exist. Within Canada there existed little in the way of formal, institutional infrastructure, such as labels, radio, etc. There was the Canadian Gospel Music Association (G.M.A.) which was an association of musicians, David C. Cooke as the major distributor (formerly C.M.C.), and Acts Artist Agency

which was the largest booking agency in Canada (Nathaniel O'Doyle, Personal Communication, July 15, 2009).

Christian musicians in Canada generally did not see the same levels of success as those in America, and in earlier years, most, to achieve any measure of success, felt compelled to leave for America:

...in Canada, in order for a Canadian act to have success, they have to move to Nashville or California or wherever. It's very rare that a Canadian artist who is Christian to have success. (Nathaniel O'Doyle, Personal Communication, July 15, 2009)

The differences in scale between Canada and the United States meant that Christian rock musicians in Canada were always living in the do-it-yourself (or D.I.Y). reality that American musicians are just starting to find themselves in.

Within Christian rock, there was divided opinion on Christian music as an industry. Some viewed it as a necessity and an aid in the pursuit of Christian rock:

I think in sort of its purest form it's really good. Like everything else it's been turned into a business which in some ways is great. It allows musicians to spend 40 hours a week making music which is great. It definitely allows us to make a living doing that. (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)

For others, Christian rock was simply a business, no different than any other:

When there's money involved that means it's a business. The Christian music industry is not any different than the secular in a lot of ways.... (Personal Communication, September 17, 2010)

For others, the Christian music industry was something they were more uneasy with, seeing it as compromised and not fully engaged in Christian goals:

A lot of people in the Christian music industry aren't in it for ministry; they're just in it for money. And worship leaders too, doing worship albums, those sell like hotcakes, and Michael W. Smith makes like \$250 000/night. ... All I know is that it's a really sketchy field to get into and there's a few artists do it right, at least the

way that I interpret their heart, but it's hard to say. (Mary Lambshead, Personal Communication, December 21, 2009)

For these, the motives were as important as the actions as both tied to identity and faith. If one acted in a way that was not seen as Christian, to what extent should one be viewed as a real or authentic Christian? The connection of motives and actions or goals and practices is crucial when looking at Christian rock.

In looking at the structures of Christian rock, there was a difference between the United States and Canada. Within the United States, the industry was more oriented towards large scale production or audiences. Within Canada this approach was not as feasible as the audience and infrastructure did not exist to the same extent. Issues related to actions and practices within Christian rock will be explored in looking at non-performance spaces where individuals engage in Christian rock.

Non-Performance Spaces

For Christian rock musicians there are various spaces in which the music and culture are engaged. Some are performance spaces, while others are non-performance spaces. Non-performance spaces involve musical consumption in some form. These are different from performance spaces in that they can be public or private and often reflect music as product rather than as performance. In what follows I will briefly look at the non-performance spaces of Christian book stores, youth groups, radio and television, home and bedroom, and the internet.

Christian Book Stores

Traditionally, one of the main sites of Christian rock was the Christian book store. In the mid-twentieth century, Christian book stores became sellers of various kinds of

Christian cultural product including records, greeting cards, and other ephemera. While many stores were initially reluctant to sell Christian rock records, over time they became the main supplier of Christian rock recordings. It was in Christian bookstores where those interested accessed Christian rock albums and Christian rock magazines. Within Canada, Mitchell and Co. was once the dominant Christian bookstore chain, though in the past decade, most of these have disappeared (Wilson, 2008: p. GO4)

While Christian rock originally attempted to evangelize, over time this became harder, as secular music stores often would not carry many Christian releases. This led to a situation where Christian book stores became the only retailer for Christian rock music². Because of their monopoly on Christian music retail, Christian book stores have historically acted as gatekeepers of Christian music, deciding on what to stock based on their prejudices. As such, Christian rock that was seen as problematic would not be stocked. In the early years of Christian rock, this was of primary concern though by the 1980s most Christian rock was sold through Christian book stores (Beaujon, 2006: p. 28). Later Christian book stores rarely refused to carry albums released and distributed by Christian artists and labels:

Once in a while you will get some retailers who are reluctant to carry something. It can range anywhere from an album cover to if the lyrical content is too allegorical and maybe not quite as obvious, but that is really, really rare. (John Lemon, Personal Communication, May 26, 2010)

² This created a paradox, which in some ways aided in the development of the so-called separational approach, wherein, “Christian albums are only sold in Christian bookstores” which is “*not* [italics in original] where non-Christians go when they’re looking for records.” (Larry Norman, 1976)

The difficulties faced by Christian rock performers in relation to Christian book stores were tied to issues of encoding and decoding, where the content created by Christian artists was decoded as not being Christian.

Over time Christian bookstores became seen as problematic in that they were purveyors of Christianity as a lifestyle that was merely safer than (as opposed to better than) that of the secular world:

That said, by the 1970s the evangelicals as a whole had come up with an alternate “gated” America: “Christian” education, radio, rock, makeup, publishing, schools, home schools, weight loss, sex manuals, and politics. It wasn’t about *being* something but about *not* being secular, about *not* having nudity, sex, or four-letter words. What it was *for*, no one knew. (Schaeffer, 2007: p. 331)

Many saw this development as a cheapening of their faith, particularly as the products sold were often seen as mass-produced “Jesus Junk” (Schaefer, 2012: p. 66). Because of their role in selling safer Christian products, Christian bookstores relate most strongly to Howard & Streck’s separational type.

Oddly, Christian bookstores have ended up as an embodiment of much of the contradictions attached to the separational approach: they attempt to appeal to non-Christians, but really only sell to Christians.

Youth Groups

Another non-performance space related to Christian rock is that of youth groups. Youth groups are often the strongest connection between young people and Christian rock, as youth leaders use Christian rock as a means of recruitment and retention (Schaefer, 2012), or as a means to provide Christian alternatives to the secular culture that church youth consume:

I still think it appeals the most to kids in Evangelical youth groups... Youth pastors have to answer to the parents of the kids in the big Christian congregations and they think here is something that's safe. (Thomas McClintock, Personal Communication, August 27, 2009)

Youth groups also represent places where adolescences socialize and interact with other Christians, discussing those things they might not be able to discuss with their non-Christian peers.

What participants find in youth groups is then used in other areas of their lives. A study of youth group members found that listeners used the Christian rock music they were exposed to in youth group as a way of witnessing/evangelizing to their peers or encouraging their peers to go to youth group events. It also helped them know how to live in a "Christian" way and aided and reinforced their faith. It also encouraged and aided them in understanding the Bible, encouraged them to be charitable, and helped them pray (Reid, 1993: p. 40). Youth groups provide spaces where individual and collective Christian identities are negotiated and formed.

Radio and Television

Other sites of Christian rock are radio and television. As was stated earlier, Christian music radio is much smaller in Canada, with only a few stations doing "100% Christian music" (Nathaniel O'Doyle, Personal Communication, July 15, 2009). Unfortunately, Christian music stations will often end up giving less desired time slots to Christian rock music such as the overnight slot (Nathaniel O'Doyle, Personal Communication, July 15, 2009). Because of the smaller scale, Canadian Christian radio is often most concerned with its own survival. Christian radio in Ontario is generally a restricted market, aiming simply at those who are interested in finding it.

Similar to radio is the use of Christian rock on television in Canada. While the United States has seen the rise and fall of Z Music television, an all Christian music video channel, within Canada, Christian rock is given little airing on Christian television outside of small music video shows (i.e. C.C.M. Countdown). Both radio and television act as a means of promotion and a way of enjoying the music in the home or in other spaces. Its limited access has reflected the smaller state of the Canadian Christian rock market.

Homes & Bedrooms

Another place where individuals actively engage with Christian rock is in their homes, either with friends or by themselves. Home engagement can be passive (having music playing in the background) or active (active listening, reading lyrics, etc.). Private spaces, such as bedrooms are areas in which most listening occurs.

Private listening of individuals relates to bedroom culture, wherein individuals select, interact and apply media to various aspects of their lives with little interference (Steele & Brown, 1995: pp. 558-559). “Bedroom culture” is most strongly tied to female adolescents. For females, the bedroom is often the only acceptable space for them to express their own preferences and shape their identity. In this context, females are often discouraged from engaging in public spaces. The bedroom becomes a highly personalized space out of necessity as young females face greater restrictions in related to consumption, risk taking, etc. (McRobbie and Garber, 1975/1997: pp. 119-120). In bedrooms they can listen to their own music, decorate how they see fit, etc. For Christian rock listeners, bedrooms are sometimes places of secrets:

...I sort of remember some of my friends hiding her tapes under their pillows and listening to her [Amy Grant] in secret, even though it was Christian music, our church was so against it. (Ruth Powers, Personal Communication, May 7, 2009)

Here the bedroom reflects spaces where individuals can listen to music without fear of repercussion from family or church.

The Internet

Lastly, the internet is the centre of various types of non-performance related activity. There are message boards, news sites, band networking sites (i.e. yourmusiczone.com), video streaming sites, online stores on which to buy music, etc. There are possibilities of discovering music and interacting with musicians and other fans:

The web has been great. I've put myself out there a little bit, it's been like woosh. It's kind of funny. Then I get peoples e-mails and things. Facebook, MySpace, I'm on Twitter... For me as an artist, if I do have a fan base, they can, if they want (check it out). (Ruth Powers, Personal Communication, May 7, 2009)

The internet provides virtual sites that allow for the creation of virtual scenes (Bennett & Anderson, 2004). These virtual sites allow for the proliferation of other types of music as musicians are able to market themselves without appealing to establishment gatekeepers³:

The internet is great because it kind of puts everyone on a level playing field, so some guy like myself that's working on something, can be heard. (James Marmet, Personal Communication, November 16, 2009)

The internet provides a venue for individuals to connect to others and to find the music they are interested in.

³ Indeed, many of the musicians that Howard and Streck labelled as “transformational” (i.e. those interested in music as self-expression/art rather than as mandate based) were early adopters of the internet as a means of distribution of music (ex. 77s, Daniel Amos), as they found themselves outside of traditional distribution channels. As such, they were better prepared for the decline in the recording industry.

Ultimately non-performance spaces tend to be either fairly large-scale (i.e. book store chains, radio), attuned to smaller groups (i.e. youth groups) or operating at a more individual level (i.e. bedrooms). Oddly, the internet can operate on all of these levels. Having looked at the use of non-performance spaces, I will now look at performance spaces.

Performance Spaces

Within the ideology of rock, live performances are given a privileged position (Bannister, 2006: pp. 83-83) as the greatest site for establishing legitimacy through representational authenticity (Frith, 1978: p. 166),. A frequent question such as, “Sure their recording is good, but can they play live?” implies that skills in live performance are the ultimate measure of a rock band’s legitimacy. Similarly, within Christian rock, live performance is of great importance. It is here that audiences most directly interact with musicians, where a shared experience is created and where practices are most fully displayed. It is also in performance spaces where differences related to genres and subgenres are embodied. For example, coffeehouses relate to the singer-songwriter subgenre, secular venues such as bars and rock clubs relate to alt-Rock, punk, and metal, etc. In looking at practices, it is important to consider the relation between practices and performance spaces.

The relationship of practices and spaces is important in that spaces shape practices which in turn shape spaces. Practices are in part shaped by size and layout. As such, the use of venue space relates to issues of scale and intent in that different practices and scripts can exist in different spaces and in these spaces questions of legitimacy related to

practices and scripts are often addressed. In looking at practices in performance spaces, Wendy Fonarow's **The Spatial Organization of the Indie Music Gig**⁴ (1995/1997) provides a means of looking at rock performances and the typical uses of rock spaces. In the article, Fonarow discussed practices in three zones: "stage side and pit area", "floor/middle ground" and "bar and beyond".

The first zone, "stage side and pit area", was usually the densest in terms of audience numbers. Here people crowded around the stage in attempts to be closer to the performer and to enhance their prestige and fandom (these things being measured by proximity to the performers) (p. 361).

The second area "floor/middle ground" was used by those audience members less-engaged in the activities of bands. These individuals were interested in socializing, or watching rather than involving themselves by attempting to interact with the band like those in the stage area (pp. 365-366).

The third area "bar and beyond" was the back of the venue which contained the bulk of socialization (p. 366). It is here that people not actively participating in the musical performance congregated. It is also the area in which other professionals in the music industry stay and in which older fans tend to gather. Here the individuals involved do not feel the need for the proximity: the older fans have outgrown that type of fandom while the professionals have easy access to the band regardless of proximity to the stage

⁴ Fonarow defined Indie music by:

...its association with a particular genre of guitar music. For the most part, indie music is played by young white males in their late teens to early thirties. The indie community has been characterized in England as a primarily middle-class student phenomenon. In reality the community is composed of a cross section of classes, with a particular ethic that favours showy poverty for performers. The indie community is predominantly white and straight with a proclivity for imagery that is sexually muted or androgynous. (1995/1997: p. 360)

(p. 367). In what follows I will see how these zones tend to be used within Christian rock.

Looking at the different types of performance spaces will provide a more detailed account of how performance is approached in these venues. In conducting participant observation, I was able to observe the practices of a few different performance spaces: festivals, large churches, small churches, coffee houses and bars. Here the separation of venue/goal type often worked in conjunction with the disparities between subgenres, as well between worship, entertainment and art. In what follows I will look at the use of Christian rock in festivals, large churches, small churches, secular rock clubs and Christian coffeehouses. Following this I will look at how the practices of these spaces relate to issues of gender.

Christian Rock Festivals

Rock festivals, whether at fixed location events, held over several days or travelling events that bring many artists to different cities, provide ways of bringing together large groups of people with common interests. Currently there are few major Christian music festivals and of these there are two main different types: those that focus on a particular geographical area and those that tour. Of Christian Rock Festivals the most important historically have been the Greenbelt Festival of England, the Icthus Festival of Kentucky, and Cornerstone Festival of Illinois, all of which were primarily protestant but non-denominational in nature.

The Cornerstone Festival, organized by the Chicago based Jesus People USA (Young, 2012a), was held in rural Illinois on an annual basis from 1984-2012, and, during

that time became the premiere Christian rock music festival in the world. The festival featured dozens of artists, including both new and pioneering Christian rock artists over 5 days on roughly a dozen stages. There was a metal stage, a punk stage, a dance stage, a main stage, and stages on the campground on which attendees perform for each other. The event, held on a campground owned by J.P.U.S.A., featured various seminars, activities for children, a prayer tent, a worship tent, and various other booths and vendors (Beaujon: p. 14). The festival, which was attended by over 20000 annually, was much like secular rock festivals, such as Glastonbury or Coachella.

Cornerstone attracted various Christian rock artists, but specialized in those excluded from other events (Hopper, 2009). The festival attempted to include other subgenres and subcultures, from metal to punk to Goth, alongside various organizations to create a space where people were open to presenting different musical forms, different viewpoints on Christianity⁵, and different expressions (Hunter & Whinna, 2004). Cornerstone represented a site in which the approaches to Christian rock (worship, entertainment and art) intermingled.

In looking at festivals, I attended a touring Christian metal and punk mini-festival in Toronto. In relation to Fonarow's zone, the audience was divided between a fairly large group standing right in front of the stage for 2-4 rows composed of equal parts male and female attendees in their late teens and early twenties, followed by a large area that had been cleared away for moshing, which was dominated by males. The moshing, that

⁵ In the film "Why Should the Devil Have All The Good Music", there was a speech given by Jay Bakker, son of televangelists Jim and Tammy-Faye Bakker, at the 2001 Cornerstone Festival, who stated that he was "sick of Christians being on the wrong-side", and instead advocated that Christians needed to be more inclusive (Hunter & Whinna: 2004).

is jumping around in a circle, sometimes hitting others intentionally, was done for most bands in this heavier environment. The mosh pit would grow or decrease in size depending on the band, their music, and the presence of fans familiar with the music. Here, safety was a concern raised by various bands and artists, as they would ask moshers to be safe. Those fans leaning against the stage seemed to generally be younger fans trying to be as close as possible to the action, working within the notion that proximity equalled intimacy, and that greater intimacy equalled greater fandom (Fonarow: p. 365).

The next area was composed of individuals staying back for longer periods in the “floor/middle ground” zone, to observe rather than take part fully. Here there was a certain sense of disconnection from much of the activity, with people feeling more able to talk amongst themselves. Those talking were as likely to talk about non-related topics as they were to discuss issues of music or faith, while little attention was paid to the action on stage. As well, there is some similarity between the distribution of the audience at Christian rock concerts and Indie concerts in that age plays a significant factor in where one is positioned. The young were closer as a sign of their levels of fandom, as they were prone to open displays of fandom in this context, while older fans maintained a certain distance (Fonarow, 1995/1997: p. 365).

The third zone, which Fonarow referred to as “the bar and beyond”, was somewhat different for Christian rock concerts. While those shows that took place in secular venues had bars, these are generally not used as much as they might be at secular shows. This third zone was still an area in which “participants go if they wish to distance themselves from the performance” (p. 366). However, in most cases there was no bar at

these areas in the traditional night club sense, and festivals were noticeable for their lack of alcohol or marijuana aromas. Instead the third zone consisted of non-alcoholic concession stands, sponsor stands, and band merchandise tables. For instance the merchandise booths at the attended festival were peopled entirely by the bands in question, while, oddly, there were no booths for outside agencies or groups like “Rock for Life”, as was the case at Cornerstone (Beaujon, 2006: p. 15). The booths sold various paraphernalia such as CDs, records, stickers, books and band t-shirts with slogans such as “I Will End You”, “Forked and Left For Dead”, “I Am the Creator and Destroyer of Worlds”, “Don't You Judge Me”, “We Call This War” and “Mosh Worship”. Band members at these tables appealed to notions of continued poverty by asking for donations to a tip jar, as they are “on tour”.

The scripts found at the metal and punk festival often revolved around rebellion and individual and subcultural identity. One band made the point that Jesus was a revolutionary and that “2000 years later Jesus still pisses people off”. These bands saw themselves as “underground kids who are helping the church”, and how this struck them as ironic because they viewed religion as “a spirit from hell”. The connection of Christianity to punk and metal understandings of rebellion and collective individuality allowed for Christian artists to be seen as somewhat legitimate within these musical subcultures. Interestingly, the punk and metal festivals provided elements of both worship and entertainment, as a few bands focussed on engaging the audience primarily through the music; others led the audience in communal singing and encouraged a more active participation. In two cases, bands stated their intention was to “worship Jesus”,

while one band ended their set in a communal worship song. In this case, the audience was not watching a performance so much as participating in a religious practice.

In contrast to Cornerstone which tried to appeal to a wider Christian audience, the examined festival focussed on specific sounds and approaches, those of metal and punk. I would argue that Cornerstone and festivals like it, with large bills involving many different acts and subgenres attempted to appeal to all people, but predominantly end up appealing to Christians and, as such they ended up being what Howard and Streck refer to as separational. On the other hand festivals which focussed on one subgenre and outlook appealed to individuals who were fans of metal and punk who might not be Christian, but like the music, and in this sense end up relating to an integrational or transformational approach. As such Cornerstone could be seen as a purely large scale event while the other festivals, despite their size, are more restrictive. Christian metal and punk music can appeal to Christian and non-Christian metal and punk fans in a way that ordinary Christian rock does not because of the attachment of the former to a specific subcultural identity, that of metal and/or punk. However, in attaching themselves to these subgenres, some participants are aiming at evangelizing to people within the subculture.

Christian Rock in Large Church Settings

Another performance space for Christian rock is in churches. These can range in size from small-scale to large scale events. For large scale events the goals or aims tend to relate to evangelical outreach or worship events, such as youth conferences, designed to unite or bring together various youth groups from a larger area. Though they take place in spaces that are seen as sacred, they tend to follow secular concert layout laid out

by Fonarow (“side stage and pit”, “floor/middle ground” and “bar and beyond”) (1997), often with very different results. These larger events will usually take place in the main church sanctuary (the same area where regular services are held), with full use of larger staging, lighting and sound systems.

I was able to attend and observe a youth conference concert and two larger worship concerts. In observing the “side stage and pit” area, I noticed that the dynamic changed depending on the musical performer involved. The conference began with “poppier” bands which tended to bring a fairly high concentration of younger women to the front. As the conference progressed more males came to the front area to be closer to the headliner, which was a heavier, almost metal band. At this show in particular there were concerns regarding safety, with the M.C. (a DJ at a local Christian music station) telling people to jump up and down to the music, but not side to side, so as not to cause injury. At worship concerts the front was composed of individuals standing, swaying with their arms in the air singing along. Here the focus was on individual worship more than the band.

The second area “floor/middle ground” was also significantly different. At the youth conference, the middle area was taken up by pews, as the venue was also a church sanctuary. The middle area was used by those that were less engaged in the activities of the bands, and were more interested in observing. These included youth group leaders as well as individuals waiting for particular acts and were not interested in other bands. At the worship shows audience members tended to remain in this area, though they still actively participated in the music by singing along, often with arms raised.

In these types of shows, “the bar and beyond” is somewhat different than other concerts. Instead of focussing on alcoholic beverages, the third zone consists of non-alcoholic concession stands, band merchandise tables, and booths detailing various causes, and other available services. At both the youth conference and one of the worship concerts these booths included various Bible Colleges—Canadian and American—, booths selling books, and charitable Christian organizations dealing with issues of poverty and youth ministry. The people in this area tended to be those taking a break from the bands, looking for merchandise, or working. Interestingly, the majority of merchandise tables were worked at by the bands themselves, and are generally open to talking to fans after shows.

For the most part, artists that play these types of larger shows tend to be consciously professional, attempting to use these events as a means of creating or furthering their careers. They also provide acceptable music that youth leaders can feel comfortable recommending to young people as an alternative to secular music, knowing that the performers will create an appropriate, professional experience. This professionalism extends to creating a shared moment that fans and bands can remember:

People want to be a part of something bigger than themselves. That's our goal as band to say "Let's really create something that's bigger than me, bigger than you, bigger than us, and we can come together share a beautiful night, put it out there, share tears and go home." And sure, buy a t-shirt, buy a CD and remember it, that's cool. It's all about the live thing. (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009)

For these artists, the performance focuses on creating a “big”, shared experience, with the aim of leading to a collective emotional release (“sharing tears”) between the performer and audience. This approach is reminiscent of Durkheim’s concept of collective

effervescence in that there is a ritualistic and ceremonial character to these gatherings.

By creating an experience that is “bigger”, differences between audience and performer and audience members themselves are played out, losing separation but also losing individuality.

For others, the importance of these types of shows is the direct interaction between artist and audience that one finds in church settings:

I think youth groups, we would go to these youth groups and we'd be the worship band or something and these kids wanted to listen to the worship and listen to the music... And we realized as guys trying to communicate and share our music, we're like wow, these youth groups are a platform for us to communicate what we want to say. They want to listen, they want to get to know us, they want to find out what we're about, whereas in bars it was just like a background noise, drinking music. (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)

This close interaction allows for a direct communication between artist and audience, which attempts to create less of a hierarchy of artist to audience, and more of a dialogue. By interacting with the audience, by dressing like the audience, by looking like the audience performers attempt to upend the hierarchy of performer and audience by blurring the lines between performer and listener (Babović, 2019: p. 99). However, in this interaction there is always a possibility of maintaining the hierarchy by treating the audience as an object who wants to listen and needs to be communicated to rather than communicated with. Here the hierarchy of performer as communicator and audience as recipient is often maintained. While attempting to create a greater sense of community through direct communication, and appealing to what is shared, the hierarchy of performer and audience can remain.

The larger church concert tends to be more religiously oriented (with goals of evangelism/proselytism and worship), and with hopes of larger scale audiences and recruitment. These events are undertaken on a large scale, and often end up combining elements of worship and entertainment. The legitimacy of the event comes from its focus on a large scale, in trying to cater to the needs of many, even if it is unable to reach outside of the religious. These shows fit best into what Howard & Streck would call a “separational” approach.

Christian Rock in a Small Church Setting

Church events on a smaller scale often take place in smaller communities where church groups will hold shows by local Christian or non-Christian bands. In terms of those interviewed, these venues were most commonly used by metalcore/hardcore bands.

They'll get the dirtiest metal bands you can get in there sometimes and just really heavy bands who frankly they've got some dirty mouths and certainly don't have anything Christian about them and kind of just allow them to have a show in the basement of the church because they like the idea of their church being seen as youth oriented and being a friendly place for youth. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

These shows are generally music oriented in the sense that they are not tied directly to religious goals or structures⁶. In the rural areas discussed, this church activity acts as a more general social gathering, rather than one tied to issues of faith. These events are generally undertaken in an attempt to give youth a place to engage in social activities without getting in trouble. That is, the motives are less about overt evangelism and more about providing a safe space in community. It is instead, an event that draws youth from

⁶ Many of those participating in so-called metalcore Christian bands often have fewer strong ties to organized religion in general. This will be discussed in further depth in Chapter 7.

all over the community to engage in a shared experience in a safe environment. In relation to subcultures and new social movements, this practice can be seen as connected to both: it can be seen as a recruitment tool to bring in outsiders a la social movements, but it can also be seen as a means of providing a space that preserves a particular type of identity, in this case those of metalcore/hardcore fans.

Because of the sparse populations of these areas, the musicians involved often find these experiences more rewarding than playing in secular rock clubs:

...a lot of churches have started opening up, especially in places like Port Perry there's a church called Emmanuel Church.... that kind of show's been working out well. We get higher numbers at those shows, y'know. Numbers around a hundred or so, whereas in clubs it's actually terrible, you get 60-100 people at the most. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

These musicians find a purpose in performance and feel a connection to the audience in smaller venues with audiences who they feel are more excited. The smaller church performance can be aimed at a more restricted audience that is one that is more interested in the specific music played, or in playing music themselves.

Unfortunately I was unable to attend a small church performance, so I cannot comment on the use of space, except in so far as the space is used to provide a safe “alternative” for young people in their community.

Christian Rock in Secular Rock Clubs

The use of rock clubs as a venue for Christian rock concerts is interesting in that it places Christian rock in a context that is usually within the secular world. For the most part, bands that play secular venues do so while playing more aggressive forms of rock: alt-Rock, punk, and metal. Christian rock concerts are essentially similar in layout to that

described by Fonarow in her work on British Indie concerts (Fonarow, 1997), though the observed behaviour is somewhat different in that what is accepted at a secular concert might not necessarily be recognized as Christian at a Christian concert.

At a Christian hardcore/metalcore/Worshipcore⁷ show in Toronto there stood a crowd of people at the “stage side and pit area” who would mosh when bands played. Here most were focussed on the activities on stage. Even in the “floor/middle ground” focus was given to the stage as well as other audience members in their immediate vicinity in order to maintain safety for themselves and others. As such, the “bar and beyond” area was of little interest to most in the audience, outside of the occasional water, soft drink or visit to the washroom.

As the primary source of revenue for such venues is the sale of alcohol, there is a divided opinion of these venues within Christian rock. Most Christian rock musicians view these types of spaces as important to evangelizing:

My biggest struggle is getting any non-Christian venues. The Bible says to go into the world and make disciples, it is a struggle but it is a calling. (Preston Fender, Personal Communication, January 18, 2010)

For these artists, playing in secular venues is necessary to evangelize or change the minds of the audience. Indeed, some Christian musicians find their music more appreciated within a bar context:

But over the years, we've never shied away from playing mainstream events at clubs or bars or festivals—and we've even noticed that we're sometimes received BETTER in those venues than at Christian events. (Samuel Osmond, Personal Communication, May 12, 2009)

⁷ Worshipcore is a Christian variant on metalcore which originated in Toronto. Groups use their music as a means of engaging in communal worship. This will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 7.

This in turn causes some artists to pursue a career playing mostly outside church settings.

Other musicians saw the experience of playing in secular rock clubs as wholly negative,

based in part on their attitudes towards the bar/club scene:

I don't like playing bars personally. I think it's a negative place to be in, I think a lot of negative things happen there. I know it's not happening at the time that we're playing but there's so much oppression and heavy spirits. (Member of GOTG, Personal Communication, November 11, 2009)

That was the thing too; the bars were just a brutal place to play. It was terrible. I think there was smoking back then, a couple of us were underage. People spend all their money on booze; don't spend any money on CD's. The sound systems were bad, they were small and dive-y. We didn't get paid at all. The churches would put on youth events and we'd get paid \$500, it was awesome, it's great. (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)

Oddly, the negativity in the second quote is couched in economic terms, i.e. no sales, no pay, small audiences, etc. The specifics of the negativity are not related to morals or ethics, as much as they are related to occupational issues such as income.

The intended scale of Christian rock performances in secular music clubs often varies between restricted and large scale, depending on the performer, and the venue. Secular rock clubs can play host to all approaches (separational, integrational, and transformational), but mostly attract those involved in the transformational, in that those that choose to perform in such venues are often doing so as a means of operating outside of the normal parameters of Christian rock music.

Christian Rock in Coffeehouses

In the 1950s and early 1960s coffeehouses became the focus of urban folk scenes (Brown, 2007). Within evangelical Christianity, the 1970s saw a rise in youth oriented Christian coffee houses which provided Christian rock musicians places to play.

The coffeehouse scene is predominantly the domain of singer-songwriter types. Most Christian coffeehouses, like the one I was able to attend, are institutionally tied to a church or various churches. The venue itself was relatively small, clean, with cashiers serving hot and cold non-alcoholic drinks and selling baked goods. This type of venue was generally more open to families, and was also more open to female performers. In this context coffeehouses often represent a female space within Christian rock, where female performers and audience members can dominate, similar to the role of women in folk coffeehouses.

For the most part coffeehouse performers perform alone on a small stage, sometimes with minimal accompaniment including acoustic instruments or small keyboards. The coffeehouse equivalent to the “side stage and pit” area was composed of a mixing board and some tables. This was where the audience paying attention to the performer sat. There was little physical separation between audience and performer, though this may be in part due to the small size of folk venues, nature of the audience, etc. Indeed, the performers seen engaged the audience by conversing, asking for requests, telling stories, etc. As one participant noted:

They were really touched by the message I was presenting and I always like to tell stories before I sing my music for people can connect more and understand the context. So that was really cool. (Mary Lamshead, Personal Communication, December 21, 2009)

The authenticity of folk and singer-songwriter music is drawn from its connections to the people, expressing the everyday lived experiences of the audience. This is enacted through simplicity in musical style and instrumentation and a perceived authenticity in the performer. The performer must mean what they are singing; otherwise they can be seen

as a “phony”. Even within this context, the hierarchy between performer and audience was maintained, as performers attempted to communicate and include as a way to control this part of the room.

The “floor/middle ground” consisted of people who were paying some attention to the performer. This was often done to be polite, as most of the audience in this space engaged in their own conversations over coffee. For them the performer was simply background noise. The equivalent to the “bar and beyond” was represented simply by the counter itself, where various beverages and baked goods were sold. Little interaction between audience and staff occurred here outside of that which was required for commerce.

In these venues performers generally do not make much money, relying on some variation of paying what you can or “passing the hat”⁸ as a means of compensation. This kind of interaction and compensation is generally seen as “traditional” in that it is based on folk practices⁹.

The coffeehouse is generally aimed at small-scale, restricted production, but that is very much connected to the size/scale of the space. In reality, coffeehouses can play host to both subcultural and social movement approaches, in trying to retain a certain audience (subcultural) or trying to reach out to others (new social movement). As well, coffeehouses can be spaces of all types of Christian rock music, from worship to entertainment to art. That said, coffeehouses do tend towards the more entertainment and

⁸ Passing the hat involves the performer requesting donations and allowing audience members to pay as much or as little as they see fit.

⁹ For instance, Bob Dylan gained his start in Greenwich Village playing various basket houses, where money would be raised by passing around a basket. This was necessary as a means of building an audience, a repertoire and making a living (Dylan, 2004).

artistic sides of the equation, in that performers are attempting to appeal to all in the audience, and religion is not the explicit purpose of the show. In both Christian and secular coffeehouses, a secular atmosphere tends to be typical as there is little overt worship or proselytizing behaviour. The coffeehouse as a venue is often more focussed on music than on explicit expressions of religion, though this can often vary depending on the make-up of the audience.

Issues of Gender in Practices

In looking at performance spaces it should be noted how these spaces are gendered in relation to risk management and the policing of sexuality (McRobbie and Garber, 1975/1997). In practice this translates to an association of coffeehouses with singer-songwriters and feminine spaces, while rock clubs are associated with heavier music and masculine spaces. As was noted previously, issues of gender in rock operate to exclude women. Within rock bands, women are seen as exception, and often find themselves marginalized (Bayton, 1997), except within “feminine” subgenres, such as singer-songwriter. Of the roughly 40 participants interviewed, 5 of them were female. Of these, one was the lead singer in a then aspiring band, one was a professional worship leader, and the other 3 were aspiring/semi-pro singer-songwriters. As a minority within Christian rock music, these women brought up issues related to the pros and cons of being women in Christian music. In what follows I will look at gender issues related to the ideology of rock, hard rock, folk music and questions of image for women in Christian rock.

With the rise of the ideology of rock in the late 1960s, the masculine came to be seen as serious, significant, and legitimate (Coates, 2003: p. 77) while women were often dismissed as “groupies”, “teenyboppers” or “rock chicks” and as such were often relegated to the margins (Keightley, 2001: p. 109). Under this new ideology rock was high culture and masculine while pop was lower culture, feminine and trivial. Within the parameters of this ideology, women were often allowed roles as singers, as singer-songwriters, but rarely as musicians or “serious” hard rock performers.

In this context hard rock, heavy metal and hardcore punk shows occupy male spaces, with an appeal to a “macho Jesus” whose followers are to engage in spiritual warfare (McDowell, 2014: pp. 266, 268). Mosh pits are often seen as sites of male bonding, where the quality of the pit reflects the quality of the music, but where women are often excluded (McDowell, 2017a: pp. 232-234). Indeed, in many of these Christian rock subgenres women are excluded because they are seen to represent sex (p. 235) and come between the male participants bonding with each other and God (p. 239), or because women are seen as being at risk in the mosh pit.

Even so, women occasionally have roles in these types of rock bands. For one individual, being a female singer in a mostly male rock band was generally an asset to her band:

I think that people are usually more interested in a band with all guys and one female. Especially when she’s the lead...it just brings curiosity because it’s not as common. I think that it helps separate us and is a huge plus. (Hope Nashton, Personal Interview, January 27, 2010)

For this individual, there is a certain exoticness, or otherness attached to being a woman in a rock band that led to a greater/easier success for her band.

However, for most women, the otherness attached to their gender is more of a negative: “Personally, I can say that I think there are some people, in fact, I know some people who have admitted that female musicians are not ‘as good.’” (Heather Carpenter, Personal Communication, August 5, 2009). In this context, women are seen as less capable musicians, though this is often related to other issues such as problems in obtaining instruments, learning to play individually and together (Bayton, 1988/1990: pp. 239-250). For female musicians interested in playing rock music, the proverbial deck is often stacked against them.

Female participants within Christian rock are most accepted performing folk and singer-songwriter related music. In these genres, participants must adhere to folk ideologies of authenticity, where “feminine” traits like presenting oneself as emotional and vulnerable are viewed as assets. As well, elements of traditional, large-scale entertainment, such as professional appearance management, are rejected. The issue of image remains prevalent, particularly in relation to women within Christian music:

When I first started out I had an imaging consultant, we were talking about dress and stuff, and there's the very trashy images about so many pop stars...even in the Christian music industry I'm very disappointed with a lot of the way that the women are presented...I work with photographers who have given me outfits where I'm not sure if I should wear them and they told me not to worry, but were very controlling. That kind of scared me. (Mary Lambshead, Personal Communication, December 21, 2009)

While the performer's image may be promoted in a highly professionalized manner, it is also problematic in that it can put focus on a sexual aspect that Christians (particularly

female) are taught to be uncomfortable with. For female performers, image is seen as more central than it is to male performers:

Definitely the image is huge. I feel like as a female artist, it's easier for people to work with. I feel that they can market you better, not better but easier, I guess because there's a lot of guys in the industry and they prefer to work with females, I don't know. I've had that mentioned too. I guess in some ways there's that advantage. But I guess females are easier to manipulate and to control, but maybe that's a downside (Mary Lambshead, Personal Communication, December 21, 2009)

The control of image is problematic, as female artists attempt to appear in a non-sexualized way. This is often played with by image makers in order to find a balance that will be acceptable to the market. The problem of image relates to Christian rock as a business: the problem of image often extends into how female performers are depicted in performance spaces, and how in spaces where women are viewed as more sexualized (i.e. hard rock) women are often marginalized or othered as performers.

The role of women in Christian rock is similar to the role women have taken within secular rock: that of marginal participant or, if included, as performer within certain roles or subgenres. They are more likely to perform more “feminized” subgenres of rock such as folk and singer-songwriter, where they can fulfill more traditional gender expectations of being emotional and vulnerable.

Meanings of Practice

Having looked at the practices of Christian rock in non-performance and performance spaces, it is now important to look at the meanings assigned to practices. First, I will look at the different aims in practice: worship (separational), entertainment

(integrational) or art (transformational) and, in doing so I will look at issues of scale, lyrics vs. music, and performance scripts.

Worship

In the past 40 years, there has been an increase in the use of worship music¹⁰ within churches. Emerging from charismatic, evangelical denominations, the worship approach was developed as a reaction to traditional hymns which were seen as passé. Worship music was a means to both engage congregations and recruit members (McDowell, 2017b). Worship songs attempt to create a direct, individual connection to God, rather than create a sense of community within the congregation, as is frequently the case with hymns¹¹. Those within so-called charismatic congregations believe worship is about the connection to God, which becomes manifest via “signs of the spirit” (i.e. speaking in tongues, the display of emotions).

Alongside the rise of worship music within church services came the commercialization of worship music, which saw an increase in professional worship concerts and worship music sales. Evangelical Christianity has seen an increase in individualism (Stringer: p. 238) there has been an increase in emotionalism and consumerism (p. 239), where individuals are more inclined to buy a worship experience:

¹⁰ Worship music refers to music that: “that can be played during services, with the whole congregation singing along.” (Sanneh, 2018)

¹¹ The divide between hymns and worship songs can be seen as an echo of the difference between the Apollonian and Dionysian (Jones, 1994). The use of hymns can be seen as Apollonian in orientation: ordered, somewhat intellectual (sometimes focussed on lyrical and musical sophistication), and strongly connected to church tradition. Charismatic worship can be seen as Dionysian in the sense that it is connected to a sense of losing oneself, of appealing not to intellect but to emotion and particularly emotional gratification. This form of worship is a collective exercise whose goals are a personal connection to God.

That's one of those things where maybe you're making a bit of money on it but the thing is like you know that those people care, they engage with it. (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009)

Worship bands engaging in the commercialization of a worship experience are attempting to create a collectively shared, live experience. The creation of a shared experience allows for emotional gratification via the collective emotional release that can be found in such experiences. In order for worship bands to succeed, to bring in an audience, either through recruitment or repeat attendance, they need to provide a satisfying emotional experience that individuals want to repeat. For these performers, cultivating and creating a shared experience is integrally tied to their sense of professionalization. Performers attempt to sell the experience of a shared, transcendent moment created through planned performance scripts.

...if I can move in a way that's going to impact people, then I'm going to do it again, and I'm probably going to do it every night. The first time it was spontaneous maybe or in rehearsal, but...we think about it and go "Here's what I'm going to do" when and why. And it's not because it's oh so spontaneous it's because it makes a difference, it helps people and if it doesn't help people we stop doing it. (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009)

Everything is planned out. We went to a performance coach 2 years ago and this year on a couple more songs, so everything is planned out....Some people say, "It's not spontaneous" but for me it's like the thing that people react to. You say "Hey Hamilton" and people cheer. This is a proven rock concert fact. If you're trying to connect with people to the lyrics, you play the song softer so they can hear the words better. (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)

This desire for a pre-planned performance suggests a need for the performer to control the situation, so the audience can experience what the performer wants them to.

Professionals engaged in worship rock are attempting to create a "hybrid of being a rock band and leading worship" (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009).

As a professional endeavour, worship rock attempts to combine worship with entertainment or attempts to entertain through worship.

I'm very comfortable entertaining people... I want to engage the whole person and I think to do so you have to recognize where they're coming from and who they are. (Andrew Mather, Personal Interview, July 22, 2009)

Here entertainment is viewed as the best way to engage people in worship¹². It also implies that worship requires the participation of “the whole person”, by focussing emotions, thoughts, actions, and embodied experience in the direction of worship. This contrasts with other approaches to worship (and by extension Christianity) where people are viewed as not fully engaged. The total worship of worship rock is a goal for performers and audience alike and is a means of aligning their actions with their totalized personal identity as a Christian¹³.

Entertainment

Entertainment within Christian rock can be divided into two approaches: those who entertain primarily within Christian rock, and those who entertain outside of it.

Those who entertain within Christian rock are often trying to provide comfort for other Christians. That is, they are approaching entertainment as a substitute for secular rock that can provide a service to Christians. Often, these ideas of creating an alternative but parallel popular culture for Christians are viewed with scepticism:

¹² Indeed, the separation of worship from entertainment or art can be seen as less of an opposition and more a scale of degrees. Those aiming at entertainment may still engage in acts of worship or art, while those engaged in worship often also aim at entertaining as well.

¹³ There is something to be said for the notion of worship as performance that those in the audience are performing as much as those on stage. They are aware of the expectations of the rest of the audience in terms of worship behaviours and attempt to meet said expectations by performing those behaviours.

I think my problem with remaining an evangelical centered on what the evangelical community became. It was the merging of the entertainment business with faith... (Schaeffer, 2007: p. 389)

The problems had with this relate to what is seen as a profaning of religion. What is created is a separate (cf. separational) entertainment for Christians by Christians that is only slightly different than secular entertainment.

Conversely, for those focussed on an integrational approach, there are various ways of moving between the fields of Christian rock and the fields of mainstream rock (Dueck, 2000: p. 131). Some, such as Evanescence (Bartkowski, 2014) and Skillet were able to mix Christian and secular scenes by using the established career paths of both (Dueck, 2000: p. 135). For Evanescence this required a change in how they publically saw their faith: “movement away from the sacred...toward things that are revered as holy,” (Bartkowski: p. 365), becoming a sort of “non-Christian” Christian rock¹⁴ (p. 364). For others, such as Skillet, this meant enacting different scripts in different venues. Those engaged in this tightrope act approached performances in Christian venues engaging in Christian practices and language, while at non-Christian venues they would follow secular scripts, sometimes including swearing (pp. 364-369).

Art

The third option is that of pursuing music as art. This has little to do directly with worship or entertainment as understood above. Instead, it is a greater attempt at a personal, restricted form of Christian rock that may contain elements of worship and

¹⁴ Conversely, there are a number of successful performers engaged in various areas of the secular rock world that address their faith openly, but seek no connection to established Christian rock. These include U2, Collective Soul, Creed, Kings of Leon, P.O.D., Switchfoot, Sunny Day Real Estate, Iron and Wine and Sufjan Stevens.

entertainment (i.e. what is entertaining is in the eyes of the entertained, what is worship is in the eyes of the worshipping).

The pursuit of art allows for a shifting of values from those often pursued in the wider world. According to Bourdieu (1996: p. 256), those with the highest capital within art fields often see themselves as anti-establishment. Those with capital in the arts oppose wider societal structures that comprise the mainstream of society, including, among other things, industrial production. They are however insiders in their smaller art fields, where they promote a limited or restricted art market that prizes the “specific principle of legitimacy” above all others. In this sense, art for art’s sake places a premium on scarcity connecting it to notions of authenticity and Walter Benjamin’s discussions of aura as a scarce product (Benjamin, 2007).

The creation of art as art is closely tied to the “transformational” approach. For other approaches, art is one of many goals, whereas for the transformational practitioner, it is the main goal. These individuals tend to work on a limited scale where they also stress the “specific principle of legitimacy”.

Issues of Scale

In looking at scales and particularly large versus restricted scale, I would argue that the clearest factor determining scales for the different approaches relates to goals and motives.

Performers in large scale venues, by attempting trying to reach and appeal to as many as possible, connects to evangelism, worship and entertainment. These performances are similar to social movement activities (i.e. protests) in that they try to

appeal to diverse arrays of participants who may otherwise have little in common. For evangelist musicians, performing at such venues allows them to try and recruit the audience to their Christian cause. For those engaged in large-scale worship, the performance operates in part as an advertisement to a particular way of practicing Christianity. Similarly, for those engaged in large-scale entertainment there is an attempt at promoting Christianity as fun.

For smaller or restricted venues there is a parallel to the subcultural. For those attempting restricted scale, the goal can be to evangelize or entertain. However, instead of evangelizing to everyone they are targeting small, specific groups who are already involved in a certain type of activity or who hold a certain identity. For those focussed on creating art, a restricted scale is often preferable as it ties them to Bourdieu's "specific principle of legitimacy". Here there is a concern with maintaining artistic legitimacy above all, which is best done by playing for smaller audiences with certain types of cultural capital, manifesting as taste.

In terms of the size of performance spaces there are times when large spaces are used for those interested in operating on a restricted scale. For example, festivals can be either large scale or restricted depending on the approach. Large scale festivals such as Cornerstone attempt to appeal to many different subgenres and groups. Restricted festivals, such as the metalcore festival I attended attempt to focus on one specific subgenre. In other words, large scale festivals attempt to appeal to people in different groups while restricted festivals attempt to appeal to a lot of people within a specific group or subculture.

Issues of Music vs. Lyrics

The relationship of music and lyrics in Christian rock is often seen as one-sided. Christian rock began as a means of combining contemporary music with Christian lyrics, as a vehicle to spread the Christian message. Over time, Christian rock came to apply to any style of rock that contained Christian lyrics (Sanneh, 2018). Christian rock is therefore often seen as lyrically focussed¹⁵. However, among Christian rock practitioners there are three approaches to the relation of music and lyrics: those who focus on lyrics, those who focus on music, and those that view the two as equal.

The primacy of lyrics in Christian rock is often seen as one of the defining characteristics of the genre. Musically-speaking there is often little difference between Christian and secular rock. For many, the only real difference lies in the lyrics, and it is the lyrics that make the music Christian:

In this context, “Jesus music,” lyrics must always come first. There is no justification for the existence of the genre without the message. Indeed, the lyrics are the only thing that delineates the differences between Contemporary Christian Music and any, secular song of the day. (Luke Kane, Personal Communication, October, 16, 2009)

As such, the lyrics are seen as presenting a message while the music is often, though not always, an afterthought.

For those that view music as being most important, music by itself is enough: “Well, I would say the music, it moves me.” (Mary Glass, Personal Communication,

¹⁵ Christian lyrics can come in various forms: the unequivocally or explicitly Christian, the moderately Christian and the ambiguously Christian (Livengood et al., 2004). In a study of Christian rock lyrics, it was shown that most lyrics were theologically ambiguous, with 19 out of 50 songs studied having little clear Christian content (Livengood, et al., 2004: p. 128). If the lyrics aren't clearly Christian, artists may face backlash, particularly by those within the Christian rock audience who view Christian lyrics as a requirement for their continued fandom (Reid, 1993: pp. 33-45).

August 23, 2009). The approach often appeals to those who see themselves primarily as musicians rather than singers or songwriters.¹⁶

Lastly are those who see music and lyrics as being equally important. For these people the music can be undermined by lyrics (as in Stephen Lawhead's good art, good message categorization discussed in the introduction), or there is a strong sense that the music should fit the lyrics (i.e. lyrical content should suit the musical, and the music should fit the lyrics). In terms of the relationship between music and lyrics, one participant noted:

...I'm not sure you can separate the two. If you want to write good lyrics write poetry if you want to write good music write music, don't write songs. If you want to write a song I think having good words to bad music is counterproductive and I think having bad lyrics to great music is counterproductive. ... I would be very reticent to separate the two. (Phil Winestock, Personal Communication, September 16, 2010)

For this participant, quality music and lyrics are equally necessary in the creation of songs.

Superficially, the relationship of music and lyrics reflects the divide in goals amongst Christian rock practitioners. Following this logic, different understandings of the utility of music connect to different goals in creating music. In this relationship the primacy of lyrics relate to the message or worship focus of separational. Here the lyric is the primary tool in spreading a Christian message. The primacy of music can relate to entertainment or integrational in that lyrics or messages are not as important as the impressions created by the music. Finally, the inseparable connection between music and

¹⁶ It is interesting to note that many who prioritize music over lyrics came to Christianity with musical identities established. These either converted later in life or grew up in musical families. The former will be discussed in more depth in chapter 6.

lyrics is one that can apply to any approach, though most strongly applies to the transformational artist who views both music and lyrics as part of their art. However, it should be noted that this is an oversimplification. There are those in ministry who view music as having an equal or greater role in creating good worship music. As one worship band leader put it: “my main thing is writing great music” (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009). He went on to explain why he aims for musical uniqueness:

So when you have all those elements in a song, you have all those elements that are going to engage quickly...When you change that a little bit, add the surprising, add different elements that are just great and beautiful, there's that moment for people, and I find it really rare when worship music has that moment intrinsically. (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009)

Here the focus on music gives this individual a means of separating himself from other worship music, and gain an audience. Similarly, there can be those in entertainment who focus on creating good lyrics over music, etc.

Performance Scripts

There are various scripts used within performances, such as the way lighting and sound are used, the ways musicians play, singers sing, or performers interact with the audience, which take into account differences in venue, type of audience, and the approach and goals of the performers doing the performance. Some will approach performance purely as a musical activity, whereas others will use it to evangelize or engage in worship. In what follows I will look at scripts in worship, entertainment and art approaches to Christian rock.

Those interested in worship follow different basic scripts depending on the venue and intended audience. For the professional worship rock practitioners, the *job* is to create an environment that promotes worship: getting folks to sing along and have a collective and individual experience. In this context, the scripts used are aimed towards standard practices of audience participation, including encouraging singing along, clapping hands, etc. Within worship rock music there is often an attempt to create social solidarity. Sometimes this is done through collective singing, through the sharing of stories and emotional experiences, or through the sharing of childhood nostalgia items, like the use of old Sesame Street footage¹⁷ used at one worship rock event I attended.

For those within worshipcore, scripts exist to entice audience participation, but often are only used when they “feel right”. For these performers, instead of trying to facilitate worship within the audience, worship is facilitated amongst the performers. The Worshipcore performer engages in worship on stage, if this happens to spill out to the audience, all the better. For worshipcore participants, many having rejected traditional church services, the concert is the closest thing they have to participation in communal, Christian worship activities. Their musical participation is their space for worship.

Related to worship is the notion of ministering to people. At one show I attended at a youth conference, the singer of the band began attempting to minister to the audience by talking about his conversion experience which took place during a failed suicide

¹⁷ In between bands, an old animated clip from Sesame Street was aired. The clip, which originated in 1977, featured the interior of a pinball machine and a song that included counting to 12 sung by the Pointer Sisters. Within Christian young adult/youth circles there is often an embrace of nostalgia and childhood kitsch as a counterbalance to what they see as the secular world’s embrace of superficial signs of adulthood (i.e. premarital sex, alcohol, etc.)

attempt. At the conclusion of the story, the singer asked for audience members to lower their heads, as he asked a succession of questions:

1. Who has considered suicide in the past 2 weeks?
2. Who has written a suicide note?
3. Who has planned on committing suicide before Monday?

As he talked, people were encouraged to raise their hands to receive prayer cards on which they will provide e-mail addresses to be on a suicide prevention mailing list, and receive a free band sticker. Speaking with some of the attendees after the show, I discovered that the band follows the same script for every show, or at least every show they had seen. In particular, one audience member commented, with some degree of cynicism, that many of the people that raised their hands for the prayer cards did so in order to get the free sticker, indicating that many of them had probably seen the band before and knew what to expect. If this was the case, this band's attempt at ministry ended up as entertainment, in that it provided a diversion or an inauthentic experience, where people simply followed the script rather than having the experience that band had aimed for¹⁸.

For those interested in entertainment, the purpose is to engage and put on a show. Entertainment in Christian rock can act somewhere in between ministry and art in that it can use elements of both approaches but neither acts as the main goal. Entertainment scripts are often indistinguishable from those of secular rock performances.

¹⁸ In a way this encapsulates the problems related to the separational approach: they try to evangelize, but end up with an audience of the converted, because other Christians are the only ones really aware or interested in the separational artists existence.

For those interested in art, the purpose of performance is to engage the audience on an emotional and musical level that creates a shared personal, but not necessarily spiritual, experience. This is in part a more nuanced approach to performance, where performers see themselves as attempting to connect to others and share some of themselves. In performing, people will attempt different scripts, from the interpersonal performer/audience relationships of folk type shows, to the spectacle that can be found in full-scale rock shows. The purpose is to get their art across above all other things.

All types of rock performance make some attempt at creating social solidarity, where individuals share an experience that takes them out of their individual self. This approach connects to Durkheim's notion of "collective effervescence", a foundational state for religious practice in which a group is collectively able to experience an external force to themselves that enables them to attempt to make larger changes (Durkheim, 1995: p. 220, 424)¹⁹. "Collective effervescence" allows for a way of losing oneself in the group, of being more than an individual, while also legitimating the activity through the creation of social solidarity and consensus.

Participation in acts of "collective effervescence" in Christian rock connects audiences and performers to each other and to their faith in social solidarity. Worship attempts to recreate community consciously, even with a sphere oriented towards an individualistic, personal faith: it is drawn from bringing together a number of people each having personal connections God. Entertainment aims to divert people from their normal lives, to share an enjoyable experience. Worship tends to aim for transcendence,

¹⁹ Durkheim argued that collective effervescence led to the notion of the "religious idea" (p. 220), placing religion as a fundamentally social practice.

entertainment aims for creating a good time, and art aims for a personal experience. Still, many in Christian rock aim for the transgressive.

Transgression Through the Mundane

While much of Christian rock aims at worship, entertainment or art, within each of these are performers that aim to disrupt or transgress. For them, Christian rock exists as a means of rebellion against both the secular world and notions of Christianity that participants reject. These acts of transgression can be found in performance and non-performance spaces.

There is a strong historical connection between adolescence, music and rebellion. These have manifested as different subcultures: Greasers, Teddy Boys, Mods, rockers, Hippies, Punks, Metal Heads, etc. All of these have—to a certain extent—represented rebellion from the “mainstream”. Acts of rebellion and transgression can be found at Christian rock concerts, expressed in some explicit ways both by fans and bands who attempt to resist both secular and religious behaviours. One of the ways this is done is by inverting typical rock behaviour.

At Christian rock concerts there is a tendency of participants to play up certain understandings of “traditional middle class” normalcy not usually accepted within rock music. Traditionally rock musicians have been people looked on as virtual transients with instruments, travelling from town to town, using rock music as a means for changing their identity²⁰. This contradicts a stability cherished by post-Victorian middle class

²⁰ Rock music is filled with those who have changed and adapted their selves, from the early shifts of Bob Dylan (from folk to rock to country) and the Beatles (from teen-pop to psychedelic to straight professional rock band), to the more self-conscious post-modern identity shifting of David Bowie.

sensibilities. Signs of rock lifestyles are often found at rock concerts, usually relating to the consumption of mass quantities of drugs or alcohol at such events. Foul language alongside talk of sex and drugs often appear in rock stage banter–dialogue spoken in between songs by band members to the audience that is sometimes spontaneous, while at other times only gives the illusion of spontaneity²¹. This is part of the ritual of the rock concert.

In Christian rock shows, this banter takes on a very different character. On two occasions, I encountered individuals making reference to band members leaving for family reasons: in one case the bass player of a band spoke about being recently married, in another case the audience was told that the lead singer was absent because he had to return home to be with his sick mother-in-law. Both of these announcements were greeted with extremely positive responses, and the point being made was that the show came after familial responsibility. This inverts much of the accepted practice of rock concerts, where such claims would not necessarily fit the image of a rebellious rock star. For Christian rock musicians, these differences are tied to ideas of responsibility in relation to issues of promiscuity, drug use, and violence on and off stage. By laying claim to responsibility, Christian rock musicians are rejecting the stereotypes of rock music, and laying claim to a different type of rebellion that attempts to reject the ills of the secular world in place of “wholesome fun”. Ultimately, by rejecting certain aspects of rock culture, a kind of legitimacy is given to Christian rock as a rebellion against

²¹ For example there is the oft used rock stage banter cliché: “Hello (city being played)! Are you ready to rock?”

The KISS album **Alive!** features stage banter wherein band members ask the crowd if they like to “get high” and “drink alcohol.” (Kiss, 1976)

rebellion. While Christian rock participants do not tend to criticize or condemn non-Christians, they are attempting to present an alternative that is appealing to non-Christians²².

This rebellion is acted out onstage. As previously mentioned, at one concert, a band's lead singer stated that: "2000 years later, Jesus is still pissing people off". He went on to make an identity claim by referring to himself as an "underground kid who is helping the church", even though he said that "organized religion is a spirit from hell". The sentiment presented in this case, and reaffirmed throughout my research, is that Christianity should be rebellious and dissenting.

At one conference I attended there were books with titles like **Unchristian** and **The End of Religion: Encountering the Subversive Spirituality of Jesus**. These books attempt to play up the difference between real Christianity as something spiritual and personal versus organized religion which is impersonal and dogmatic. While this differentiation has long been a part of various denominations of evangelical Protestantism, the way it is addressed in this context, tied to notions of youth rebellion, puts it in a different context than simple individualism. It provides a re-encoding of the myth of the rebellious teenager in a script that can be acted out by Christian youth. Christian rock takes the form of the secular concert in many ways, but receiving the encoded understanding and scripts of the form it remakes it in its own image. By making claims about Christianity as rebellious, Christian rock musicians also invert the idea of rock as rebellion.

²² I would also argue that the lack of criticism towards non-Christians is related to criticism being drawn inward towards the self or other Christians. This will be discussed in further detail in chapter 6.

For Christian rock, this type of transgression is a tool with which they can claim legitimacy internally and externally (that is claim legitimacy from other Christian rock participants and from outsiders). It is a way for Christian rock to connect itself to the discourses and ideology of rock. By framing themselves as rebelling against the rebellion, Christian rock performers aim to draw in outsiders attracted to the rebellious aspects of rock.

This approach to transgression is closely tied to notions of the separational, which sees Christianity as being separate from the rest of the world. What is created is a sense of Christianity as a counterculture or subculture. Paradoxically though, the separational approach aspires to be a mix of subculture and movement, defending the identity against the world while actively recruiting and expanding the membership. It is a paradox that will be explored in greater depth when looking at issues of identity.

Conclusion

By looking at the practices of Christian rock, I was able to look at the field of Christian rock, how the habitus is created in relation to non-performance and performance spaces and the meanings attributed to those spaces. The habitus of the field Christian rock helped determine the scope at which Christian rock participants operate, allowing me to look at issues of legitimation, scale, scripts and transgression in relation to the goals of worship, entertainment and art, or separational, transformational and integrational.

In general, Christian rock in Canada is smaller, particularly compared to the United States, operating with far less in the way of major venues, radio and other forms of infrastructure. Canadian Christian rock exists on a smaller scale that has parallels with

subcultures in that it is a small field with distinct identities and practices that are protected. However, Christian rock also attempts at bringing in others, at proselytizing and expanding, in a manner similar to new social movements.

Practices within the field of Christian rock are tied into the identities of those involved. In what follows, I will look at the categorizations of Christian rock participants, their career paths and how their individual and collective identities tie in to the aims and goals of participants. Following this, I will discuss which aims and identities fit with subcultures and which fit with new social movements.

Chapter 6: Christian Rock Identities

Introduction

In the previous chapter I examined Christian rock practices and uses of space in relation to worship/ministry, entertainment and art. In doing so I looked at issues of scale and legitimacy in attempting to understand Christian rock as a subculture or new social movement.

In this chapter I will look at identities in Christian rock, particularly in relation to issues of authenticity. Evaluations of authenticity related to individual and collective identity are paramount in distinguishing between insiders and outsiders (Owens, et al, 2010: p. 491). As such, authentic identity represents a key factor in subcultures and to a lesser extent in social movements.

Within Christianity, questions of authenticity are related to the evaluations by Christians of themselves, by other Christians and by non-Christians. One participant explained that she spends time interrogating herself:

“doing my work on myself, getting to know myself... constantly asking ‘How do I feel about this?’ ‘Is this right for me?’” (Ruth Powers, Personal Communication, May 7, 2009)

The continuous evaluation of self relates to Foucault’s ideas about how individuals self-monitor through self-work, self-assessment, self-interrogation and care of self via pastoral power (Foucault, 1983). Originating in relation to Christian institutions, pastoral power draws on promises of heaven and fears of hell as reasons for self-monitoring behaviour. In relation to authenticity, the constant evaluations determine if the individual or group in question is truly “Christian”. By extension, the questioning of authenticity within

Christianity is central and is commonly used within Christian rock to evaluate collective and individual identities, to separate the “saved” from the “unsaved”.

In this chapter I will look at collective (Christian, rock, Christian rock) and individual (personal) identities in Christian rock and how these relate to issues concerning subcultures and new social movements. The focus of this chapter will be on identities that people attach to themselves at different stages of involvement in Christian rock and how these reflect how individuals see themselves and their participation in Christian rock as authentic at different stages of their involvement. In order to do so, I will first look at the different roles people take in Christian rock. Following this I will look at narratives around recruitment, active participation, and exiting Christian rock. Lastly I will look at issues of claims to authentic and legitimate identities before delving into the identities attached to Howard and Streck’s approaches of separational, integrational and transformational.

Christian Rock Roles

In looking at identities in Christian rock, it is important to look at roles available within Christian rock as a means of better understanding the field and where people fit in to it. These roles, in turn, help in understanding the activities undertaken and how these relate to the ongoing construction of identity that individuals have within Christian rock. That is roles provide a means by which one can understand how the world is ordered, while identities offer an understanding in how the world is interpreted. The roles of

Christian rock include: musicians, audience/fans, youth leaders, DJs, promoters, producers, record industry employees and retailers¹.

Christian Rock Musicians

Christian rock musicians are those that play, perform and ensure the continued existence of Christian rock. In looking at Christian rock musicians, one can divide them into 4 different groups: amateur, aspiring, professional and those formerly active (retired amateurs or professionals).

Amateurs represent those musicians who purposefully enjoy playing and creating music, with no interest in becoming professional.

Well, I want to keep recording. There's no goal in the sense of being discovered or being signed to a label or making a fortune at it or anything....My goal is to find new creative ways of doing it (James Marmet, Personal Communication, November 16, 2009).

For amateurs there is a need to record and perform for themselves and their creativity has no aim outside of their own satisfaction. Amateurs will concentrate on writing and playing as a hobby rather than as a career. In this context there is no sense of wanting to reach an audience, influence others, use their music as a proclamation of their faith or change the world. Amateurism centres on individual practitioners who use their amateurism as a part of their identity.

The aspiring Christian rock musician is one who wishes to have a professional career as a musician. These are often concerned with finding regular gigs, developing contacts, building up a fan base, improving their recordings, etc. For most aspiring

¹ In conducting my research I interviewed 33 individuals, which I could put into the following categories. It should be noted that there is some overlap, with musicians as fans or youth leaders, fans as promoters, Musicians-30 Audience/fans- 25 Youth leaders-4-5 DJs – 1 Promoters – 2-3 Record Industry Employees-1 Retailers-1

Canadian Christian rock musicians, the pursuit of a Christian rock career is done through a Do-It-Yourself approach, often using social media (Facebook, MySpace, etc.), youth and music oriented magazines with a Christian perspective (**C.C.M., HM, Cornerstone Magazine, Phantom Tollbooth, Campus Life**), and attempting to appeal to youth leaders and radio DJs. These individuals are attempting to make Christian rock a bigger part of their identity.

Professional Christian rock musicians are those who tour and release music regularly, and whose recordings are fairly widely available (often from online sources and Christian bookstores). These musicians are connected to contacts and social networks aspiring musicians look for. For the most part, these musicians see their activity within Christian rock as a career, and view their career as a defining characteristic of their identity.

Retired Christian rock musicians are those who once participated in Christian rock, usually either as aspiring or professional musicians who have since ended this part of their career. They often come to occupy similar space to amateurs, or completely separate themselves from Christian rock entirely.

Audience/Fans

The audience/fans are those that consume the music, either in live settings or through the consumption of recorded music. They are the consumers of Christian rock. Their fandom can manifest in various ways: attending concerts, buying and listening to music, talking and reading about music, etc. Without an audience, Christian rock as a field could not exist.

Youth Leader, DJs and Promoters

Youth Leaders and DJs act as facilitators and promoters of the music. Youth Leaders promote the music by making suggestions to church youth, taking youth to events, etc. They often act as recruiters into Christian music. DJs are promoters of music most predominantly on radio, where they play what they feel is important for people to hear. This can be based on what is popular, or what is seen as being good in relation to one's taste:

I keep track of a lot of American Christian Rock radio. I play as much new music as possible. So if a band has a record coming out I try to play that...I try to play as much new music as possible. (Nathaniel O'Doyle, Personal Communication, July 15, 2009)

Promoters are those who book/arrange shows. Most inhabiting these roles start as fans, and increase their fandom by taking on a more active role. These individuals all operate at a semi-professional or professional level, and often act as gatekeepers, determining for their audience what is acceptable, and what is not.

Recording Industry Employees

Recording industry employees include those working for industry associations, record company employees (which can include producers, executives, etc.) and independent producers. All of these aim to create a cohesive, professional field.

Employees of industry associations attempt to create professional networks for Christian musicians. In Canada this work is mostly done by the Canadian Gospel Music Association. They do this through professional recognition, such as the Covenant Awards and by encouraging networking and mentoring:

...one of the beauties of GMA Canada is we've been able to bring those people together, where the more experienced artists can mentor the more up and coming...I think the biggest thing the artists get out of that is the sense of community, coming together where a new artist can hang with somebody who's been doing it for awhile and those new artists can three or four years later end up becoming mentors for the people who follow them. (John Lemon, Personal Communication, May 26, 2010)

Producers and record executives are professionals who enable and manufacture recordings. Producers that were spoken to were interested in promoting professionalism, networking, and recording the highest quality music on both recording and aesthetic levels:

If I ever talk to bands...I try to get them recording contacts and set them up and stuff. I do as much as I can to get them to stay away from local or home recordings. I tell them to go into the studio because even if you get 3 songs done, it's better to get 3 good songs out. (Preston Fender, Personal Communication, January 10, 2018)

These producers see their role as helping musicians navigate the field of Christian rock by holding them to professional standards that mirror those of secular rock.

For those working within the recording industry, there is a sense that promotion of the product, building interpersonal networks and creating a professional scene (or scenes) is the key to Christian Music's survival in Canada.

Retailers

Traditionally, retailers of Christian rock have been Christian bookstores. Historically, they were responsible for most Christian music sales and as such, acted as de facto gatekeepers. However, in the last ten years, many of these have closed. Instead, the selling of music has gone online or into the hands of musicians and, as such, the role for retailers as gatekeepers of Christian rock has diminished significantly.

Having looked at practitioners within Christian rock, it is important to look at how people came to be active within Christian rock.

Recruitment

In looking at Christian rock, I will now look at how people are recruited or become active in Christian rock. Recruitment narratives allow me to look at Christian rock as a subculture or a new social movement, as the two have distinct methods of recruitment: subcultures have relatively passive recruitment; new social movements have more active recruitment that is often undertaken through existing networks.

In a 2012 study, Nancy Shaefer claimed that Christian rock was commonly used as a tool to recruit and “raise excitement in members” (Shaefer, 2012: p. 55). In other words, Christian rock acts as a means of proselytization and motivation for young Christians. In order to look at recruitment, it is important to examine the conversion narratives of members: those who came to Christianity early in life, those who had conversion experiences as children or adolescents, or those who converted in adulthood. I will relate how their experiences connect to their earliest exposure to Christian rock.

Those connected to Christian rock at an early age usually grew up within evangelical Christianity. For them Christianity was always present in their lives.

I sort of grew up in a Christian household, always went to church, accepted Christ at a young age. (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)
I've been going to church my whole life, I would say I've been a Christian since I was about 13 years old. (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009)

In this context, knowledge of Christianity was often viewed as “cultural” in nature, in that for those that grew up within this Christianity it was the norm and not something they had

to seek. Here Christian rock was often something they were introduced to by parents, their peers, media, or their church. Many evangelicals saw Christian rock as the only popular music open to them:

At that young age, I considered mainstream music to be sinful and considered Christian music to be the safe alternative (Samuel Osmond, Personal Communication, May 12, 2009).

This view of secular music speaks to a normative framing of behaviour based on negation or avoidance, and a view of identity relating to what one is not rather than what one is. This framing portrays mainstream music as a possible corrupter of Christians, bringing us back to many of the arguments made against Christian rock music in the 1970s (See Introduction). For young Christians who were seen as being particularly vulnerable in their new, religious identity, the risk involved in listening to non-Christian music was too great. Because of this risk, young Christians required the aid of parents and church leaders in order to differentiate between morally good and bad music. Sometimes parents and church leaders saw Christian rock as bad music.

When you asked me that I sort of remember some of my friends hiding her [Amy Grant's] tapes under their pillows and listening to her in secret, even though it was Christian music, our church was so against it. I listened to it. I was introduced to it through a friend, and I wasn't supposed to, but my parents by that time were realizing it was getting a little ridiculous, and y'know bad girls listen to Christian rock. (Ruth Powers, Personal Communication, May 7, 2009)

For many people there existed a deviance and resistance in consuming Christian rock, one that saw this consumption as transgressive. Parental opposition, often a strong reference point in the development of adolescent taste and identity, here represented a force which Christian practitioners defined themselves in relation to, à la subcultures.

For other Christian rock participants there was often an epiphanal moment or “catalytic experience” (Cherry, 2015: p. 61) that led them to Christianity. These types of conversions could impact both those who grew up in Christianity and those who did not. For most evangelical Christians, the conversion experience, when they were “born again” was an important event because it forms the core of their religious experience.

Many of these came to Christian rock through youth groups or Christian media: Youth groups in particular used music as a recruitment tool and as a means to introduce individuals to evangelical culture:

When we started attending church, I attended a youth group, and some other youth introduced me to bands like dc Talk, the Supertones, Skillet, etc. (Samuel Osmond, Personal Communication, May 12, 2009)

Similarly, others discovered Christian rock on their own in their teens through radio or other media: “...when I was in junior high school I started listening to Christian radio” (Mary Lamshead, Personal Communication, December 21, 2009).

For these participants, secular music was something they often voluntarily rejected or purged when they underwent a conscious conversion to Christianity². Purgers were led to believe that secular music was either inherently evil or that their faith was not strong enough to tolerate and overcome the problems that the music could cause them. The purging was often in part instigated by attitudes learned from peers and religious

² The purging of secular music from one’s collection is in some ways akin to the purging that occurs in hardcore punk. For practitioners of hardcore, the discovery of the music led to a purging of those records that did not fit within the parameters of the ideology of hardcore. This purge was often seen as a sign of commitment (Attfield, 2011: p. 83).

leaders³ and involved eliminating consumption of non-Christian music, else the recent convert might come to engage in secular activities like premarital sex, witchcraft, or drug and alcohol consumption. Through listening, these individuals would put themselves at risk. Purging allowed them to demonstrate their commitment to their new Christian identity, and also allowed others to monitor them to ensure they were true Christians⁴. Indeed, some current Christian musicians saw secular music to be dangerous, particularly for newer Christians:

I tell young people at the church that you should really listen to music that's going to edify you, that's going to help your walk with God...You really have to be discerning but I don't put all secular music in a box and say "It's all evil, let's burn it." but you definitely need to be discerning. For someone who's not discerning or someone who's easily influenced, I would say "Don't even go into that room. Focus your life on God and listen to what's going to help you." It's a really individual thing, not everybody can handle mainstream music, they really need Christian music. (Mary Lambshead, Personal Communication, December 21, 2009)

Again, for newer Christians, secular music is viewed as possibly dangerous as it could potentially lead to a lapse into their former, non-Christian identity. Monitoring the listening habits of new Christians is a means of gate keeping, of determining who is committed to their faith and who is not.

For all that came to Christian rock in their youth, the music provided a connection to others of a similar belief as well as aiding them in the creation and maintenance of their

³ In his work **Rock: Practical Help For Those Who Listen to the Words and Don't Like What They Hear** (1980), Bob Larson, writing primarily to parents, discussed the needs for purging "dangerous" items, quoting Deuteronomy 7:26 (NRSV):

Do not bring an abhorrent thing into your house, or you will be set apart for destruction like it. You must utterly detest and abhor it, for it is set apart for destruction

⁴ Interestingly, once one has been a Christian for awhile, and their identity was seen as firmly established (or they have accumulated enough social capital) they often reacquired the secular music they had earlier purged.

own identity. For one participant the discovery of Christian hardcore band Underoath in university reaffirmed his faith and his understanding of Christianity:

I guess in the first years in university I came across a band by the name of Underoath which is just kind of a really popular Christian hardcore band. And my discovery that Christian music could also be really heavy, that could be really expressive and could say a lot more than the things you usually hear expressed at church. Things that weren't explicitly in the Christian language, without speaking of the grace and the blood and all of that, kind of this more raw (sic), which I thought was more real sort of faith I saw in the first Christian bands I connected to. I connected with that and thought there was something maybe a little more true in this kind of music, and I connected to the raw passion and emotion connected to it. It just seemed more real to me, it felt more genuine. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

For this respondent Christian rock provided music that was as pleasurable as secular music but provided something more than was found in evangelical churches. The message that the music conveyed added to and went beyond the message found in the institutional setting of church. This experience of music was more fulfilling than what was found in explicitly religious institutions. However, this message was primarily understood at the individual level: that is, it connected to the individual, not necessarily to the individual in relation to a faith group. Instead Christian rock often supplemented individual emotional and intellectual experiences, allowing individuals to become who they want to become and provide support to their image of the self. These experiences might connect them to similar like minded music fans, but did not necessarily connect them to a particular religious institution.

Lastly are those who converted to Christianity in adulthood. For those who attached themselves to Christian rock later in life, a connection was formed between their pre-existing musical interest and their new religious identity:

I didn't really become interested in Christian music, I just became interested in music and then I'm a Christian, so those two things met. (Benjamin Farr, Personal Communication, July 24, 2009)

These new participants were often either connected via fandom of rock music, or a participation in rock music as local musicians in local secular rock scenes and becoming involved with other Christian musicians aided in their solidification of their new identity.

The recruitment of individuals to Christian rock can be compared to the recruitment of people to Veganism as described in **Veganism as a Cultural Movement: a Relational Approach** (Cherry, 2006). In relation to recruitment, Cherry sees two paths that individuals can take: through punk music and the surrounding culture (group) and through their own individual quest for education and self-improvement (individually). Similarly, many typically come to evangelical Christianity and Christian rock through family and peer groups, whereas others come on their own. Those that come through family and peer groups are recruited in a similar manner to those found in new social movements: through active networks. For those Christians that recruit through these networks the act of recruitment is a matter of religious duty. For family it is a question of raising children in the religious tradition, for peers it is a question of evangelizing. Similarly, depending on their view of secular music, recruiting to Christian rock can also be a matter of duty. For others, it can be a process of discovery.

Recruitment to Christian rock takes various forms: from those who grew up with it, to those who were introduced to it via youth groups or media, to those who came to it following a conversion in adulthood. For recruits, Christian rock is a means of

identification that enables connecting to like minded individuals externally. It also connects to something of themselves internally:

Again, like I said earlier, my reaction was that it definitely touched me on a deeper level than say a lot of the mainstream music. It was definitely much more inspiring, it excited my heart more...It wasn't as clearly impacting on my heart as Christian music was. (David Isaacson, Personal Communication, January 28, 2010)

... It just resounds deeper within me, so I'm able to I guess use their lyrics as theology. That's kind of weird but I guess that's kind of how it's impacted me. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

These individuals found a connection between Christian rock and what they saw as their core self. For them, Christian rock helped expand their identification with Christianity.

Active Participant Identity & Authenticity

From recruitment, individuals become active participants within Christian rock, displaying commitment (Cherry, 2015: 56) and demonstrating a Christian rock identity. For Christians a primary concern related to identity is that of authenticity (Sandler: p. 112). Among Christians, there exists the assumption that every thought is known to God and therefore it is important to not simply do good works, but to have a purity of intention and thought. That is, Christians are to present themselves to the world in a way that reflects their core self rather than an illusory self which is seen as hypocritical.

In looking at Christian rock it is important to note the ongoing negotiation between religious identity (Christianity) and musical identity (rock). Within this negotiation, questions of authenticity come to the fore. In what follows I will look at issues related to religious and musical identities with special attention paid to issues of

authenticity and boundaries. Following this I will examine how issues of religious versus musical identity are negotiated within Christian rock.

Religious Identities Within Christian Rock

For most religious traditions, the religion acts as a sort of master status under which all other identities are subsumed. Being religious requires adhering to a certain set of demands (in a similar manner to how activities in social movements and subcultures can bring meaning to participants) that can bring to focus an identity that is totalizing or all-encompassing: “How would I describe it? It's definitely everything I am, it's a part of who I am”. (David Isaacson, Personal Communication, January 28, 2010) For most participants in Christian rock, their faith is what comes first, and their participation in Christian rock is an offshoot of their faith:

I didn't really become interested in Christian music, I just became interested in music and then I'm a Christian, so those two things met....And then through the lens of being a Christian...what comes out is just naturally communicating my own worldview, and my own values. (Benjamin Farr, Personal Communication, July 24, 2009)

Here is an identity centered on faith, and identity that requires ones faith be reflected in all aspects of existence: private, public, social and psychological. Their faith acts as a catalyst of an ethic of self; wherein one follows a set of behaviours and values that cut across all other roles or social space. Here it becomes important, even necessary, for all activities, including hobbies and interests to connect to faith. In that sense, for an evangelical musician, it makes sense to create “Christian” music (indeed for many this is the only acceptable kind of music).

For evangelical Christians, their religious identity is most closely tied to their faith and what they see as their “personal relationship with Christ⁵”. It is an interior relationship that is supposed to manifest through outward behaviour⁶. Evangelical Christians, centering their faith on notions of having a personal relationship generally reject the classification of their faith as a religion:

I think if I were to define it to a person who was non-Christian I think I would tell them I was a born again believer, I’m not a religious person. I have a personal relationship with Jesus. I’m not a person who believes that rules and traditions are important but they are something we would want to do to follow God but they're not necessary to the faith. (Preston Fender, Personal Communication, January 18, 2010)

Instead of being religious, people see themselves as having faith or being spiritual. They view religion as “institutionalized dogma” which is “inherently against individual inquiry”, or an individual focus which can be found at the centre of spirituality (Ecklund & Long, 2011: pp. 261-262). As one participant explained it:

Religion, religiosity is any time I have to do A, B, and C to achieve this. I have to do these steps to achieve this. Spirituality is all about letting go. (Ruth Powers, Personal Communication, May 7, 2009)

⁵ A personal relationship with Christ is a direct, one-on-one relationship between the adherent and Christ that many evangelical Christians claim. In part this serves the function of completing part of the project of the reformation: the elimination of an intermediary between any believer and God. It could be argued that this serves the function of turning something social into something centred on the individual, wherein their relationship with other Christians is mediated through their relationship with Christ or God.

In *The Postmodern Sacred* (2010), McAvan argued that transcendence, going beyond the mundane, was most commonly addressed within the mass media (p. 7) where ideas of individualist, “new age” spirituality (p. 9) often replaced the collective religious practices that used to be the main source for the pursuit of “transcendence (p. 18). The embrace of this individualist spirituality is seen in contrast to religion, and connects itself to evangelical culture through the stressing of the supernatural, as in the apocalyptic *Left Behind* series (p. 13).

⁶ In Max Weber’s *The Protestant Ethic & the Spirit of Capitalism* (1920), the author argued that the two ways of knowing one was saved were through simply believing one was saved (p. 65), and through continuous work, which would banish the doubt as regards to one’s status (p. 66). As such, being of the saved elect was a matter of both faith and works.

For these individuals religion is devalued in relation to the spiritual. For them religion relates to rules and expectations while spirituality relates to freedom from these. What this ends up doing is making their practice and belief individually focussed, and not so much concerned with a faith community as such.

As such, for many evangelical Christians, the personal nature of their faith separates them from religious institutions. This separation extends to other forms of Christianity and other Christians.

“While I continue to attend ‘church,’ I do not identify myself with Christianity. Believing that Americanized Christianity is, as a religion, a failed experiment”.
(Luke Kane, Personal Communication, October 16, 2009).

Similarly, many of those interviewed find institutional, denominational identifications to be unnecessary⁷:

...for me denomination is more of a title than anything. As long as the church is preaching the Gospel the way it should be preached what's the point in the denomination kind of thing. (Nathaniel O'Doyle, Personal Communication, July 15, 2009)

For these Christians, the important thing is the practice of their faith and their self-identification, not the institutional label. The rejection of institutional religious labels creates a kind of post-modern approach to religion, where there are no collective

⁷ Some viewed distinct denominational practices as important. For one participant, who came from an evangelical background, the allure of Catholicism was strong in so much as he preferred Catholic practices: ... but I like the mystical elements of the mass. I find I'm able to connect with God on that level, even though I'm not able to take communion because I'm not a baptized Catholic, I enjoy going to mass and going through the motions of their communion without taking part in the ritual just because I find a connection to God in the penitence that they emphasize. I really, really like liturgical music as well... (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)
That said however, the participant still felt attached to the Protestant Community, “I prefer the community of the evangelical church.” (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010).

absolutes or ideals to live up to. Instead, people consume their faith individually by selecting that which fits their individual spirituality.

For the religious identity of evangelicals, the opinions of outsiders or the general public are often taken into account in unexpected ways. Attacks from outsiders are often seen as persecution: “That’s something that they [Church leaders] really fostered growing up, the idea of being persecuted for your faith” (Bazan in Beaujon, 2006: 250). For many within Evangelical Christianity, persecution was seen as a sign that their faith was strong. As such, persecution was seen as a positive development that made practitioners believe themselves to be more legitimate and authentic.

Within evangelical Christianity, the religious or spiritual identity is more focussed on the individual than the collective. This identity relates strongly to the individual and their perceived relationship with God rather than their relationship with other Christians. However, the collective identity emerges when it is realized that this approach to individual, religious-faith based identity is the identity that is held in common. Here evangelical Christianity emerges as a community of individualists. Having looked at identities within Christianity, I will now turn to the practices of identity within Christian rock.

Practices of Identity Within Christian Rock

For practitioners, Christian rock provides a collective and an individual identity that is strongly tied to their religious practice of Christianity. The uses of identity in Christian rock vary. For most practitioners, the greater focus is on the Christian aspect,

which acts as a master status, and it is from this that they derive all their personal meanings.

Within Christian rock, musical activity is strongly connected to religious activity. In Howard and Streck's **Apostles of Rock** (1999), the authors examine the connection of music and evangelical Christianity:

Among evangelicals, music is believed to facilitate a more authentic and active religious experience. Thus, debates over the nature of Christian music and its appropriate manifestations...are to a large degree debates about the nature of Christianity and the Christian experience.... (p. 6)

The centrality of music in this type of religious practice allows for a greater religious experience for individual participants and the group as a whole.

For those in Christian rock, rock music allows for the expression of their Christianity either through worship ("I know people who choose the church they attend based on the worship." (Mary Glass, Personal Communication, August 23, 2009)), or the formation of an identity centred on transgressing established norms:

4: ... Some nights I'll talk...about the flaws in churches and so on.
2: Which is extremely easily misinterpreted because kids who don't have any idea about church, when they hear us say stuff like "The church has flaws," or stuff like that. Like Deathstar, when they were a band they had a shirt like "stop religion", and kids would take that as an anti-Christian thing, but they don't know that us being like Christians, view Christianity as not being a religion but being a faith and a personal relationship. (GOTG, Personal Communication, November 11, 2009)

There is a sense that Christian rock is seen as a means of expressing their religious-faith identities.

For others, Christian rock is a means of expressing their musical identity. For these participants, Christianity provides an outlet for them to play music, but does not

influence what type of music they choose to play. For these individuals, there is often a strong sense that what they are doing is “cool” regardless of their faith: “I can ‘rock out’ ...within my personal beliefs.” (John Knotts, Personal Communication, May 11, 2009)

Some rock musicians may classify themselves as Christian but try to avoid the label of Christian rock entirely, by avoiding religious venues, Christian labels and retail (Joseph, 1999). In some cases, an artist’s reluctance to be labelled as Christian rock reflects their dissatisfaction with the baggage of Christian rock. Some performers feel called to the larger world, and see the “Christian rock” identity as limiting to their chances of success in the secular music world.

For those that embrace the label of “Christian rock”, particularly in the United States there can be a built-in audience connected to networks of youth groups, Christian radio and other areas of the Christian music industry. However, this can easily become stifling as they are unable to break into the secular market, attempting to move from separational towards integrational (Howard & Streck, 1999). In the case of Pedro the Lion, Dave Bazan went out of his way to distance himself from the Christian audience that had initially embraced him, purposefully playing bars, swearing and drinking in order to get out of an environment he felt trapped in (Beaujon, 2006: pp. 75-94)⁸.

Many of these individuals, rather than being in Christian bands, often identify as being “Christians in a band”, and are often viewed suspiciously by those within Christian rock:

⁸ Bazan originally signed to Tooth & Nail records in the late 1990s. Though quickly embraced by certain elements of the Christian rock world, Bazan would come to see his status as a burden. Oddly “Pedro the Lion” became a project documenting Bazan's struggle with his Christianity and the Christian subculture (Beaujon: 83). By the early 21st century, Bazan began to openly question his faith (p. 87) and, by the end of the first decade, no longer viewed himself as a Christian (Hopper, 2009).

The role of the Christian in a band, if you're a follower of Jesus Christ, in everything you do you've got to give it back to him. God gives you a talent use it for him and he's going to multiply it. If you're a Christian person and you believe that Jesus Christ is God then how could you not want to celebrate that? Your life and your love and all your struggles through life in music are celebrated with God as a backdrop. If you're a Christian and you don't do Christian music I would just question why? How strong is your faith or where is your faith at? Because at the end of the thing there's nothing to sing about outside of God. (Preston Fender, Personal Communication, January 18, 2010)

Those that criticize the “Christian in a band” do so on the basis that they view the religious identity is naturally dominant, subsuming musical identity completely. These remarks point to the process of evaluating legitimacy of faith claims. Implicitly there is a distinction between true believers (who subsume practice and other identities to the religious), and those who don't. By stating that “there's nothing to sing about outside of God”, the respondent implies that those who do not sing about God are deluding themselves. The remarks also imply a hierarchy in which claims to cultural capital signifying legitimacy and authenticity are ranked in relation to how one's musical practice reflects their faith.

For Christians within Christian rock, there is a tendency to see Christianity as the dominant or master status within which their participation in music is enacted. Rock then becomes a secondary identity that participants operate within. This is not to say that the musical aspect is not important. On the contrary, musical questions related to the ideology of rock are often found within Christian rock.

The Ideology of Rock Within Christian Rock

The ideology of rock emphasizes a preoccupation with the evaluation of authenticity that aids in separating insiders from outsiders (Keightley, 2001: p. 131).

Authenticity within Christian rock relates to the ideology of rock's focus on self-expression and musical traditions, or in other words personal and musical authenticity.

Personal authenticity relates to the intentions and actions of the participant, including the creation and performance of music, and to what extent intentions and actions line up with the way they are perceived by themselves and others. In part this authenticity connects to notions of self-expression: is the music created a true expression of the self.

Within Christianity, questions of personal authenticity often relate to the intentions and actions of the adherent:

Z: Is your authenticity defined by the purity of intention?

CS: I think so, yeah. Hopefully, what's at the centre is going to come out.

Hopefully if I'm striving to be a good person, hopefully my actions will show that I'm a good person, and I try to legitimately reach people. (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)

The self-evaluation of Christians allows for an assessment of authenticity that focuses on whether individuals are "true to themselves" in both their intention and action. This truthfulness extends to their musical activities in that they are trying to have their music reflect themselves accurately:

I'm hoping to keep it true to my faith, more as a reflection of who I am in my art...a self portrait sort of thing. (Ruth Powers, Personal Communication, May 7, 2009)

The goal of keeping one's music and musical persona consistent with oneself and one's faith, of keeping it authentic, is central to both Christianity and the ideology of rock. This is evaluated by the self, one's peers within Christian rock and the general public.

The authenticity of Christian rock music is often assessed in relation to self-expression. One participant viewed rock as “a genre with less restrictions [sic] and more feelings of passions and freedom expressed through music” (John Knotts, Personal Communication, May 11, 2009). However he felt that many within Christian music displayed, “... less genuinity [sic] or passion in the songs, or what some would term a more ‘hokey’ feeling...” (John Knotts, Personal Communication, May 11, 2009). This is also the case for Christian rock, which is divided between ministry, entertainment and art.

Musical authenticity relates to musical stylistic connections to musical traditions. In relation to musical authenticity, Christian rock is sometimes engaged in justifying itself through claims tying it to the roots of rock music. For early practitioners, such as Larry Norman, the connection was obvious: the roots of rock music were in the church:

Larry saw the whole business of Jesus rock as poetic justice. Rock came from rhythm and blues, and rhythm and blues came from gospel. Elvis didn't make up rock 'n' roll; he heard it in the black churches of Tupelo, Mississippi. He was getting young Christians to embrace music that white churches had rejected because of their protracted racism. What could be more appropriate? (Thornbury, 2018: p. 64)

The claims to authenticity made by Norman and those like him were based on the connection of rock to black music. Some Christian rock musicians see little connection between other Christian rock and these musics. As one participant stated:

It all goes back to the Blues. How comfortable are people going back to that? They're comfortable being bluesy but people don't go as roots-y as in other styles of music. The reason there isn't like Christian folk festivals or Christian blues festivals is because Christians are so desperate to stay current and adopt the current stylings because that's where the money is. (Benjamin Farr, Personal Communication, July 24, 2009)

Here Christian rock participants see other Christian rock music as musically inauthentic.

This however, is a minority position.

Most within Christian rock see the music as merely a tool for the message. For these participants, any music can be Christian so long as the lyrics or intent reflect one's faith:

You can have Christian music from Newfoundland with a fiddle singing a hymn to a dude in Florida banging on a bongo. Anything can be Christian really, if your heart and the words coming out of your mouth are just worshipping. That's what being Christian is about, just worshipping, worshipping God, right? (GOTG, Personal Communication, November 11, 2009).

This gets back to the issue of self-expression wherein Christian rock authenticity is derived from how the lyrics reflected the individual and their faith. For anti-rock evangelist Bob Larson, lyrics, goals and motives of musicians were the means of determining whether the music of Christian musicians was acceptably Christian or non-Christian (1980: pp. 99-100). As such, Christian rock instrumentals represent a problem within Christian rock:

...the people that were down on Christian rock music because of the music, those same people would be furious if you did music even that they liked with no lyrics and said it was Christian music. Because there's no lyrics [sic], but they'll argue that Christian rock is wrong because of the music. (Phil Winestock, Personal Communication, September 16, 2010)

For most Christian rock there exists an asymmetrical relationship between religion and music, where the most important measures of authenticity relate to the spiritual/religious nature of the music and how this reflects the experiences and "true self" of the performer, rather than the musical elements stressed within the ideology of rock.

Exiting Christian Rock

It is the nature of the identity project for identities to change over time. Rarely do adults remain in youth cultures their entire lives, and, for those that remain past their youth, change in personal musical identity and subcultural attachment is generally common (i.e. Goth (Hodkinson, 2012), punk (Bennett, 2013)). For adults within Goth there is a tendency to assimilate to dominant adulthood roles (Hodkinson: p. 1080), but still retain ties to Goth via clothing, musical tastes, and the ideals that they drew from the Goth scene (Hodkinson: p. 1084). The role of older participants in punk is often that of historian (Bennett: 219-235). However, those that stay are the minority as most simply outgrow the subculture. Similarly, within social movements, individual careers will often change if individuals become disillusioned with what they see around them (Bannister, 2006: 81), and stop believing the movement represents them (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: p. 291).

For participants of Christian rock, exiting is usually caused by one of two factors: a change in musical identity over time, or a change in religious identity over time. In both cases, people find that their individual identity no longer aligns with that of the group (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: p. 292). In what follows I will look at those who depart from Christian rock for reasons of time commitment, or change in musical or religious identity.

For older Christian rock participants, involvement often drops over time as they no longer have the energy or resources to commit to music professionally or semi-

professionally. As other commitments pile up, participants come to see that kind of musical activity as the sphere of younger people:

If you ask a young guy, and I know a lot of young guys in Christian bands, I've met a lot of them just through my business, and they're out there slugging away, maybe the third opening act for some bigger band, and they're touring away, and they're doing it but they're young and they're loving it, and that's what they should be doing. (James Marmet, Personal Communication, November 16, 2009)

These individuals often retain their Christianity and interest in music but are no longer as active as they once were. They might continue to be involved in shows and creating music, but on a less intense scale, as other things came to take up their time.

Some participants became more heavily involved in church music ministries, often being employed as a music minister for their church. This allows them to stay involved in music, though it cuts down on creative activity such as working on their music as much as they'd like:

...It's definitely a tough one for me right now. I'm so busy with what I do in leading our church with music you know...It's very exciting to be getting back into writing and I'm looking forward to even better stuff in the near future. (David Isaacson, Personal Communication, January 28, 2010)

The transition from musician to music minister was one taken up by some participants, mostly those previously engaged in worship rock forms (i.e. David Isaacson, Phil Winestock).

For others, the departure from Christian rock is connected to criticisms of the form. When asked about the outsiders' opinion of Christian rock, participants believed others saw the music as "a joke" (Preston Fender, Personal Communication, January 18, 2010) and "unoriginal, insincere music" whose "only goal is to convert the listener" (Mark Thompson, Personal Communication, October 10, 2009). Many within Christian

rock came to see their own opinions echo these criticisms and their opinion of Christian rock lowered. One participant viewed Christian rock as, “the red-headed step-child (sic) of rock and roll” (Luke Kane, Personal Communication, October 16, 2009). Many participants see Christian rock as no longer attempting to compete with secular music and merely preaching to the converted. For others, Christian rock is much like mainstream rock music: a form of entertainment with no real connection to their faith.

Lastly, there are those for whom the lack of participation and identification with Christian rock is tied to their lack of participation and identification with Christianity. Over time their personal identity became disconnected from Christianity. One former participant saw himself as a former “zealot” who at one time believed that he “could save something or someone”, but “it turned out...I couldn't save anyone, especially not myself” (Donald Sawchuk, Personal Communication, July 9, 2009). He came to believe that the lyrics were judgments of himself: “Never once did I think that I might actually be judging myself.... I didn't know it then, but I was preaching to myself...” (Donald Sawchuk, Personal Communication, July 9, 2009) This performer’s identity changed slowly through self-reflection and self-criticism. The act of self-criticism that is part of the identity project is often amplified in religious circles in which religious practice and identity are seen as totalizing⁹. Christian rock musicians often engage in an internal

⁹ Often the attributes that attracted them to Christianity end up as an anathema. They begin to question the “self-righteousness”⁹ and “certainty” that they see around them (Schaefer, 2007., p. 30). As Frank Schaeffer, former American Evangelical leader put it:

With the acceptance of paradox came a new and blessed *uncertainty* that began to heal the mental illness called certainty, the kind of certainty that told me that my job was to be head of the home and to order around my wife and children because “the Bible says so.” (Schaeffer, 2014: p. 13)

transition where individuals go from “squeaky clean, shiny, gung-ho soldier-for-Jesus type, and came out a [sic] sceptic” (Klingensmith in Wilson, 2010: p. 240). The transition was summed up by Derri Daughtery of the American Christian rock band the Choir:

When you're young, you start out with this innocent idea of what Christianity is, and what ministry is. You're focussing on trying to save everybody else, trying to make sure that everybody else is okay. As you get older, and you walk with Christ, you still care about everybody else but you've got to try and make sure that you're okay through all your brokenness. Along the way you fall, and you lose a lot of that innocence. You realize that God is different than what you imagined, and that you're different than who you imagined you were. (Daughtery in Wilson, 2010: p. 157)

The rejection of Christian rock exemplifies the ways in which the self-criticism that seems to come from Christian practice can sometimes undermine one's faith. It certainly can lead people to suspend participation in Christian rock. Those who have rejected Christian rock are often attempting to remain authentic to their perceived identity.

Having looked at roles within Christian rock, and the career stages of Christian rock participants (recruitment, active and exiting), I will now look at Howard and Streck's identities of Christian rock in relation to subcultures and new social movements.

Identities and Goals in Christian Rock

Rock music is an art form, Christian is an adjective... There's [sic] people who understand it more as artistic expression, and there are other people who understand it as evangelism and there are other people who understand it as

This criticism of the certainty of fundamentalism is one that arose from a continued questioning of self and those around, most notably immediate peers. Eventually, it seems the practitioner has little in common with the culture that has grown around them.

I think my problem with remaining an evangelical centered on what the evangelical community became. It was the merging of entertainment business with faith, the flippant lightweight kitsch ugliness of American Christianity, the sheer stupidity, the paranoia of the American right-wing enterprise, the platitudes married to pop culture, all of it...that has made me crazy. (Schaeffer, 2007: p. 389)

nurturing the body of Christian and so on and so forth. So I think that Christian rock kind of captures a lot of those things and a lot of the different purveyors of it. (Thomas McClintock, Personal Communication, August 27, 2009)

The above quotation alludes to the disparity that exists within the field(s) of Christian rock, where different identities coexist in what can be seen as a “microcosm of the contemporary American evangelical religious experience” (Howard & Streck: p. 6). These disparities reflect a field that is not as monolithically unified as it is often portrayed, but is instead fragmented. This fragmentation is reflected in differences in goals, where many aim goals outward to the secular world, while others aim it inwards towards evangelical Christianity. These goals reflect the separation between those with a subcultural inclination and those who lean more towards a social movement orientation. The goals of Christian rock musicians are often tied to questions of authenticity and are used to determine whose behaviour is seen as real versus who’s behaviour is seen as fake, or who are seen as insiders and who are seen as outsiders. In what follows I will look at the differences in goals and identities using Howard and Streck’s typology of separational, integrational and transformational.

Goals of separational

The separational field consists of performers whose focus is aimed predominantly at other Christians. For these performers, being a Christian band is not seen as problematic, but is instead a goal to strive towards: “...we're feeling sort of called and pulled to be more of an obvious Christian band.”(Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009) According to Howard & Streck, the main goal for separational

performers is ministry, which is undertaken via “evangelism”, “worship” and “exhortation” (Howard & Streck: 55-64).

Evangelism, that is the need to preach and convert, is a strong goal for many participants: “...our role as Christians is to evangelize, or ‘spread the word,’ in another sense” (Heather Carpenter, Personal Communication, August 5, 2009). One participant viewed evangelism as the main goal of Christians and the only possible goal for Christian rock:

BUT I believe that the role of Christians (as outlined in the Bible) is to evangelize, so the role of Christian rock should be to evangelize...But if a band is calling itself a Christian band, or if a band labels its music as Christian rock, then I 100% believe there should be evangelism or ministry of some kind happening. (Samuel Osmond, Personal Communication, May 12, 2009)

Within Christian rock, actively evangelizing represents a means of legitimating Christian rock and in particular, the Christian rock concert. For example, the concert discussed in the previous chapter where there was discussion around suicide and the passing out of prayer cards and other information. The passing out of this information during the performance represented a means of determining how many were definitely affected or saved by the evening’s performance. While evangelism is often seen as the primary goal, it is a problematic one in that separational musicians often end up preaching to those who are already Christian, unable or unwilling to reach out beyond their Christian audience (Howard & Streck, p. 60).

The second rationalization is that of worship, which in relation to Christian rock is understood as musicians facilitating audience participation in singing “praise” songs

(Howard & Streck, p. 61). Worship rock developed over time as the lines between Christian rock and Worship music became blurred¹⁰:

I think now there's a huge amount of overlap. It used to be pretty cut and dried. ...Maranatha and Vineyard was worship and praise and Michael W. Smith and Amy Grant were contemporary Christian. There was no crossover. I don't remember what year the Third Day Offerings album came out, I want to say it was somewhere between '99 and 2001, but when that CD came out it really blurred the lines a lot. (Jacob Hayes, Personal Communication, November 25, 2009)

For those engaged in it, worship is a way of creating and sharing a memorable experience with their audience. This experience takes on characteristics of a religious gathering in that it brings people together and focuses them on a particular practice: that of singing praise songs aimed at God. Worship within Christian rock, much like with evangelism, is sometimes seen as troubling because it focuses on entertainment and the individual experience:

As people fulfill their desires for entertainment in churches within worship, they will in fact be shifting the focus from God to themselves (Timothy Cowle, Personal Communication, October 12, 2009).

¹⁰ One performer interviewed started off playing music as self-expression but over time became engaged in worship music:

What would actually happen was we would end up doing a lot of gigs where we would do a concert and then they would want us to stick around later where say it's a conference and they'd say, "Could you lead us in some corporate singing at some point?" It was funny they'd make these two kind of distinctions: here's your rock show time and now here's the time of worship we want you to lead and I guess doing that it got to the point where I felt awkward separating those two things. ... So that did actually become somewhat intentional, where I wanted us just to focus on the worship aspect of this music. That was definitely in our later years became a definite intentional shift in our approach and how we did music and how we did our concerts as well. (David Isaacson, Personal Communication, January 28, 2010)

For this participant, facilitating worship was not the original intention of his participation, but was something that developed partly as he became more involved in performing and noticing that worship songs were in demand in the market.

While ostensibly focussed on God, worship rock presents itself as an emotional experience that fills the same role as entertainment. Therefore the emphasis is placed more on the entertainment of the worshipper, than on the act of worship itself.

The third rationalization is that of exhortation, or the comforting of believers¹¹.

Many view exhortation as one of a number of worthwhile goals, while others see it as the only role of Christian rock in people's lives:

I think Christian music is done for the purpose of just uplifting someone's faith instead of just being not about anything, it encourages Christians... I do think it's important to have encouragement, especially to people that are new to Christianity and to just have that in their minds through the music. (PSS, Personal Communication, November 10, 2009)

Exhortation allows for Christian rock musicians to play music that aids people without necessarily evangelizing or facilitating worship. As previously noted, the faith of new Christians is often seen as vulnerable. Exhortation is seen as a means of strengthening their faith by both keeping them away from risky, secular music and by providing them with content that supports their new faith. Exhortation acts as musical and spiritual comfort that aids in the creation and utilization of a Christian master identity. Similar to subcultures, the Christian identity is one that must be continuously defended from the secular world, a world viewed as a threat to that identity.

¹¹ The comforting of believers is often done via the use of metaphorical language, including the use of images of warfare (Howard & Streck: p. 68). See for example the Stryper album "To Hell with the Devil", whose original cover painting depicted the band members as long haired, muscle bound, warrior angels (one wielding a guitar) who were dragging the devil to hell with a chain. This cover was somewhat controversial within Christian Bookstores, and came with a sticker which read:

We have attempted to make a visual representation of the title, *To Hell with the Devil*. Whenever illustrations are used to convey concepts or ideas, misinterpretations become possible. With this picture, however, there should only be one message delivered: "The devil belongs in hell, not in your heart."(Stryper, 1986)

The separational approach remains the most prominent within Christian rock (p. 52), and is the approach most identified with Christian rock. Separational musicians tend to be interested in a professional career path as either aspiring or fully professional musicians. They see their legitimacy as deriving from two sources: mass popularity (to both Christians and non-Christians), and the appeal to bourgeois tastes or in this case, those with cultural capital within Christian rock (other Christians). Because of the dominance of the separational approach, it is often assumed that performers are separational in orientation. Those who participate in Christian rock and are not engaged in ministry are often penalized. Others convert to a separational approach in order to have a career, even though ministry is not their original aim:

They'd say, 'I never got into this to be a preacher, or to push any message. It's just that I believe and I'm a musician.' However, they wanted a record deal so bad they'd accept it...(Kalinowski in Wilson, 2010: p. 224)

Regardless, those participating in Christian rock often find themselves engaged in ministry, regardless of their intentions. These find themselves serving as recruiters, bringing people in before "the real guy come(s) out to lay on the message." (Taylor in Wilson, 2010: p. 23)

Some begin in ministry, but come to distance themselves from the separational approach of ministry over time because, "It branded us in ways we never wanted to be branded" (Matthew Webster, Personal Communication, September 23, 2009). In this case, the continued label of Christian rock marginalized by keeping the participant out of the secular sphere. He had to negotiate the previous, separational identity in relation to his changing identity which was something he was more comfortable with. At the same

time, he came to have problems with the separational approach he had once been involved in, and rejected it along with Christian rock as a whole¹².

The separational approach resembles a subculture trying to be a social movement. It attempts to actively recruit through evangelism, but ends up appealing most strongly to insiders, through ministry via worship and exhortation. Within most of Christian rock, Christian is the master identity. This is wholly true within the separational approach. Everything is measured based on its relation to participants faith. For those critical of the separational approach, its focus on ministry is seen as problematic. These critics view the separational approach as creating popular music that lacks thought-provoking content that would strengthen ones growth in their faith. As well, it can be seen as profaning the sacred by turning it into a product or package.

Goals of integrational

While separational is a difficult approach to remove oneself from, some manage to do so and successfully appeal to the secular market. Bands like Evanescence and Skillet began within the separational world of Christian rock, but over time came to separate themselves from it by changing their focus from the explicitly to the implicitly Christian (Bartkowski, 2014). This approach, known as integrational, attempts to infiltrate the mainstream music industry and present Christian messages to secular

¹² Interesting, this participant, by attempting to reject ministry for art, found himself in ministry: ... I just really wanted to be a great musician, and I've accomplished a lot of my musical goals, but what I did not ever see is what I ended up being which is, to use the lingo of the church, someone who has actually been ministering to the church via popular music, the same way a priest would. In a sense I find I almost consider myself a musical priest, which is a much more serious calling then just a guy with a guitar playing pop music. (Matthew Webster, Personal Communication, September 23, 2009)

Oddly part of his role engaged in ministry was due to his rejection of ministry as the main goal of his music. By doing this he was able to build a relationship with those fans that also had problems with the separational approach.

audiences without being “overtly Christian”. For Howard and Streck, the rationales of the integrational approach include the presentation of a wholesome alternative to secular music, of providing a Christian worldview and of ministering to insiders (Howard & Streck, 1999).

The wholesome alternative approach to music, often referred to as the creation of “positive pop” (98), is advocated by participants who see their purpose as trying “to make a difference in a world so cold and dark, and be a positive light...” (Peter Goodman, Personal Communication, September 20, 2009). This approach has been taken by successful separational musicians, i.e. Amy Grant (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 76). Integrational artists believe Christians should affect change by offering something different for the masses, an alternative to secular music.

Another approach is that of presenting music that reflects a Christian worldview. A Christian worldview as presented by integrationalists can be understood as one “providing a commentary on everyday life from a Christian perspective” (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 101). Many welcomed this approach: “I want to write about life from a Christian worldview...” (Thomas McClintock, Personal Communication, August 27, 2009). The approach is seen as unusual in part because it attempts to play music that is Christian, but not explicitly so. Trying to present a Christian worldview can become problematic in that the worldview is not necessarily unique to Christians, as much of it can fall under the umbrella of “family values.”

Howard and Streck’s final rationale is that of ministering to insiders. This requires operating within the secular musical industry as a way to evangelise to those

involved in that industry. This rationale was not overtly present in my research. Instead, participants talked about ministering to others by using the music as a means of talking to people. For a number of participants, their conversations with those in the audience, both Christian and non-Christian, when not performing was their main motivation:

I've been on the radio. I've played at big venues. I've toured the US of A.
But most fulfilling is that I got to talk to people about God.

(Joseph Gest, Personal Communication, November 8, 2009)

I'm very open with the listeners. They write to me through Facebook and MySpace, or just regular e-mail...I think even the personal relationships, even though it's not music it's also an awesome opportunity to outreach. (Mary Lambshead, Personal Communication, December 21, 2009)

For these participants the importance of developing relationships as a means of “outreach” to others was central.

For those practicing an integrational approach, the key is to reach many different people (both Christian and non-Christian), to present alternatives to secular music, present a Christian worldview or communicate non-musically with non-Christians. Those within the integrational approach see “Christians being in bands that are not necessarily ‘Christian bands’” as “way more effective” than the separational approach (Samuel Osmond, Personal Communication, May 12, 2009).

For those involved in the integrational approach, there is a tendency towards professionalism. They see themselves as deriving their legitimacy from mass popularity; the more successful the music is the more legitimate it is. Because they often distance themselves from the explicitly Christian (worship, evangelism), they are often seen merely as Christian entertainers.

One criticism of the integrational approach is that of inauthenticity. Their music is seen as “pop” rather than “rock”, and is therefore viewed as disposable by many others within Christian rock, particularly those who stress the ideology of rock. Others within Christian rock view the integrational approach as being made up of sell-outs who create music that is “empty” and “vapid” (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 96). Their stress on worldview over explicit religious content is seen as problematic, and the faith of integrational participants is often questioned (p. 102). Others see the mission of entertaining and providing an alternative as aspiring to too little: “It shouldn't be an alternative, but at the same time, that's what it ends up being.” (Nathaniel O’Doyle, Personal Communication, July 15, 2009).

The integrational approach resembles a new social movement in its focus outward. Integrational attempts to actively recruit non-Christians via entertainment. The stress placed on appealing to outsiders means that goals are, for the most part, directed outside of Christianity and Christian rock. Integrational then operates within the Christian rock subculture while attempting to exist outside of it.

Goals of Transformational

Lastly, I come to the transformational approach which sees good Christian rock as art which is influenced by a Christian worldview that allows for struggle and sin. It looks down on other Christian rock which it characterizes as either preaching to the converted or propagandistic a la the separational approach (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 127) or as “positive pop” of the integrational approach (Howard & Streck, 1999: pp. 120-131).

Transformational performers see the other approaches as “manipulative and artificial sometimes” (Thomas McClintock, Personal Communication, August 27, 2009).

These performers see their goals as creating “art for art’s sake” (Howard & Streck, 1999: p. 134), and “revealing truth and presenting possibilities” (p. 139).

The first rationale, “art for art’s sake”, is an attempt to create music as self-expression for its own sake. The notion that Christian rock can be art was one espoused in relation to Lawhead’s typology: ““bad art with a false message”, "good art with a false message", "bad art with a true message" and "good art with a true message" (Lawhead, 1981: p.128). For those approaching music as art for art’s sake, the quality of the message is as important as the quality of the form, in other words music is equal to lyrics. Even so, what is seen as good art or good message is subjective, though it is often judged by tastemakers and those with cultural capital within Christian rock such as critics and other musicians.

Another way of determining what is good art is by assessing authenticity. Historically, there has often been a sense that “real” Christian rock (the most authentic) was music made by those that did not fit into mainstream evangelical culture. These individuals, considered misfits, were seen as “authentic”:

There are several acts (but less than "a lot") from those early days of "Jesus rock" that you can use the word "icon" to describe. There are also several (but even less) acts that you can describe as visceral, authentic rock artists. Of course, when you narrow down that category you arrive at the outsiders of the genre: the uncompromising artists who laid it all on the line to express their convictions with artistic integrity and unyielding honesty. (Bert Seraco, 2012)

This approach attempts to appeal to the ideology of rock, judging the music based on perceived musical and personal authenticity. A way of displaying this is through musical and lyrical transgression, or “revealing truth”.

The second rationale of the transformational approach is that of revealing truth and presenting possibilities (139). This rationale attempts to critique both problems of Christianity and mainstream secular culture. In doing so, it presents musicians as cultural critics and outsiders (141). The rationale attempts to create an alternate understanding of Christianity and its place in the world:

I think the first thing is that we all have kind of said that we want to change people's perceptions of what Christianity is... That Christianity isn't about fitting into a box necessarily, right? (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

This desire to reveal truth and present possibilities aims to transform the attitudes of others using a nuanced view of theology that acknowledge problems in all areas and seeks to provide alternatives for all Christians and non-Christians. Transformational practitioners do not see the world in absolutist, saved/unsaved (or black/white) terms.

Instead, it provides a more nuanced view:

I've got a review of my second album by a guy who said, I love this actually. He said, "Jesus isn't mentioned once in it, but he's all through it", and I thought that was a pretty cool comment. So suddenly it's okay to not necessarily have Jesus in a song, or the plan of salvation. That it's alright to talk about pain, talk about suffering and not have to resolve it at the end. So I think that is a lot better. (Thomas McClintock, Personal Communication, August 27, 2009)

The transformational approach represents an attempt at creating and participating in Christian rock music that is less about strict ministry or entertainment and more about exploring the relation of Christianity to both oneself and the world. It asks questions like:

What does faith mean to the participants? What problems and solutions does their faith create?

The transformational approach is used by individuals at all career path stages. Because of its stress on art for art's sake and a more restricted market, it often has more amateurs than other approaches. The transformational approach often attempts to circumvent market considerations, and is less concerned with popularity or evangelism, but is more concerned with the quality of the music being created, and ends up creating art for other artists. The transformational artist is connected to the identity of artist, albeit Christian artist.

The transformational approach adopts a critical stance relating to both music and faith, but does so by stressing values such as honesty and integrity. For those within the transformational field, their motives and Christianity are often doubted because they are not putting forth an obvious statement or presenting the message in an obviously palatable way. This conflict often leads to artists defending their actions:

Like from my extended family I've even gotten ideas like "Yeah, I'm a screamer in a hardcore metal band." "No, really what are you doing?" But then once I explain to them, "Look at my lyrics, look at the message that I'm trying to portray." It's then that people warm up to the idea. (Gabriel Cooper, Personal Communication, November 26, 2009)

As transformational artists stress the revealing of truth and presenting alternatives, they are often engaged in debates around authenticity and legitimacy, both internally (i.e. in themselves) and externally (i.e. peers, general environment).

The transformational approach represents a hybrid of subcultural and new social movement traits. It recruits like a subculture in that it is not particularly interested in

actively pursuing recruitment. It deals with insiders and outsiders in a manner similar to subcultures as well in that a premium is placed on subcultural behaviours in order to determine one's qualifications as an artist. It's goals are both inward and outward facing, inward in addressing the self and Christianity, but also outward in trying to address the wider world and present a reflective, alternative Christianity a la the emergent church.

Conclusion

In this chapter I examined collective and individual identities within Christian rock. In particular, I looked at different roles within Christian rock and how identity is constructed during recruitment, active participation and exiting Christian rock. I also looked at identity and the ways authenticity and legitimacy are determined within Christian rock. Finally I looked at how these struggles for authenticity and legitimacy in identity related to Howard and Streck's separational, integrational and transformational approaches.

For Howard and Streck, Christian rock is representative of a splintered art world, a world where individuals judge themselves and others based on the biases of the three approaches of: separational, transformational, and integrational. These three approaches can be simplified into ministry (separational), entertainment (integrational), and art (transformational). These differences in approach seemingly related closely to particular genres with separational often being similar to mainstream rock (ironic because it also represents the default approach of Christian rock), transformational relating closely to pop and transformational relating alternative, extreme metal and punk.

While the practices of these approaches differ, the end goals are similar: to represent their faith truthfully and attempt to change the lives and minds of others. In this context boundaries become confused: those interested in worship play in hardcore/metalcore venues and often stay away from churches entirely (i.e. GOTG, John Schmidt); those interested in art as a means to reach people end up engaging in ministry (i.e. Matthew Webster). One participant discussed the use of entertainment and showmanship in ministry:

For other people, they just want to draw people in. For example, Starfield at one point in the show will probably tell people to just hold hands, because he's talking about the body of Christ coming together and there's something symbolic about holding hands with the person next to you at a concert, and wow, there's 400 people connected. We are the body of Christ. I don't know this person behind me but he's a believer, she's a believer. There's something powerful about that. I've been to shows where they've done stuff like that and I think Tim is trying to make a point of "here's a moment". (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)

This shows how the divide between approaches is not as clear cut as one might think: "I think entertainment and art and showmanship are all in the same pot" (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009). The boundaries between ministry, entertainment and art are fluid: ministry and art can require entertainment in order to be successful; entertainment and art can take on elements of ministry as a simple extension of a performer's faith; ministry and entertainment make claims to art as a means of legitimizing themselves.

In the next chapter I will look at the connection between the approaches of Christian rock, subcultures and new social movements.

Chapter 7: Subculture vs. New Social Movements

Introduction

In the previous chapter I looked at Christian rock roles and identities in relation to recruitment, active participation, changes over time, and identity loss. I also looked at Howard and Streck's typology of separational, integrational and transformational, how these types related to ministry, entertainment and art, and, in turn, how the typology related to subcultures and new social movements. Now I will look at subcultures and new social movements in relation to Christian rock as a whole. In doing so, it is important to recapitulate the characteristics of subcultures and new social movements in relation to identity, authenticity, legitimacy and goals.

For subcultures, there is a stress placed on the protection of self, the creation of subcultural space, clear differentiation between insiders and outsiders, and a tendency towards deviance. More importantly subcultures generate social suspicion and wariness of outsiders, possibly relating to the totalizing nature of subcultural identity. For those within subcultures there is a shared identity (relating to collective belonging and egalitarianism) coupled with a greater distinction in status (relating to a hierarchy of insiders and outsiders).

For new social movements there exists a need to promote a cause, a struggle for legitimacy, a collective identity with normative, emotional character and resonance, a less clear differentiation between insiders and outsiders, and a need for advocacy and activism. New social movements aim to make changes to the outside world either

politically or socially. In doing so, they are often willing to compromise to achieve temporary goals; here outsiders can become prospective allies.

Christian rock represents a field where there exists conflicting impulses towards protecting the group identity or reaching out to others, to remaining small and restricted or to enlarging itself. Over the course of its history, Christian rock has undergone a codification of practices and institutionalization of spaces often resulting in a blocked opportunity structure that prevents communication with non-Christian audiences. With this in mind, it is important to consider how Christian rock fits under the ideal type of the subculture or new social movement. In doing so, I will look at the criteria of recruitment and mobilization, distinctions between insiders and outsiders, structure and leadership, strategies and goals, space and material cultures. Following this, I will look at the cases of worship rock and worshipcore, and how these reflect subcultures and new social movements.

Recruitment and Mobilization

The difference between subcultures and new social movements with regards to recruitment is that new social movements tend to engage in active forms of recruitment while subcultures tend to engage in inactive forms of recruitment.

Within Christian rock there is often an aim to actively recruit through evangelism, youth groups, etc., but recruitment is often done simply through looking for music conducive to a Christian identity (that is, music that does not challenge or undermines one's religious identity). Within separational and integrational there is a stated goal for active recruitment, for some type of evangelism, though this is often not the case for the

former. For those engaged in the transformational approach, recruitment is relatively inactive.

The use of evangelism as recruitment (or recruitment as evangelism) places a focus on authenticity (a “real” conversion) as a kind of test for newcomers. For subcultures, this type of test is a way of distinguishing authentic insiders from the inauthentic or poseur. For movements there is less of an emphasis on qualification as movements are always looking for adherents and treat participations as an opportunity to socialize, convert outsiders, and reinforce belief in the movement’s cause.

Mobilization within subcultures is aimed at protecting the subculture, while for new social movements; mobilization is about activism, advocacy and expansion. In this context Christian rock falls somewhere between the two. It often attempts to engage in evangelism and activity, with separational and integrational practitioners often viewing this as the primary goal of all Christian religious participation. However, Christian rock often becomes an arena within which Christian identity is protected from the secular world, by providing an acceptable alternative for Christians, or a safe place for them to exercise their Christian identity as is the case for separational. It can also be a place to protect the transformational identity from other approaches to Christian rock.

I would argue that all approaches to Christian rock (separational, integrational, and transformational) exhibit aspects of both subcultural and new social movement practice with regards to recruitment and mobilization. The integrational approach is more of a new social movement in this respect, the transformational is more subcultural, while the separational falls somewhere in between.

Separating Insiders From Outsiders

Distinctions between insiders and outsiders help determine boundaries for subcultures and new social movements.

For subcultures, boundaries between insiders and outsiders are often distinguished via questions of authenticity, wherein authenticity claims and judgments determine who is considered a real member versus who is considered an outsider. The judgment of authenticity is an important aspect in determining one's subcultural capital (Williams, 2006: p. 189, 195). This distinction is also the basis for the boundary creation and maintenance of independent subcultures. Here a strong differentiation between insiders and outsiders, between Christians and non-Christians, is often needed for subcultural approaches to Christian rock (especially separational). In other ways, distinguishing between insiders and outsiders relates more fundamentally to the approaches: the separational practitioner might see integrational and transformational as outsiders, transformational attempts to protect itself from separational and integrational approaches.

Within new social movements, distinctions between insiders and outsiders are often fairly fluid in that participants are attempting to recruit others to their cause. In the case of Christian rock, this can manifest as an effort to make music that connects:

Well, writing songs with the traction to reach people. I don't think music should be constantly selfish...It's gotta be about sharing something, connecting with people. A better song is a song that better connects. (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009)

Here, the goal is to connect with people and share experiences, to bring people together. This reaching out can take various forms, from evangelism to making emotional connections to advocating on behalf of social issues or advocacy groups. While there is a

strong sense of us vs. them, the goal is ultimately to turn outsiders into insiders, to turn “them” into “us”. This is music promoting a cause rather than an expression of an “inner feeling”. The new social movement approach to boundaries relates to those aiming for a larger audience such as separational and entertainment. Both approaches attempt to evangelize, though they have different strategies with which they do so. For separational, evangelism is often done through big events, through churches or outreach ministries. For integrational practitioners, evangelism is done simply by providing an alternative musical and lifestyle model that is meant to appeal to the masses.

Distinctions between insiders and outsiders are most clear with those approaching Christian rock from the separational or transformational approach, that is those who are interested in protecting their identity. They are less clear with integrational performers and with those within separational who aim at evangelism, as they are often attempting to bring outsiders in to share the identity.

Structure and Leadership

The role of structure and leadership differs within subcultures and social movements. For subcultures, structures and leadership are most often informal, and geared towards protecting a distinct, subcultural identity from outsiders. Within social movements, leadership and structure can range from formal to informal. For traditional social movements, hierarchical leadership and institutional structures are keys to organizing and mobilizing. For new social movements, leadership and structures are often made up of informal, horizontal alliances of equal activist groups.

For Christian rock, some formal structure and leadership exists, particularly for those involved professionally in the separational approach. These use Christian record labels, Christian youth organizations and radio stations to get their music out. Leadership in the separational relates to those in leadership positions within said organizations who determine and measure appropriate behaviours and judge who should and should not be included. Integrational artists tend to use secular avenues and networks, while transformational tend to use smaller scale, D.I.Y. approaches, where there is less formal organizational structure and more stress on informal social networks. These also rely on the leadership in their respective scenes, though these can vary in origin between those with institutional or financial capital and those with cultural capital.

This difference in approach to structures relates to levels and locations of professionalization. For the separational, professionalization takes place within the Christian rock industry proper, while for integrational and transformational performers there is an attempt at using secular structures, with the integrational looking at larger scale, mainstream types of organizations and institutions (major record labels, booking agents, etc.) and transformational relying more on an independent, D.I.Y. ethos, that stresses art over commerce.

As such, the separational and integrational are often more similar to the professional organizations and structures of traditional social movements which aim for a larger scale, while transformational relies on informal structures and often aims for a more restricted scale approach.

Strategies and Goals

Goals refer to the aims of subcultures and movements. For subcultures, the main goal is the preservation of a unique identity: for social movements the goal is to bring about change in the wider world. The strategies in question are the methods used in the accomplishment of these goals. For subcultures these strategies are often aimed towards the group, in trying to maintain a clear identity and keep out outsiders. For new social movements, the strategy is somewhat outwardly focussed and relates to making themselves visible.

In relation to subcultures, Christian rock should represent a unique identity, possibly even a master identity or master status. For subcultures, goals and strategies relate to the protection of the group identity within what is perceived as a hostile world. This can take the form of emotional work which binds groups together (Owens, et al, 2010: p. 492). Subculture members tend to have strong feelings of belonging to the group which can translate into an ideological orthodoxy and homogeneity within the group which is therefore unlikely to compromise. The commitment of members is often seen as totalizing (Piotrowski, 2013: 411).

For social movements, Christian rock should be seen as an identity that participants can have. In the case of new social movements, the creation, maintenance, and spreading of this identity is as much the goal as any other type of social change (Polletta & Jasper, 2001: p. 296). For new social movements, the changing of identity (alongside changing the world) is a goal, akin to the goals of various religions and self-help type movements. They attempt to change biographies of participants (p. 296).

Social movement participants are more likely to be moderate or compromise, and have stronger distinctions between public and private (Piotrowski: 411). The focus of social movements is aimed towards advocating and activism.

For Christian rock participants a major goal is to continue the process of forming and evaluating their individual and collective identities. The process includes a continuous state of reflection, assessment, and improvement, as they strive to better themselves both for the sake of themselves (or their soul) but also to better reflect those with whom they feel they are in a community (i.e. collective identity). Within Christian rock as it is practiced in Ontario, I would argue that most elements are too disparate to offer a totalizing identity as one would typically find in subcultures, one that would encompass their Christianity and link it to their musical participation. The exceptions would be those who are engaged in small scenes, such as the transformational. Instead, Christian rock offers a means by which individuals can create music as ministry, entertainment or art, but also attempt to affect themselves and other people and change them in the process. It is the desire for continuous reflective improvement that is key to the identities within Christian rock. While the identity of Christian is totalizing, it is also one that is changing as participants strive to be better Christians.

Uses of Space and Material Cultures

For subcultures, uses of space and material cultures are aimed at creating and maintaining the unique identity of the subculture. For social movements, use of space and material cultures are aimed at advocating and advancing the cause.

Within Christian rock, spaces are sometimes used to maintain an identity, particularly within transformational spaces. Separational/ministry spaces outside of evangelism also act this way. Both approaches attempt to maintain an identity and provide a safe space. This is a use of space on a more limited scale and can involve religious or secular spaces such as smaller churches, coffeehouses or rock clubs.

Similarly, the use of material cultures in most Christian rock is aimed at creating and maintaining a unique identity. For instance, t-shirt slogans at the Christian metal festival included “I Will End You”, “I Am the Creator and Destroyer of Worlds”, “Don't You Judge Me”, “We Call This War”, and “Mosh Worship” attempt to create an identity that is separate from other metal fans and other Christians. These t-shirts reappropriate metal cultures apocalypticism and violence and use it within Christianity, via ideas of religious warfare, etc.

Christian rock musicians aim at advocating or attracting when engaged in evangelism or entertainment, which attempt to engage on a large-scale and often involve the use of larger spaces such as larger churches, and halls. The use of material cultures in these Christian rock spaces is often aimed at the goals of recruitment and advocacy. At the youth convention this included various Bible Colleges—Canadian and American—as well as booths selling books, and other charitable Christian organizations dealing with issues of poverty and youth ministry.

Within Christian rock uses of space and material cultures differ depending on aims. If the scene is trying to protect itself, then it behaves more like a subculture. If it is attempting to reach out, it behaves more like a social movement. In general, attempts at

ministry (excluding evangelism) and art fulfill many of the requirements of subcultures while evangelism and entertainment based approaches are more closely connected to social movements.

For Howard and Streck, Christian rock represents a “splintered” art world (1999: p. 188-189). In this dissertation I have looked at Christian rock as a field with various subfields, some of which correspond with Howard and Streck’s typology of separational, integrational and transformational. In some ways, Christian rock represents a field as subculture or set of subcultures, each with their own identity, style and behaviours. However, as a whole, the field of “Christian Rock” resembles a new social movement in the sense that there are networks of participants with similar values, but maintaining relatively weak boundaries. In this context it is a splintered social movement or a movement of subcultures with most participants in different fields sharing seemingly common goals such as a faith approach, a need to evangelize and change the world either en masse or one individual at a time. In what follows I will look at two Christian rock scenes, and highlight the ways they act as subcultures and new social movements.

Case Studies: Worshipcore and Worship Rock

In this section I will examine two different approaches to worship within Christian rock: those of worshipcore and worship rock. One clearly echoes a subculture, while the other represents all the conflicting elements of Christian rock that make it something of a subculture/social movement hybrid. In looking at worshipcore and worship rock I will focus on issues related to collective identity, goals, and practices.

Worshipcore

Worshipcore exists within the subgenre of metalcore, an amalgamation of hardcore punk, and heavy metal¹. Beginning in the late 1990s, various Christian bands emerged within the metalcore scene, and referred to themselves as “spirit filled hardcore” (Abraham, 2014: p. 88). These bands, often affiliated with the Christian metal label Solid State Records, consciously expanded their focus to include explicitly Christian lyrics and themes in their music, while at the same time attempting to avoid “preaching”. Christian metalcore bands from this era included Zao, The Devil Wears Prada, As I Lay Dying, August Burns Red, Texas in July, Demon Hunter, Oh Sleeper, and Underoath. In the early 21st century, drawing upon the influence of American Christian Metalcore bands (in particular For Today, and the so-called “positive hardcore” of Uplift), a number of Christian metalcore bands emerged in Southern Ontario. By the end of the 2000s, these types of bands represented a small scene which included the worshipcore bands GOTG, and WOW and the metalcore bands Prince Caspian, and Sacrifice². In what follows I will look at the unique characteristics of Christian metalcore in relation to appearance, music and how these relate to their collective identity. I will then look at how this is used to separate insiders from outsiders, and finally I will look at worshipcore as a unique manifestation of these practices.

¹ Metalcore emerged in the 1980s when a number of hardcore bands crossed over into metal, often playing alongside early thrash metal bands (Blush & Rachman, 2006). These bands began combining styles, keeping a D.I.Y. approach (exemplified by a lack of differentiation between artist and audience) and speed of hardcore alongside the more extreme volume, and musicianship of thrash to create a new style of music deeply indebted to both.

² Prince Caspian features a Christian lyricist/singer, while the rest of the band does not necessarily share his faith. All members of Sacrifice are Christian. Both groups self-identify as metalcore, but neither engages in worshipcore activities.

I have changed the names of these bands to retain their anonymity.

Christian metalcore and worshipcore performers tend to be young, white males between the ages of 18 and 30. Much like secular metalcore practitioners, they tend to have shorter hair which is often coloured, many piercings (including spacers), and tattoos (Haenfler, 2006: p. 17). Metalcore also represents a certain sound that is often characterized as loud, angry and intense.

For Christian metalcore practitioners, the appearance and sound of metalcore have led to problems with other Christians. Within many church communities the look has sometimes been deemed too radical and therefore unacceptable by other church members.

I've had buddies that have gone in with spacers and they've been completely torn apart saying "You don't belong here in church"... (Gabriel Cooper, Personal Communication, November 26, 2009)

For the critics, metalcore practitioners are viewed as unchristian in appearance, and this appearance ties them to a music and subculture that is seen as wholly angry and negative. For most of the critics, the music is labelled problematic for this very reason:

The confusion comes with the idea that when you're hardcore you have to be angry and that's not true. We're a very passionate band but we're not the least bit angry, and there's nothing to be angry about. When people say that hardcore bands can't be Christian bands, I think that you just have to open your mind and realize that you can be passionate and not angry. (Josh Dolittle in Style, 2003)

Indeed, other practitioners of Christian rock have noticed that Christian metalcore remains unacceptable to many other Christians who “take offence at hardcore music...” (David Isaacson, Personal Communication, January 28, 2010)³. This harshness of sound

³ The criticisms of Christian metalcore practitioners by other Christians are similar to those levelled against Christian rock as a whole as discussed in chapter one. In particular, the belief that engaging in the music would lead to an unhealthy lifestyle by modeling the behaviour of secular practitioners and that the music was a hindrance to one's spiritual growth because the sounds tapped into negative emotions.

and appearance play a role in creating a metalcore identity that sees itself as separate and unique from the rest of the world.

The main collective identity of metalcore manifests through the commonality of being outsiders. Part of this outsidership is manifested in an ideology that stresses the rejection of other, external types of authority including traditional, cultural, and religious; as such, secular metalcore has had a very anti-authoritarian streak that has often viewed Christianity with suspicion (Moberg, 2007: p. 427). Even so, over time it became common for Christian metalcore performers to be on the same bills as other metalcore bands (McDowell, 2014: p. 261), where they were accepted for their honesty (McDowell, 2017a: p. 236), and because of punk's celebration of the "expression of deeply held but socially unpopular beliefs" (Abraham, 2014: p.88).

For Christian metalcore participants there is a sense that they are outsiders from both Christian communities, as shown above, and from the mainstream:

...a lot of outcasts, the kids that don't have many friends, they come to shows and feel welcome and build those relationships. Like we say, we don't care what you're into; you're accepted at these shows. (Gabriel Cooper, Personal Communication, November 26, 2009)

While metalcore is not necessarily active in terms of recruitment, there is a sense of openness and inclusivity towards a certain type of outsider. These are welcome because they are seen as outcasts and their individual identity is seen as parallel to the collective identity of metalcore participants, especially in relation to their conflict with the outside world.

As such, the metalcore community ends up replacing other communities, including religious communities that participants no longer feel a part of.

...that was the whole appeal for me when I became part of this scene. I walked into a room where I knew maybe 5 guys, and yeah the first few times it was a little weird, but I met everyone the first couple of shows I went to and then after that, you walk in a room and everyone's giving you a hug, everyone's saying "How you doing? Let's catch up." It's just great. I can go to a show in Toronto now that can have 300 kids there and I can walk around, and I won't know all of them, but I'll know the majority of them and I'll know them by name. And its things like that that really attracted me to it (Gabriel Cooper, Personal Communication, November 26, 2009).

For these individuals, metalcore is a scene where one is readily welcomed, and part of a larger community. For Christian individuals that do not necessarily feel comfortable within church spaces, this type of community and acceptance are keys in the sustainment of their identity.

Over time, the collective identity of Christian metalcore practitioners more strongly relates to their self-perception as having been rejected by the church (McDowell, 2014: p. 262), and many within metalcore come to see the mainstream church as the “oppressor” (McDowell, 2017b: p. 59). For these participants, Christian metalcore in its acceptance of outsiders is authentic Christianity:

I think that there's been this idea that we're not making hardcore Christian, we're mixing elements of the hardcore mentality and the Christian mentality together and what we're getting is something that's sort of this Christianity that's true to the social nature of Jesus' gospels. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

For many Christians, the notion of getting to the “true” “nature of Jesus’ gospels” is a compelling one, and one that reflects the ongoing individual and communal self-evaluation and self-correction referred to previously. For those who grew up within Christianity, there is a struggle with what they see as the problems and hypocrisies of their religion. These Christians often end up, “dissatisfied with the way churches are”

(John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010) and look for alternatives.

For these individuals, the focus shifts away from religious institutions and towards what they see as the fundamentals of their faith, including a focus on a personal relationship with Jesus tied to a social gospel message that is divorced from religious institutions; they aim to "...tear down... [pre-existing] notions of Christianity." (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010). Because of their rejection of mainstream Christianity, Christian metalcore practitioners are able to lay claim to punk in a way that is seen as more legitimate (McDowell, 2016b: p. 11):

I mean I think that the things that we're railing against as a Christian hardcore band are the same things that earliest hardcore bands were railing against about Christianity. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

These Christian participants see their role as continuing the debate and challenge to Christianity with an insider's knowledge. They like to challenge accepted understandings:

We like the idea of wrestling with God and struggling with our faith and the idea of thinking things out, and we're actually very distraught by the idea of people telling someone what to believe, the idea of accepting systematized theology without examining it. That's something we actually like to explicitly, in our lyrics, talk about. We like to stand firm on what we believe because we've examined it, so I find there's actually some continuity between the old hardcore bands and what we're saying about Christianity. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

Christians in metalcore attempt to question accepted truths, where one can question beliefs and be accepted for it so long as the questioning is sincere. This questioning can place them within the transformational approach.

Within metalcore there exists a strong sense of boundaries determining who belongs and who does not. One of the ways this is determined is through a code of behaviour that stresses acceptance and respect for others:

That's the one major theme that I think goes through all of it, no matter what your other reasons are for being there, it's a simple fact that we do accept people, we do demand respect and a high level of respect...(Gabriel Cooper, Personal Communication, November 26, 2009)

With this respect comes a stress on “hard work” and putting “the effort in” within the scene, which allows for the accumulation of subcultural capital. Here it is assumed that people did “something to get to where they're at” (Gabriel Cooper, Personal Communication, November 26, 2009), and that their position is thus legitimate. Those who are not seen as doing the necessary work are often judged harshly:

It used to be that it was completely separate on it's own, and nothing with screaming would you ever see on MTV or Much Music, but now it's gotten to the point where there are a lot of bands out there that are making a killing doing this music and they are actually hitting the mainstream...there's a lot of people that say if you're doing that, you're kind of sell outs. (Gabriel Cooper, Personal Communication, November 26, 2009)

This notion of selling out, of not being an authentic performer either in terms of presenting a realistic persona or by taking the so-called easier path without putting in the work is a standard criticism within artistic fields.

Similar issues of inauthenticity relate to participants referred to in metalcore as “scene kids”. The “scene kids” are often treated with suspicion by those more established within the scene, and are sometimes seen as problematic in part because they are seen as attaching themselves to metalcore to be cool, rather than because it reflects their own outsidership:

The kids getting into it now, there's a lot more of what we call "scene kids", there's a lot more kids that are doing it because it's cool and there's a lot more popularity for it, and there's a lot more kids coming out to shows because they think it's cool. (Gabriel Cooper, Personal Communication, November 26, 2009)

The “scene kid” is an example of a subcultural participant whose authenticity is judged as lacking and is therefore excluded or marginalized. For the metalcore community, a shared sense of outsidership is important, even essential in maintaining a coherent group identity. The presence of those seen as inauthentic calls into question the community that is supposed to be central. For subcultural participants, the exclusivity is part of the appeal in that it is theirs and no one else’s. Alongside this is the notion that music should be created for its own sake, or for the community, but not for the masses.

The subgenre of metalcore known as worshipcore that emerged in the early 21st century consists of the southern Ontario bands WOW and GOTG. Worshipcore arose after the collapse of the “spirit-filled hardcore” scene, a form: “...where people would basically just scream and according to them the Spirit of God would fill them.” (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010). “Spirit-filled hardcore” attempted to use the extreme sonics of hardcore to allow for a religious experience. Worshipcore emerged out of this approach as a means by which individuals could worship in a setting and style they felt more connected to:

... frankly none of us feel at home in a Sunday morning church worship service, where you kind of play Hillsong songs or Chris Tomlin or whatever. We don't really connect with that kind of music. We find it really kind of it doesn't say much. It doesn't say anything genuine. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

For participants of worshipcore, worship is defined as giving “your attention to something” (GOTG, Personal Communication, November 11, 2009), in this case it meant giving one’s attention to God. For participants in worshipcore, music allowed them to communally worship outside of church settings.

So we find that for us we practise every week and we find that those are our actual times of connection with God, and our shows are just phenomenal for us because we find it's like having church without the whole church setting. (John Schmidt, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)

For these bands, metalcore provides them with a means to engage in religious practice outside churches. This is a practice that views the audience as secondary: the primary goal being simply to worship with ones bandmates. If any in the audience get anything out of it, so much the better. While tied in with the metalcore scene, there is an element of faith that separates worshipcore practitioners from most within that scene, making them akin to a subculture within a subculture.

Christian participation in metalcore and worshipcore represents a joining with the larger metalcore community. This community stresses its secular outsidership from the mainstream, just as Christian metalcore and worshipcore participants stress their separation from the Christian mainstream. It is a community which prizes a perceived authenticity of self in the shape of transgressive behaviour in the form of loud music and uniqueness of fashion/style. The subculture of metalcore and worshipcore is similar to that of punk in that its critiques of institutions often relate to their hierarchical nature, a nature which is inverted within the subculture (that is status is given to subcultural insiders and less to those who have capital in the outside world). There then exists an internal contradiction in that this subculture espouses an inclusive, egalitarian ethos but

acts in a judgmental, exclusionary way to outsiders (i.e. scene kids or the majority of Christianity).

*Worship Rock*⁴

Worship rock represents a bringing together of worship songs, understood as songs that “draw us to God” (David Isaacson, Personal Communication, January 28, 2010) and rock. For worship rock practitioners, the goal is to operate as a “...hybrid of being a rock band and leading worship” (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009). Worship rock represents a field within Christian rock that has its own identity, one which is neither simply worship or simply rock, but rather “a weird hybrid of worship music from a church and a rock show” (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009). Worship rock performers are:

...inspired to write worship music, to have people sing, to sort of have that shared experience with people and to help people shape their theology and world view. (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009)

For worship rock performers, there is a desire to change the audience and the way they see the world.

Primarily, worship rock bands have a common goal: to create a shared live experience. The goal of a shared experience is the way in which the mostly professional performers make their living. The creation of a shared experience leads to situations where performers have few problems with attempting to create spontaneity through highly choreographed and rehearsed activity. As previously stated:

⁴ It should be noted that the discussion of worship rock that follows is short, in part because its relationship to the rest of evangelical Christianity is simpler than that of Christian metalcore and worshipcore.

Everything is planned out. We went to a performance coach 2 years ago and this year on a couple more songs, so everything is planned out....Some people say, "It's not spontaneous" but for me it's like the thing that people react to. You say "Hey Hamilton" and people cheer. This is a proven rock concert fact. If you're trying to connect with people to the lyrics, you play the song softer so they can hear the words better. There are just these basic things that, for as long as the industry's been around, 50 years or whatever, they just work so it's like "why try to reinvent the wheel." We have our own songs that we try to slot into a certain formula and that but it's like we know it works. (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)

The professionalization of Worship rock, particularly in comparison to other areas of Christian rock, means the music is often calculated to be more participatory. However, performers try to justify this open manipulation through purity of intent:

I think again it just comes to wrestling with having the purest intention. Why are we here? Why are we doing what we do? What is this? For some people, it is about pure manipulation. For other people, they just want to draw people in. (Carl Spencer, Personal Communication, November 2, 2009)

Worship rock is the creation of a pre-packaged experience that is meant to simulate spontaneity in the aims of successfully creating a communal, religious experience. The communal experience being sold is one that stresses the involvement of both performer and audience:

“...with the ideal worship music you're doing something, and you're in there, you're part of it, but you're part of it with people rather than for people or to people even” (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009).

For the worship rock performer, rock is a tool for bringing people together. In using rock music as a tool for worship they hope to create an experience like other big rock shows:

The thing is, people go to Coldplay, they go to U2 they go to these big rock shows and they sing every word at the top of their lungs, (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009)

They want to create an environment where people participate just as actively and emphatically as they do at these “big rock shows”, where people sing worship songs at the tops of their lungs.

Worship rock groups are often composed of individuals who facilitated worship in institutional settings either through their voluntary work within their own church community (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009) or as Christian musicians who were asked to lead worship by event organizers (as was seen with David Isaacson). However, worship rock represents a different experience, “...people come with a different sort of expectations than at the church” (Andrew Mather, Personal Communication, July 22, 2009).

Worship rock is aimed at other Christians, often promoted through churches and their audiences tend to be mainstream evangelicals, including youth. Worship rock exists as a type of Christian entertainment that aims for ministry but must act as a combination of entertainment and ministry in order to be successful. In worship rock, questions of authenticity relate most closely to performer intention and reaction of audience. While on the face of it, worship rock might be seen as being a subculture this is only because it is a facet of the larger evangelical subculture. Instead, it is a part of evangelicalism that aims at being accessible on a mass scale, of ministering and evangelizing through entertainment. Within this it is actually more closely related to a new social movement in its attempted inclusivity and attempt to change the audience.

Conclusion

In conducting my research, Christian rock emerged as a field within which aspects of subcultures and social movements can be found. Originally a subculture attempting to be a movement (Jesus Freaks), over time Christian rock became both established and institutionalized, taking on more of the formal trappings of social movements. The goals of Christian rock participants came to relate either to expanding Christianity through evangelism (social movement) or to protecting and developing the collective and individual identity of Christians (subcultural).

In Ontario, Christian rock participants have loose connections to each other, as they operate in a fragmented field. In part, this fragmentation relates to the individualistic orientation of most respondents and much of evangelical Christianity. Evangelicals often focus on feelings, passions, and direct connections between Christians and Jesus/God, which often marginalize the social dimensions of religious practice. The fragmentation of Christian rock manifests through the varying goals of ministry (separational), entertainment (integrational) and art (transformational) found within Christian rock.

For those engaged in Christian rock at a professional level, there is often more in common with social movements in relation to tactics, uses of identity, etc. Often engaged in ministry, the professional Christian rock musician attempts to evangelise and struggles for legitimacy in front of audiences, Christians and the secular world.

For those engaged in Christian rock at a semi-professional or amateur level, who are often aiming for entertainment or art, the trappings of subcultures are more pronounced. Even so, these subcultural ties are often less connected to Christianity and

more connected to local scenes that the Christian musician feels attached (i.e. metalcore, indie, singer/songwriter, etc.). In these scenes there is a struggle to protect self and the music from “commercial” elements, via D.I.Y. methods, and a greater interest in transgression and maintaining insider/outsider dynamics between the scene and outsider/poseurs.

Christian rock in all forms attempts to promote a sense of what the performers think Christianity is or can be, to attract others of like mind. A commonality of Christian rock musicians is their use of Christian rock as a means of reaching out to people (“our goal is to reach everyone” (Hope Nashton, Personal Communication, January 27, 2010)) and communicating. The net result of the actions of Christian rock musicians creates a movement that promotes Christianity through music in many different ways, and, in that sense, is akin to proselytism.

And yet Christian rock remains somewhat separate from much of the world. It is often viewed as illegitimate by secular artists, the tastemakers and the masses. Instead, it exists as its own field, or group of fields within Christianity. While individual performers may be able to cross over into the secular world with varying success, Christian rock as a whole remains outside the mainstream, where it is often looked at with embarrassment by both outsiders and insiders. It is an unintended subculture, a subculture that would rather be something else.

Chapter 8: Conclusion

Introduction

I began this research with the major question of whether Christian rock (a hybrid field bringing together the fields of religion and music/popular culture) in Ontario should be considered a subculture or a new social movement. In addressing this question I looked at issues related to authenticity and legitimacy and how these were resolved in relation to identity (insider/outsider distinction), practices (recruitment and mobilization, structure and leadership, use of space and material cultures), and the overlap and interaction between the two (strategies and goals). In this conclusion I will go over the key findings of this work as well as its contributions to the literature, and possibilities for future research.

Summary of Key Findings

As detailed in the methodology chapter, when starting my study on Christian rock, I created a series of questions related to issues I wanted to look at. In what follows I will address those research questions.

The first questions related to the problem of reconciling the values of evangelism with the values of rock music:

- How do Christian rock musicians negotiate the morally conservative values of Evangelicalism with the aesthetics of rock music? Are these differences reconciled and if so how? Or is the struggle between Evangelicalism and rock music a part of the ongoing creation of Christian rock? Is the Christian rock form (and identity/identities) now firmly entrenched and naturalized within Evangelicalism? How are these negotiations reflected in terms of identity and practices of participants?

Historically evangelism and rock were reconciled through a negotiation between defenders and critics of the genre for the minds of regular Christians. In most cases, these stressed that rock music was a musical style rather than a lifestyle, and that the sonic style of rock did not conflict with Christianity. Over time, this issue has become mostly resolved, though some negotiation remains, as Christian rock attempts to self-regulate.

Christian rock musicians negotiate between the two poles via self-regulation of themselves and their fellow Christians. Most do so by laying claim to personal authenticity wherein they participate in rock in ways that they see as not conflicting with their religious identity. In relation to participant identity and practice, negotiation of one's Christianity and rock participation are done mostly by stressing one's Christianity as a type of master status that overrides one's rock participation and identity. For most Christian rock participants, Christian rock has become "naturalized" within their own Christianity⁵. Within Christian communities, Christian rock has generally become acceptable except within very strict, traditional oriented denominations.

Another question related to how Christian rock fit within subcultural and new social movement theory, and how to separate new social movements from subculture in relation to goals and ethics:

- How do identities and practices of Christian rock resemble the models of subcultures (whose goals are retaining membership and defending against outsiders) and new social movements (whose goals are the promotion of a

⁵ It should be noted that the Christianity that is often presented within Christian rock is one that focuses on the individual rather than on the church as a whole. Christian rock of all stripes often centres on stirring personal feelings, passions, and individual connection to Jesus/God. As such, the social dimensions of religion become secondary, as the lack of focus placed on the connections between participants is not often seen in subcultures or social movements. Their connection is not to each other because of their commonalities per se, but is to each other through their connection to Jesus/God.

cause and the achievement of practical aims in relation to that cause)? To what extent do the goals and ethics of Christian rock musicians reflect social movement or subcultural approaches?

Historically I would argue that Christian rock began as an attempt at creating a social movement, a Christian response to the youth culture of the 1960s that tried to couple Christianity to hippies and contemporary activism. Over time Christian rock was forced to defend its legitimacy in relation to attacks from both Christians and non-Christians who questioned its ability to reconcile Christianity and rock music. Because of this, the focus of Christian rock often turned inward. By the end of the 1970s, Christian rock had found a fairly secure position within evangelical Christianity. Christian rock became less about evangelism and more about reaching the converted. This led in turn to the creation of what Howard & Streck refer to as the separational, integrational, and transformational approaches. These three types would come to define Christian rock: with the inward, ministry focussed separational acting as the dominant form, the outward looking, secular entertainment focussed integrational and the art focussed transformational subordinate. These approaches, more than any others, determined which forms of Christian rock should be considered subcultures or social movements.

The strategies and goals of Christian rock vary significantly. Those practicing the separational approach view their goal as ministry, and their ethics require them to minister to Christians and non-Christian. They sometimes make attempts at reaching out a la new social movements but most often end up insular, protecting the separate Christian insider from the secular world outsider. Their methods of recruitment and mobilization can also vary between active and passive, evangelism and retention.

Because they are seen as the assumed or default approach of Christian rock, the structure and leadership within separational represents the bulk of Christian music industry organizations: labels, musicians groups, etc. The separational use of space varies, but will often aim at larger, church centred events: the larger church show, the youth oriented festival or the worship rock performance. Here there will often be a direct connection to Christian identity politics via the inclusion of Christian charities, political groups and schools.

Worship rock attempts to cross worship with a more listener friendly form of rock that it can use to aid in ministry. Its ethics require it to attempt to appeal to Christians and non-Christians by aiming to bring people together. Though its main goal is in leading communal singing, another goal is creating an image of Christianity that will appeal to outsiders. It attempts to promote the cause of Christianity to both members and non-members. Worship rock emerged as something of a force within Christianity and it came to represent much about evangelical culture to both evangelicals and outsiders.

The integrational is connected to entertainment and to appealing to secular audiences. Here recruitment is somewhat inactive, performers do not oppose recruiting people to Christianity per se, but that is not their main goal. Instead, they aim to entertain. The structure, leadership and uses of those practicing integrational Christian rock are tied into the secular music industry and secular venues. The integrational attempts at a kind of new social movement approach, although it practices a less overt form of identity politics, often minimizing their Christianity in an attempt to appeal to primarily “outside” secular audiences.

Transformational is connected to the pursuit of art. It aims to reach audiences but does not seek to actively recruit to Christianity; instead aiming for having listeners become interested in Christianity through the music. There is little in the way of formal structure or leadership, instead relying on informal structures and leadership relating to cultural capital of the artists involved. For the transformational artist, there is often an attachment to a local secular scene and its associated venues such as folk/songwriter and coffeehouses or metalcore and rock clubs or small churches. These spaces allow for particular, subcultural oriented practices to arise.

An example of the transformational approach is worshipcore: a mixture of heavy metal, punk and worship strongly connects itself to the musical subculture of metalcore. This is an approach to music that is primarily done for the performer more than for the audience. While worshipcore may minister and entertain others, these goals are secondary to the creation of a worship environment for the performer. This is an approach that is concerned with the preservation of a metalcore identity to the exclusion of outsiders, including other Christians. It is deviant in its often unpalatable musical style, but more importantly in its rejection of Christian institutions in favour of a highly individualistic approach to faith that also prizes a particular collective identity where participants see themselves as outsiders from the secular and religious mainstream.

Another aspect of Christian rock I was interested in related to issues of personal, collective and musical authenticity:

- To what extent do Christian rock music participants view themselves as authentic? View other Christian rock musicians as authentic? View the musical form as authentic?

Individual authenticity relates to how individuals align themselves with identities that mirror their ideal self-image and maintain that identity until the two diverge⁶. In the case of Christian rock, participants often come to the music through peers, parents, or youth leaders. For those who come from non-Christian backgrounds or who make conscious decisions to convert there is often a rejection of secular music and a desire to find music that aligns with their new faith. This behaviour is reinforced by experienced individuals who view secular music as potentially threatening to the faith of the spiritually “young”.

Individuals may find themselves drawn to various forms of Christian rock (Howard & Streck’s typology of separational, transformational and integrational) because of how these connect to the perceived ethics that they hold for their individual musical practice: whether they see themselves as ministering, entertaining or creating art. As such, they see those musicians whose goals and ethics aligned with theirs as being the most authentic.

Musical authenticity relates to how Christian rock is perceived within rock. Christian rock struggles to authenticate itself by connecting itself to the roots of rock music (i.e. connecting it to church gospel music), or by laying its own claim to the image of rock as rebellion by stating that Christian rock too is transgressive. In this way, Christian rock attempts to be authentic in the eyes of outsiders, though this is often met with limited to no success.

⁶ Over time, participants will leave Christian rock due to issues of age, free time, or in some cases re-evaluating their faith and finding it no longer useful.

Within Christian rock as it is practiced in Ontario, I would argue that most elements are too disparate to offer a totalizing identity as one would typically find in subcultures; one that would encompass participants Christianity and link it to their musical participation. The exceptions would be those who are engaged in small scenes, separated from most of Christian rock (i.e. Worshipcore). Instead, Christian rock offers a means by which individuals can create music as ministry, entertainment or art, but also attempt to affect other people and change them in the process. As such it presents elements of both subcultures and social movements: it presents unique identities and practices, but those practices can be aimed outward and those identities can be protected through outreach and insularity.

Contribution to Literature

In conducting a study on Christian rock in Ontario from 2008-2010, I was able to compile a fair amount of data on participants attitudes and practices including Christian rock performance scripts, attitudes and biographies of Christian rock performers.

The study also provides a look at subcultures and social movements that demonstrates how they are similar and different, and the areas in that they are blurred, particularly in relation to how they deal with identities and practices. Both can be protective of unique identities and both can engage in identity construction as the main focus of practice. As a subculture, Christian rock represents a fractured subculture or collective grouping of subcultures. There exists smaller communities with some homogeneity but for the most part Christian rock exists as a heterogeneous entity. In relation to social movements, Christian rock represents an attempt at a social movement

with little overt politicization. Like new social movements, the political act is social and tied to participants being Christian. Within both approaches there is a never-ending negotiation of identity in order to achieve legitimacy of both individual and collective.

The dissertation looked at issues of authenticity and legitimacy within Christian rock. One of the ways this was examined was in relation to the so-called “ideology of rock”. This ideology draws on ideas of rock as ideally being separate from market concerns, wherein rock is about art or building community (Frith, 1983: pp. 30-31). In this sense, the ideology of rock stresses authenticity of purpose (bohemian, rejection of straight society) (Frith, 1978: p. 170; Frith, 1983: p. 176) and musical style (blues, country, folk or classically derived) (Frith, 1983: pp. 16, 41). I would argue that one can extrapolate this ideology of rock to create an ideology of Christian rock. Christian rock also focuses on building community, self expression and a rejection of straight society. In addition Christian rock can require an adversarial relationship with secular rock and a focus on purity of intention or purpose over sound. In the ideology of Christian rock, intention is all.

Finally this dissertation also looked at Howard and Streck’s work on Christian rock. Howard and Streck broke Christian rock into three art worlds that can be simply understood as separational relating to ministry, integrational relating to entertainment and transformational relating to art. These distinctions can be blurred: separational is predominantly aimed at Christians but can aspire to entertainment, art and a non-Christian audience; integrational can attempt to minister or be art for non-Christians or Christians; while transformational creates a hybrid of the two approaches in terms of openly aspiring

to appeal to both Christians and non-Christians. That is to say, the boundaries between all of these approaches are blurred at best. While there are differences in the approaches there are also commonalities that bring those practicing them together. These commonalities relate to organization structures (i.e. Christian record labels), identity (often ostracized from secular fields, religion operates as master identity), and goals (selling music to people) that ensure that the three approaches remain tied together.

Future Research

The data in this research represents a relatively small sample (just over 30 people were interviewed) conducted over a short period of time (2009-2010) that focussed on a relatively small area (Southern Ontario). As such, there is much research to be done, particularly in relation to the connection between Christian rock and evangelical political activism, Christian rock and gender, lyrical analysis, and comparison to other musical forms.

One area of potential interest is the relationship between Christian rock in Ontario and political activism in Ontario. Studies of this sort have been done in the United States (in particular see Eileen Luhr's 2009 book *Witnessing Suburbia: Conservatives and Christian Youth Culture*), which have showed how Christian rock is used as a tool of recruitment and mobilization for evangelical political movements such as the pro-life movement, anti-LGBTQ movement, anti-sex-ed groups, etc. Because of the religious differences between Canada and the United States, Canada's evangelicals are a demographically smaller though still active group. It would be interesting to see what, if

any, connections there are between Christian rock and evangelical political movements and organizations in Ontario.

Another area that could be researched further relates to issues of gender in Christian rock. As was previously stated, I had little in the way of female participants because there are fewer women in Christian rock; a look into why this is the case would be helpful, as would a look into attitudes, etc. that perpetuate this disparity.

One area I that I neglected was the issue of Christian rock's content, both musical and lyrical. Christian rock appropriates secular forms of rock music, and does not necessarily produce anything that is musically unique. Instead it uses the music but creates its own lyrics in a kind of bricolage that reformulates rock music as a different kind of transgression. There is work to be done on how Christian rock uses the rock music from a more musicological perspective. As well, while other studies have been done on lyrical content (Howard, 1992; Livengood & Book, 2004), there is a lot to be done in looking at the different ways lyrics can present Christian identity and authenticity.

Lastly, an avenue for future research could be to make a systematic comparison between Christian rock and other fields of music, both secular and Christian. A possible case can be found in the rise of rap music. In the past several years there have been questions about the continuing relevancy of rock music. As charts have come to be dominated more and more by rap, pop and country, many have questioned whether "rock is dead?", if it is at all relevant to young people, etc. As such, a study comparing the cultures of Christian hip hop to Christian rock could be illuminating.

Conclusion

Christian rock began as an attempt at using youth culture to create a social movement; a young Christians' response to the 1960s that attempted to bind Christianity to the hippie subculture and contemporary political and social activism. This reappropriation of culture led to an ongoing debate about the legitimacy of Christian rock, a debate that Christian rock defenders made against both secular and Christian opponents. As these attacks from outside abated, attacks from within grew stronger and Christian rock fractured. This led to the creation of what Howard & Streck refer to as the separational, integrational, and transformational approaches. These three types would come to define Christian rock: with the inward, ministry focussed separational acting as the dominant form, the outward looking, secular entertainment focussed integrational and the art focussed transformational subordinate. This gave rise to the Christian rock that I studied, a Christian rock that is neither truly subculture nor truly social movement. It is instead a field composed of subfields, some of which are very reminiscent of social movements (i.e. worshipcore); while others approach new social movements (i.e. worship rock). Christian rock emerges as a field in which collective and individual identities are protected, but also where evangelism is rarely far from ones mind.

Christian rock then plays a key role in the lives of participants as they struggle with their identities; in the same way that they continue to question their faith and the faith of others. As such, a study of Christian rock in Ontario represents a way to understand the contemporary evangelical culture in Ontario.

Post Script

In the years since the original data collection was completed a number of changes have occurred that bear a relationship to Christian rock. The most relevant of these are technological changes, taste changes and political changes.

Technological and Taste Changes

Since the beginning of the 21st century technological advancements have accelerated, particularly in relation to entertainments mediums. The music industry has seen a change from physical sales to streaming. For most musicians the source of revenue has moved from physical sales to live performance. Similarly there has been a shift away from rock as the dominant popular musical form towards hip hop and pop. Where does Christian rock fit into this new landscape?

First, I would argue that rock represents an umbrella term for pop music that prizes authenticity related to musical style and recorded sound, but most importantly related to authenticity of performers: that is it prizes whether performers are presenting something real to themselves. In that way, much of hip hop and pop is still somewhat rock in that performers often attempt to present something that is a reflection of themselves.

Secondly, there is a growing sense that allegiance to particular musical styles and genres is no longer central to music consumption: instead tastes have become more omnivorous (Peterson & Kern, 1996). Similarly, people no longer need to own physical things to listen to them, and as such, I would argue much of the cultural capital associated with such possession has diminished.

Christian rock can be used as a term that covers all (predominantly white) contemporary Christian popular music that prizes authenticity of the performer/artist highly. Within Christian music this is a given as authenticity as a moral quest and practice of self discovery, attempting to finding stability in a post-modern world is part and parcel of the Christian faith (Vannini and Williams, 2009). For Christians authenticity is tied to the connection of themselves to their message and their goals of being true to themselves.

Political Changes

Since the research was initially conducted, much has changed with regards to the role of evangelicalism in politics, as the religious right has risen to even greater prominence alongside right wing populism, nationalism, and white supremacy.

This rise has lead to tensions within protestant Christianity, as conflicts have emerged between older conservative and younger more progressive evangelicals (Cox, 2019). The tension relates in part to how individuals deal with the modern world, with younger individuals embracing subjective understandings of the world due to the pluralism they grew up with in the larger society⁷. For some young white evangelicals, religious structures of the church have become their main adversary⁸ (Young, 2012b).

⁷ This can be seen in terms of polls looking at young, white evangelical support of Trump, which is not as great as that of older evangelicals. Much of this disparity relates to disagreement on policy, particularly immigration (Cox, 2019).

⁸ While U2's song One from 1991's Achtung Baby is often seen as relating to the end of a relationship (Cantanzarite, 2007), one fan has speculated that the song is about Bono's relationship with the church.

Did I ask too much, more than a lot?
You gave me nothing, now it's all I got
We're one, but we're not the same
Well we hurt each other, then we do it again
You say love is a temple, love a higher law
Love is a temple, love the higher law

One response to this conflict is the so-called emergent church. The emergent church is predominantly made up of young evangelicals who take a more post-modern approach to faith and reject the existential certainties of conservative fundamentalism for an embracement of doubt (akin to that found in the transformational approach of Christian rock) (p. 335). In the emergent church there is a rejection of right wing policies in favour of globally oriented activism, particularly related to anti-poverty movements (p. 333).

The tensions seen here relate to issues of authenticity connected to who best represents Christianity. For the religious right the adversary is the secular world, and their authenticity is measured against the secular world. For the emergent church, their authenticity is measured both in terms of how they see themselves connected to early Christianity (asking What Would Jesus Do? in relation to issues of poverty, etc.) and against the established white evangelical church, which they view as not fulfilling its Biblical mandate. As such, a struggle between older conservative and younger more liberal evangelicals has developed around who is the “truest Christian”.

With the changes in technology that have occurred, the split within evangelicalism has become more pronounced as people are able to find like-minded individuals online: there has developed an emergent church network that mirrors the networks of the religious right. As such, Christian rock this decade has become a potential site of conflict

You ask me to enter, but then you make me crawl
And I can't keep holding on to what you got
When all you got is hurt (U2, 1991)

The lines quoted here relate to both a shared faith and to the hypocrisy that practitioners see in churches where they hear love preached but are rejected for not being the right kind of Christian. (Steve Dempsey, Personal Communication)

between different views of Christianity and how these views lay claim to their Christian identity and to authenticity. This is reflected in two of the approaches found in my dissertation: those of separational and transformational. For the most part the separational most closely fits with the religious right church particularly in its antagonism and separateness from secular culture. Similarly the transformational aligns with the goals of the emergent church (Young, 2012b: pp. 331-334) placing an emphasis on ambiguity, uncertainty and left-wing politics. While some conflict was shown in the dissertation between these two approaches, it would be interesting to explore these relationships as they connect to this continually changing political reality.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Letter of information

Title of research: Christian rock and Identity

My name is Zachary Horn and I am a fourth year Ph.D. student from McMaster University. I am conducting research on Christian rock, and the relationship between Christianity, Rock music and participant identity. The purpose of this study is to better understand the relationship between religion, contemporary cultural forms and identity. I will be studying these processes through participant observation and through interviews with interested musicians and fans. The primary focus of this research will be on the views held by those producing this music with a secondary focus on audience, and how each feels their involvement in Christian rock reflects their own personal beliefs.

I am particularly interested in the ways in which people approach their involvement in Christian rock in relation to their faith, and how this relates to the formation of their identity. This is addressed through questions relating to one's personal faith, and how this faith plays a role on one's musical involvement in both a playing and listening capacity, and how, conversely, one's musical involvement has impacted their approach to their faith.

If you are interested, I would like to conduct an interview with you. This interview will take approximately one hour, and can be scheduled at a time and location that is convenient for you. If you prefer, we can talk by phone rather than in person.

The information gathered from this project may be used for formal presentations, and potential publications. Your identity will not be revealed in any of these formal presentations or publications, as pseudonyms will be used when referring to any of the participants in the study. However, even though I will be taking precautions to safeguard your identity, there is a possibility that published information might make you identifiable to others. You should be aware of this possibility when choosing what to discuss in the interview.

A list of identities and corresponding pseudonyms will be kept separate from the research data collected. All information will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office (except for the list with names and pseudonyms which will be kept in a locked desk drawer in my office at school). The researcher will be the only person who has access to this research information.

There are very few potential psychological risks which may arise out of this research process, but due to the nature of research with human subjects, one cannot completely deny the possibility that a participant may potentially experience some sort of psychological harm such as embarrassment, worry, etc.

Final written copies of the research findings will be available to you upon request.

Should you have any questions about the nature of my research, please do not hesitate to contact me at (905) 524-2869 or e-mail at hornza@mcmaster.ca.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the McMaster Research Ethics Board. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, you may contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Board Secretariat
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
c/o Office of Research Services
E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

Sincerely,
Zachary Horn
Ph.D. Student
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario
hornza@mcmaster.ca
(905) 524-2869

Supervisor:
Dr. Graham Knight
Chair of Communication Studies
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario
knightg@mcmaster.ca
(905) 525-9140 (ext. 26518)

Appendix B: Consent Form

Date: _____

Title of research: Christian rock and Identity

Investigator:

Zachary Horn
Ph.D. Student
McMaster University
Hamilton, Ontario
hornza@mcmaster.ca
(905) 524-2869

Purpose of study:

The purpose of this study is to better understand the relationship between religion, contemporary cultural forms and identity. I will be studying these processes through participant observation and through interviews with interested musicians and fans. The primary focus of this research will be on the views held by those producing this music, and how they feel it reflects their own personal beliefs.

Procedures involved in study:

As an interview participant you will be asked a series of open-ended questions about yourself and your involvement in musical production. For example, I may ask you what steps are taken in the creative process of a musical work, or how musical/creative decisions relate to your faith. The interview you participate in will be recorded either with a tape recorder (with your permission) or through hand written notes. The information gathered from this project may potentially be used for formal presentations, course requirements (such as essays) and potential publications. Your identity will not be revealed in any of these formal presentations, essays or publications, as pseudonyms will be used, nor will I include any information that would make it easy for others to identify you. Should you wish to not remain anonymous, this option will be provided (see below). The research will be conducted over the next two years, with publications likely occurring in the year after that. Once the work is published, I will destroy the original data.

You are under no obligation to participate in the study. You can withdraw from the study at any time during the process of data collection. If you choose to withdraw, any data you have provided will be destroyed unless you indicate otherwise. In addition, should you be interviewed, you may decline to answer any or all of the questions.

Possible risks to you:

McMaster University requires that people who participate in university research be informed of the possible risks involved. Given that this research is completely voluntary, the possible risks involved in this study are minimal. However, even though I will be taking precautions to safeguard your identity, there is a possibility that published

information might make you identifiable to others. You should be aware of this possibility when choosing what to discuss in the interview.

A list with the identities and corresponding pseudonyms will be kept separate from the research data collected. All information will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home office (except for the list with names and pseudonyms which will be kept in a locked desk drawer in my office at school). I will be the only person who has access to this research information.

Research findings:

Final written copies of the research findings will be available to the participants upon request. If you are interested in a copy of the findings, let me know during the interview, and I will provide you with a copy once the research has been completed.

If you have questions or require more information about the study itself, please contact me (Zachary Horn), at (905) 524-2869 or through email at hornza@mcmaster.ca.

This study has been reviewed and approved by the McMaster Research Ethics Board. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant or about the way the study is conducted, you may contact:

McMaster Research Ethics Board Secretariat
Telephone: (905) 525-9140 ext. 23142
c/o Office of Research Services
E-mail: ethicsoffice@mcmaster.ca

CONSENT

I have read the information presented in the information letter about a study being conducted by Zachary Horn, of McMaster University. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about my involvement in this study, and to receive any additional details I wanted to know about the study. I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time, if I choose to do so, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Participant

Please check mark and initial one of the following options:

I would like all of the statements that I make in this interview to:

Remain anonymous (use pseudonyms) _____

Not remain anonymous (reveal your identity) _____

A mixture of both options (pseudonym and identity) _____

I agree that my interview can be taped. _____

I wish my interview NOT to be taped. _____

Appendix C: Interview Questions

How long have you been a Christian?

How would you define your faith?

How important would you say your faith is in your daily life?

How did you become interested in Christian rock? When?

What was your initial reaction to the music?

What role does Christian rock play in your faith?

What Christian rock genres and/or performers do you like best? Why?

What is your attitude to non-Christian music?

Do you listen to any? Do you avoid it?

Do you think it is possible to be a person of faith while creating music that is not explicitly religious in tone? That is, could one be a Christian musician performing music that could be construed as embracing secular styles and content?

What should the role of Christian rock be? To evangelize? To entertain?

Do you see Christian rock as being applicable to any musical genre, so long as the lyrics represent one's faith?

Which do you view as having primary importance: music or lyrics? Why?

What impact does the music have on the message?

What impact does the message have on the music?

How is your participation in Christian rock viewed by those around you (both Christians and non-Christians)?

Who do you think Christian rock appeals to most? Why?

What kind of relationship do you see between Christian rock and the church? Between Christian rock and secular society?

How accepted is Christian rock generally? Within churches? In the secular world?

Do you feel that Christian rock represents a community to which you are a participant? Excluded? Why?

Note: For the purpose of this interview, Christian rock refers essentially to any form of contemporary "popular" music produced by Christians that is predominantly consumed by Christians.