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LABELLING YOUTH CULTURES DEVIANT:

TRADITIONAL GENDER ROLES IN HEAVY METAL

BY

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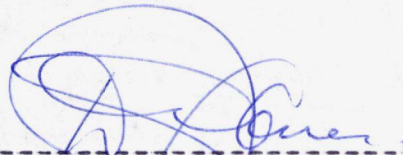
The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Labelling Youth Cultures Deviant: Traditional Gender Roles in Heavy Metal," submitted by Bruce K. Friesen in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts.

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ABSTRACT

Discussions by social theorists on the functions of
deviance have pointed out the positive role that deviance
can play in society. Empirical studies on youth cultures
have illustrated that although youth cultures have been
perceived by society to be deviant, their values and
objectives are congruent with those of mainstream society.
This exploratory study attempts to outline the process by
which youth cultures are labelled deviant from a symbolic
interactionist perspective. The functional relationship
between society and youth cultures are examined, in part,
through a socio-historical analysis of the history of rock
music.

Using the heavy metal youth subculture as a case
study, data were collected using participant observation
techniques. Results obtained from field research present a
detailed description of the heavy metal subculture and
music, and provide evidence that such subcultural values
are traditional as well. Gender roles were examined in
more detail by performing a content analysis on lyrics of
heavy metal. This latter exercise provided quantitative
data which illustrates the traditional rather than
non-traditional nature of gender roles presented in heavy

metal music.   Interviews were also conducted with six key participants in the setting to confirm conceptual validity. These findings thus confirm the functional relationship between society and youth cultures that are labelled deviant.   As youth gain power through societal fear of their deviant status, society benefits in several ways through identifying a highly visible deviant group.

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DEDICATION

To Debi: my colleague, my friend, and my wife.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The sociological significance of deviance has been recognised by students of human behaviour for many years. Its significance lies not only in the many insights that we receive into the relationship between the individual and society, but in the positive manner that deviance functions in society as well. While Emile Durkheim (1933, pp. 102-108) first suggested in The Division of Labor that deviance may play a positive role in society by clarifying social norms and indicating the limits of social tolerance, it was Georg Simmel (1955) who developed the idea. He outlined the role of deviance in social conflict theory.

The Functions of Deviance

Simmel's work (restated by Coser, 1964) suggests that deviance (and the conflict it engenders) performs positively in society in at least five interrelated ways.(1) First, when no external enemies exist, deviants exposed within the society can be used as scapegoats,

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(1) These five functions are summarized in James Teevan, ed. Introduction to Sociology:__A Canadian Focus. Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1982, p. 89.

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serving to unify the general populace who do not deviate in the same manner. The aggression directed towards the deviant may further increase the cohesion, productivity and well-being of the conformists, since the antagonist-protagonist distinction produces a strong allegiance stemming from a common identity.

Secondly, since deviants are viewed by society at large with disgust and contempt, it adds a dimension of security and stability to the identity of the conformers, who perceive themselves as as being morally superior and somewhat self-righteous. Kai Erikson (1966) argued that this distinction is, in fact, an essential need of society, and that other behaviours will actually be redefined as deviant in order to fill the need of having someone inferior with whom to compare one's self.

Thirdly, assuming that one can make the distinction between "healthy" or "harmful" deviance, non-conformity can serve as an early warning signal that something is wrong with the social system. This can help the society avoid potentially larger faults that could cause more damage at a later time. Both Simmel and Coser reinforced the idea that deviance in a society is healthy unless it attempts to seriously undermine the basic fabric of society.

Expressions of deviance, they advised, could be evaluated on the grounds of being healthy or harmful to society.

Fourthly, the social change that is encouraged by certain forms of deviance may begin a process of progress and adaptation to "better" norms and values in a given social system. Again, the decision as to what is "better" or "worse" for a society can only be made on a subjective level, but is a distinction that theoretically could still be made. Certain people in the past who were labelled deviant (such as Ghandi or Martin Luther King) encouraged social change in a fashion that is presently evaluated as positive.

Finally, assuming once again that certain behaviours actually "let off steam", minor forms of deviant behaviour may lead to fewer problems for society in the long run. This is to say, if pent up frustration and aggression can be expressed in a number of lesser deviant acts, more harmful acts of deviance can then be averted. Prohibition was abolished partly due to this philosophy, since government leaders were more willing to accept certain social consequences of legal alcohol consumption than they were in the problems with "bootlegging", organised crime and the like.

While this functional approach to deviance may illustrate the point that deviance is a necessary part of any society, it is used here only to provide a macro-sociological backdrop to the focus of this study. While functionalism aids in identifying broad factors which affect societal reactions to deviance (particularly in collective rule-making), it does not provide a framework for an intensive analysis of the interactive process that exists between society and deviant behaviour. Nevertheless, as Schur (1971) has stated, "In this respect, it (functionalist theory) is quite consistent with, and in fact complements, the major findings of labeling-oriented research."(2)

Labelling Deviance

It is appropriate, then, to move to a consideration of the labelling theory of deviance. The focus of this discussion does not rest upon the assumption that the performance of a deviant act is an act that runs contrary to the collective conscience (as Durkheim suggests).(3)

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(2) Schur, Edwin M. Labeling Deviant Behavior: It's Sociological Implications. New York: Harper and Row, 1971, p. 148.

(3) Emile Durkheim, The Division of Labor. George Simpson, trans. London: Collier Macmillan Pub.,1933, p. 80

Rather it rests on the proposition that differing interest groups in society attempt to apply the deviant label to other groups that they perceive to be in conflict with. Lofland (1969) has referred to this process as "conflict games"; opposing forces (including pressure groups, subcultures and control agencies) that struggle to define situations in their favor. These interest groups know that applying a deviant label to another group does more than simply label a behaviour. If the label is successfully applied it becomes a "master status",(4) which defines the essential character of those individuals involved as deviant.

Becker (1963) has referred to the group that instigates the labelling process as "moral entrepreneurs". These are individuals who are motivated by highly moral principles (e.g. religious, humanitarian), and who seek to change old laws or make new laws that will enable them to force a deviant label upon the behaviour in question. What makes this process particularly political is the fact that "groups and individuals with high resources are more likely than are those with low resources to be able to avoid or

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(4) See Everett C. Hughes, "Dilemmas and Contradictions of Status", American Journal of Sociology, 50 (March 1945), pp. 353-359.

resist negative labeling."(5)   Furthermore, Becker observes that:

> ...this fact--that moral cursades are typically dominated by those in the upper levels of the social structure--means that they add to the power they derive from the legitimacy of their moral position, the power they derive from their superior position in society.(6)

Youth Culture

In his classic study on adolescence, James Coleman (1961) suggested that the development of the secondary school system in industrial society, particularly in the post World War II years, produced the age and geographical segregation that became the breeding ground for a distinctive youth subculture. By allowing adolescents to meet together in a regulated fashion and to interact largely with each other, a unique, segregated and distinctive subculture emerged.   This readily identifiable group not only created a subculture especially meaningful to adolescents, but it also managed to establish a permanent and powerless group that was easy to label as deviant and equally easy to exploit.

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(5) Schur, op. cit., p. 151.

(6) Howard Becker. Outsiders._ Studies in the Sociology of Deviance. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1963, p. 149.

In another book, Coleman evaluates the adolescent subculture in particularly negative terms:

> Adolescents have their own little society, with special symbols and language, special interests and activities . . . Such a situation invites trouble. It encourages leadership that asserts itself against the adult demands. It encourages a disdain for those who exert effort to meet adult demands. It encourages a status system among adolescents. . . . In sum, it effectively impedes education, keeping the effort expended on learning at a minimum.(7)

While societal reactions to the youth subculture tend to be consistent with Coleman's evaluation,(8) legislative control of the time that youth spend in a powerless position continues to grow. Where a high school education ensured an adolescent an upwardly mobile occupation in the 1950's, a university degree or technical school diploma is necessary to ensure the same type of position today. The

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(7) James S. Coleman, Adolescents and the Schools. New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1965, p. 12.

(8) Hechinger and Hechinger, for example, write in their introduction: "The pages which follow . . . are not intended as a declaration of war but as an honest attempt to make 'the teens' once again a transition period to full man- or womanhood rather than a tribal subculture'; a temporary condition to be terminated with normal speed, rather than to be artificially induced and prolonged . . ." See G Hechinger and F.Hechinger, Teen-Age Tyranny. Greenwich, Conn.: Fawcett Pub., 1963, p. ix.

effect is that adolescents must spend more time in a dependant position upon parents and the schools than they did only twenty or thirty years ago. Their powerless status, as well as the continued participation in the youth subculture, is ensured.

In the complex process of selection of a group to label as deviant, youth and youth cultures appear to be ideal. Lofland has suggested that "When low education and youth or old age are combined in the same Actor . . . it seems apparent that he becomes especially vulnerable to escalation [of a deviant identity]".(9) A genre of music listened to primarily by lower-class adolescents would appear to be an open invitation for middle-class entrepreneurs to label as deviant.

On the one hand, adolescents appear to be an intimidating group to label, due to various resources at their disposal. Adolescents are quite physically adept at carrying out protests or retaliatory attacks. Additionally, they have an abundance of energy and are highly idealistic, which helps motivate them in their various endeavors. Adolescents have large networking opportunities to facilitate rapid dissemination of

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(9) Lofland, John. Deviance and Identity. Englewood Cliffs, N. J: Prentice-Hall, 1969, p. 181.

information. This network is unified through peer pressure, which exists especially in the schools. Adolescents also have few major commitments in the social system, and are free to pursue their own interests or causes at will.

Yet despite these advantages, youth or adolescents are still one of the most powerless groups in society. They are largely unsophisticated, and lack the knowledge or tact necessary to effectively defend themselves against any moral attack. Their dependency upon those in authority is crippling. Any attempts at criticizing the status quo are quickly quelled by parents who lean towards a more conservative viewpoint. In addition to this dependancy (which is both economic and emotional), adolescents' lives are heavily regulated by teachers and the secondary school system. Elaborate control mechanisms are built into the school system to ensure conformity to time schedules, attendance and the like. Youth similarly are in this position of powerlessness for only a few years, which helps to prevent the organisation of any effective or long-term protests. Any attempts by adolescents to fight the "deviant" label only enforce societal beliefs of youth being rebellious.

In addition to these structural confines, most adolescents are in a crisis period of life. They are attempting to build their own self-esteem and make wise career decisions, while trying to ward off moral attacks. Because many of them are likewise barred from obtaining more powerful positions in society (i.e. those that drop out of school are largely destined to fill only blue-collar positions), adolescents remain a relatively powerless group within society. Thus they frequently find themselves or their culture to be the focus of a moral entrepreneurial attack.

Deviance and Youth

There is evidence to indicate that these crusades have been successful. In the roaring twenties, for example, adolescents were criticized for their involvement in promiscuous sex, excessive drinking, flapper dresses and short skirts, and lewd dancing styles such as the Charleston.(10) In the 1940's, adolescents were again criticized for their strange attraction to big bands and trumpet players such as Harry James. Labelled "jitterbugs", adolescents again adopted a specific

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(10) For a discussion on the "flaming youth" of the 1920's, see F. Philip Rice, The Adolescent. Boston: Allyn and Bacon Inc., 1981, pp. 13-15.

subcultural style of language and dress, marked by the porkpie hat, fingertip coat, and tight-bottomed trousers. With the inception of "rock 'n' roll" in the 1950's, criticisms of adolescents and their culture were evident again.

Empirical evidence indicates that these negative attitudes towards the changing youth subculture still exist today. Feelings of adults toward adolescents includes open resentment (Conger, 1971). They have been depicted as rebellious, unappreciative, immoral, ill-mannered, untidy, irresponsible, lazy children who are more interested in having a good time than growing up. They are criticized as people whose chief delights are sexual immorality and attendance at rock concerts, smoking drugs and listening to shocking music (Rice, 1981; Barr, 1971; Drane, 1973; Feigelson, 1970; Gerzon, 1970). Adolescents of today have been negatively stereotyped as pampered and spoiled, irresponsible, immoral, hedonistic, cynical, and rebellious and rude,(11) despite empirical evidence to the contrary. Most empirical studies concerned with normal adolescents indicate that the majority are not rebellious, not politically active, not resistant to the values of their

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(11) For an elaborated discussion on each of these characteristics, see Rice, op. cit., pp. 6-9.

parents, not at the mercy of their emotions, nor even in turmoil.(12) In a recent major study which surveyed 3,600 Canadian youth, researchers R. Bibby and D. Posterski concluded in regards to the values of adolescents:

> We do not mean to minimize the potential of youth minorities to have a cultural and political impact on our societies. However, we would underscore the fact that even in this period of such publicized societal disaffection on the part of youth, the values and related lifestyles of the majority of young people were largely untouched. . . . Our survey has found that those terminal and instrumental values deemed most important by adult Canadians are also held by a solid majority of young people.(13)

The Present Study

It is the purpose of this study, then, to examine this interactive relationship between the deviant image of the adolescent subculture and the seemingly contradictory conservative attitudes and actions practiced by its habituees. The process of labelling the adolescent subculture will be examined. Research has been carried out to determine whether or not the values of the examined

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(12) J. Adelson, "Adolescence and the Generation Gap", Psychology Today, February 1979, pp. 33ff.

(13) R. Bibby and D. Posterski, The Emerging Generation: An Inside Look at Canada's Teenagers. Toronto: Irwin Publishing, 1985, pp. 23-24.

components are really deviant (i.e. contrary to mainstream adult values and suppositions). To facilitate this analysis, it will be necessary to focus on a particular aspect of the youth subculture, and then identify any moral entrepreneurial groups and their efforts to legislate a deviant label upon this aspect. The second part of the analysis includes an in-depth evaluation of the actual values and trends that lie beneath the symbols of this particular aspect of the youth subculture. This is an attempt to assess whether or not the values being promulgated are actually contrary to those of society.

One of the most readily accessible aspects of the youth subculture is rock music. Given the high value that adolescents place on music,(14) as well as the high profile that rock music enjoys in the media, an analysis of this aspect of the youth subculture should provide an accurate picture of the way in which moral entrepreneurs in society have dealt with the issue. Second, and more importantly, this study will aim at analyzing the specific value-laden

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(14) In a recent Canadian survey, adolescent respondents rated music as the second most important part of their reference circle that they receive enjoyment from. Most important was friendships, although for B. C. and Ontario a greater percentage indicated music gave greater enjoyment than friendships did. See table in Ibid., p. 32.

messages that are produced within the rock music rubric. Are the values being put forth truly deviant? This will be the focus of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

As mentioned before, the importance of popular music in the lives of Canadian adolescents cannot be overstated. Avery (1979) has documented the inverse relationship between television viewing and music listening during adolescence: as the time spent watching television declines the amount of time spent listening to music increases. Larson and Kubey (1983) suggest that this is due to the fact that television content is largely determined by adult influences and is overly concerned with adult matters. Popular music, on the other hand, is geared towards a younger audience and consequently deals with such adolescent themes as heterosexual relations, autonomy and self-identity. Indeed, recent research has documented adolescents' preoccupation with music and radio over television (Bibby and Posterski, 1985; Larson and Kubey, 1983). It is ironic, then, that the bulk of mass media research has dealt predominantly with effects of television viewing rather than music listening. Nevertheless, several studies have been conducted on the relationship between adolescents and popular music.

In the past, researchers such as Coleman (1961) viewed popular music as a specific subcultural expression that provided the catalyst necessary to unite young people and allow them the ideological freedom to develop a collective identity of their own. Yet empirical research conducted since Coleman's analysis has failed to substantiate the existence of such thematic homogeneity in popular music. Indeed, the term "popular music" is at best nebulous; it can signify any genre of music from classical to punk; from the most elusive forms of psychedilia to the strict melodic confines of Tin Pan Alley. In an article addressing the question, "What is 'Popular Music'?", Stratton (1983) concludes: "...what is accepted as 'popular music' is popular music."(1) Frith (1978) has similarly suggested that "It is only pop music whose essence is that it is communicated by a mass medium. . . The assumption is that a pop audience can be CONSTRUCTED by the record industry itself."(2)

If this is true, it then becomes necessary to approach the problem of music and the adolescent subculture with a narrower focus, for not all of what constitutes popular music is necessarily a product of the youth culture, nor is

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(1) Jon Stratton, "What is 'Popular Music'?", The Sociological Review, 31, 2, May 1983, p. 308.

(2) Simon Frith, Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock. London: Constable, 1978, p. 6.

it necessarily aimed at a primarily adolescent audience.
As a matter of fact, since the 1960's popular music has
consistently grown more diverse in terms of the increasing
number of styles and genres of music that receive radio
airplay. In a content analysis of popular music lyrics
from 1940-1977, for example, Anderson et. al. (1980)
distinguished four types of mainstream and six types of
substream material played on the radio. Mainstream styles
consisted of pop ballads, pop upbeats, rock ballads and
rock upbeats. Substream styles were based upon
distinctions between folk, country and western, rhythm and
blues, jazz, comedy/novelty and seasonal selections.
Tanner (1981) similarly identified three mainstream genres,
consisting of Top 40, Progressive, Heavy Metal, and
miscellaneous. Buxton (1983) has commented: "From the
period after 1970 emerged new rock music genres, marketing
types and 'supergroups,' a prelude to the sclerosis from
which rock has not yet recovered."(3) Even as early as
1971, Hirsch concluded:

> While we have located several youth
> subcultures insofar as popular song
> style preferences are concerned, we

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(3) David Buxton, "Rock Music, The Star-System and the Rise
    of Consumerism", _Telos_, 57, Fall 1983, p. 102.

> found no evidence for the existence of
> a single, unified teenage culture
> strong enough to overcome within-group
> class and racial differences.(4)

What appears to be the case then, even if popular music did provide the vehicle to create a unified youth subculture at one time, is that the popular music scene currently provides a "smorgasbord" of musical styles. For the more "mainstream" styles the term "pop music" seems to be an adequate description, since (as suggested by Frith before) they have been written specifically for receiving top 40 radio airplay. However, the number of substreams that also gain exposure on the radio give only a sample of the number of performers that also attempt to create music within the confines of that same genre. Etzkorn (1976) reiterates the point by declaring: "While audiences frequently tend to be specialized regarding the types of music they are selecting for exposure, we find that musicians also specialize in performing certain styles."(5) Popular music today, then, creates the conditions where several subcultures may consequently develop in response to such musical diversity. Due to the propensity for adolescents to develop specific musical tastes, it is

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(4) Paul M. Hirsch, "Sociological Approaches to the Pop Music Phenomenon", American Behavioral Scientist, 14, 1971, p. 385.

(5) K. Peter Etzkorn, "Manufacturing Music", Society, 14, 1, Nov.-Dec. 1976, p. 20.

reasonable to suggest that several of these subcultural musical styles may be age-specific. While each subculture may hear a certain amount of their preferred genre played on popular music radio, they are continually introduced to other genres at the same time. Etzkorn summarizes by saying:

> Within delimited social contexts certain musical forms become clearly associated with specific social groups, and are practiced within them to the exclusion of others.
>
> These specific musical forms are socially learned and transmitted within delimited social groups in ways comparable to those characteristic for other values and certain non-material cultural practices. Group-specific socialization practices offer a key to the analysis of the maintenance of specific musical culture.(6)

As stated before, it is the purpose of this study to examine a specific adolescent musical culture. A consideration of deviance further necessitates that a musical culture (referred to here as a "subculture") traditionally labelled "deviant" be the focus of this analysis, to facilitate the observation of the interactive processes between society and the individual.

Since the establishment of a much more diverse array of musical genres on the popular music scene, adolescents have increasingly identified each other in terms of what type of music they listen to (Chapman and Williams, 1976,

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(6) Ibid., p. 20.

p. 61). While this has not totally removed the deviant label from all adolescents, it has in effect taken some of the stigmatization away from certain subgroups by labelling other groups as more deviant. In examining these various subgroups, the style of music most readily identified as deviant is labelled "heavy metal".(7) Other youth subcultures, rock music, and adherents to heavy metal music regularly identify heavy metal with the more "seedy" side of humanity. The Economist, for example, describes heavy metal as:

> . . . a raw, loud and violent type of music. Its excesses are justly notorious--Mr. Blackie Lawless, a singer with a band called Wasp [sic], abuses a semi-naked girl on stage while wearing a chainsaw codpiece. A violent attitude to sex is often taken in the lyrics; an extreme example is 'Eat me alive' by Judas Priest, which is alleged to deal with forced sex at gunpoint.(8)

Such "allegations" perpetuated by the rock music press and others allow the "deviant" label to be continually applied to the heavy metal genre of music. Studies have also been carried out that link illegal drug use, self-reported

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(7) The history of the term "heavy metal" and the characteristics of the music are dealt with in chapter 3. While punk music could also be considered as a "deviant" style of music, the philosophical nature of the punk movement has appealed much more to young adult rather than adolescent groups.

(8) "Obscene But Not Heard?" The Economist, v. 296, August 17, 1985, p. 25.

delinquency, and low commitment to school with listening to heavy metal (Dees and Vera, 1978; Tanner, 1981). This genre of music, then, provides a brief socio-historical example of how adolescent subcultures are typically labelled deviant in an attempt to stabilize the functioning of society.

Labelling Theory

While labelling theory brings to light the interactive processes that stigmatize heavy metal music and other forms of deviance, it is necessary to distinguish between the application of an informal versus a formal deviant label. Theorists such as Becker (1963), while recognising the fact that moral entrepreneurial efforts usually precede the creation of rules, nevertheless tend to concentrate specifically upon the labelling processes that occur AFTER formal legislation has been passed. Heavy metal, however, has not yet progressed that far in the labelling process. It is necessary, therefore, to focus on the process of applying an informal deviant label. Empey (1982:408) has diagramed the informal labelling process in the following way:

Informal Labelling:

Primary   ---> Dramatization ---> Delinquent ---> Secondary

Deviance   of Evil   Identity   Deviance

The formal labelling process, however, begins after secondary deviance has been committed. Secondary deviance legitimates the efforts of moral entrepreneurs by reinforcing the deviant status of those labelled, and may therefore justify the creation of new rules.

Formal Labelling:

Creation ---> Selective ---> Stigmatization ---> Permanent

of Rules   Labelling   of Offender   Deviant

                                                  Status

In outlining the informal labelling process, Empey (1982:408) notes that first there are various acts of primary deviation. Lemert (1951) suggests that all young people engage in these acts to some extent for reasons of their own. Primary deviance may consist of kicking over garbage cans, skipping school, and shoplifting for example; acts that are defined by young persons as "fun" or "exciting". A contingent point in the practice of primary deviancy, however, is whether or not the "deviant" behaviours are detected by society. Since society defines these behaviours in much different ways, parents or school

authorities may attempt to dramatize the "evil" (Tannenbaum, 1938). Moral entrepreneurial forces (such as a parent or school organisations) may be further mobilized in an attempt to "do something about the problem." As a result of the attempts of moral entrepreneurs to label such behaviours as deviant, persons who have been discovered in acts of primary deviance acquire a deviant identity themselves.

Lemert (1971) has also suggested that once people are so labelled, another specific set of informal rules are applied to their behaviour that restrict where they go, what they do, and whom they associate with. This, in turn, acts as a type of "self-fulfilling prophecy"; deviants cannot "reform" themselves even if so desired, since their behaviour is continually interpreted in terms of their deviant master status. Their friendships are likewise restricted to others "who are like them." In response to this stalemate, some deviants (the term is used only in reference to those who are so labelled) may engage in acts of secondary deviance. Secondary deviance is behaviour that is done in accordance with the expectations of the deviant status, and frequently gives moral entrepreneurs the justification necessary to create rules to outlaw such behaviour. Lemert suggests that "When a person begins to employ his deviant behavior . . . as a means of defense, attack, or adjustment to the overt and covert problems

created by the consequent societal reactions to him, his deviation is secondary."(9) In other words, it is almost impossible to act in such a way that society will interpret your behaviour as "good," or not associated with your deviant status. Once moral entrepreneurs have documented cases of secondary deviance, the creation of rules normally follow, and the process of acquiring a formal deviant label then takes place.

This informal process will now be illustrated in an application of labelling theory to rock music in general, and heavy metal in particular. While brief, this analysis serves to illustrate how society has typically labelled aspects of youth culture as deviant. It is important to keep in mind as well, that the entire process of labelling by agencies of control can be seen as boundary-maintaining activity which is functional to the well-being of society.

Labelling Theory Applied

Primary Deviance

It is not necessary to break a formal law in order to be labelled as a deviant. Any person caught violating a moral norm of society is perceived to be deviant in at least that situation, and sanctioning of the violator can

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(9) Lemert, Edwin M. "Instead of Court: Diversion in Juvenile Justice". Public Health Service Publication No. 2127. Wash, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1971, p. 13.

carry over into other social situations if the same actors
are involved.(10) In the case of rock music,(11) the very
aethetics of the music broke a very important yet unwritten
ascetic code in society. As Weber (1930) has documented,
North American culture was originally developed within the
rigid confines of ascetic Puritan communities. What was
sacred to these communities (in the Durkheimian sense of
the word)(12) was the belief that holiness could be
maintained through the stimulation of the cognitive aspects
of man by reading the Bible, praying, and attending Church
regularly. These ascetical virtues were to be rigidly
practiced, at the expense of controlling all sensual
feelings, desires, and temptations. If Weber is anywhere
near correct in his thesis that this form of asceticism
provided the social condition for the rise of a
capitalistic society, it is apparent then that some of

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(10) This has been experienced by various undergraduates
     who were assigned to carry out a norm violation for an
     introductory sociology class at the University of
     Calgary, Fall term of 1985, in order to observe social
     sanctioning. One student broke into a bank line-up on
     campus, and several days later had one of the people
     who had been in the line-up walk past him in the
     library and called him a "jerk".

(11) The term "rock music" here is used in the same sense
     that Frith (1978, p. 11) has distinguished it to
     mean: a pop genre that describes the resultant music
     of the counter-culture particularly following the
     1960s.

(12) See Emile Durkheim, _The Elementary Forms of the
     Religious Life_. Joseph W. Swain, trans. London:
     George Allen & Unwin, 1976.

those "sacred" ascetics were built into the social fabric of today.

In an attempt to distinguish between cultures with conflicting values, Sorokin (1937) has distinguished between two opposing types of societies which he has labelled "ideational" and "sensate". The former encourages a "complete detachment from the sensate world and even from oneself" (1937, p. 73) with the express purpose of personifying truth, beauty and goodness. The latter, on the other hand, appeals directly to the senses. "Its needs and aims are mainly physical, and maximum satisfaction is sought of these needs" (1937, p. 73). While most of Sorokins' inferences to societies have since been discounted,(13) his dichotimization remains fruitful in distinguishing different types of music. Until the mid-fifties, proper (i.e. White) music was always composed and performed in an ideational manner; it was designed to convey through its lyrics an edifying message with music providing an appropriate background. "Improper" music on the other hand (usually black), contained sensate elements that appealed to individuals on a physical level. Words took second place, and often the voice was used merely as another instrument. Because of this, sensate music was

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(13) For a brief discussion see R. Serge Denisoff and Richard A. Peterson, The Sounds of Social Change: Studies in Popular Culture. Chicago: Rand McNally & Co., 1972, pp. 2-3.

labelled deviant. Until the late 1950's musical producers had done a reasonably good job in controlling the amount of sensate material that was recorded. Rock music, however, glorified the sensate aspects of the music and encouraged people to "let loose" while listening. This, in effect, constituted the original act of primary deviance.

Social reaction to the violation of this norm was immediate; the public nature of the music did not conceal the primary deviance for long. Early television coverage of Elvis Presley concerts, for example, attempted to film Presley only from the waist up (Fornatale and Mills, 1980, p. 42), because the habit of gyrating his hips while he sang was considered to be lewd and lascivious. Indeed, what has been traditionally recognised as Presley's "magic" was that he was a white man who could sing black music with a black feel (Uslan and Solomon, 1981, p. 32). In Sorokins' terms, Elvis' appeal came from the fact that a young male with an ideational (i.e. Protestant) upbringing was able to perform particularly sensate music.

Other early rockers such as Jerry Lee Lewis and Little Richard have felt this tension between their religious upbringing and attraction to rock 'n' roll. Indeed, institutionalized Christianity has delivered some of the most severe criticisms of rock music since its inception. To this day, Jerry Lee Lewis still considers himself a sinner destined for Hell because of his continued

involvement in rock music.(14) Rock emphasized the beat of the music to such an extent that society identified the breaking of a "sacred" norm, and began to label rock 'n' roll as deviant music.

If the preoccupation with rock 'n' roll aided in labelling the youth culture as deviant, the growth of heavy metal helped to confirm that image. As Bashe has commented regarding the music:

> If rock & roll is loud, heavy metal is louder. . . If rock & roll is about rebelliousness, heavy metal is positively anarchic. . . If rock & roll is about breaking down the barriers between performer and audience, heavy metal completely erases the line separating the two. . . If rock & roll is about extremes, amplify that for heavy metal.(15)

Since its inception and development as a subgenre of rock music in the late 1960's, heavy metal has totally glorified the sensual experience of the music. Utilizing the recent development of the electric guitar in new and innovative capacities (instead of using it simply as a loud accoustic guitar), heavy metal celebrates the new aesthetics of loudness and electronics (Kealy, 1982).

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(14) M. Uslan and B. Solomon, Dick Clark's The First 25 Years of Rock & Roll. New York: Greenwich House, 1981, p. 36.

(15) Philip Bashe, Heavy Metal Thunder. Garden City, New York: Doubleday & Co. Inc., 1985, p. 6.

Heavy Metal as Primary Deviance

One important incident that contributed to the demise
of the ideological motivation of the counter-culture of the
1960's occurred at the Altamont Rock Festival on December
6, 1969 in Altamont, California. North America had
experienced "Woodstock"; the climax of the counter-culture,
only four months previous. Words such as "Woodstock
nation" and "a new dawn" had been used to describe the
hopes of new young idealists at that time. For those who
were present, the collective experience of Altamont saw the
defeat of those dreams.

At Altamont, California, the Rolling Stones and the
Grateful Dead had organized a free concert as a "Christmas
present" to the young people of North America, and had
hired the Hell's Angels to police the area. By the end of
the evening four people had died (including one black man
beaten to death in front of the stage by the Hell's
Angels), three babies had been born, and numerous serious
injuries and drug overdoses were reported. The shock of
the evening's activities was felt more in the centre of the
counter-culture than anywhere else; above all a keen sense
of failure to be able to implement the ideas of love and
peace pervaded.(16)

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(16) Gary Herman also acknowledges this point in Rock 'n'
     Roll Babylon. New York: Perigee Books, 1982, p.
     145.

As a result of this disillusionment, some youth turned once again for meaning to traditionally Christian lines, forming, in part, the Jesus People Movement. Others continued experimenting with alternative lifestyles such as communes; still others adopted a philosophy of existentialism, and sought to experience the "ultimate thrill".

It was this latter group that brought heavy metal to the fore. Moving first through genres of "psychedelic rock" and "acid rock",(17) heavy metal became the ultimate existential or sensate experience, whether listened to in a packed colliseum or the privacy of one's own room.

Besides deviating from the standard ascetic or ideational musical norm, heavy metal was also associated with criminal forms of deviance early on. The song traditionally recognised by adherents as 'the' first heavy metal tune, "Born to be Wild" by Steppenwolf,(18) was used as the soundtrack for the popular motorcycle movie "Easy Rider". It was the first time that the phrase "heavy metal" (or, more correctly, "heavy metal thunder") was ever

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(17) So named because the sensate aesthetics of the music were an attempt to re-create a trip on LSD or "acid".

(18) See Lenny Stoute, "The Roots of Metal, pt. 1", *Metallion*, v. 1, no. 1, Sept. 1984, p. 12. It should be recognised that other bands with similar musical styles were popular before "Born to be Wild" was aired.

used in a popular song.(19)   Says Kay, one of the original

members of the band,

> The song wasn't intended as a biker
> tune. It was written about the age-old
> custom of teenagers causing havoc on
> the highways with daddy's car. It was
> an anthem for kids but after the movie
> came out, the biker label stuck.(20)

The song received much airplay as early as the summer of

1968, several years after the Hell's Angels Motorcycle Club

had risen to deviant fame on a wave of media hype and

sensationalistic journalism.(21)   Heavy metal's association

with the criminal element in society quickly solidified.

As a matter of fact, the deviant status of heavy metal

was actually used as a commercial vehicle to attract people

to the music.   Simmons has declared that "No matter how

law-abiding we are, most of us harbor a streak of

lawlessness and rebellion within us. . . As long as the

deviance isn't a personal risk or loss, we seem to derive

some vicarious satisfaction from the rebellion and

lawlessness of others."(22)   One of the first heavy metal

performers to capitalize on this principle was ironically

the son of a Baptist minister, Vincent Furnier (better

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(19) Philip Bashe, op. cit., p. 4.

(20) Ibid., p. 12.

(21) See Hunter Thompson, _Hunter Thompson's Hell's Angels_.
     New York: Ballantine Books, 1966, 1967.

(22) J. L. Simmons, _Deviants_. Berkeley, California: The
     Glendessary Press, 1969, p. 22.

known as Alice Cooper). Realising that the best way to get known in the music business was to be bizzare, Alice created one of the most lucrative tours in rock history: his Billion Dollar Babies tour of 1973. Using heavy metal music as the core, Alice produced a stage show that included bludgeoning and chopping up baby dolls with a hatchet, fondling an armless and legless female mannequin, sexually molesting a giant tooth with a toothbrush, dancing with a live boa constrictor, and climaxed with being beheaded by a giant guillotine. Even his adoption of a female name attracted many curious adolescents to his concerts. Many heavy metal acts, following in the wake of Alice Cooper's success, have capitalized on Cooper's stage presence. Their concerts frequently utilize gigantic and elaborate sets, magic tricks, and visual and lighting effects that help make the concert a sensate and existential experience.

To summarize then, when an individual youth is attracted to heavy metal music, whether it be for the sensate experience of the music, the reinforcement of a deviant (and therefore "different" or "individual") identity, the feeling of solidarity among the music's adherents or whatever, they experience the application of a deviant label by society as a result of the continued efforts of moral entrepreneurs. Due to the propensity of heavy metal adherents to adopt a distinctive style of

subcultural dress, the identification of such "deviants" is made easy. Easy identification is functional; the deviants' high-profile enables conventional people to make quick distinctions between "them" and "us".

The Dramatization of Evil

As Tannenbaum has suggested, initial acts of deviance are defined by the actor as "play, adventure, excitement, interest, mischief, fun".(23) The community has a different definition of the situation, however, and the dramatization of evil process is started soon after the deviance is publicized. This is usually carried out by a moral entrepreneur. Becker (1963) suggests that moral entrepreneurs are typically motivated in their crusade on moral grounds, although their morality may be based upon humanitarian rather than religious concerns. The goal of a moral crusade, says Becker, is either to create new rules by which new forms of deviance are created, or to see that existing rules are enforced. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the moral crusaders are often people in positions of power and influence. It is their version of morality,then, that is usually imposed upon society.

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(23) Tannenbaum, op. cit., p. 17. This point was substantiated in interviews with adherents to heavy metal. Each adherent interviewed expressed getting involved in heavy metal music because it was "fun".

Soon after heavy metal received its identity as a distinct genre of music, moral entrepreneurs from varying backgrounds began to stigmatize the music in the same manner that rock was stigmatized when it was first introduced. While individual entrepreneurs may have been motivated by different concerns, entrepreneurs came typically from conservative, institutionalized segments of society. Each voice similarly advocated governmental intervention to control the persuasive influences of the music, which they felt could corrupt young children and subvert them into a life of deviance. Crusading voices were heard from Protestant religion, the media, parents, academia, and the government. Each of these voices will be briefly discussed.

Protestant Religion

As early as 1956, an American Pentecostal minister named Albert Carter epitomised the stand that North American religion was to take against rock music. "The effect of rock and roll on young people", Carter said, "is to turn them into devil worshippers; to stimulate self-expression through sex; to provoke lawlessness; impair nervous stability and destroy the sanctity of marriage. It is an evil influence on the youth of our country."(24)

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(24) Albert Carter, as quoted in Gary Herman, op. cit., p. 153.

That most religious critics have been motivated to criticize rock music on moral grounds is obvious. Institutionalized Christianity has been apalled at the lack of control displayed by rock performers, and has frequently chastized or excommunicated any Church member who has become a rock musician. Even so, the Church has failed to organize any consistently successful entrepreneurial movement against rock music. At best, no more than a few strong moral entrepreneurial voices have ever established themselves.

One of the most consistently vocal moral entrepreneurs has been Rev. David A. Nobel, current president of Summit Ministries. In his lonely crusade against the evils of rock music, Nobel's criticisms have included numerous editorials, speeches, papers and books. In his latest book Ihe Legacy of John Lennon (1982), Nobel declares that Lennon's contribution to North American society was ". . . one giant, multi-media portrait of degradation--a sleezy world of immorality, venereal disease, anarchy, nihilism, cocaine, heroin, marijuana, death, Satanism, perversion, and orgies."(25) According to Becker (1963), political and economic power can also motivate the efforts of moral entrepreneurs. This also appears to be a factor in Nobel's condemnation. For, after noting that Lennon

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(25) David A. Nobel, Ihe Legacy of John Lennon. New York: Thomas Nelson Pub., 1982, p. 15.

left an estate valued at approximately $275 million, Nobel asserts somewhat jealously: "Not bad for one who referred to himself as an 'instinctive socialist'".(26)

A second entrepreneurial voice that has gained a certain degree of notoriety and respect within Christian circles is Bob Larson. Also the author of numerous books and articles on rock music, Larson is currently President of Bob Larson Ministries, which includes a "Christian" radio show promoting the more conservative and "uplifting" religious music. While Larson opposes most secular rock in general, much of his evidence of its decadence comes from the heavy metal genre. In his book Rock, Larson includes a glossary of rock groups to help parents become attuned to the "negative moral philosophies"(27) of today's secular rock market. Many of the groups criticized are from mainstream heavy metal. Larson points out political and moral problems with rock music when he criticizes rock by saying: "For the first time, the control of Christian musical expression was slipping from the status quo hands of adult leadership".(28)

Younger moral entrepreneurial voices from institutionalized religion have also appeared recently,

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(26) Ibid., p. 11.

(27) Bob Larson, Rock, Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House Publishers Inc., 1982, p. 121.

(28) Ibid., p. 91.

reaffirming conservative Christianity's general approach towards the secular music market. Criticism is still based in the ideational-sensate distinction; heavy metal is recognised as evil because it has developed "a sound that made lyric listening nearly impossible".(29)   Heavy metal is also believed to be able to draw youth into sinful activities through evil messages both forwards and backwards in the music.(30)   While religious moral entrepreneurs have developed one of the most persistently loud, morally motivated voices to speak against heavy metal, they have not been able to organize enough power to force the creation of new rules. This failure is discussed more fully in the last section of this chapter.

The Media

It is difficult to isolate the moral entrepreneurial role that the media has played in stigmatizing rock music and heavy metal. There is a strong desire by the media to be seen as objective and aloof. Editors and journalists

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(29) Dan Peters and Steve Peters, Why Knock Rock? Minn: Bethany House Pub., 1984, p. 28.

(30) See Jacob Aranza, Backward Masking Unmasked, Shreveport, Louisiana: Huntington House, Inc., 1984, for a discussion of such fears. "Backmasking" or "Backward masking" is the alleged practice of putting Satanic messages into rock lyrics that are audible when a record is played backwards. Many religious entrepreneurs fear that such messages work their way into the unconcious of the listener, even when the record is played forward.

are slow to admit that the media plays a role in agenda-setting or in shaping the definition of a specific situation. Yet it is obvious to students of mass media that newspapers and television (particularly) do play a key role in the stigmatization process. In investigating a similar situation regarding the Mods and Rockers in Britain, Cohen states:

> The student of moral enterprise cannot but pay particular attention to the role of the mass media in defining and shaping social problems. The media have long operated as agents of moral indignation in their own right: even if they are not self-conciously engaged in crusading or muck-raking, their very reporting of certain 'facts' can be sufficient to generate concern, anxiety, indignation or panic. When such feelings coincide with a perception that particular values need to be protected, the preconditions for new rule creation or social problem definition are present. Of course, the outcome might not be as definite as the actual creation of new rules or the more rigid enforcement of existing ones. What might result is the sort of symbolic process which Gusfield describes in his conception of the "moral passage"; there is a change in the public designation of deviance.(31)

It is possible that the media was threatened at first by the rock movement and its association with the counter-culture. They may have feared that it would upset the structure of society and therefore jeopardize the

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(31) Stanley Cohen, _Folk Devils and Moral Panics_. Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1980, pp. 16-17.

media's economically secure place in that society. As rock
began to flourish, newspapers were quick to report on any
skirmishes of students with police, or any criminal
activity (i.e. communism, drugs, and so on) with rock
music. The same newspapers were deafly silent about any
injustices adherents to rock music may have suffered at the
time. For example, Art Linkletter, a high-profile
television personality known for his work with children and
youth, testified at a court hearing that rock music
encouraged young people to experiment with drugs. The
newspapers published his comments. "Almost every time a
top-40 record is played on the radio, it is an ad for acid,
marijuana, and trips. The lyrics of the popular songs and
the jackets on the albums . . . are all a complete, total
campaign for the fun and thrill of trips".(32) Billboard
magazine similarly reported Gordon McClendon's efforts to
put together a panel of prostitutes, ex-prostitutes,
junkies, and ex-junkies to assist him in weeding out filthy
and suggestive records for airplay. McClendon was then
president of a chain of easy-listening radio and television
stations. He stated: "We've had all we can stand of the
record industry's glorifying marijuana, LSD, and sexual
activity. The newest Beatles record has a line of 40,000

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(32) "Linkletter talks on drugs to Nixon", New York Times,
     Oct. 24, 1969, p. 18.

purple hearts in one arm. Is that what you want your children to listen to?"(33)

Music critics were also quick to criticize the new music through the media. Ralph Gleason, long time jazz critic and self-appointed social commentator, was slow in accepting the demise of the counter-culture.(34) He too condemned rock music because of its potentially disruptive social force:

> The Rolling Stones attack sexual taboos and endorse the directness of today's young people. Not an overtly revolutionary act but one which--when coupled with the Beatles singing "I'd love to turn you on" and "I get high with a little help from my friends--. . . challenges fundamentals of American behavior. . . As I see it, the situation is plain: if you want to reach the young people in this country (and revolutions are made by the young. . .), then write a song, don't buy an ad or issue a statement.(35)

Gleason's article is used here only as an example of the way in which media commentators helped to label those involved in rock music as deviant.(36) Even with the more

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(33) "Anti-smut McClendon to set up fringe panel", Billboard, May 20, 1967, p. 1.

(34) See "The Dream Simply Isn't Over", Rolling Stone, Oct. 28, 1971, p. 30.

(35) Ralph Gleason, "The Greater Sound". The Drama Review, Summer 1969. Reprinted in R. Denisoff and R. Peterson, ed., op. cit., 1972, p. 139.

(36) For examples of others, see R. Denisoff and R. Peterson, ed., Ibid., chapter three.

recent development of the 'rock critic' column in most newspapers, however, heavy metal is still often negatively reviewed. While top 40 bands frequently receive a positive evaluation, efforts are made to downplay more controversial types of music like heavy metal. Articles that do deal with heavy metal appear to use loaded (and common) descriptors like "simplistic" and "degrading". At other times they are evaluated on their apparent deviant content or image.(37) Seldom is heavy metal music evaluated on its own artistic merits, or against its own uniquely developed aesthetic. The media has, however, continued to assist in labelling heavy metal adherents as deviant by associating them with breaking existing rules (such as drug taking, intoxication, vandalism, and the like).

Parents

While the role that parents play in labelling is poorly documented in the literature, it is likely that they play a very significant part in upholding conservative values by trying to force them upon their children. This includes attempting to keep them away from listening to the more deviant forms of music such as heavy metal. Much of the literature produced by religious moral entrepreneurs, for example, is not written for adolescents but for their

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(37) See "Obscene But Not Heard", The Economist, v. 296, Aug. 17, 1985, p. 25.

parents, so that they will be able to guide their "young people in Christian values".(38)

Perhaps the greatest evidence of this type of social control is illustrated in concerts that are cancelled ahead of time due to parental pressure; or concerts that are subsequently barred from being repeated. One such occasion occurred early in the Doors career.

> At a recent Rock and Roll concert held at the Coliseum [sic] in Phoenix, five thousand screeming (sic) teen-agers stampeded a cordon of sixty policemen when they tried to block the kids from rushing on stage to join the entertainers. An esoteric group called The Doors were performing. Part of their act was to shout obscenities, in cadence to the feverish beat, at the audience. Four-letter words fouled the air. Pandemonium broke out. To the kids, this was just another rowdy, boisterous affair--all in good clean fun of course; but their parents took different light of the occasion. They prevailed upon the City Fathers to bar The Doors from making future appearances in Phoenix; and as an added incentive to stay away from their fair city, the District Attorney's office assessed heavy fines against the group for performing before the public in an indecent manner.(39)

In recent years, the organised moral entrepreneurial voice of parents in the PTA (National Conference of Parents and Teachers) and PMRC (Parent's Music Resouce Centre) have

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(38) "A Letter to Parents", Peters and Peters, op. cit., p. 8.

(39) Robert Scherman, "What Are Our Kids Buying?", Journal of Popular Culture, v. 3, no. 2, 1969, pp. 274-275.

done the most to generate a formal deviant label for rock music, particularly heavy metal. This will be dealt with more fully in the last section of this chapter.

Academia

It is important to consider the role that academia plays in the legitimation or stigmatization processes as well.

Many academics, even at the best of times, do not look on themselves as purveyors of any specific morality (especially conservative). Still the conclusions of various studies do, at times, have a serious impact upon policy decisions in government, and they do impose a degree of social control by using "scientific studies" as "evidence". Regarding the legitimation process of academia, Shepherd has noted:

> Social-intellectual structures are
> primarily the result of the
> inter-subjective legitimations of
> political-economic power groups
> dialectically mediated through the
> influence exerted by media on man's
> sensory and cognitive faculties. The
> process of legitimation--whether
> achieved by all the members of a
> society turning their attention to the
> process at one time, or by specific
> members appointed by society who do

> little else--involves encompassing the
> entirety or a part of everyday reality,
> and putting its imposing massivity,
> within which everyday tasks are carried
> out, at a distance.(40)

Opinions of academics, then, legitimated by research and journal publications, can carry a lot of social "weight". Articles published that view rock music as deviant could effect the stigmatization of that genre of music.

To some extent, at least, academia did contribute to the deviant label of rock music in this manner. Arguments condemning rock on the basis of its inherent destructiveness were vocalized most often by academics in the field of psychology. Carey (1969), for example, saw the emergence of a distinctive set of values opposed to traditional American society in rock music, and labelled this opposition as the "new Bohemian". Frances Braceland, a noted psychiatrist, labelled rock music "a communicable disease"; a "cannibalistic and tribalistic form of music".(41) Dr. Joost Meerlo, psychiatrist at Columbia University, compared rock music with medieval lunacy and Saint Vitus's dance, and exclaimed, "If we cannot stem the tide with its waves of rhythmic narcosis and of future

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(40) John Shepherd et. al., Whose Music? A Sociology of Musical Languages. London: Latimer New Dimensions Ltd., 1977, pp. 34-35.

(41) Cited in M. Jahn, Rock: From Elvis Presley to the Rolling Stones. New York: The New York Times Book Co., 1973, p. 40.

waves of vicarious craze, we are preparing our own downfall in the midst of pandemic funeral dances".(42) Labelling from such sources legitimated the stigmatization process of rock music and, consequently, heavy metal.

Government

In Canada, few (if any) governmental leaders have ever commented publicly on rock music or heavy metal. It is feasible that most of these leaders watched the ongoing conflict in the United States to see what the outcome might be. It is also necessary to mention that Canada never experienced conflict around the issue of rock music to the extent that the United States did. At most, a few drug-related problems in Gastown, Vancouver or Montreal arose from time to time, and an influx of young males dodging the draft also occurred. But these problems have not been considered direct consequences of the influences of rock music.

In the United States, however, rock concerts, protests, and other highly publicised events prompted some governmental leaders to comment on what was happening with rock music. Legislation had been passed in various states years before outlawing the production or playing of jazz records, but it has been noted that the motive for such legislation was most likely racial (Nanry, 1979).

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(42) Jahn, Ibid., p. 68.

Nevertheless, several government officials on both federal and state levels felt it necessary to comment upon the demoralizing aspects of rock music, perhaps with the hope of stimulating discussion in the appropriate chambers of government that could effect such legislation. Denisoff and Peterson (1972) have reprinted two of the most significant speeches from government officials in their book The Sounds of Social Change. The speeches occurred during a most crucial era of rock's history. One presentation was given by then Vice President of the United States Spiro Agnew in 1970. The other was given during the same year, by Nicholas Johnson, Commissioner of the Federal Communications Commission. Agnew's purpose was to get people to "Consider. . . the influence of the drug culture in the field of music" (Denisoff and Peterson, p. 308). Johnson's main agenda was not only to criticize Agnew's perspective, but also to illustrate that rock music actually provided the government with some answers as to how to go about changing society so that adolescents would not have to resort to certain forms of escape (i.e. drugs). Both viewed rock music as a potentially motivating force, though they differed in regards as what to do about it.

In more recent years, commentary has been sparse from governmental leaders on the problems with rock music, especially heavy metal. In the forward to a book on

backward masking,(43) however, Louisiana State Senator Bill Keith suggests that "The sinister nature of rock and roll music is one of the burning issues of our time."(44) Conservative citizens who have heard these statements of societal leaders may be similarly influenced to label rock and heavy metal music as deviant, and to stigmatize its adherents as the same. According to labelling theorists, it is such efforts of moral entrepreneurs that have the potential to lead adolescents to a deviant master status, as well as increase the likelihood of them adopting a delinquent identity.

Delinquent Identity

While Empey suggests that the third stage of the informal labelling process is predominantly concerned with a delinquent identity, it should also be pointed out that adherents to heavy metal also need to deal with their identity as a deviant. Adherents to heavy metal usually adopt a deviant (but non-criminal) self-identity soon after recognising their preference for heavy metal music. This identity, however, is cognitively separated from a

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(43) The supposed practice of putting backwards messages on rock albums, with the inherent belief that the subconcious is able to read these messages and incorporate them into a behaviour. See Thorne and Himelstein, 1984, for empirical evidence to the contrary.

(44) David Aranza, op. cit., p. vii.

delinquent, or criminal identity. Moral entrepreneurs, however, often blur the line between deviant and delinquent, making little if any distinction between the two. As already pointed out, an immediate consequence of the efforts of moral entrepreneurs is that the deviant is viewed by society as a delinquent, and that this new status becomes a "master status"; that is, everything he or she does is interpreted in light of the new identity (Becker, 1963, p. 32). This new status is forced upon individuals who begin showing a preference for heavy metal music; whether they define themselves as delinquent or not. As Schur explains, people around the individual begin using a retrospective interpretation of what has gone before in an attempt to reestablish "where the person is coming from" (Schur, 1971, p. 52). Parents, for example, believe that they should have spent more time with their child so he or she wouldn't have turned into a delinquent, or others may believe that the person just "began hanging around with the wrong crowd." Lemert (1971, p. 13) suggests that once people are labelled as deviant they are expected to adhere to a new set of rules designed to control the expected role they are to play as a result of their new status. If relatives with smaller children visit the home, for example, parents may warn their "delinquent" adolescent not to associate with the smaller children for fear of getting them involved in listening to heavy metal music. If these

new rules are broken, and the "deviant" does in fact associate with the younger children, this is another new act of deviance and the stereotype is reinforced. In addition, friends who associated with the individual before may become less and less interested in spending time with that person. As a result, the person with a preference for heavy metal music begins to associate more with other adherents to heavy metal, and may in time begin to identify himself or herself with the heavy metal subculture. Other subgroups such as preppies or punks may in fact begin to attack physically this individual because they identify him or her as a "metalhead" or "headbanger" (the label for adherents to heavy metal). This physical violence had been known to occur even in the Alberta school system.(45)

Because of the easy identification of adherents to heavy metal and their master status as a "delinquent", they are also more apt to be harassed by police. Says one police officer:

> "Of course we're going to stop more guys who dress like delinquents, because they're easier to spot. Like the other night, my partner and I saw one of those guys with long hair and a black leather jacket running along the sidewalk at about 2:30 a.m. I put the lights on and we got him inside the car just to check his I.D. and stuff, and ask him why he was running. If we had

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(45) See "Headbangers' Serenade", Alberta Report, November 11, 1985, pp. 28, 33 for one such case where heavy metal fans were being persecuted by other subcultural groups.

seen some guy in nice pants and a
sweater running down the sidewalk, we
wouldn't have stopped him." (Interview
with Police Officer).

Because of the ostracism by former friends,
stigmatization by parents, and mockery by other groups, the
heavy metal adherents soon find themselves in what Schur
(1971) has termed "role engulfment". Briefly stated, role
engulfment refers to the process whereby the person begins
to define himself as others define him. To be sure, one
attraction of adolescents to the heavy metal subculture is
that the dress and image portrayed is one of deviance and
intimidation (i.e. power). In an adolescent's position of
powerlessness and dependancy, the portrayal of autonomy and
acquisition of power through fear is indeed attractive for
some. There is the tendency, then, to accept the heavy
metal role and begin to acquire a deviant identity. Some
adherents may adopt the deviant image without seeing
themselves as delinquent. That is, they realise that their
music is viewed by society as rebellious and evil, and they
enjoy the special status that they receive from being
associated with the music.

However, many adherents do not see themselves as
"necessarily" delinquent because of their association with
the music. Any delinquent behaviour that they may engage
in is perceived to be a concious choice rather than
subconcious indoctrination on the part of the music. This

refusal to adopt a delinquent identity remains, despite their inability to convince otherwise those who do not listen to heavy metal. Adherents who do not adopt the delinquent identity usually graduate from school, seek a good job, and fulfill most, if not all, of society's expectations of its citizens.

There are those, however, who begin to see themselves as both deviant and delinquent. These individuals soon drift into the criminal element of society to reaffirm their own identity. They may acquire a formal deviant label if their delinquent behaviour persists.

Whether a "headbanger" has achieved a delinquent identity or not, he or she may begin to engage in acts of secondary deviance. Lemert (1951, p. 76) has suggested that when a deviant act is commited for reasons of defense, attack, or adjustment to the overt and covert problems created by a deviant label, the deviance becomes secondary.

Secondary Deviance

There are two types of actors in heavy metal, then, who may commit delinquent acts: those who view themselves as deviant and delinquent, and those who view themselves as perhaps deviant but not delinquent. To be sure, most of the secondary deviance that occurs within the heavy metal context is carried out by the latter group. Because attempts at reasoning with people who label them as

delinquent may fail, heavy metal adherents may resort to delinquent acts to shock or irritate "normal" society, and in so doing, may set off a "self-fulfilling prophecy" (Empey, 1982, p. 404). An excellent example of this may be found in the on and off stage impressions managed by Ozzy Osbourne, heavy metal rock musician. In a candid interview Osbourne has complained:

> "But when you're in the public eye, ear, nose and throat, they figure everything you do is pre-meditated and then they blur the line between your stage life and what they imagine you must really be like. They think I must get up in the morning and go: Hmmmm, I think I'll have a bowl of sheep's eyes, three or four cat heads and a leg of Doberman on the side."(46)

Yet few of Osbourne's public appearances ever contain more than reactive displays of secondary deviance:

> In February, Osbourne made another public splash, this time by urinating in public at the Alamo. Texans were infuriated. . . The _Diary of a Madman_ Tour was a hit. . . Pigs' intestines and calves' livers were tossed at the audience as part of the show, and a midget. . . was unceremoniously "hanged". Critics called it a crude abomination, while Osbourne howled with glee. On the _Diary of a Madman_ cover, he presented himself in a spooked house, surrounded by such demonic paraphernalia as a black cat and an upside-down cross hanging from one of the walls. Ozzy's face was caked with blood, and his wife Thelma was lying bloodied on a table covered in cobwebs.

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(46) Ozzy Osbourne, in an interview with Lenny Stoute, "Barf at the Moon" in _Music Express_, v. 8. no. 76, Feb. 1984.

> Not everybody appreciated Osbourne's
> sense of humor, though, and authorities
> in several towns tried --
> unsuccessfully -- to ban his
> concerts.(47)

Few other heavy metal groups have gone to these lengths of secondary deviance. But a few have also gone this far to sensationalize their concerts, to make the concert arena just that: the ultimate "sensate", as opposed to "ideational", experience.

However, there are other performers, as well as adherents, who do not spend much time doing acts of secondary deviance merely to upset the "status quo". There are those in heavy metal who view themselves both as deviant and delinquent, but who attempt to live their lives as unhypocritically as possible. These metal listeners are not typically dressed in flashy stage material such as spandex or expensive clothes. They do not usually rely on a large number of technical gadgets or magic tricks to support their sensationalism. These groups dress traditionally in bluejeans, black t-shirts, and denim or leather jackets. For many of them, heavy metal has not become a "fun" thing to do; it has become a way of life. This element of the heavy metal subculture has adopted a deviant as well as delinquent identity, as defined by

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(47) Bashe, op. cit. p. 46.

society and by themselves. For them, the creation of new rules would change little of their behaviour.

Creation of Rules

At present, moral entrepreneurial efforts have failed in creating new rules to limit involvement in heavy metal. According to Becker's labelling theory, if group A has enough political and economic power it will successfully apply a deviant label to group B, and new legislation will be introduced. The fact that new rules have not yet been created may be due to a number of reasons, a few of which will be discussed here.

While moral entrepreneurs from religious circles might rejoice if legislation were passed outlawing certain types of rock music (such as heavy metal), this has never been the expressed aims of the religious entrepreneurs. At most, religious moral entrepreneurs have encouraged people to deal with the issue of rock music on a personal level, encouraging adolescents to rid themselves of the desire to listen to secular rock music (through ascetic virtues of prayer, meditation and Bible reading). Burning or destroying all offensive records and paraphernalia is also encouraged. Peters and Peters (1984:9-10)), for example, encourage teenagers to discard and burn their questionable records, tapes and music memorabilia. They claim to have been responsible for destroying over ten million dollars

worth of rock music paraphernalia to date. This may explain in part why organized religion has had no formal impact upon creating new restrictive rules for the rock music market.

The media has also never taken a formal stand for or against heavy metal. With the inception of the rock critic's column in the entertainment section of most newspapers, the media has (in many cases) adopted "highbrow-lowbrow" distinction similar to the position of academia.

Academia has seemed to renege on its previous position that rock music necessarily endorses counter-cultural values. In recent years, many academics have instead adopted the attitude that any academic legitimation of the popular arts, such as by research, is a waste of energy and money.(48) Most of the motivation appears to stem from the assertion that popular music is inferior or "lowbrow" music, and that only "highbrow" music is worthy of any attempt of analysis (Rosenberg and White, 1957). Indeed, at the time of undertaking this study, only one known academic attempt had been made at analyzing aspects of heavy metal music (Straw, 1984). Therefore, moral

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(48) See R. Serge Denisoff, "Content Analysis: The Achilles Heel of Popular Culture?" Journal of Popular Culture, v. 9, 1975, p. 456.

entrepreneurial efforts to reform popular music have basically been left to governmental intervention.

But moral entrepreneurial voices from the government have also remained silent in recent years. Part of the reason for this has been the the transformation of rock music into a multi-billion dollar industry, creating a new balance of power in electoral districts. For government leaders to oppose something which is by nature so "popular", as well as something that involves a major industry in society, would be to commit political suicide. Their initial interest in creating new rules, then, seems to have dissipated.

The only group left to pursue moral entrepreneurial interests, then, have been the parents, and in recent months they have attempted to do just that.(49) The 5.6 million-member National Conference of Parents and Teachers (PTA) has recently encouraged the printing of warning labels on potentially offensive record albums. The Parents Music Resource Centre (PMRC), which consists of many wives of Washington politicians, recently held a series of hearings in Washington D. C. to discuss the possibility of applying such labels. The PMRC is not only pushing for the application of warning labels on those albums with explicit

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(49) See, for example, James Muretich, "U. S. Groups Label Record Industry Explicit", The Calgary Herald, Sat., Sept. 7, 1985.

lyrics, but is also requesting further categorization of albums along the lines similar to that of movie ratings. It is interesting to note, however, that they are NOT pushing for the creation of formal censorship laws to regulate the application of these labels. Instead, they want the record industry to develop their own system of rating and apply it to their products. Perhaps, with the stigmatization that comes with the creation of new rules, society has realised the impact of the basic tenets of labelling theory. On the other hand, a self-inflicted or informal label may still provoke a new informal labelling process. In the words of one easy-listening performer who testified at the PMRC hearings, "I don't want to have to make my lyrics dirty so that I will be able to sell my records." The application of these censorship labels, however, may do just that."

CHAPTER THREE

STUDYING HEAVY METAL

> It is an assertion that the student of
> society has to face the problems of
> context and relevance fully, honestly,
> and openly. It is a contention that
> the student of society has no choice
> but to follow the necessarily
> idealistic mandates of social science
> as knowingly and as well as he can or
> not to contribute significantly to his
> field.
> -- The Participant Observer(1)

The research question still remains to be addressed:

"To what extent is heavy metal music 'really' deviant?" In

other words, are the values expressed in heavy metal

materials directly opposed to or in "sinc" with those of

mainstream society? Given that the heavy metal music genre

and adherents to the music have been labelled deviant, to

what extent is this label reflected or endorsed by

purveyors of heavy metal culture?

At first glance, the very nature of this question

appears to lend itself easily to an investigation in the

form of a content analysis of heavy metal lyrics. Since

the heavy metal subculture exists as an artifact of heavy

metal music, an analysis of the latter would seem logical.

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(1) Alfred McClung Lee, "On Context and Relevance" in The
     Participant Observer, Glenn Jacobs, ed. New York:
     George Braziller, 1970, p. 16.

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Subcultural values do appear to be more accurately represented in song lyrics than other cultural materials because the artists are able to maintain a large degree of control over what is produced. This is especially true with substream material such as heavy metal. Due to the experimental nature of the music and the specific audience to which the music is directed, producers and sponsors (who are more often than not unfamiliar with subcultural aesthetics) are willing to give bands a larger degree of autonomy in recording what they want to record. Mainstream recording artists, on the other hand, are expected to conform to existing formulae already perceived as "successful". James Hetfield, member of the heavy metal band "Metallica", recalls:

> Did Elektra [records] have any suggestions? Yeah, fistfuls of crisp, green ones. That's all, they just gave us the money and fucking said go to it. There was no pressure from them, no trying to get us to do anything different. It's a great attitude to work with; same as our management, they just let us do what we want, and keep an eye on the biz, and that's cool. Those guys are sharp enough to realize they don't have a fucking idea why we're so successful, but they know we're doing the right numbers, so why fuck with a happening thing?(2)

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(2) "Metallica Takes Heat From No One!", Metallion, (Toronto: Rock Express Communications Inc.), v. 2, no. 10, April/May 1986, p. 17.

Rock videos do not give bands nearly the same amount of control over their material that albums do. Since bands are less able to mediate what sells in a video as compared to musical compositions, professional producers are brought in to sensationalize the video, and what is acted out on the video will frequently have little or nothing to do with the lyrics of the song. An analysis of heavy metal magazines (such as the Canadian periodical Metallion) might produce an informative study on what is happening in heavy metal, but this too has its problems. Only a small percentage of adherents to heavy metal ever read such material, for example; and those that do must take role distance(3) since reading is not normally a well-respected public practice in the heavy metal subculture. In addition, rock journalists attempt to create a sociological reality in articles and interviews that may not otherwise exist.(4) An analysis of these materials, then, would elicit a distorted view of the subculture.

A content analysis of lyrics, then, would ideally elicit the most "valid" statements about the heavy metal subculture. Even so, concerns have been raised regarding

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(3) See Robert A. Stebbins, "Role Distance, Role Distance Behaviour, and Jazz Musicians", British Journal of Sociology, vol. 20, 1969, pp. 406-415.

(4) Jon Stratton labels this the "discourse of popular music". See "Between Two Worlds: Art and Commercialism in the Record Industry", Sociological Review, vol. 30, May 1982, pp. 267-285.

the validity of content analyses of lyrics (Denisoff, 1975;
Denzin, 1970; Carey, 1970). One would do well to implement
Denisoff's caution in any analytical study of media content
when he says: "This is not to suggest that content
analysis be tossed out of popular culture. Rather, we must
be more careful in presenting our supporting material in
such a way that it is representative of the idiom."(5)
While Denisoff (1975) and Denzin (1970) specify several
shortcomings in using content analyses on lyrics, two are
of special interest here.

The first and most important issue to address when
using content analysis alone in an assessment of heavy
metal lyrics is its obvious problem of interpretation or
inference to the subculture. Ling has suggested that
"Music is an excellent object of research for cultural
sociologists precisely because it is a carrier of meaning
without being descriptive. All that has to be done is to
decode the meaning conveyed by the musical message!"(6)
But as one might expect, this process is far from
simplistic. There is evidence to indicate that music is,
at the very least, culture specific, and that even within
cultures there are varying subjective interpretations

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(5) R. Serge Denisoff, "Content Analysis: The Achilles
Heel of Popular Culture?", _Journal of Popular Culture_,
v. 9, 1975, p. 457.

(6) Jan Ling, "The Sociology of Music", _Canadian University
Music Review_, No. 5, 1984, p. 1.

regarding what various pieces of music attempt to do (Schutz, 1964; Wright, 1975). There is also evidence to indicate that many listeners engage in an interactive process with the music, symbolically interpreting not only lyrics but the aesthetical dimensions of the music within the context of the individual's collected musical experiences (Coker, 1972; Ridgeway, 1976). This individual context is, nevertheless, defined in conjunction with the social group to which one belongs (Etzkorn, 1976; Wright, 1975; Dees and Vera, 1978). With heavy metal participants, the heavy metal subculture in general and their immediate peer group in specific constitute this social group. To remain true to the sociological task, then, a content analysis of this genre of music must take into account the subjective meanings and interpretations of the social group.

The second problem with content analysis specific to this research is the fact that heavy metal music has yet to be analyzed within the confines of academia. Straw (1984) has produced the only known academic paper dealing with heavy metal which, while thought-provoking, was not based upon empirical research. To perform a content analysis alone on heavy metal lyrics, then, without knowledge of their cultural context through previous empirical literature or direct observation, would indeed be a mistake.

The exploratory nature of this research, then, demanded that other methodologies be incorporated into the research design if a valid AND reliable study was to be carried out. At the same time, the nature of the study dictated that one not stop with an ethnographic description of the heavy metal scene. The clearly-defined purpose of this study was to find to what extent the heavy metal subculture was deviant. But in order to discover the respected values of this subculture, it was necessary first to become familiar with the meaning of the symbols that convey these values by developing a grounded theory of those symbols (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). This was facilitated, in part, by conducting field research, using a flexible and open-minded approach to data collection. As Babbie has stated most succinctly: "By going directly to the social phenomenon under study and observing it as completely as possible, you can develop a deeper and fuller understanding of it."(7)

Research Design

For reasons outlined above, a research design using several methods was developed. This has been referred to by Denzin as "methodological triangulation". "The rationale for this strategy", Denzin says, "is that the

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(7) Earl Babbie, The Practice of Social Research, 3rd ed. Belmont Cal.: Wadsworth Pub. Co., 1983, p. 244.

flaws of one method are often the strengths of another; and by combining methods, observers can achieve the best of each while overcoming their unique deficiencies."(8) To handle the task responsibly and comprehensively, a socio-historical analysis of the informal labelling process was performed (see Chapter 2). Secondly, participant observation research was conducted for two reasons: 1) To become familiar with the norms and values of the heavy metal subculture; and 2) To become familiar with the way in which the music is used and interpreted in the setting by the participants. After becoming familiar with different contingencies in the setting, it became clear to the researcher that one theme frequently reappeared. This was a concern with interpersonal relations between the sexes, and a keen understanding of differing gender roles. After gaining an understanding of the setting, a content analysis was conducted on a random sample of thirty heavy metal albums to examine to what extent the sex-relations theme manifested itself in song lyrics. A two-stage analysis first determined thematic categories in the music and the extent to which they appeared; the second part further analyzed gender presentations, and to what extent they differed from traditional gender definitions of society.

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(8) Norman K. Denzin, The Research Act, 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1978, p. 302.

An attempt was also made to analyze underlying values illustrated in other thematic categories of lyrics.

After the content analysis was completed the researcher once again entered the field to test hypotheses and look for negative cases. Finally, interviews were conducted with adherents to heavy metal to further confirm or disprove results found in the content analysis. Since the socio-historical analysis has already been covered in Chapter 2, the other three methodologies will be dealt with here in more detail.

Participant Observation

In beginning this research, methods of participant observation were used (McCall and Simmons, 1969; Schatzman and Strauss, 1973; Becker, 1970; Lofland, 1971). Since there was no defined population of heavy metal adherents, random sampling was not possible. However, a heavy metal adherent or "headbanger" (as they were inclined to define themselves) was operationally defined according to the following characteristics: 1) a tendency to select heavy metal as their favorite type of music; and 2) a propensity to define himself or herself as a "headbanger".

Initial access was gained to the field by visiting local nightclubs which regularly featured live "hard rock" or "heavy metal" bands, and made contacts with the participants in the setting. Access was also gained

through attending special functions held in the city to promote amateur heavy metal bands. These functions were usually entitled "Battle of the Bands". Concerts of heavy metal bands were also attended, and attempts made to interact with those who were present. In addition to casual contacts, relationships were also established with several "purveyors" of heavy metal culture; young but enterprising headbangers who were producing/directing a local television show that televised heavy metal videos and relayed information about bands, records, and so on.

Conforming to the classic "participant as observer" role (Gold, 1969), the researcher established meaningful relationships with actors in the setting. At no time did the researcher attempt to conceal his identity or his reasons for being there. However, the information was not usually volunteered. Initially taking on the role of "complete observer", the researcher was able to study interaction patterns and types of participants visiting the setting. Fieldnotes were taken according to Lofland's suggested categories of acts, activities, meanings, participation, relationships, and settings (Lofland, 1971, pp. 14-15). As well, close attention was paid to the dress and behaviour of each participant. Generally, observations were recorded immediately after leaving the setting.

From July 31, 1985 to July 23, 1986, the researcher
entered six different types of settings a total of 57
times, including concert arenas, nightclubs, a cable
television station, musician's union concert hall, a band
practice room, and home parties. This produced some 256
pages of typed fieldnotes. As contacts expanded,
theoretical sampling was practiced, as was a concious
search for negative evidence to modify or refute developing
hypotheses (Turner, 1953, Robinson, 1951). Full attention
was directed to this process after the content analysis was
completed.

A genuine attempt was made at inductively developing
"grounded theory" through the process of analytic induction
(Denzin, 1978). Before entering the field only vague ideas
of delinquency and rock music had been considered. Once
inside the field, however, it became clear that an
important aspect of the heavy metal subculture involved the
presentation of gender. After talking to a number of
participants, individual conceptions of gender began to be
examined and checked against past observations. By
referring to previous notes taken, examining negative
cases, performing a content analysis and questioning
through semi-formal interviews, reliability was
established. As a final check for validity a close contact
in the setting (very similar to "Doc" in Whyte, 1955) was

consulted about the final theoretical. statement, and his concerns were checked again against existing data.

Content Analysis

By the late 1960's it had become evident that the album format had replaced the "hit single" as the dominant form of musical sales. By 1969, eighty percent of dollars spent on music had gone into buying L.P.'s (Fornatele and Mills, 1980, p. 74). The practice of purchasing L.P.'s, and that of discussing their overall worth rather than their individual pieces of music, is even more pronounced in the heavy metal subculture than in groups that listen to Top 40 music. While Top 40 radio stations traditionally play only single hit "tunes", radio stations that concentrate upon playing more select substream material (including those who play heavy metal) are apt to feature albums rather than individual songs. Current charts that list "popular" heavy metal music likewise do not list individual songs like the Top 40 charts, but the most frequently purchased albums instead. It is logical, then, that an entire heavy metal album be selected as the sampling unit for the content analysis, with individual songs comprising the basic unit of analysis.

A random sample was taken from a population of heavy metal albums. This population was gathered from the first six issues of Metallion magazine (a Canadian heavy metal

magazine produced bi-monthly), September 1984 to July 1985. Each issue contained one "Hard Chart" listing the thirty best-selling albums each month. Each list was compiled by a different record store or distributor, thereby giving a wider sample of albums and sales. The intent of the sample was not to generate a sample of the "most popular" or frequently purchased albums, but a diverse array of heavy metal music. It was possible for an album to show up more than once on the charts, since albums could rise or fall from popularity between one issue and the next. Because of the desire to achieve as broad a range of heavy metal music as possible, albums were included in the sample only once, thus reducing the population of albums from 180 (6 months times 30 albums rated per month) to 133.

Out of the 133 albums a computer-generated random sample of thirty albums was selected. Of these, two albums were unobtainable. Both albums were recorded on an import label, and specialty stores had back-ordered shipments of the albums but they had not arrived. In their place two other albums were hand-picked because of their inclusion of female members in the band. The 30 album sample constituted 22.6 percent of the population.

It was also important to have thirty different bands represented in the sample. If a second album by the same band appeared in the list of random albums, then, the second on the list was excluded. This allowed all 133

albums to have an equal chance of being included in the sample, and did not bias the selection of which album to include from the same band. In our sample, two such albums were omitted from the list. Random numbers were then used to select two other albums representing bands not yet included in the sample.

First Stage

The sampling procedure described above produced a list of 282 songs, 13 of which were instrumentals. Out of the 269 remaining songs, the lyrics to 113 and one-third (42 percent) songs were printed on album covers or inside liners. The "one-third" lyrics of a song were printed on the inside of an album, and were part of a song that took up an entire side of an L.P. The remaining 155 and two-thirds (58 percent) songs were transcribed by the researcher and checked by a second coder for accuracy. The lyrics of the 269 songs were then analyzed thematically by two independent coders well-versed in the heavy metal subculture. Thematic categories were arrived at through analysis of a pre-sample of albums not included in the sample. The following categories were elicited:

1. GENDER THEMES: Lyrics that deal with male-female interaction or relationships, or lyrics that describe various qualities of a man or a woman, or group of men or group of women. These identities must be human, however;

not mystical or supernatural. Lyrics dealing with love, sex and broken hearts are included in this category.

2.   REFLECTIVE/PHILOSOPHICAL   THEMES: The lyricist evaluates the lifestyle he or she is leading, or makes a statement regarding life in general or about a social issue or problem. These songs deal more often with attitudes than behaviour.

3.   OPPRESSIVE THEMES: The lyricist comments upon other identities or institutions that are oppressive to him or her; they do not deal with the lyricist who views himself or herself as oppressive. Usually, no real solution is given to relieving this oppression. There is, instead, a type of resolve made to live with the conflict. Oppression comes from such sources as parents, school, police or some abstract (but not supernatural) force are examples.

4.   PHYSICAL CONFLICT - RECOGNITION/RESIGNATION/ENJOYMENT: The lyricist sees and accepts physical conflict as part of everyday life and resigns himself or herself to participating in it, even if it means death. A certain amount of enjoyment may be the reason for participating in physical conflict. The conflict is the end, not the means to an end.

5.   PHYSICAL CONFLICT AS MEANS TO AN END: Physical conflict is seen as a viable means to a desired end; a good

solution to a problem. While some enjoyment may be extracted from the conflict, it is not an end in itself. Even so, the lyrics concentrate more upon the conflict than the motivation for it.

6. MYSTICAL/SUPERNATURAL THEMES: The lyricist talks about or deals with some type of force or entity that is not human but is endowed with supernatural or mystical powers. Often these forces are overwhelming and cannot be controlled. At times the lyricist is the possessor of these qualities. Satanism and occult characters (eg. wherewolves) are examples of such a force.

7. EXCITEMENT THEMES: Purposeful behaviour that is carried out for the primary purpose of producing enjoyment or thrills. Fast driving, partying, "rocking" to music, and "getting crazy" are examples. Physical conflict and sex are EXCLUDED from this category since they apply to others.

8. ESCAPE THEMES: In desiring to get away from pressures or from the mundane world, the lyricist does not look for excitement. Rather he or she looks for a way to physically avoid the conflict. At times the escape may be a desired place to run to, at other times it is merely a desire to get away.

9. LOSS OF CONTROL THEMES: Due to many pressures and turmoil, the lyricist finds himself or herself ACCIDENTALLY becoming mentally ill or being unable to control the emotions. This is not done as a purposeful action, but is a response to other pressures.

10. INSTRUMENTAL: There are no words to the song.

11. OTHER: (Please describe).

This thematic analysis is similar in procedure to other content analyses of popular music lyrics.(9)

Although the categories are not mutually exclusive, two independent coders achieved 72.5 percent agreement on first choice of categories, and 100 percent was achieved when considering each coder's first three choices. After a brief discussion of each song, 100 percent agreement was reached on first choices. A reliability check was also computed upon the revised coding. Of the 27.5 percent of the songs that did not match up on coder's first selection, 42 percent of coder one's choices remained unchanged, 45 percent of coder two's choices stayed the same, and 13 percent of the songs were recoded from second or third choices of both coders.

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(9) Cole (1971), for example, used four categories of themes: love-sex, religion, violence, and social protest. Hirsch (1971) identified six basic themes: heterosexual, social commentary, religious, novelty, personal, and nostalgic.

Out of the 269 songs, only one song did not fit into the first 10 categories and was listed in the "other category". For heavy metal music, it appears that this set of thematic categories is almost exhaustive at this time.

Second Stage

The second stage of the analysis examined the 102 gender-related lyrics that fell into category number one. This was the largest of all categories, comprising 37.9 percent of the sample. Comparatively, Cole (1971) found 59 percent of lyrics of pop tunes from 1960-1964 dealing with love-sex themes, rising to 71 percent from 1965-1969. Hirsch (1971) found that a heterosexual theme was displayed in 69 percent of his sample of popular music tunes. From these percentages, as well as from other information collected from the content analysis, it is safe to infer that heavy metal lyrics in general deal with a number of themes that are foreign to pop music.

In doing a content analysis on gender roles, pains must be taken to ensure the conceptual clarity of operational definitions (in this case, traditional and non-traditional gender traits). In reviewing the literature on sex and gender roles, however, it becomes apparent that most researchers measure traditional role concepts specifically by expected duties of basically middle-class wives or husbands. In attempting to measure

traditional roles in heavy metal music it becomes difficult, then, to use much of the past literature as a basis for such distinctions. There are two reasons why this is so. First, heavy metal is a genre of music that is aimed at a consumer population that is largely adolescent. Adolescents typically have not established themselves in a formal social role (other than someone elses son or daughter, and/or student), and consequently are not expected to perform the same behaviour or assume the same sex-typed duties as middle-class married adults. Secondly, some researchers have noted the different and sometimes conflicting expectations or emphases that are placed upon the traditional female role; such as the maternal, wifely, and erotic aspects. Regarding such inconsistencies, Suzanne Keller states: ". . . Primary emphasis is supposed to be given to the maternal and wifely aspects, though at certain stages of the life cycle, the erotic component may be preeminent."(10) One of those stages of the life cycle where the erotic component may be preeminent is adolescence.

It therefore became important that traditional role expectations were defined in ways congruent with the status of adolescents; in particular, those adolescents who have a

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(10) Suzanne Keller, "The Woman's Role: Constants and Change" in Readings in Introductory Sociology, 3rd ed., Harry Gracey and Dennis Wrong, eds., 1977, p. 238. Emphasis mine.

high probability of coming from working-class backgrounds
(Tanner, 1981). To get around the problems that previous
definitions of traditional roles might have created, male
and female roles were evaluated in terms of what quality or
qualities they demonstrated or were expected to
demonstrate. The traits of the highest profile male and/or
female in each song were evaluated in the following manner.

First, two independent researchers well-versed in the
gender literature identified the sex of the writer of the
song, as well as the singer (if a different person than the
writer). Secondly, the two researchers identified whether
the song was primarily describing a male, a female, or
both, or group of one or the other or both. Thirdly, the
researchers independently rated whether the characteristics
ascribed to the male(s) and/or female(s) were traditional
or non-traditional in nature, using a list of traits
similar in nature to Freudiger and Almquist (1978), Chaftez
(1974), and Thaxton and Jaret (1985). This type of
analysis was preferred to using sex-typed gender roles
since there is often too little information given in lyrics
to assess the social role of an individual.

Eleven characteristics were listed for each gender
that were traditional in nature. In a manner similar to
Chaftez (1974) and Freudiger and Almquist (1978), each
gender was evaluated as conforming to the stereotyped
trait, not conforming, or the trait not being illustrated

in the lyrics. The following is a list of the traits for traditional male: aggressiveness, dominance, strength, daring, courage, forcefulness, ruggedness, adventurousness, independence, confidence, and lack of emotion. Traditional female traits included: passiveness, dependency, quietness, meekness, gentleness, warmth, affection, kindness, sentimentality, soft-heartedness, and sensitivity (Rice, 1981, pp. 314-316). In addition, "sexual desire" was added to the list of male qualities based upon observations from the pre-test of the thematic categories. "Erotic role" was added to the female's list of qualities, based upon comments from previous research.(11)

Non-traditional male and female roles were determined by assessing any attitude or behaviour that went contrary to traditional personality traits. A male who expressed fear of or dependence upon a woman was one example; a woman who acted aggressively and independently was another. Using indicators such as these, researchers evaluated the "whole" presentation of the role in the lyrics rather than isolated words or sentences in a verse or chorus.

Kaplan and Goldsen have developed a method for analyzing the way in which particular values or symbols are

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(11) Deborah Harding and Emily Nett, for example, discuss the large part that the erotic role plays in the presentation of women in rock music. See "Women and Rock Music", Atlantis, vol. 10, no. 1, Fall 1984, p. 65.

presented in various media. Symbols can be presented positively, positively with qualification, negatively, negatively with qualification, or neutrally (see Berelson, 1952; Budd 1967; Freudiger and Almquist, 1978). One of the reasons for recording the sex of the lyricist and/or singer was to test for positive or negative evaluations of ascribed traits. In the last part of this analysis, then, Kaplan and Goldsen's ideas were modified and applied to traditional and non-traditional behaviour in an attempt to assess whether a role was endorsed or criticized more by males or by females. The categories developed were: a) endorses traditional role (includes resignation to), b) criticizes traditional role, c) endorses non-traditional role (includes resignation to), d) criticizes non-traditional role, e) endorses and criticizes traditional role, non-traditional role, or both.

This type of analysis facilitated comparisons between male and female perspectives on gender roles, and also helped in the assessment of what type of role (i.e. traditional or non-traditional) was presented positively within the confines of the heavy metal genre of music.

Interviews

After the content analysis was completed the researcher reentered the field to validate the analysis. To conclude the research, interviews were conducted with

six individuals, selected specifically for their strong allegiance to the heavy metal subculture. Using an unstructured standardized interview format (or "nonschedule standardized interview" according to Denzin, 1978, p. 115), four males were interviewed at the same time. This was to ensure the answers elicited were collectively accepted, even though the same questions were directed to one individual at a time. One male played in a heavy metal band, another was a deejay for a local heavy metal radio show. The third was well-known for his involvment in sponsoring local heavy metal contests and concerts, while the fourth was producer of a heavy metal television show. In addition, two female adherents to heavy metal were interviewed. Both females were selected due to their association with heavy metal. Both worked as salespersonnel in record stores.

Interviews lasted about 90 minutes, and covered topics ranging from induction into the heavy metal subculture to defining heavy metal. Questions were also asked about gender roles and their presentation in heavy metal, as well as perception of deviance and delinquency. Interviews were tape-recorded and later transcribed.

CHAPTER FOUR

HEAVY METAL: CULTURE AND CONTENT

Heavy Metal: A Subculture?

Part of the task of this research was to investigate

the possibility of the existence of what has up until now

been assumed to "be": a subculture organised around the

production and consumption of heavy metal music. To say

that a certain amount of activity peculiar to heavy metal

does not exist would be a mistake; the moral

entrepreneurial efforts of groups mentioned in Chapter 2

have taken great pains to publicize such collective action.

It is necessary, instead, to determine to what extent these

activities may be defined as "subcultural" in nature.

Clarke et. al. have noted that:

> Subcultures . . . take shape around
> the distinctive activities and 'focal
> concerns' of groups. They can be
> loosely. or tightly bounded. Some
> sub-cultures are merely loosely-defined
> strands or 'milieux' within the parent
> culture: they possess no distinctive
> 'world' of their own. Others develop a
> clear, coherent identity and
> structure.(1)

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(1) John Clarke et. al., "Subcultures, Cultures and Class:
    A Theoretical Overview" in Stuart Hall and Tony
    Jefferson, eds., Resistance Through Rituals. London:
    Hutchinson & Co. Ltd., 1976, p. 14.

It is possible, then, to define the activity surrounding
heavy metal as subcultural in at least a "loosely-defined"
sense of the word; heavy metal adherents center their
group's identity and even activity around the focal concern
of heavy metal.

Straw, however, does not agree. He asserts:

> If. . . a musical subculture is
> defined as a group whose interaction
> centers to a high degree on sites of
> musical consumption, and within which
> there are complex gradations of
> professional or semi-professional
> involvement in music and a relative
> looseness of barriers between roles
> (such that members will all be
> involved, in varying degrees, in
> collecting, assessing, presenting, and
> performing music), then Heavy Metal
> audiences do not constitute a musical
> subculture.(2)

On the surface, these differences appear to be semantical.
Clarke et. al have concentrated only upon the "focal
concern" of a group, while Straw's definition uses several
criteria to determine what is or is not a musical
subculture. Nevertheless, the observations made while
conducting field research revealed that the activity
surrounding heavy metal music is subcultureal even in
Straw's sense of the term. This will be illustrated in the
discussion on participants below.

What appears to be the case, then, is that the
activity surrounding heavy metal, no matter how "loosely"

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(2) Will Straw, op. cit., p. 112.

organised, constitutes a subculture by any credible definition. For the purposes of this thesis, however, Schwartz' definition of "subculture" has been used in determining whether or not heavy metal adherent's can be classified as such. Schwartz writes:

> The distinctiveness of a subculture resides in the symbolic devices, especially shared moral and cognitive categories, through which the members of a group or social category appraise and evaluate their own behaviour and the behaviour of the members of other groups. . . a pattern of behaviour acquires subcultural significance insofar as it becomes an integral part of a system of shared meanings.(3)

Within the social interaction of adherents to heavy metal, a number of behaviours are performed that constitute a system of shared meanings. The most obvious perhaps, is the selection of "style" in dress patterns, self-presentations, and language. Brake (1985, p. 12) has described these three elements of style as "Image", "Demeanour", and "Argot". Image is the appearance composed of costume and accessories such as hair-style, jewellery and artifacts. Demeanour is made up of expression, gait and posture. Argot is a special vocabulary delivered in a meaningful manner. Style is perhaps the most immediately recognisable meaningful behaviour practiced by heavy metal

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(3) G. Schwartz, Youth Culture: An Anthropological Account. Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1972, p. 11.

adherents, at least to the outside world. But small acts and activities practiced by adherents in day-to-day relations are seldom seen by individuals outside of the subculture. These actions also elicit implied meanings that only heavy metal adherents can appreciate. These products of the rock culture produce more than a new form of musical expression; they symbolically carry the collective messages and values of the heavy metal subculture. As Frith has commented, "Subcultural analysts argue that there is, nevertheless, a homology, a stylistic fit between youth groups' values and the musical forms they use to signify them; the sociological problem is to decode the styles."(4) To do this, the researcher must first become familiar with the group's values and its musical forms.

On the other hand, submitting the music to a detailed, in-depth symbolic analysis may lead the researcher farther away from the qualified interpretation adherents make of the music. Cohen has noted that:

> Massive exercises of decoding, reading, deciphering and interrogating . . . the whole assembly of cultural artefacts, down to the punks' last safety pin, have been scrutinized, taken apart, contextualized and re-contextualized. The conceptual tools of Marxism, Struturalism, and semiotics, a left bank pantheon of Genet, Levi-Strauss, Barthes and

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(4) Simon Frith, op. cit., p. 219.

Althusser have all been wheeled in to
aid this hunt for the hidden code.(5)

Regarding Cohen's criticism Roe adds:

> For Cohen this 'symbolic baggage' that
> adolescents are being asked to bear is
> 'just too heavy' and the exercise of
> decoding has become 'arcane, esoteric
> and mysterious', so that we are in
> danger of disappearing into a 'forest
> of symbols'. This warning is timely as
> well as telling. Important as it is
> the new sociology of subcultures needs
> to be wary of imposing an
> over-subculturalized view of man upon
> adolescent life with all the
> distortions and over-sophistications
> attendant with it.(6)

Indeed, labelling theory has also been criticized in recent

years on the same grounds; that actors are too often seen

as over-subculturalized, their behaviour determined.(7)

Therefore, while the following results do analyze what has

been identified as the heavy metal subculture, the

integrity of each participant has been respected by

acknowleging the voluntary position that each adherent

holds. Heavy metal adherents are not forced to listen to

the music. Neither are they forced by the music to carry

out deviant or delinquent acts. Adherents, on the other

hand, choose to associate themselves with the heavy metal

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(5) Cohen, op. cit., p. ix.

(6) Keith Roe, Mass Media and Adolescent Schooling:
Conflict or Co-existence? Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist
& Wiksell International, 1983, p. 73.

(7) See, for example, Taylor et. al, The New Criminology,
London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973, Chp. 5.

subculture in an attempt to resolve personal and social conflicts which they are experiencing. This will be dealt with again in Chapter 5.

The Participants

Involvement in the heavy metal subculture begins when an individual chooses, for whatever reason, to begin listening to heavy metal music. Encouragement to listen to the music can be experienced in a number of different ways. Older siblings influence younger children to listen to such music, friends encourage friends to listen to a particular song or album, and individuals may at times purchase a heavy metal upon impulse and learn that they enjoy it. In certain peer groups a considerable amount of status accrues to anyone who listens to heavy metal music, and a certain degree of sanctioning is experienced by those who choose alternate styles. The most prevalent method of introduction to the music, however, occurs when a piece of heavy metal music is played on the radio. Adolescents who enjoy the song often go out after hearing it played and purchase the album. After the association is made between the style of music and the "heavy metal" label (i.e. record stores will often have a separate section labelled as such), individuals may begin to develop an awareness that they prefer that type of music and will seek it out. Friends are consulted as to their musical tastes, and new

friendships may be formed because of a shared preference for heavy metal music.

In many cases, adherents to heavy metal are inducted into this genre of music during junior high school. Many adherents at this age are not attracted to the music alone, but to the image which many heavy metal musicians portray. Associating oneself with an image of independence or intimidation helps to alleviate the structural problems of dependancy and powerlessness that young people face. Participants may also be inducted into the subculture while in high school for the same reasons. Of the participants observed and interviewed who began listening to the music during this time, a fairly high percentage (approximately 30 percent) came from homes where parents (or at least the father) were particularly authoritarian; restricting their children's freedom with early curfews, few dates, mandatory short hair cuts, conservative dress and the like. Adolescents coming from this type of background distanced themselves from their conservative appearance by getting heavily involved in the persona of heavy metal. Participants who were inducted into the subculture after high school frequently began associating themselves with the music by patronizing local bars that frequently featured heavy metal or hard rock bands. While in the bar, participants either developed an appreciation for the music or discovered that it really was "their type" of music.

In whichever manner a person is introduced to heavy metal music, two turning points had to occur in order for them to view themselves as a contributing part of the heavy metal subculture. 1) They had to identify heavy metal as one of their favorite types or most favorite type of music; and 2) They had to perceive themselves as a "headbanger"; as a person who identifies him or her self with the subculture. After these two preferences were realised, the individual passed into the first of three stages in adhering to heavy metal.

1. Posers

The Poser stage is the first level of involvement in the heavy metal subculture. The term "Poser" is used condescendingly by more involved listeners to denote the perceived motivation of such individuals to be involved with heavy metal. While Posers may identify themselves with heavy metal music and enjoy listening to it, their interest in personifying the image of heavy metal sometimes becomes more important than the music itself. Posers will periodically frequent a heavy metal bar or concert for example, to meet members of the opposite sex, to get together with friends on a weekend night, or perhaps to purchase some drugs. Posers may also dress up in a highly stylized version of heavy metal dress so as to appear attractive to other participants in the setting.

Almost all of the more involved heavy metal adherents in the settings admit to having passed through the Poser stage; it is rarely skipped. As a matter of fact, for the majority of adherents the Poser stage is never passed. Most adherents continue to have limited involvement in the subculture, enjoy the deviant image associated with listening to the music and contribute to the subculture primarily by means of consuming the music. One primary contingency that the Poser must face is graduation from high school. Due to high school constraints and parental controls, heavy metal music is most appealing to adolescents in high school. Social structural factors such as entrance to university may seriously discourage Posers from maintaining a public identity as a headbanger. Most university students are openly hostile to heavy metal adherents. The status may thus be abandoned in favor of more popular "preppy" dispositions.

For other Posers, the newfound freedom of not having to attend school anymore causes their interest in heavy metal to wane. This is usually due to the fact that the ideology of overcoming oppressive forces is not nearly as appealing when personal constraints are alleviated. For still others, their preference in music may change to include country or easy-listening music; a feeling that they have "outgrown" their previous musical tastes may develop.

Although posers are viewed by more "hardcore" listeners as being insincere in their allegiance to heavy metal, much of the Posers' focal activities are based upon the consumption of heavy metal music. In junior high school, for example, many heavy metal adherents invite each other to their parents' homes and retreat to their own bedroom or family room, to listen to heavy metal albums. They may also go to various record stores to survey new heavy metal albums that have come out, or go downtown to browse in the local "headshops".(8) Poser activities in high school likewise centre, at times, around the primary activity of consuming heavy metal music. For high schoolers such activity may involve "listening to tunes" in a parked car or elsewhere from a ghetto blaster, or going to a heavy metal concert. Since many high school-aged Posers are too young to frequent heavy metal bars, this is not a frequent activity. However, friends may also be invited to one's home to listen to music and compare albums. Additionally, due to the limited finances of high-school Posers, recording a friend's heavy metal albums for one's own use is also common.

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(8) "Headshops" are shops that deal almost entirely in heavy metal paraphernalia such as posters, wall hangings, jackets, arm and wristbands, buttons, pins, earrings, and the like. Oddly enough, "headshops" carry samples of almost all types of heavy metal material culture except heavy metal albums.

Posers are the most easily identifiable adherents to heavy metal. The everyday "image" or costume of males consists of blue or black denim jeans, dark runners, a black t-shirt (usually a heavy metal band jersey) and a blue denim or black leather jacket. This is usually complemented with a red or green checked flannel shirt which is worn under the jacket, the shirttail hanging out in the back. At times a leather jacket will be worn with a sleeveless denim vest over the outside. Denim jackets often have the back painted or even sewn (i.e. needlepoint) with the crest or logo of a heavy metal band. While the typical hairstyle is usually long and straight, some adherents choose to wear a very short hairstyle as well. Earrings worn in the left ear are also in style for males. Earrings denote a certain individuality and deviance if worn correctly. However, earrings worn in the right ear symbolize homosexual tendencies, and is to be avoided.(9)

Female Posers' day-to-day apparel is also strictly defined, but differs somewhat with age groupings. Females in junior high, for example, do not differ in dress much from the males. Denim jackets and jeans are the norm, as

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(9) In comparing this practice to other parts of the United States and England, it is apparent that these meanings inadvertantly change, depending upon the locale. In Hawaii, for example, homosexuals traditionally wear the earring in the left ear.

are black t-shirts and concert jerseys. More make-up is used on dates, however, and high heels are sometimes worn. Female Posers in high school take great pains to find tight-fitting denim jeans and often wear a solid-colored but revealing blouse or shirt. Earrings are usually long and dangling, and hair is usually "fluffed", standing high on the top and sides of the head. Denim jackets are also frequently worn, but a greater concern for personal appearance begins to develop, especially in grades 11 to 12. More make-up tends to be worn during this period (particularly eye-liner and mascara), and high heels become a frequent selection of footwear over runners, especially on dates.

Gender distinctions become critically obvious at concerts or bars when a popular band stops to play in the area. Posers view these events as a time to really "dress up" or "strut their stuff". Males tend to wear the same type of apparel as worn from day-to-day, although concert jerseys are usually preferred over plain black t-shirts, and a longer, dangling earring is often selected if a male's ear is pierced. Similarly, denim jackets flaunting allegiance to various heavy metal bands are common. There is also a small contingent of males who have taken to wearing "spandex"; a brightly-colored stretch pant that adheres to the shape of one's legs, graphically reproducing each curve and bulge. Male performers playing the more

popularized versions of heavy metal frequently wear spandex, although the majority of male adherents tend to avoid it.

A more apparent contrast was observed in female apparel. While a small contingent (approximately 25 percent) of females still wear the common denim jacket and jeans to concerts, the large majority take great pains to "beautify" themselves. Spandex is frequently worn by women for the more popular metal concerts, while tight jeans, high heels and make-up is the standard for others. A small proportion of females wear low-cut dresses, nylons, high-heels and fur coats. In the concert arena these females were mostly observed staying near either the "soundboard men" who were engineering sound for the concert, or close to the backstage entrance. Most were not accompanied by male companions, but appeared eager to meet the members of the band. In the clubs, however, this latter type of dress became the norm for about half the females, the other half wearing tight jeans, high-heels and low cut blouses. Few, if any, wore runners, jeans and jean jackets.

Another peculiar gender distinction was observed in behaviour. Norms allow females (especially in bars) to dance with each other without fear of being stigmatized as homosexual. It was common during the first part of the evening in a bar that up to 60 percent of the dancing

couples were entirely female. Whereas males would dance
with females, it was absolutely taboo for males to dance
with males.

2. "Experimenters"

During the year's time spent observing the heavy metal
subculture, several Posers were observed "graduating" to
the Experimenter stage. This stage was usually achieved
when a Poser began to actively seek out less popular forms
of heavy metal music, and spent more time listening to
albums alone. New activities also involved "listening to
tunes" with a few other close companions, and developing a
critical vocabulary to assess the music.

Inception into the Experimenter group usually involved
a unique socialization process by those adherents more
involved in understanding various aspects of heavy metal.
Much of the heavy metal listened to by Experimenters
receives no radio airplay, yet enjoys large volume sales.
A sense of a new aesthetic begins to develop in an
Experimenter, and he or she begins to listen closer to and
seeks out more heavy metal music that is NOT aimed at the
popular music market. Instead of conforming to popular
themes and standardized music compositions, such artists
experiment more and attempt to remain true to their
"artistic integrity". Progressive groups such as Pink
Floyd and Rush, while not traditionally recognised as heavy

metal bands, also enjoy large sales to Experimenters developing a taste for more complex and experimental forms of music. Greater interest is taken in finding out more about band members and tour schedules, and many Experimenters begin to experiment with writing their own music or getting involved with playing in a band. Experimenters also frequently seek to acquire older records that are traditionally recognised as the "first" bands of heavy metal,(10) both to attempt to "get a feel" for the development of the musical genre, and to acquire status among other Experimenters by building a heavy metal record library. Often a distaste begins to develop for bands that obviously attempt to create music merely for the popular market by sensationalizing concerts and images.

Unlike the Poser group, the Experimenter group is almost entirely male-dominated. Out of the forty-three females interacted with in the setting or interviewed, only six admitted receiving enjoyment out of listening to more experimental types of music, or discussing or reading about bands that interested them. Males in this group again tend to dress in blue denim, black t-shirts and denim or black leather jackets. They emphasize the image less than listening to the quality of the music and lyrics. Females

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(10) Some of these bands are: Led Zepplin, Black Sabbath, and Deep Purple.

observed in the Experimenter group typically wore tight jeans and tight t-shirts, revealing blouses and high-heels.

Induction into the Experimenter group is often achieved by grade 12 for males. Those who do enter this category usually continue to listen to heavy metal music even after graduation. Most females inducted into this category say they became interested in the music through the efforts or frequent selection of the music by their boyfriends. It was reported that it is usually the male who selects the music to be listened to on a date.

3. "Hardcores"

While people belonging to the Experimenter group are most likely to listen to the widest variety of heavy metal music, Hardcores tend to seek out a specific type or "sub-genre" of heavy metal identified as "thrash" metal. Thrash metal differs from more popularized forms of heavy metal and progressive music in that it concentrates upon extremely fast tempos and many screams from the vocalist. Emphasis is placed upon the complexity of the music, and the playing of such is made more difficult due to the extremely fast tempo. There are also three main types of thrash which are based on lyrical content: "Death metal" thrash, "Speed metal" thrash, and "Black metal" or "Satanic metal" thrash. While melodic and harmonic styles are roughly the same, we shall see in the next section that the

three are further distinguished by the main theme of the
lyrics.

During the year's time spent in the setting, the
researcher met only two females who showed any interest in
one or more types of thrash metal. Keen distinctions are
also made between types of thrash; Black or Satanic metal
is considered by many to be the most deviant. As one
female Experimenter put it:

". . . Venom, Slayer, Merciful Fate [names of various black
metal bands], those are not metal in my category; that's
the black Satanic shit, crap, garbage, like, that's going
too far, like . . . no."

While two females were inclined to listen to some Speed
metal thrash bands, (and one said she enjoyed a few Death
metal albums), Black metal was considered by all other
females to be too deviant.

Obviously, the overwhelming majority of adherents to
thrash metal are males. Most Hardcore enthusiasts were
observed listening to thrash most of the time, although
some progressive music was also occasionally selected. A
mild antagonism develops between males who listen to thrash
and those who listen to more mainstream music. Concerts,
however, are attended by all three groups, since the bands
who tour are almost solely mainstream. Thrash metal bands
seldom play more than the club circuit, and even then the
clubs must be based in cities large enough to support such

a narrow base of adherents. During the year spent in the field no thrash metal bands were observed playing in the city.

Hardcores contribute much to the promotion of heavy metal culture within their own city. They often know most of the heavy metal bands in the city; where they are playing, and who is in each group. Hardcore adherents encountered in the setting either held a full-time job in the music business, or contributed substantially to the scene as a hobby. Hardcores encountered in the setting worked at audio-visual companies, record companies or stores, recording studios and concert promotion agencies. Other Hardcores had day jobs (eg. baker, supermarket worker, gas station attendant) or attended school full-time, but contributed to the heavy metal subculture by hosting local radio and television shows, organising heavy metal band contests and concerts, and writing in heavy metal magazines.

Hardcores also contributed substantially to the compilation of a formal history of heavy metal by researching some of the "first groups" and, in particular, maintaining astoundingly large record collections of an archival nature. One's prestige is measured, in part, by the number of albums in one's heavy metal collection. Obtaining original albums of the forerunners of heavy metal music (such as Steppenwolf or Mountain), albums of early

heavy metal artists, or hard-to-get albums (usually British groups recorded on labels that were imported) were also ways of enhancing one's status.

Hardcores, then, are purveyors of heavy metal culture. Almost entirely a male population, Hardcores are highly intensive listeners, and often form a type of "cult" that follows a favorite thrash band. Adherents may become a Hardcore while in high school, but the transition usually occurs after graduation from high school if a preference for heavy metal music is still maintained. Hardcores are key socialization agents, active in introducing Posers or Experimenters to other forms of heavy metal, and to developing an appreciation of the aesthetics of the music and what it attempts to do.

The Music

One requirement that must be met for a particular setting to be classified as part of the world of heavy metal is that heavy metal music has to be played there. Whether the participants in a particular setting can be categorized as Hardcores, Experimenters, Posers, or even members of the general populace who find themselves in a setting that is playing heavy metal music, the focal point of any gathering is not the setting per -se but the music. While certain settings are typically identified with heavy

metal music,(11) each participant, no matter what level, comes to these settings expecting to listen to heavy metal music. For heavy metal adherents, the most important component in any social situation is the music. It is the music that defines the situation and the activities surrounding it as specific to the heavy metal subculture. Furthermore, these types of settings provide opportunities for collective evaluations of the music being played. While popular music has developed it's own standards for evaluation, heavy metal has expanded upon those themes and developed new areas of musical experimentation. In turn, these new areas of experimentation have now been standardized, creating the "accepted" aesthetics of heavy metal.

Adherents to heavy metal will evaluate the music on the most elementary level of "good" or "bad". This is due to the fact that many adherents are unable to articulate the generally understood aesthetics or purpose of the music. As the commitment of participation in heavy metal grows, however, so does the understanding of what the music is attempting to do. After understanding the purpose of the music, an individual decision is made (not without the

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(11) Certain bars and nightclubs, for example, were well-known as "heavy metal bars". They regularly featured live pop-metal bands playing weekends and week-nights.

influence of peers) as to which type of heavy metal music they most prefer.

While distinctions based on differences in lyrics are more common than distinctions based upon stylistic musical differences,(12) three broad sub-categories of heavy metal music exist. Each of these is evaluated upon its own aesthetical standards. The first is the more popularized forms of heavy metal music, or "pop-metal". Kealy (1982:106) has noted that popular music in general created new aesthetics for rock music; namely the aesthetic of loudness and the aesthetic of electronics. These have certainly been adopted in producing pop-metal music, along with additional aesthetics of limiting the length of the song to three or four minutes (therefore suitable for radio airplay), a driving beat, and the usual standardized musical organization of verse, chorus, verse, chorus, bridge, verse, chorus.

The most important aesthetic for popular heavy metal is commonly referred to as a "hook"; a catchy musical change in the music that catches the listener by surprise. At times this hook will be displayed in the "bridge",(13) but more often than not the hook is built in to the

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(12) See next section on content analysis for a discussion of the different types of lyrical categories.

(13) A change in tempo and chord progression that usually gives a different "flair" to the musical experience.

development of the chorus in a syncopated fashion. The listener's regular beating bodily functions (such as breathing pattern and heartbeat) are actually "frustrated" or caused to beat unevenly by listening to an intensified syncopated beat. The result is a mild but stimulating physiological response, similar to those experienced in mild emotional changes of excitement, happiness, or expectation (Farnsworth, 1939, 1969; Berlyne, 1971). In other words, the music's aesthetic can be measured by the way that one's body is physically affected. In subcultural terms this is referred to as a "buzz"; getting "turned on" by the music, getting "high" on the music, or as a "tasty" presentation of a particular tune.

The second style of heavy metal music may be entitled "progressive". Progressive heavy metal attempts to meet all of the aforementioned aesthetics, but takes more liberty in experimenting with different rythyms and musical "runs" or "trills". Many progressive pieces of music may extend over the three or four minute maximum required for radio airplay. Instead, emphasis is placed upon complex changes in tempo, style, chord progressions and musical themes, which require much more skill to perform than pop-metal.

The third style can be categorized as "thrash" style of heavy metal, which is characterized less by syncopation of the beat than by speed and fast timing. Hard-driving

beats are prominent in the music, creating a very aggressive and energetic aura. Emphasis is again on the complexity of the music, with additional intensification and skill needed to keep up the fast pace. While lyrics are an important part of thrash metal, the voice of the vocalist is used as a separate instrument; capable of making unusual sounds such as screams. Small but frequent statements such as "oh yeah", "alright", "come on", and so on emphasize the urgency of the music and encourage the listener to get involved.

Whether used as background music to a discussion with friends or as the focal activity, heavy metal music must conform to these aesthetical standards, or be judged as "scrap" metal. As Kealy (1982) has also pointed out, the electronic aesthetic (reproducing clear sound in recording) is a precondition of enjoying a record or cassette tape. Poor sound reproduction alone may be reason enough to regard any heavy metal album as worthless. In live performances, professional sound engineers and first-rate equipment must also be used to produce a "clean" or undistorted sound at high decibels. Even when listening to the music in a particular setting is secondary to a participant, the failure of those responsible to meet these aesthetics will be reason enough for many participants to leave.

The Scene

As mentioned before, the heavy metal subculture does not depend solely upon geographic locale to unify its participants. Subcultural activity is carried out wherever heavy metal music is played. Interaction may be encouraged, for example, by one adherent playing a heavy metal tune at full volume while carrying a ghetto blaster. An approaching adherent may give an understood symbol of a raised fist, or hand raised with the pinky finger and pointer finger raised; the symbol of approval.(14) Conversation may follow, even if the adherents are strangers.

Heavy metal adherents nevertheless tend to congregate in more general types of settings. Age appears to be a determining factor as to which settings are frequented by which participants. Younger participants in junior high, for example (typically Posers), frequent their parents homes and organise parties with other friends whenever possible. Parties usually take place when their parents are not home. Ghetto blasters in parks and schoolgrounds also constitute a legitimate subcultural experience.

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(14) While in the setting a number of participants were asked what the latter symbol stands for. Few knew exactly, although it is a symbol that is frequently displayed. A few adherents suggested that the two raised fingers represent the horns of the devil, while other adherents disagreed. To be sure, the wide use of the symbol by other heavy metal adherents signifies a subcultural action of approval.

Attendance at heavy metal concerts is limited, however, due to the expense of the concerts, parental insistence that there be an adult chaperone, and lateness of the event. While Top 40 music is usually played at school dances, these functions allow heavy metal adherents to congregate together and even apply pressure upon the deejay or the band to play a few heavy metal songs.

Small groups of high school adherents, on the other hand, tend to use a car that has a "good" stereo. Such cars are frequently parents' cars. Adherents often manage to manipulate their parents to upgrade the stereo system in it. Alternatively, they may pay for the upgrading themselves. More affluent heavy metal adherents have their own cars. Heavy metal music is also played loudly at parties at parents' or older friends' homes. Several participants also admitted to faking identification or borrowing identification from a friend or sibling so that they could "sneak into" a bar to hear a heavy metal band play. Concerts are very well attended, and such concerts usually have a half-hour break between bands to facilitate interaction.

Bars become a central gathering place for those adherents eighteen years of age and older. Several local bars or nightclubs were known as "hard rock" or "heavy metal" bars, where heavy metal bands usually played well-known pop-metal tunes (known as "cover-tunes").

Original material was also periodically presented in these places. Home parties were frequently organised, and concerts were also well-attended by older adherents. Much musical activity revolved around playing heavy metal on a stereo with a few close friends at home. The researcher also noted an increase in listening to such music while alone. As one older hardcore participant commented:

"I could listen to this stuff all day. Put on a metal album when I get up in the morning, listen all day, and go to sleep listening to the same thing."

Collective Values

While observing various activities and interactions in the setting it became apparent to the researcher that certain things were highly valued among heavy metal adherents.

Music

As mentioned before, all participants consulted contended that music was a very big part of their life. This is consistent with recent findings: Bibby and Posterski (1985:33) found that some 90 percent of teenagers in their across-Canada sample indicated that they listen to music "very often". Next to friendships, music was recorded as the greatest source of enjoyment. It appears that the high value that heavy metal enthusiasts place upon

music is something they have in common with the rest of youth in society.

Along with the high level of enjoyment that headbangers receive from listening to their type of music, however, there exists a keen defensiveness. In other words, heavy metal adherents display a strong dislike towards those who criticize their music. Most headbangers are more than well aware that there are people attempting to censor their music and label the adherents as delinquent. One female adherent commented:

"I have a couple of friends that I said 'Here, I'll put on some [heavy metal] ballads for you', and they said 'no, it will hurt my ears', as if it's going to corrupt them or something. Shit, I mean, even Bruce Cockburn swears in his songs. If there's a few harsh words in metal, what's the difference?"

Reactions by heavy metal adherents to others' dislike for heavy metal range from relativism ("each to his own") to acts of antagonism. Turning up a stereo in a public place after someone has voiced criticism of the music is a favorite antagonistic reaction.

Existential Pleasures

While studying the heavy metal subculture it became obvious to the researcher that many topics of conversation centered on various types of existential pleasures. These pleasures contrast with the long-term goals of "normal" society that involve deferred gratification. Getting

drunk, driving fast, "doing" drugs, having sex, listening to music, and "partying" are examples of existential pleasures, while getting a university degree, saving up for retirement and taking yearly vacations are examples of deferred gratification. Approximately one-half of the conversations overheard by the researcher dealt favorably with existentially pleasures such as those above. Similarly, Bibby and Posterski (1985:19) found that almost six in ten young people desired a life of excitement. However, excitement "took a back seat" to more conservative values of companionship and love. Similar values were expressed by heavy metal participants.

In the heavy metal subculture, it appeared that most of the talk about what conservative society may deem "deviant pleasures" was never put into action. There was frequent talk about having sex with a stranger of the opposite sex, for example. This seemed to be an accepted "rhetoric of deviance". Participants (particularly males, but females as well) found such discussions to be a verbal working-out of certain frustrations.

It was also observed that all headbangers made a sharp distinction between work and leisure time. Thompson (1969) has suggested that "deviant" leisure pastimes have been viewed by employees in the past as a potential disruptor of productivity because they are a "counterthesis" to work. In the setting, however, participants were quite able to

differentiate between necessary duties in the "outside" world, and enjoyable activities engaged in apart from work. Work was viewed as essential by those interviewed, but not as a necessary evil. Leisure activities were purposely selected to provide a break from the routine of the week.

While in the setting, a certain amount of illegal activity was observed, particularly in the form of soft drug consumption or purchasing (eg. marihjuana, hashish, hashish oil). Because observation of the heavy metal subculture was made almost exclusively at places of leisure, however, it is likely that observations of such activities were more numerous than would have been recorded when observing heavy metal adherents at other times. Similarly, it is likely that such illegal activity is carried on at approximately the same level in other groups of the same age and purpose. This fact was emphasized by one adherent:

We are no more delinquent than any body else. Preppies and all others drink as much as we do, do as many drugs, and have as much of the criminal element in their kind as we do in ours. As a matter of fact, I know a few thiefs [sic], and their favorite type of music is Top 40, not heavy metal.

Short-Term Job Preparation

Of those headbangers interviewed informally in the various heavy metal settings, approximately half of the adherents came from working-class families and the other

half came from middle-class families.(15) However,
approximately 70 to 80 percent of the same individuals had
either gone through or were going through some form of
skills training at a technical institute, or were receiving
on-the-job training. Close to 90 percent had finished high
school, although some of these people had quit school and
gone back later. It would appear, especially with
Hardcores, that the desire to be close to the music
business dictates, to some extent, the amount and type of
education that they seek. Most career positions in the
music business, such as sound engineer or audio technician,
require short-term training courses. This is not to say
that adherents of heavy metal are determined by their
association with the subculture to limit their education.
Rather, serious heavy metal adherents are more likely to
want jobs that require such education.

Gender Expectations

One of the most distinctive aspects of the heavy metal
subculture to the casual observer was the different
expectations that existed for males and females. Males and
females would conform to these expectations in order to be
evaluated as "cool" or "alright". Failure to conform to
such expectations resulted in a range of sanctions; from

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(15) Indicators were the district of town that their family
    lived in, fathers' and mothers' occupation, and
    adherents' occupation.

ridiculing the behaviour or person to ostricism from the group. For the most part males were expected to conform to extremely rigid roles. Males were expected to emulate certain characteristics (eg. aggressiveness, independence) in their image, demeanour and argot, and were also expected to practice behaviours that would disassociate themselves from anything feminine. Females, on the other hand, were allowed at times to display certain male qualities in addition to female characteristics. At other times such masculine behaviour was expected of them.(16)

One particularly obvious characteristic expected from males in the setting was "toughness" or "ruggedness". Toughness was expressed in the gait of many participants, wearing leather studded arm or wristbands and walking with arms and legs slightly spread as if to protect oneself. Toughness was also demonstrated by the lack of physical intimacy between males. The only time males came in contact with each other was through carefully mediated symbolic actions of support; such as a gentle punch on the

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(16) For example, aggressiveness was an expected and desired characteristic of females when males were viewing them in the erotic role. The behaviour was seen as appropriate as long as it was oriented to satisfaction of the male rather than the female (other-oriented rather than self-oriented). At a few other times females were expected to threaten or even engage in physical violence with another female if she threatened to "make a play" for her boyfriend or male she was with. Such activity also demonstrated commitment and faithfulness to the male.

shoulder, a special handshake where one person's hand clasps the other person's thumb, or a hand held high in the air while an approaching male would do the same, slapping hands as they met. Any other physical contact, even suggested, was negatively viewed. One headbanger, for example, relayed a story of a homosexual proposition on the street:

That's as bad as G____ jumping in this car, he's hitch-hiking and this car drove down the side of the road. Jumps in, buddy in a big Cadillac, and he says, [effeminate voice]: "Where're you going?" G____, six foot four, right? Looks down at this guy, [deep bass voice] "I'm going down the street to get some gas." [effeminate voice] "Uh, do you mind if we stop around the corner a little bit? I've never had anybody as big as you before." And G____ just put his head through the window on that side; just nailed him; just cold-cocked him on the side of the face. Pushed his head right through the window on the other side. "You flaming faggot" he says, "stop this car."

Stories such as these, whether true or concocted, stress the behaviours expected of males.

Other observed traits of males included aggressiveness, independence, and desire for non-commital sexual relations (i.e self-oriented). While male traits were viewed by males and females more positively than female traits, females were evaluated by males in the setting more by physical appearance than expected behaviours. At one heavy metal concert, for example, the lead singer shared with the audience an experience he had in a Calgary bar meeting "the perfect female". He

described her as being dressed in red leather pants, a small, sleeveless black shirt, high heels and long, black hair. Participants similarly commented in interviews:

Male 1: "Metal girls are sexy. They get dressed up in the shortest skirt, and they usually have long legs...
Male 2: And they usually wear the tightest spandex.
Male 3: But they're not always sexy; they're more wild.
Male 1: No they're not always sexy; they're more of a wild creation that is tolerable and acceptable, right? Little old ladies look at them and go "Little slut", but Dad goes "Oooh".
Male 3: Yeah, and swerves the car.
[Laughter]

The males in the setting also seemed to agree that "chicks" were there not because they enjoy the music, but because they want to "get a guy". The "pure" male motivation of being involved with the music for its intrinsic value enabled them to accord women a lower social position. As one participant put it:

Male 1: They [females] like the musicians, whereas the guys like the music."
Male 2: But that's what the women are there for [to get a guy], it carries on the teen idol bit but for metal.
Male 3: That's chauvanistic.
Male 2: Okay, it's chauvanistic, but that's what I see, you know, like the girls at the Helix concert all backstage.
Male 1: Yeah but girls are girls.
Male 2: Okay, girls are girls.

The distinct masculine identity in heavy metal is also reinforced by the recognition that few women listen to thrash metal.

Male 1: Women don't like a lot of thrash. They don't like
a lot of the intensity. They like a lot more mainstream
stuff. It's all guys. You go to a thrash show and you'll
be looking at about a 90% male turnout.
Male 2: But if you go to a show like Ratt you'll be
looking at about 75 percent women."

These types of distinctions made by males reinforce the

masculine character traits that distinguish them from

females.

Also evident is the extent to which females have been

socialized into accepting these gender distinctions and

actually conform to the behaviour. Females are more apt to

explain such differences in terms of individual tastes

rather than male or female differences. One female

commented, for example:

I don't like all of that thrash stuff, I don't know what it
is, but it just doesn't turn me on. I'm sure that there
are other chicks that enjoy the stuff, but it's just not
for me."

Because of the stigma that is attached to getting

involved in the setting for reasons other than music,

females likewise tend to practice a certain amount of role

distancing to try to demonstrate their "pure" attraction to

the music. However, such role distance behaviour is still

practiced on a personal rather than social level. To

illustrate, one female participant commented:

Like, a few friends of mine who are working in bands or
whatever, for them to turn around and say "Oh fuck, the
groupies are here again", like I have to laugh, you know,
but then I kind of have to go "Don't fucking think that of

ME", you know, because that's the last thing I want thought of myself... But some of them chicks with the lace around the ankles and the spandex and chains, like those chicks, look at THEM.

While male adherents to heavy metal tend to emphasize the differences between the sexes, then, females tend to downplay them. This may be due, in part, to the stigma generally associated with female gender traits. These inconsistencies are not radically different than those of traditional society. In some cases gender presentations seemed to be an extreme but logical extention of society's traditional gender expectations. What appears to be deviant is not the values, but the symbols that are used to express such values. Long hair on males, for example, is viewed in traditional society as effeminate rather than masculine. Within the heavy metal subculture, however, long hair is a symbol of freedom, autonomy and, at times, virility. These are values traditionally associated with masculine behaviour. While these symbols seemed somewhat extreme at times (eg. a "dog collar" worn by a male with 8 inch spikes sticking out of it), it was recognised that the majority of adherents were adolescents. Most adolescents are not confined or restricted by conventional social statuses and careers that demand that a certain attire be worn. Adoption of such traditional symbols are accepted as presenting masculinity or femininity in proper ways. In

subcultures such as heavy metal, it is the symbols that change.

To summarize what has been presented thus far, the data gathered through field research provides a number of useful sociological insights. There is indeed a musical subculture organised, however loosely, around the production and consumption of heavy metal music. This subculture contains its own norms, values and symbols which carry meaningful messages to the participants and serve to unify the group. The types of participants in the setting have been described, and the aesthetics of various styles and types of heavy metal have been briefly presented. More importantly, the values which were both verbalized and performed in the scene have not been found to deviate from those of society at large. Rather, it is the symbols used to express such values that are different. In considering gender, for example, the roles practiced and expressed were not deviant but extremely traditional and sexist in nature. Such data lends support to the thesis that youth cultures, while labelled deviant by moral entrepreneurs, are not much different than the society in which they exist. Indeed, the data just analyzed appears to justify the statement that the values expressed in youth cultures are more conservative than societal values. Although the limited scope of this exploratory study did not permit the gathering of comparative data, the research design did

involve a quantitative analysis of the expressed values in heavy metal lyrics. This is reported in the following section.

Classifying Heavy Metal

The content analysis performed on a random sample of heavy metal albums produced certain results which were congruent with what was observed in the setting. In the first stage of the analysis, the themes of each of the 282 songs on the thirty albums were identified. Thirteen of the 282 songs were instrumentals (containing no lyrics), and were thus removed from the sample. Of the remaining 269 songs, 102 (38 percent) dealt with "interpersonal relations" or "gender themes". "Reflective-Philosophical" was the second largest category found in 51 (19 percent) of the songs. "Excitement" themes followed closely with 48 (18 percent) songs. "Physical Conflict as an end in itself" contained 21 songs (8 percent), "Mystical-Supernatural" themes contained 16 (6 percent), only 13 songs (5 percent) dealt with themes of "oppression", 8 songs (3 percent) dealt with "involuntary loss of control", 5 (2 percent) dealt with "physical conflict as a means to an end", and only 4 (1 percent) dealt with a "desire to escape". While the gender category contained the largest number of songs, there were a number of other thematic interests expressed in heavy metal lyrics

that do not show up in the Top-40 tunes. The most obvious examples are physical conflict themes and themes that deal with mystical or supernatural powers.

While heavy metal adherents distinguish among at least three different styles of heavy metal music, each of these styles is further broken down by participants into sub-categories according to the lyrical content. These categories are referred to as "sub-genres" within the genre of heavy metal music. From interviews with participants it was clear that there was a consensus on the following sub-genres:

1. HARD ROCK: While most adolescents familiar with the Top-40 scene would characterize this sub-genre as heavy metal music, adherents to heavy metal (particularly Experimenters and Hardcores) reserve this category for heavy metal that is primarily aimed at popular music radio airplay. Groups in this sub-genre frequently use special lighting, smoke bombs and other stage paraphernalia to popularize their concerts. Songs are usually written within a Top-40 format (such as three or four minutes playing time). Consequently, most lyrics apparently have to do either with meeting members of the opposite sex or "partying"; with doing exciting things. A typical example of this category is Quiet Riot's "Party All Night":

> Got my head to the grindstone
> Trying to act like a fool

                    My hat is a lampshade
                    Can't find me at school
                    Well I'm an animal
                  . Yes I'm a cannibal
                    They say I'm out for blood
                    One thing I wanna do

                    Party all Night
                    Party all Night
                    Party all Night long

                    Driving right way on the wrong side
                    A bit too much to drink
                    Women in the back seat
                    They don't know what to think

                    They say I've lost my head
                    "He'll probably end up dead"
                    But they're too blind to see
                    What's important to me

                    Paradise parties, I'm on a
                     one way cruise
                    Lookin' for trouble
                    We got nothin' to lose
                    They're on the telephone
                    Tryin' to send me home
                    We've gone and pulled the plug
                    We got a new kind of school

        Sixteen albums from our sample (53 percent) fit into

the   hard   rock category.   They contained   a total of 161

songs.   Of these songs, 76 (47.2 percent) dealt with gender

themes,   20   (12.4   percent)   dealt   with

reflective-philosophical   themes,   and   4 (2.5   percent)

presented themes dealing   with oppression.   Themes of

physical conflict   as a means to   an end, physical conflict

as an end in itself,   and the mystical or supernatural were

found in   only 4   songs (2.5 percent)   each.   The second

largest category, as predicted by heavy metal adherents, was "excitement themes", which contained 35 songs (21.7 percent). 3 songs (1.9 percent) used themes of escape, 6 (3.7 percent) had themes of loss of control, 4 (2.5 percent) were instrumentals and 1 fit into the "other" category, an apparent "nonsense" song.

2. HEAVY METAL: A second sub-genre recognised by adherents was entitled "Heavy Metal" music. Bands playing this music may also receive radio airplay, but it is not a main goal of the group. Heavy Metal groups experiment more with their style, and generate more of a "cult" following than hard rock groups. Their adherents tend to purchase every one of their albums, go to their concerts, and learn everything they can about the bands, including the lyrics they have written and their particular form of musical expression. Lyrics concentrate on popular themes, but also take more liberties in dealing with historical or philosophical issues as well. The song "Balls to the Wall" by Accept is one example:

> Too many slaves in this world
> Die by torture and pain
> Too many people do not see
> They're killing themselves - going insane
> Too many people do not know
> Bondage is over the human race
> They believe slaves always lose
> And this fear keeps them down
> Watch the damned (God bless ya)
> They're gonna break their chains (Hey)
> No, you can't stop them (God bless ya)
> They're coming to get you

            And then you'll get your
            Balls to the wall, man
            Balls to the wall
            You'll get your balls to the wall, man
            Balls to the wall - balls to the wall
            (etc.)

The sample generated 5 heavy metal albums, or 17 percent. 45 songs were recorded on the 5 albums, 17 (37.8 percent) of which dealt with gender themes. 13 (28.9 percent) songs dealt with relective and philosophical themes, compared to hard rock's 12.4 percent. Four songs (8.9 percent) dealt with themes of oppression, 2 (4.4 percent) with the mystical or supernatural, 5 (11.1 percent) with excitement themes, and 2 (4.4 percent) were instrumentals. Escape and loss of control themes were each dealt with in only one (2.2 percent) song, and there were no songs dealing primarily with physical conflict. While gender themes still comprised the largest category (37.8 percent), reflective-philosophical themes also increased (28.9 percent) when compared with hard rock.

3.   PROGRESSIVE METAL: Progressive metal bands are characterized predominantly by the experimental style of their music.   The music is frequently elaborately structured, but lyrical composition may be equally complex. Lyrical themes range from popular interests such as interpersonal relations and partying to more social and

philosophical issues. Many of the lyricists in progressive metal are well-read, which shows up in the lyrics as well. This is illustrated in Triumph's "Stranger in a Strange Land":

> Andy Warhol's modern man
> builds a castle in the air
> The deck is stacked, but his house of cards
> grows high as the market will bear
> It won't take much to make his
> ship of dreams come crashing to the ground
> You just wait for the wheel of fate to turn
> and the wind of the wolf
> is gonna blow it all down
>
> Shallow rivers of fashion
> run on courses tried and true
> The masses dive in and it washes them down,
> Makes 'em feel like they're all brand new
> Blinding hatred caused by fear
> is showing in their eyes
> They want their truth all black and white,
> But a rainbow never tells no lies to a
>
> Stranger in a strange land,
> What's a man supposed to do?
> Just a stranger in a strange land,
> Waiting and watching and wondering
> When will the light come shining through?
> (etc.)

Four albums (7.5 percent) of the sample of 30 were of the progressive metal sub-genre, containing a total of 31 songs. Of the 31 songs gender themes dropped drastically to 4 (12.9 percent), while reflective-philosophical themes increased to 13 (41.9 percent). One song (3.2 percent) dealt with an oppressive force, five songs (16.1 percent)

dealt with physical conflict as an end in itself, four songs (12.9 percent) dealt with mystical-supernatural themes, one (3.2 percent) dealt with an excitement theme, and instrumentals increased to 3 (9.7 percent). No songs dealt with loss of control, escape, or physical conflict as a means to an end.

4. SCRAP METAL: Scrap metal is more of an eclectic category containing any musical production that attempts to fit into at least one sub-genre but fails due to poor production of the album, lack of skill or talent of the musicians or other such problems. In the thirty album sample, no albums were classed as scrap metal. Intuitively this makes sense, since scrap metal albums would fail to reach the top 30 sales charts of heavy metal.

5. WHITE METAL: The term white metal is used to describe any heavy metal band that uses Christian values and themes in the lyrics of their music. While musical styles may range from mainstream to progressive to thrash, most white metal bands write in the hard rock to heavy metal sub-genres. Each song, however, deals with some aspect of traditional Christianity. Most white metal bands have arisen out of the Protestant fundamentalist tradition, using the music as a means of proselytization. White metal represents a bitter irony between Christian adolescents and the moral entrepreneurial activities of the Church to label

such music as deviant. Most religious moral entrepreneurs still characterize white metal as "harmful" or "of the devil". Two heavy metal adherents who were interviewed in the setting had regularly attended Church, but left after they were negatively labelled because of their preference for such music.

While in the field, the researcher observed an attitude of avoidance to white metal. Few heavy metal adherents admitted to buying such albums unless those adherents upheld Christian values to some extent. These low sales were in part a reaction to the "Bible thumpers"; religious fundamentalist Christians (usually from pentecostal-type Churches) who were present outside every heavy metal concert attended to hand out religious tracts in an attempt to "save" heavy metal adherents. Even so, one white metal album by the band Stryper received a top rating for it's musical qualities in an album critique contained in a secular heavy metal magazine.(17) The antagonistic relationship between organised religion and heavy metal, however, still exists. As a result, no white metal albums reached the top 30 chart at the time of this study, and consequently none were included in the sample.

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(17) See Drew Dalgliesh, Metallion, vol. 2, no. 8, 1986, p. 46.

6. THRASH METAL: As mentioned previously, thrash metal is divided into three thematic categories:

6.1 Black Metal: Black metal bands, above all, tend to use Satanic themes or supernatural entities (such as werewolves or vampires) as subjects of their songs. There is thematically a preoccupation with the supernatural. While some bands merely consider the possibility of the existence of an ominous or transcendent force, other bands focus their entire attention upon purely Satanic themes, dealing with the overthrow of Heaven and God by Satan, for example. The band Venom is a typical example of Black metal. Printed here is an excerpt from their song "At War With Satan":

> Damnation has sunk its talons
> deep into the womb of Utopia,
> spilling forth great streams of
> Virginal Purity and Bliss.
> The Golden throne of tetragramaton
> is ablaze, his Satanic Majesty sits
> proud, the joyous drones of celebrations
> inact scenes of blasphemy, Lust
> and destruction, raping the Holy
> Trinity.
> The Sabbat chimes tunes of Burlesque
> and insanity.
> The Heavens in their last throes of death.
>
> Gabriel and his Arch Angels falling
> ever downwards through the fires of
> pandemoneum, to the dark deserted depths
> of Hell, their broken blood stained wings
> scorched by the raging inferno lie battered
> along the shores of Styx.
> Weary from the battle they seek refuge,
> bathing their wounds in the blood of a
> million Martyrs.
> (etc.)

The existence of Black metal is indeed the best evidence that heavy metal adherents have adopted the deviant label that society has applied to all heavy metal. Religious groups consider heavy metal music itself to be inherently evil. Anyone who listens to the music, they believe, will run the sure risk of being taken over by an evil supernatural force. Heavy metal adherents who consume Black metal are reaffirming the deviant label that they have accepted.

Black metal is also a classic example of secondary deviance. As one black metal adherent has written:

> Listen up troopers, very few black metal bangers are true satanic preachers the likes of King Diamond, late of Mercyful Fate. The vast majority of them adhere to the same principles which Ozzy and Iommi [sic] laid down with Black Sabbath's first two masterpieces, Black Sabbath and Paranoid, back when yuppies were still wearing love beads. That being, 'let's give 'em some fantasy; let's fuck with their psyche.' In other words, let's have some FUN.
>   That, quite simply people, is the essence of devil metal; sheer amusement for healthy imaginations. No more, no less. To read more into it than that, is as sick as worshipping a half-naked corpse nailed to a cross.(18)

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(18) Tarin Elbert, "Reaping it Up", Metallion, vol. 2, no. 6, 1986, p. 41.

Even apparent "Satanists" such as King Diamond have admitted: "OK, I'm just putting forward what interests me in an entertaining way, because at the bottom, that's what it is, an entertainment. I was much more influenced by Alice Cooper than I ever was by the occult."(19) Black metal, then, is used and interpreted by participants as a symbolic acceptance of the deviant label they have received. It also has a reactive secondary deviant element. Some headbangers have immersed themselves in Black metal to "prove" to entrepreneurs that the music will not have any harmful effects. Entrepreneurs, for the most part, refuse to accept this evidence, and interpret actions of such headbangers in terms of their deviant status. Headbangers may then react and involve themselves still more in Black metal simply to "scare" those engaged in entrepreneurial activities.

Black metal also has one final aspect to it, as the above quote from King Diamond suggests. Many adherents define Black metal in the same way they define a "horror" movie; as an enjoyable type of entertainment. Black metal bands are expected to have elaborate stage shows involving magic tricks and costume changes. Such shows produce the same shock or fear as horror movies do; but participants define the situation as a harmless form of entertainment.

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(19) Stunner Crunch, "Portrait in Black", Metallion, vol. 2, no. 10, 1986, p. 21.

Only one black metal album was included in the 30 album sample. It contained 7 songs. One-half of the album consisted of only 1 song. Of the 7 songs, 1 dealt with a gender theme, 1 a reflective-philosophical, 2 with mystical-supernatural themes, 2 with excitement themes, and 1 an instrumental.[20] Each of the songs, however, dealt with supernatural entities or religiously significant places (eg. Hell).

6.2. Speed Metal: Speed metal concentrates primarily on musical virtuosity in the true "thrash" sense of the word. Musical complexity and speed take a predominant place in the mixing of lyrics and music, although lyrics are still audible. Lyrics usually deal with aggressive themes, and several deal with driving or travelling fast, almost "out of control." Anthrax's "Metal Thrashing Mad" is one example:[21]

> Racing down the road
> in a street machine of steel.
> Gear jammin', woa!
> I'm a madman at the wheel.
> Got my footprint to the floor,

----

(20) The song classified as such was different than any of the other instrumentals, since it included a high degree of yelling and screaming, swearing, and various musical expressions and beats arranged in no apparent order.

(21) Lyrics to this song were transcribed by one researcher and checked by another for consistency. Due to screams and variations in the recording, however, lyrics printed here may deviate slightly from what was actually sung.

            You can feel the engine roar.
            I got thunder in my head,
            I'm metal thrashing mad.
            Metal thrashing mad.
            Metal thrashing mad.

            Driving like a maniac,
            I can't go any faster.
            I'm burnin' up the road
             and headed for disaster.
            (etc.)

In our sample, 2 albums were included from this sub-genre, containing 20 different songs. One of the 20 songs (5 percent) dealt with gender, 2 (10 percent) with reflective-philosophical, 4 (20 percent) with themes of oppression, and 6 (30 percent) with themes of physical conflict as an end in itself. Two songs (10 percent) dealt with mystical-supernatural themes, and 3 (15 percent) with themes of excitement. 2 songs (10 percent) were instrumentals. No escape, loss of control or physical conflict as a means to an end themes were presented.

6.3. Death Metal: Death metal thrash music also remains true to its title. The lyrics predominantly concern death: it's finality, awesomeness, and inevitability. As a result, many lyrics deal with physical conflict themes resulting either in the death of hundreds of foes, or the death of the lyricist (usually written in first person).

War, obviously, is a common theme. Exciter's song "Violence and Force" is a typical example:

> Living in fear in the ditches at the front
> fighting for my life never knowing
> what's to come
> shell shock, heart attack eats me to the bone
> through the darkest hell this
> battle rages on and on
> enemy attack walls of fire burn the sky
> fighting with the rats of war
> preparing to die
> (Chorus) violence and force
> taken by violence and force
> violence and force
> taken by violence and force
> (etc.)

Death metal, like black metal, may be seen as a preoccupation with such things that are transcendent. As evidence of their secondary deviance, heavy metal adherents realise that most members of society are afraid of death to some extent. Singing about such subjects not only elicits a negative reaction from society, but serves as an extention of masculine characteristics of being fearless and strong. The Hell's Angels personify the same characteristics through their activities. Carter writes:

> ...and in the Neanderthal way, the
> Hell's Angels are obeying Camus' law -
> that the dandy is always a rebel, that
> he challenges society because he
> challenges mortality. The motorcycle
> gangs challenge society because they
> challenge mortality face to face, doing
> 100 m.p.h. on the California freeway
> in Levis and swastikas, no crash
> helmets and a wide-awake hat, only a

veneer   between   man   and   his
death. . .(22)

For heavy metal adherents, society is challenged in the
same way by coming face to face with mortality through the
experiences shared in the lyrics of death metal.

Two death metal albums were included in the sample,
producing 18 songs. Of these, 3 (16.7 percent) dealt with
gender themes, 2 (11.1 percent) dealt with
reflective-philosophical themes, 6 (33.3 percent) dealt
with physical conflict as an end in itself and 1 as
physical conflict as a means to an end (5.6 percent). Two
songs (11.1 percent) dealt with mystical-supernatural
themes, and 2 (11.1 percent) dealt with excitement themes.
One song dealt with loss of control, and 1 with an escape
theme.

Gender and Heavy Metal Records

The second part of the content analysis attempted to
evaluate to what extent observations recorded in the
setting were validated by the content of heavy metal
lyrics. It is interesting to note that of the 282 songs,
242 (86 percent) were written entirely by males. Only 29
songs (10 percent) were written by females. This is a
higher percentage than normally expected for female
composers, since two albums were included in our analysis

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(22) A. Carter, "Notes for a Theory of Sixties Style", New
     Society, vol. 14, Dec. 1967, p. 43.

solely because they contained females in the band. They replaced anavailable albums that contained songs written and sung by males. The remaining 11 songs (4 percent) were co-written by at least one male and one female (at times two males and one female). In these cases the vocalist almost always wrote the lyrics. For that reason, the sex of the vocalist was used in defining the gender perspective of the lyrics.

Comparatively, when we examine the sex of the vocalist, 242 (86 percent) songs were sung by males and 40 (14 percent) were sung by females. This also indicates that females received help in writing either lyrics or music from a male in 11 (4 percent) of the songs. No males received (or at least acknowledged) any help from females for the same activity.

In considering the sub-genre that each sex sang about, it is surprising to note that all 40 songs (100 percent) sung by females were characteristic of the hard rock genre, compared to 121 (50 percent) of the songs sung males. Songs sung by males included 45 songs (18.6 percent) in the heavy metal category, 31 (12.8 percent) progressive metal, 7 (2.9 percent) black metal, 20 (8.3 percent) speed metal, and 18 (7.4 percent) death metal.

In determining the thematic categories that each sex sang. about, females sang 23 (59 percent) of their songs about gender relations, compared to 79 (32.6 percent) of

the males. Females also sang more frequently (7 songs or 17.9 percent) about excitement themes than did males (41 or 16.9 percent), and also sang about involuntarily losing control (4 songs or 10.3 percent) more than males (4 songs or 1.7 percent). Escape themes were included in 2 (.8 percent) of the male's songs but 2 (5.1 percent) of the female's songs. Males sang a larger percentage of the songs in all other categories than women did. Females sung 2 songs (3.9 percent) about reflective-philosophical themes, compared to 40 (20.2 percent) songs sung by males. While 13 (5.4 percent) of the songs sung by males dealt with themes of oppression, females included no songs with the oppressive theme. Similarly, males sang 21 (8.7 percent) songs about physical conflict as an end in itself. Females included no songs with this theme. Males also sang 5 (2.1 percent) songs dealing with physical conflict as a means to an end compared to none by females. Males sang 15 songs (6.2 percent) about mystical supernatural themes, compared to 1 (2.6 percent) of the females' themes. Of the 13 instrumentals recorded, only one was written by a female.

Comparisons can also be made by reporting what gender was the primary focus or main actor in the 102 songs having to do with gender themes. Of the 79 songs written by males, 8 songs (10 percent) focused primarily on a male or group of males, 6 songs (7.6 percent) focused primarily

upon a female, and the remaining 65 (82.4 percent) dealt with both genders. Of the 23 gender songs sung by females, however, none dealt primarily with a male figure, 7 (30.4 percent) dealt only with a female subject, and 16 (69.6 percent) dealt with both male and female.

From the preceding data it would appear that females concentrate upon themselves more than males do, or are more self- rather than other-oriented. This is not the case, however. Lyrical content of songs dealing with the female concentrates upon incompleteness, unfulfillment and loneliness when without the company of a male figure. Songs sung by males about males, however, deal with positive evaluations of male traits such as strength, independence, and so on. Songs sung by males dealing primarily with female figures depicted them almost entirely in the erotic role.

Of the 73 songs written by males that included at least one male figure in the lyrics, 62 (84.9 percent) presented the male in an overall traditionally masculine role. Eleven songs (15.1 percent) showed the male in a non-traditional role. This was compared to 15 of 16 songs sung by females (93.8 percent) that presented women in a traditional role, and only one song (6.2 percent) that presented a non-traditional woman. This again would seem to indicate that women are more content with the traditional role than the non-traditional role, and males

more willing to experiment. Yet when the positive or negative evaluation of the role is taken into consideration, the view changes dramatically as is reported below. Evaluations of whether the gender roles presented were traditional or non-traditional were made in part by assessing certain stereotyped characteristics (see Table 1).

Of the 71 songs written by males that dealt with at least one female figure, 46 songs (64.8 percent) presented the females in a traditional role, and 25 songs (15.2 percent) presented women in a non-traditional role. The 23 songs sung by females about a female presented women in 17 traditional roles (73.9 percent) and 6 (26.1 percent) in non-traditional roles.

Table 1:

Gender Characteristics Found in Heavy Metal Recordings

Stereotypical Traits; Male	Conforms to Stereotype	Does Not Conform	Trait is Not Mentioned
Aggressive	52	02	36
Dominant	51	16	23
Strength	19	0	71
Daring	24	0	66
Courage	27	01	62
Forceful	31	01	58
Rugged	12	01	77
Adventurous	31	0	59
Independent	57	17	16
Confident	46	02	42
Lack of Emotion	38	37	15
Sexual Desire	60	2	28
Stereotypical Traits; Female	**Conforms to Stereotype**	**Does Not Conform**	**Trait is Not Mentioned**
Passive	38	29	25
Dependent	42	26	24
Quiet	20	07	65
Meek	20	10	62
Gentle	12	07	73
Warm	22	09	61
Affectionate	35	09	48
Kind	24	14	54
Sentimental	26	14	52
Soft-hearted	23	15	54
Sensitive	34	10	48
Erotic	57	07	32

Because heavy metal lyrics often concentrate upon only one or two primary actions or qualities of each gender during a song, many subjective traits were not mentioned. Still, out of rating 90 males and 92 females, the results as shown in Table 1 indicate an extreme bias towards traditional sex-typed characteristics. A more detailed

analysis was not performed on these data. The purpose of this part of the analysis was, instead, to aid in obtaining a more reliable evaluation of the entire presentation of each gender as traditional or non-traditional.

A different interpretation is possible when subjective evaluations of traditional or non-traditional gender characteristics by the vocalists are taken into consideration. Of the 79 songs sung by male vocalists, for example, 48 (60.8 percent) endorsed the traditional role being described, compared to only 15 of the 23 (65.2 percent) of the songs sung by female artists. Two songs (2.5 percent) sung by males criticized the traditional role, compared to 4 songs (17.4 percent) of female vocalists. While 3 songs sung by males (3.8 percent) endorsed non-traditional roles, 3 songs (13 percent) of songs sung by females endorsed the non-traditional role. A huge 27.8 percent, or 22 of the songs sung by males criticized the non-traditional role, usually as illustrated by female's actions. Only one song (4.3 percent) sung by a female criticized a non-traditional role. Four songs (5.1 percent) sung by males, however, contained conflicting views on traditional or non-traditional roles.

What appears to be the case, then, is that heavy metal lyrics overall endorse traditional rather than non-traditional gender roles. Even so, gender distinctions here should be recognised. Male vocalists are much more

ready to criticize non-traditional gender roles than are females, and females are apparently more ready to endorse non-traditional roles and criticize traditional roles than males. Further, the impressions of the researchers dealing first-hand with the lyrics suggest that female vocalists are particularly critical of their own role expectations, even though male roles are seldom brought into question. Similarly, female vocalists express more toleration towards different or non-traditional types of behaviour than do males. Males are critical of non-traditional roles regardless of sex. Male written lyrics expressed condemnation for ones self if acting non-traditionally, and usually the consequence of acting non-traditionally was some type of emotional hurt, or a moral lesson to act "like a man" from then on. Women were criticized in .non-traditional roles as well, particularly if they practiced forms of independence.

The Views of Key Insiders

The interviews conducted with six heavy metal adherents aided in confirming and clarifying generalisations that came from the participant observation and content analysis. Because the four males and two females interviewed all held positions of responsibility to some extent within the heavy metal subculture, they were

able to articulate the values of heavy metal better than most adherents.

Three important aspects of heavy metal were emphasized by those interviewed. The first aspect was the existence of a subcultural activity surrounding heavy metal music. Such a subculture is not always recognised as a cohesive collectivity, however, and less so by females than males. Nevertheless, all interviewees agreed that heavy metal adherents understand the world in a similar manner. Females tended to see heavy metal adherents as "not as uptight" or worried about things, whereas males saw adherents as understanding in a special way certain intricacies of the music and other symbols.

Male 3: I'd say there's a subculture but it's not super-organised. It's not the guys who sit at home and listen to the bands like Ratt and Motley Crue, it's the guys that go into the import stores, that's a true metal fan.
Male 1: He's in tradin' records, and [male 4] here, all the time. Take four in, buy two more.
Male 2: Yeah, we have to supply for the faithful and the true.

The second aspect concerning heavy metal expressed by those interviewed was that the values presented in heavy metal are not in contrast with or opposed to those of mainstream society. This was illustrated particularly well in the comments made by those interviewed on the subject of

gender attitudes and heavy metal music.(23)   While the
symbols used to express such values may differ radically
from traditional society, the values upheld tend to be the
same as or extensions of those found in mainstream society.

This concept is also evident in the third aspect
emphasized by interviewees, the fact that heavy metal
adherents recognise the successful attempts of moral
entrepreneurs to label their music and subculture as
deviant and delinquent.

Male 3: I'll tell you one thing. Any shit happens between
four preppies and one headbanger and the headbanger will
come out the big loser with the cops and everything. . .
You even see it downtown in the arcades and everything. . .
Preppies never got harrassed. . . The jock preps and those
guys, they got enough money they're fuckin' around with
more drugs than the headbangers are. You go in there, the
cop sees the headbanger -- "open up your cigarette
package." -- that kind of shit.

Some adherents to heavy metal are drawn to the music
because of its deviant status; it helps to give them a
feeling of individuality. For others the deviant identity
is acquired through such "hassles" by police and other
established groups in society, and their attempts to label
headbangers as such.

It is not unusual, then, to find that most headbangers
(particularly males) identify themselves as deviant.

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(23) See quotes from interviewees in the Participant
     Observation section on gender expectations in this
     chapter.

Interviewer: Do you view yourselves as deviant?
[Pause, then laughter]
Male 2: YES! To sum it up from a song from Metallica, "Am I evil?"
[several say at the same time] "Yes, I fucking am!" [laughter].

However, the large majority of headbangers do not accept the delinquent label that entrepreneurs also attempt to apply.

Interviewer: Do you view yourselves as delinquent?
Male 1: No.
Male 4: No.
Male 2: No.
Interviewer: Do you think there are some people that listen to metal that are delinquent?
Male 2: Sure, but there are people who listen to Wham! [mainstream group] who are delinquent too.
Male 1: And there's people who listen to country music too who kill people all the time. Music, I don't think, has any bearing on a person's brain, or what they do or how they function.

HEAVY METAL EXAMINED

This empirical examination of the world of heavy metal has presented an in-depth look into a youth subculture traditionally perceived as deviant. Data gathered through field research gave evidence to indicate that the activity surrounding heavy metal is indeed subcultural, and that participants share a collective definition of the scene that they share. A close examination of the values presented in the settings revealed that heavy metal participants do not adhere to values that are contrary to that of society. While the symbols used to express such values do indeed deviate from traditionally accepted means

of symbolic communication, the implied messages were similar to that of society. This aspect of heavy metal was reinforced through an examination of gender roles practiced in the setting. Males conformed to traditional role expectations in the same way that females did. In some cases, the enactment of such values were expressed in extreme styles of dress or speech. The extremes, however, enforced the traditional rather than liberal or "deviant" values behind the role.

This conclusion was also supported in the data produced from the content analysis. Heavy metal, characterized by its aggressive and loud musical style, is almost entirely dominated by male artists. For the few females that venture into the artistic arena, their music is entirely restricted to the least-respected "hard rock" sub-genre. In analyzing the content of the lyrics of both male and female composers, endorsements of traditional roles and criticism of liberal roles are overwhelming. While this content analysis has examined the music and lyrics of the genre of music regarded to be highly deviant, the conclusions supported by the data are congruent with other studies performed on more popular or mainstream styles. The messages being expressed in the music support, rather than criticize, the status quo.

Interviews of key insiders again affirmed what had been discovered through participant observation and content

analysis. Participants recognised the existence of a heavy metal subculture. Their comments also reinforced that the heavy metal subculture contains no greater percentage of delinquents than other social groups. Finally, participants were keenly aware of the successful attempts of moral entrepreneurs to label the music and its adherents as both deviant and delinquent. While most adherents enjoyed the deviant identity, they had not as yet perceived themselves as delinquent. These results contain important insights into the function of deviance in society, and considerations for future studies. These ramifications are discussed in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE

HEAVY METAL: DEVIANCE RECONSIDERED

This study has attempted to analyze the interactive relationship between youth culture and those institutionalized agents of control who constitute the voice of "society". It has been recognised that a qualified amount of deviance is healthy for a society in several ways, and by permanently stigmatizing youth culture as deviant, the society as a whole benefits. Youth and youth culture, then, are often viewed as deviant to society at large, despite empirical evidence to the contrary. Chapter Two illustrated the labelling process used to stigmatize one predominant aspect of youth culture: rock music in general and heavy metal music in specific. A study was then undertaken to explore the unexamined subculture of heavy metal, and to ascertain in particular whether the values expressed through heavy metal lyrics and reinforced in the subculture were deviant (that is, contrary to mainstream adult values).

This investigation of the heavy metal subculture through participant observation, content analysis, and interviews revealed some interesting results. One of the most significant results is the way in which adherents

(particularly males) revel in the deviant stigma attached to the music. However, while adherents may accept the general deviant label, most refuse to accept the specific delinquent label. To be sure, delinquent activities were observed while in the setting. Yet on the basis of past research into criminal activity, it is likely that the criminal element is a part of any subculture or socioeconomic strata in society.(1)

A second insight into the heavy metal subculture is that, while the symbols used to express certain values may be .considered deviant, values underlying the use of such symbols are directly reflective of society at large. This implies that the heavy metal subculture is not attempting to revolutionize or rebel against the values of society. They are, perhaps, trying to overemphasize them. Their values of future, fun and excitement, and gender, however, are conservative ones. These findings are congruent with other research done on more popular or Top 40 forms of music (Hirsch, 1971; Buxton, 1983).

The conservative nature of heavy metal's values was also re-emphasized through the analysis of gender expectations. Males are expected to personify traditional

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(1) See for example William J. Chambliss, "The Saints and the Roughnecks" in Earl Rubington and Martin S. Weinberg, eds., Deviance:_ The Interactionist Perspective, 4th ed. New York: Macmillan Pub. Co. Inc., 1981, pp. 236-247.

rather than liberal aspects of masculinity, and non-traditional roles are criticized in the lyrics. Similarly, females are expected to conform especially to the traditionally feminine erotic role. These expectations are encouraged by both male and female vocalists. Similarly, the male role was accepted almost without question both in the setting and within lyrical content. The male role was also evaluated more positively than the female role, and females had to justify their involvement with the subculture. Being there to enjoy the music was "cool"; being there to find a male companion was not. These findings are in agreement with those studies carried out on gender stereotypes in rock music (Harding and Nett, 1984), popular music (Chafetz, 1974; Cooper, 1985), and country, soul, and easy listening music (Freudiger and Almquist, 1978).

Problems of gender stereotyping are further complicated by recognising that most subcultures that sociologists have studied to date are organised around predominantly male problems and contingencies. Studies on subcultures done in the past have emphasized this point, either because males tend to engage more often in subcultural activity than females, or because researchers studying subcultures in the past have for the most part been male. This has led studies on subcultures to inadvertently concentrate more on male activities. Brake

(1985) has said, "If subcultures are solutions to collectively experienced problems, then traditionally these have been the problems experienced by young men. Consequently, youth culture is very concerned with the problems of masculinity."(2) This fact was also observed within the heavy metal subculture. Most obviously, the few females that were able to record or play heavy metal music were forced into the peripheral "hard rock" category of heavy metal music. Other types of heavy metal appeared to be overly concerned with masculine contingencies. Heavy metal, for example, was loud and aggressive. Progressive rock required a large amount of dominance and control over artistic abilities. Thrash metal was again concerned with themes of speed, war, physical violence, and so on, which are extensions of masculine concerns and values. If these messages affect the attitudes or actions of adolescents in any way, it would be in socializing them into predominantly sexist or traditional roles. If the PMRC (Parents-Music Resource Centre) is going to continue its moral entrepreneurial endeavors, it might want to encourage more liberal (rather than conservative) extensions of values that will encourage equal respect between the sexes. In

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(2) Michael Brake, _Comparative Youth Culture_. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985, p. 163.

the words of the heavy metal group Slade: "You want equality? Well you won't get that from me!"(3)

Conclusion

The stigmatization of youth culture as deviant, then, is a classic example of the labelling process. Youth, often in retaliation to the deviant label being applied to them, involve themselves in deviant subcultures such as heavy metal as an act of accepting that label. The acquisition of a deviant image is an acquisition of power to a certain extent; people fear what they do not understand and usually shy away from personal confrontations with it. At other times this involvement can be seen as an act of secondary deviance; youth involve themselves in heavy metal style and imagery as a concious effort to antagonize society's agents of control, including parents. Youth may adopt the heavy metal persona merely to identify themselves as individuals, with values different from those of their parents and yet (they perceive) not any worse or better. The two females interviewed indicated such motivation. Finally, while the attraction to heavy metal is usually due to its image rather than to its music, there are those adolescents who are drawn to listen to the music at first because of an appreciation of heavy metal

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(3) Slade, "High and Dry", Keep Your Hands Off My Power Supply, 1984 CBS Inc.

aesthetics. However, whether it is the image or the music that first entices adolescents to the heavy metal genre, they soon acquire a deviant identity along the way.

While this stigmatization can result in a change of status to "deviant", such a change is not always permanent. As noted before, many adherents to heavy metal never get more involved than becoming a Poser. After oppressive structural contraints are passed, many individuals lose their attraction to heavy metal music, and begin listening to other more mainstream styles. For moral entrepreneurs, this change of musical styles is not seen as a change in social status. It is, however, usually regarded as a positive cognitive change chosen rationally as a result of the efforts of entrepreneurs to warn individuals about the danger of the music.

What is established in society, then, is a permanent, powerless group to whom the deviant label is easily applied, and who do not have the power or resources to fight such a label. This readily identifiable group is thus ostracized. Freed from conventional influence, it can soon drift toward deviant ways of its own liking. Societal boundaries are maintained, members of society are unified, and societal members are reminded of how far they can go.

On the other hand, the deviant label does not appear to damage adolescent's self-image to a large extent. Because adolescents are such for only a few years, the

deviant label often is removed once an adolescent becomes a young adult. Further, if an adolescent changes his or her style of dress to conform more to societal expectations, then the immediate social sanctioning by conservative members of society is alleviated. Even heavy metal adherents who strongly identified themselves with the subculture (Hardcores) indicated that they had steady jobs and a strong relative sense of acceptance of others (eg. "If that's the type of music they want to listen to, fine. As long as they leave me alone, I'll leave them alone"). It appears, then, that labelling youth as deviant is carried out without serious repercussions. In the past, ethnic groups, homosexuals and women have been among the favorite minorities in society to label deviant, in that separate sets of distinctive behaviours were expected from each group. With the recent establishment of human rights legislation in Canada, however, moral entrepreneurs must be much more careful in stigmatizing such people publically, in order to avoid legal prosecution. Adolescents, however, remain one anonymous group that is not protected by law against such discrimination. From a purely functional standpoint, the continuation of this practice may indeed aid society by facilitating the positive functions of deviance.

Suggestions for Future Research

Tanner (1981) and Brake (1985) have suggested that subcultures in general and heavy metal in particular are basically working-class phenomena. However, participants that the researcher interacted with in the heavy metal setting showed a fairly even split between both working-class and middle class backgrounds.(4) Future research into the heavy metal subculture should examine more closely the relationship between social class and heavy metal activity.

While reaction to and effect of a deviant label upon adherents was carefully monitored during the one year spent in the setting, a more controlled study examining the long-term effects of a deviant label would be well worth the effort. If the recognition of deviance is indeed functional to society, it may be advantageous by agents of social control to rationally select such groups to actually minimize the harm. Studying what appears to be a basically "unaffected" group may elicit new information about the effect of deviant labels upon individuals or groups.

While this study has examined one of the most visible deviant youth subcultures in existence today, attempts have been made to generalise to the adolescent population at

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(4) Social class was measured by mother's and father's occupation, adherent's occupation, education and location of residence combined.

large. However, since other groups (such as "preppies" or "country" listeners) experience comparatively less stigmatization than heavy metal adherents, future research would contribute to the understanding of the labelling process by examining the extent to which "less" deviant adolescent groups are affected by the deviant label. While it is generally acknowleged that all adolescents are stigmatized to some extent because of their youth, engagement in secondary deviance may be a need felt less by other youth than by the heavy metal adherents.

As pointed out in Chapter 3, content analyses performed within the social sciences too often neglects the way in which listeners interact with the music, or even collectively define the meaning of the song. Triangulating methodologies such as participant observation and interviews with content analyses not only allows for a more valid interpretation of lyrics, but allows the researcher to observe firsthand what effect (if any) the music and/or lyrics have on the listener. In this study music was observed to be used in a practical way, to "create a mood" or induce a state of expectation and excitement (and which was certainly influenced by expectation effects in most settings). Dees and Vera (1978) have observed music being used in similar fashion. Music (including lyrics) was not observed to have a decided effect upon adolescents, other than a type of "popular browbeating": adolescents'

perceptions of the "real" world were based, at times, upon regularly appearing themes in the music. Since premarital sex was a predominant theme in many songs dealing with gender, for example, adolescents (particularly younger) felt that "all" young people had premarital sex, and they felt "not with it" if they had not engaged in premarital sexual activity. This effect was observed only on attitude, however. No participant admitted that such a feeling prompted him or her to engage in premarital sex. For gender roles, however, such an effect may have an important socialization consequence if adolescents accept the type of roles that are presented in rock music or heavy metal as how a man or woman "really" ought to act. Behaviour may not be effected, but gender stereotypes would certainly be encouraged and enforced. Self-worth would also be measured in terms of how one measures up to such expectations.

Related to this is the broader question of the effects of a long-term deviant label. This study has examined the labelling process based upon the premise posed by Durkheim, Simmel, Coser and others that deviance is functional to society. While each methodology was carried out with full scientific rigour, particular attention was paid to the functional process of deviance. Concentration of future studies on the dysfunctional aspects of applying a deviant label, or upon the effects of prolonged exposure to Black

metal, may produce new information. Dysfunctional aspects of the deviant label, or prolonged exposure to Black metal, have yet to be articulated.

This thesis would also not be complete without suggesting the fruitful discussion that could be produced through a Marxian analysis of the relationship between youth cultures and society. Functionalism and symbolic interactionism obviously have radically different political ramifications, and an analysis that is based upon exposing inequality rather than pointing out its merits would certainly provide new insight into this working relationship.

Finally, in reviewing the literature on gender stereotypes it became apparent that information and research on the expectations of the erotic female role are sorely lacking. Wifely and motherly aspects are overemphasized, leading to a neglect of perhaps some of the most important contingencies that contemporary females must successfully complete. A change in social status produces a change in role expectations. Changing from erotic expectations to passive and domestic expectations of a wife or mother may well cause personal problems in females attempting to make the transition. Future research may produce the information necessary to relieve such cruel conflicts.

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