

PERFORMED IDENTITIES: HEAVY METAL MUSICIANS
BETWEEN 1984 AND 1991

Bradley C. Klypchak

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate College of Bowling Green
State University in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

May 2007

Committee:

Dr. Jeffrey A. Brown, Advisor

Dr. John Makay
Graduate Faculty Representative

Dr. Ron E. Shields

Dr. Don McQuarie

© 2007

Bradley C. Klypchak

All Rights Reserved

ABSTRACT

Dr. Jeffrey A. Brown, Advisor

Between 1984 and 1991, heavy metal became one of the most publicly popular and commercially successful rock music subgenres. The focus of this dissertation is to explore the following research questions: How did the subculture of heavy metal music between 1984 and 1991 evolve and what meanings can be derived from this ongoing process? How did the contextual circumstances surrounding heavy metal music during this period impact the performative choices exhibited by artists, and from a position of retrospection, what lasting significance does this particular era of heavy metal merit today? A textual analysis of metal-related materials fostered the development of themes relating to the selective choices made and performances enacted by metal artists. These themes were then considered in terms of gender, sexuality, race, and age constructions as well as the ongoing negotiations of the metal artist within multiple performative realms.

Occurring at the juncture of art and commerce, heavy metal music is a purposeful construction. Metal musicians made performative choices for serving particular aims, be it fame, wealth, or art. These same individuals worked within a greater system of influence. Metal bands were the contracted employees of record labels whose own corporate aims needed to be recognized. To attain publicity and promotion, bands need to acquiesce to the wishes of assorted media entities like radio or television. Functioning within a subcultural genre, the band must also account for maintaining the normative practices deemed mandatory for subcultural membership while being mindful of the preferences for those consuming their performance, their audience. In other words, the musicians must adapt their performance to balance the demands of critics, peers, and a purchasing public in such a way as to appear innovative and authentic while

retaining ties to a normative subcultural standard. It is at the nexus of these factors that metal performativity is being explored. Ultimately, the shift from subcultural distinction to mainstream commercialization illustrates metal's lasting legacy as a popular cultural entity effective in reestablishing larger mass-cultural hegemonies.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Writing this section reminds me of album liner notes – the opportunity to give thanks and praise to all the kind souls surrounding the end product. Throughout this process, I’ve been fortunate enough to have a multitude of friends, family, colleagues, and mentors to motivate me, critique me, praise me, argue with me, and most importantly, support me. This project is partly the result of their efforts and energies, and I am truly grateful to all that contributed. In common liner-note speak, you folks know who you are.

Following the liner note theme, some special thanks are in order. My gratitude goes to Dr. Joe Austin and Dr. Lisa Wolford-Wylam for their past contributions as committee members. I thank Dr. Ron Shields and Dr. Don McQuarie for stepping in and seeing me to the finish. Dr. John Makay deserves considerable credit for steadfastly making it through the full journey. Finally, I graciously thank Dr. Jeff Brown for all his efforts in taking on the responsibility of being the chair. Your willingness to take on the extra burden, let alone offer me considerable insight and support, will not be forgotten.

Thanks to all who have provided me with the joy of playing music and indulging my rockstar fantasies. A well-deserved “metal horns” salute goes out to my BG musical compatriots Dan Shope and Mike DuBose, and my Kristeva bandmates Mike Albrecht and Matt Ascah. My greatest metal influences are Eric Penne, Bryan Penne, and Tim Slack. Whether they are called Cookie Mold, Cheeze, or Smokey E, Smokey T, and Smokey Bry, this group of gentlemen have become my deepest friends and my brothers.

I thank my beloved brother, Greg Klypchak, for being my true musical inspiration. Greg deserves the credit (and blame) for introducing me to collecting albums, coveting stereo equipment, and sparking the true fan’s passion for listening, reading, and critiquing music. I just

wish I could return the favor and get him to listen to more metal....

...which would still be more than my dad would ever consider listening to... My parents, Walter and Carol Klypchak, are the folks I dedicate this dissertation to. You have both given me so incredibly much. As much as I try to describe my appreciation and love for you, I never seem to get anywhere close. Thank you for tolerating “that racket” and for affording me the privilege of being your son.

Finally, I never could have accomplished this goal without the ongoing love and support of my wife, Carrie Lee Klypchak, and our pup, K-Lee. With every puppykiss I receive and every adventure K-Lee and I share, I am rejuvenated by experiencing how pure joy and enthusiasm can encompass every moment, provided one takes the time to sniff it out or chase it down. And to my dear Carrie, you have given me countless gifts: courage to try, fail, and continue on, strength to persevere, rebuild myself and move forward, hope to look ahead and remain positive, trust in myself and in our togetherness, and most importantly, love. I thank you for each and every one of those little explosions of bliss that burst within my chest, the ones that seem to coincide with every time I look into your eyes or take you in my arms. I can only hope that I provide you with at least a semblance of what you have given and continue to give to me.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER I.	“HIT THE LIGHTS”	1
CHAPTER II.	“YOU CAN’T STOP ROCK AND ROLL”	29
CHAPTER III.	“YOUTH GONE WILD”	66
CHAPTER IV.	“THE REAL THING”	124
CHAPTER V.	“STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND”	189
CHAPTER VI.	“BACK FROM THE DEAD”	251
WORKS CITED.....		276
APPENDIX A	METAL ALBUM CHRONOLOGY	309
APPENDIX B	LISTENING SUGGESTIONS.....	338
APPENDIX C	FIGURES.....	340

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	The “Blind in Texas” photo (1989).....	340
2	Reunion in the workshop (1999).....	340
3	Cover art for Iron Maiden “Sanctuary” single (1981).....	340
4.	Sleeve art from Twisted Sister <i>You Can’t Stop Rock n Roll</i> (1983).....	340
5	Slayer’s War Eagle logo.....	340
6	Cover art for Anthrax <i>Fistful of Metal</i> (1984).....	341
7	Front and back covers from S.A.D.O. <i>Dirty Fantasy</i> (1988).....	341
8	Front cover and band photo from Tigertailz <i>Young and Crazy</i> (1987).....	341
9	Sleeve art from Tigertailz <i>Young and Crazy</i> (1987).....	342
10	Cover art from Lizzy Borden <i>Menace to Society</i> (1987).....	342
11	Blackie Lawless as pictured on the sleeve of W.A.S.P. <i>Live in the Raw</i> (1997).....	342
12	Cover art from Venom <i>Welcome to Hell</i> (1981).....	342
13	Cover art to Powermad <i>Absolute Power</i> (1988).....	342
14	Cover art from Atrophy <i>Socialized Hate</i> (1987).....	343
15	Motley Crüe Gangster poster (1986).....	343
16	Cover art from Poison <i>Look What the Cat Dragged In</i> (1986).....	343
17	Back cover art from Znowwhite <i>Act of God</i> (1986).....	344
18	Inner sleeve picture of Lorraine Lewis from Femme Fatale <i>S/T</i> (1988).....	344
19	Cover art to Lita Ford <i>Out for Blood</i> (1983).....	345
20	Picture from inside cover of Lita Ford <i>Stiletto</i> (1991).....	345
21	Inner sleeve from Judas Priest <i>Screaming for Vengeance</i> (1982).....	345

CHAPTER I. "HIT THE LIGHTS"

"An El Paso hellhole, I couldn't get higher." For the first time in ten years, my friends and I are finally jamming together again. "Blind in Texas" (1985), a cover version of a W.A.S.P. song, was immortalized long ago in a photo (see Figure 1) taken back when we'd set up on Tim's back porch and play. Then, the four of us were typical suburban high schoolers in a small central Illinois suburb. Part-time jobs funded our record buying and, in my case, a guitar purchase. Hours of basement and porch practice sessions fed our naive dreams of rock stardom. Now, two live in Illinois, one lives outside Dallas, and I'm in East Texas. My friends have families and mortgages. Two have graduate degrees. I'm negotiating a dissertation after having taught at a junior college. Our lives have changed and the distance makes it tough to see one another, but for this single weekend, we are able to nostalgically relive our youth. Music is the focus. We've spent months learning and relearning the songs of our high school years. Reality gets suspended, and I can be the rock star again, despite my stage being the workshop of Eric's father-in-law (see Figure 2).

Back then, making music was heavily indebted to what we consumed. Even ten years later, heavy metal music is our preferred style. From mimicking what I saw and heard, I developed my voice and attempted to write songs on my guitar that would parallel my favorite bands. My hair, once trimmed according to the restrictions of a high school athletic code, immediately grew out. As an impressionable teen, I saw rock stars as my idols, men blessed with an idyllic lifestyle of metal, women, and rebellious freedoms. As an adult, the wide-eyed glamour is gone in favor of an academic's critical lens. Yet the impressions of who I am and how I developed as a white, suburban heterosexual male are greatly influenced by my engagement with metal.

For my friends and me, music provided an obvious identity outlet. We were linked to the

bands we wore so proudly on our t-shirts and jean jackets. For each outrageous Motley Crüe story or Blackie Lawless condemnation of Tipper Gore, we vicariously personalized the excitement and splendor of being rock n roll. To rock was to be an individual, strong and determined and self-assured. I saw – and more importantly heard – metal as being alive. The sheer spectacle of sound, speed, size and loudness resonated in ways that my previous favorites, The Rolling Stones and The Who, couldn't match. An anthemic rallying cry of Twisted Sister's "I Wanna Rock" became a mantra, partly because it made my head unconsciously "bang," but also because it mattered. It allowed an escape from the mundane. My nondescript teenage life of school and crappy fast-food job was pretty empty. But Blackie Lawless said I could be somebody too, and I believed it.

Who was this "somebody" that I thought I was being/becoming? Then, I never really thought about it; it just was. In retrospect, I can see it a couple of ways. I was part of a social circle, a collective of friends with our love for these sounds and images making us distinctive, publicly known as "rockers." Playing music with them was homage to our idols, but also a way of tapping into, even on a small level, our idyllic dreams of rock stardom. Our lives might not have provided the opportunity for groupies or unlimited hedonistic overindulgence, but we could hope.

We were teens being sold on the glory of being just that much older. The independence that metal lifestyles presented was an escape from my folks giving me a 12:30 curfew. Metal performers' mind-boggling sexual conquests symbolically supported my awkward attempts at finding a girl to date, let alone get naked. Being like the rock stars would make me a man – tough, strong, secure and self-reliant. If they drank and partied, then so would I. We learned alcohol on Jack Daniels, since that was what Crüe liked. We liked being loud – listening and

playing – publicly declaring ourselves to a world that might not otherwise notice. We liked the rawness of being able to sing “fuck” along with Axl Rose. We could do what we wanted, at least in our own minds, through music.

The focus of this dissertation is to explore the cultural impetus behind this mindset, the musicians of heavy metal music and the underlying meanings embedded in their performative choices. For idolatry to occur, we needed accessible and meaningful idols in the first place. Through this dissertation, I aim to address how and why these idols were the ones made available to us. Specifically, I am focusing on three primary research questions. First, how did the subculture of heavy metal music between 1984 and 1991 emerge and what meanings can be derived from this ongoing process? Second, how did the contextual circumstances surrounding heavy metal music during the period of 1984 -1991 impact the performative choices exhibited by artists during this time? Third, from a position of retrospection, what lasting significance does this particular era of heavy metal merit today?

Occurring at the juncture of art and commerce, heavy metal music is a purposeful construction. Those people who release albums, go on tours and foster this larger-than-life image make performative choices to serve particular aims or goals, be it fame, wealth, or art. However, these same individuals also work within a greater system of influence wherein commerce and community commingle. As a result, metal musicians must manipulate their performances to fit the system’s aims, be it record label profit margins, larger synergistic corporate plans, or fostering positive public relations, while being mindful of the preferences for those consuming their performance, their audience. Unfortunately for the metal musician, the audience isn’t a homogenous bunch. Rather, the musician must adapt his or her performance to balance the demands of critics, peers, and a purchasing public in such a way as to appear

innovative and authentic while retaining ties to a normative subcultural standard.

As a teen metal fan, I willingly accepted the constructed performances of metal artists as somehow authentic or genuine. Now, a good bit older and supposedly wiser, I recognize the naiveté of my fairly blind adoration of what metal presented to me. Looking back on the rhetoric of metal, I see the marketing manipulations and the scripted posturing of its performers. My current views are more often jaded and cynical than wide-eyed and worshiping. What I believed constituted tough, strong masculinity then seems embarrassingly problematic today. I shake my head in disbelief at the misogyny and sexism I casually ignored (or embraced) in adolescence. What I saw then as impassioned rebellion now strikes me as packaged contrivance. The “adulthood” I once aspired to now appears remarkably juvenile, as substance abuse and casual sex seem void of the “aliveness” they had once held. The “if only” I uttered then becomes “thank goodness I didn’t” today.

While my outlook has changed, my love for metal still thrives. I still love its sound and speed. Like Kiss, I still love it loud. Metal music’s ability to bombard my senses and encompass my being is just as magical as it was back then. I’m more reflective now. I hear the absolute skill behind creating simplicity like an AC/DC riff, or the complex artistry of German power metal. I view the past nostalgically, replacing my innocent wonder with “good ol’ days” reverence, conjuring revisionist histories of a simpler time. Concurrently, I acknowledge that my perspective is revisionist. I recognize that things weren’t any more or less simple. Rather, metal performances (and my deconstructions of them, both then and now) were loaded with ideological and political positioning. I know the all the larger-than-life extremes in fashion, staging, songwriting, and performance were partly a reflection of their time, though I also recognize that they were influential and formative for myself and many others. While, as a teen, I embraced

metal extremes, the values inscribed within metal are still part of who I am today.

Metal obviously has impacted my life. Heavy metal music is still my passion and pursuit. While my actual on-stage performances may be infrequent, I still actively engage with metal. My reviews of metal albums ran every week in the Bowling Green State University campus newspaper when I was doing my coursework there. I attended and reviewed numerous concerts and conducted interviews with musicians. My CD collection doubles as an extensive research archive for metal – approximately 2200 discs and growing – encompassing hundreds of bands and subgenres. My dogged pursuit of collectible discs finds me interacting internationally with online trading colleagues. I ritualistically read webpages like Hard Radio, Blabbermouth, and Metal Sludge for news and entertainment. Scholastically, metal has been my focus for years. I have written numerous papers for class and given conference presentations on metal topics. My active interest in metal continues via this dissertation.

Whenever I tell people what my research involves, I typically get one of two responses both rooted in disbelief. The first is an incredulity that I can actually conduct research on something so cool and get away with it. The stereotype of traditional academic study doesn't commonly incorporate Dokken or Bang Tango. This reaction possibly relates to the second, more common response of incredulity, which views metal as vapid. Some people regard metal as culturally insignificant, a lowest common denominator form of entertainment that makes the 1980s all the more disposable. The idea of metal holding any sort of political relevance or cultural merit is dismissed. My scholarship actively works to counter this perspective. Common stereotypes of metal fail to account for the complexities within industry, performer, and fan interactions, and the ways differing movements in metal constructed and reconstructed social definitions of metal subculture. The subculture actively negotiates and defines normative

standards of gender, race, sexuality, age, and class, significantly impacting the narrative of rock music and symbiotically influencing (and being influenced by) the popular cultural and mainstream landscape of the 1980s, both in the United States and abroad. I know metal has affected my life, and I know I am not alone.

“In the Beginning”: Metal as Culturally Significant – Metal Then

My consumption and personalization of metal, while extensive, is not unusual. Literally millions of fans across multiple generations bought the records, watched the videos, wore the t-shirts, and went to the concerts from metal’s origins in the late 1960s to the present day, though particularly during the mid to late 1980s. Stemming from bands like Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath and Alice Cooper, metal became increasingly recognizable as a subcultural style. The sales of albums and merchandise demonstrate this purchasing power. Walser (1993) reports metal’s rise of buying power as a shift from 8 to 20 percent of all records sold within the United States from 1983 to 1984. By 1987, metal represented at least one half of the top twenty albums on *Billboard* charts, a trend continuing through the end of the decade. The introduction of the weekly “Headbanger’s Ball” on MTV in 1986 quickly established the visual presence of metal, with the show becoming MTV’s most popular program for three years, despite its late-night time slot.

Mass culture of the 1980s responded. Countless bands changed their sound and look, hoping to be the next Motley Crüe or Guns ‘n Roses. Record companies developed their own niche labels specializing in metal sounds. Traditional rock magazines like *Circus* and *Hit Parader* reformatted to exclusive metal coverage. The power ballad became a top 40 radio mainstay. Movies such as *Bill & Ted’s Excellent Adventure*, *Wayne’s World*, and *Airheads* capitalized on metalhead stereotypes, and an assortment of metal stars popped up in cameos

across all genres. Horror films latched onto metal's ominous imagery through soundtrack associations or as metal vehicles themselves. Guitar manufacturers clamored for guitar gods like Eddie Van Halen and Steve Vai to release signature-line instruments. Revolutionary Comics issued a series of biographical comic books covering metal bands. Marketers attached metal to every product imaginable.

The rise of metal proved to be its inevitable downfall. Aspiring bands saw the past success of predecessors and mimicked (and extended) their tactics in order to stand out. The game of one-upmanship fostered even more extreme performances in regard to lyrical content, visual images, hedonistic indulgences, etc. The more bands tried to stand out via such tactics, the further they had to push the envelope of the extreme. As an example, Poison's popularity partly stemmed from their glam look of big hair and androgynous makeup. Later bands like Pretty Boy Floyd or Tigertailz tried to go more "glam" with even thicker makeup or bigger hair. The first tier of sex, drugs, Satan and rock n roll had become commonplace. To garner attention or create a fresh buzz, bands had to either find a new gimmick, or their reliance on past tactics had to be all the more extreme.

The selective focus by outsiders on metal performances that pushed the extremes fostered public concerns. Rebellious imagery of sex, violence, and Satanism pushed boundaries of mass cultural morality, causing conservative groups to rally against metal. Media outlets became more cautious in their programming, thereby distancing themselves from metal's tarnished image (or the political weight metal's detractors carried). By the early 1990s, oversaturation of the market consisted of too many metal bands rotely catering to the formulaic. Record labels haphazardly signed and released any band that had metal-styled hair or sounded loud in an attempt to cash in on the latest craze. The metal subculture founds itself inundated with

simulated yet less-talented versions of what had worked before. For example, Philadelphia's Cinderella went platinum with their debut record *Night Songs*. Within a year, a second Philly band, Britny Fox, duplicated Cinderella's sound, fashion, and art design on their self-titled debut album. Attempts to stand out led either to further and further extremes - whether in terms of fashion, rebellion, controversy, or musicality - or to devaluation of the once meaningful sentiments that had characterized earlier metal music. The result was that metal became a parody of itself. Casual fans moved on to their next musical phase, grunge. Metal became stigmatized, and even some of the most renowned metal bands tried to distance themselves from the freefall. Despite this, metal persisted as a musical style as bands continued releasing albums and touring to smaller and smaller audiences.

"Once Around the Ride": Metal as Culturally Significant II – Metal Now

Recently, metal has come to be nostalgically in vogue again in the United States. Tribute records to metal bands have flooded the marketplace. Reunion tours and albums have become increasingly frequent, including multiple package tours every summer since 2002. VH-1's popular *Behind the Music* series frequently features metal bands of the past. MTV's *The Osbournes* became the network's most popular program to date. Centered on the household life of Ozzy Osbourne and family, the show cross-promotes Osbourne's musical career while anomalously referencing his legacy as metal's most notorious madman. Osbourne's appearances at the White House and at a celebration for Queen Elizabeth II additionally play upon the anomaly of a popular public celebrity with a controversial past. Dee Snider's "House of Hair" syndicated radio program can be heard across the country and VH1 shot a reality show following his family as well. Vocalists such as Paul Stanley and Sebastian Bach have found roles in Broadway and off-Broadway productions. Movies such as *Rock Star* rekindle metal imagery.

Chuck Klosterman's best-selling book *Fargo Rock City* (2001) chronicles his own metal past in North Dakota. Discover Card ran a commercial featuring a fictitious metal band Danger Kitty parodying the stereotypical metal extravagancies. 80s metal has shifted into the playlists of classic rock radio stations with programming like "Mandatory Metallica" or "Big Hair Wednesday."

This revival of 1980s metal strikes me as an intriguing popular cultural trend. In a way, the same opportunism that led to metal's original fall from grace is partly responsible for its resurgence. The marketing timeframe of the recording industry has grown increasingly more short-term. In pursuit of the next big thing, the industry has resorted to a shotgun method of marketing; new styles are blasted out to the public, and if one succeeds, it is exploited as quickly and thoroughly as possible. The industry hopes for blockbuster success that can drive profit margins upward. Longevity of a band becomes devalued. As long as a new record can be finagled to multi platinum status, it really doesn't matter who records it. The passing fads of swing, emo, Latin, and ska can all be viewed as examples of this trend.

As these differing styles were run through and played out, metal eventually came to be revisited in an attempt to rekindle mass interest. On one hand, metal, despite falling out of mainstream fashion, had sustained a stable but significantly smaller subcultural sales base. Instead of the multi-platinum figures common in the 80s, metal records in subsequent years have predictably sold in the tens of thousands. Actively pushing metal again could do no worse than maintaining its established plateau. Labels and distributors such as Sony Portrait, Eagle Rock, and CMC International have had moderate success with older, established metal figures like Warrant, W.A.S.P. and Dee Snider's Widowmaker. This adds to the viability of marketing metal music. Additionally, the popularity of metal has persisted in Japan, as grunge with its lack of

flamboyance did not seem exotically American enough for the tastes of Japanese consumers. If the Japanese, though a substantially smaller market, could be convinced to keep buying metal, then perhaps an American purchasing public could too. A final impetus behind marketing metal a second time lies in the resurgent success of performers like Aerosmith or Ozzy Osbourne. Both relied on pop radio ballads to establish inroads to a mass popular audience. Osbourne also aligned himself with younger nu metal and grunge performers by organizing the Ozzfest tours. Ozzfest exists as a full-day music festival featuring a number of up and coming nu-metal bands acting as openers for Osbourne's own outfit, whether Black Sabbath or his solo material. Osbourne's relevance to the nu metal crowd is signified by directly linking a past metal "godfather" to the more recent, trendy styles. Subsequently, Osbourne's past audience is coupled with a potential new audience. Record executives noted this pattern, thereby adding another potential rationale for resurrecting metal. For the 2005's OzzFest, the reformed 80s metal stalwarts Iron Maiden and Judas Priest were featured performers.

Within a rock context, the timeline of grunge was significantly shorter than that of metal. Arguably, the successors to grunge can be considered nu-metal and "alternative" rock. For each of these, the target audience is generationally distinct from that of 80's heavy metal. As such, older metal fans and their adult lifestyles are not catered to by the sounds of nu-metal. Nu-metal's reliance on uni-dimensional, angrily-shouted vocals and sustained down-tuned bottom end versus power chord guitar riffs is not consistent with the aesthetic of older metal. While loud, the qualities and messages loaded into the music are simply not the same as traditional metal. Bands such as Korn or Slipknot extensively use electronic instrumentation and lyrically focus on themes of isolation, personal grief, and displaced aggression in ways contrary to 1980s metal standards. The rapidity with which nu-metal was formulaically marketed created a

quickly saturated market without considerable distinction for the inexperienced listener. Like metal in the past, the cream and the rest began commingling, making nu-metal repetitive and dull to an outsider's untrained ear.

“Alternative” rock lacked attraction even more so. The label quickly became a misnomer, as mainstream appropriation of bands like Creed and Days of the New voided any distinctive identity. Sonically, these bands are seen within the metal subculture as empty derivations of grunge bemoaning angst and personal anguish without the perceived personal authenticity of Eddie Vedder or Kurt Cobain. The hyperquick turnover of alternative bands also left no sense of consistency or dependability. No sooner did a band like Buckcherry emerge to be replaced by an equally fleeting Andrew WK or The Darkness. In each successive buzz, a new look and sound relying on thinly constructed gimmicks speedily wore out its novelty. A second carryover from grunge is the anti-fashion fashion. Rock stars, previously a flamboyant contrast from the everyday, no longer seem distinctive or celebratory. The lack of spectacle and the emotional somberness within "alternative" performances reflected dreary reality, rather than what would be desired within an escapist form of entertainment. When visual spectacle did take place within a scene like nu metal, the countercultural adoption of multiple piercings or and tribal tattoos was not celebratory. Rather, it was confrontational to the generation that supported 80s metal in the first place – those now representing the status quo of workers, parents, and citizens.

Again, the rapid presentation and turnover of these bands fits the industry's short-term mentality. These industry practices are less adaptive to an aged 80s metal fanbase. Without the same discretionary time to invest in learning the new bands or trends as it once did, the traditional metal audience's potential for relationships to these newer rock styles is reduced even further. Contemporary music, viewed as disposable, is seen as impractical to learn sufficiently

for deeper subcultural involvement. Reverting to the previously learned aesthetic of metal requires minimal effort.

The realities of aging and its incongruence with the conventional narrative of rock also contribute to metal's resurgence. Classic rock performers no longer fit the age expectations of what has mythically been constructed as rock music: energetic anti-authoritarianism by youthful alpha-males. Sexagenarians are not thought of as rockers. Seeing The Who or The Rolling Stones in the 21st century does not offer the same rebellious majesty their past performances once held. Baby boomers might present themselves as the arbiters of rock music taste, but they also recognize that their esteemed idols are past the prime of a sustainable rock mythos. The musicians of the late 70s and the 80s are still remotely viable in this regard. Additionally, Generation X has become a substantial sector of the workforce and earning populace. The turnover of music critics and recording industry personnel via boomer retirement leaves GenXers to their own nostalgic devices. The only "good ol' days" available are those packaged into what made Gen X unique: the consumption of MTV. Metal's prominence on MTV in its formative stages fosters this nostalgic popularity. As a result, what had been formerly stigmatized becomes embraced: Def Leppard and Motley Crüe are featured on multiple VH1 programs, weekends of all-metal programming on VH1 or MTV become more frequent, and classic rock radio programming includes specific hair-metal hours and adds bands such as Judas Priest and Metallica to their regular rotation.

"Who Do You Think We Are": Why Study Metal

Metal's popularity both in the 1980s and currently serves to justify critical consideration of metal. In this study, I will focus my attention on the period between 1984 and 1991, the period of metal's highest popularity. My choice stems from the ways in which metal has come to be

collectively recalled (both within and outside the metal subculture) without reflecting the complexities occurring during this era. While the stereotypes of metal performers as misogynistic or anti-social elicit selective sociocultural meanings, broader considerations exist beyond these limited perceptions. The subtleties within the different factions of metal and their negotiating practices deserve deeper critical consideration. Standards of masculinity and perceived authenticity varied among the metal subgenres, with each emphasizing differing sociocultural identities, yet each contributed to a generalized subcultural whole. Structural considerations of the music industry and its historical context help to situate identity constructions. The success of metal during the 1980s cannot be understood without recognizing how the industry itself fostered the conditions contributing to metal's development and eventual decline. The interaction between artist and industry resulted in varying tactics and manipulations, by both bands and their labels, to gain access and control of metal market shares. Here, I will critique metal in relation to the political economy of 1980s recording industry. Industrial tactics contributed to the various fragmentations and exaggerations that came to exemplify metal and its eventual popular decline. Supplementing this are the ways in which metal worked within and contributed to 1980s culture as a whole.

Metal served as an impetus for the moral panic surrounding music's potentially harmful impact on children. Critiques of the 1980s consider the zeitgeist of the decade as threatening traditional standards of masculinity (Robinson, 1994; Falludi, 1991; Connell 1995). Metal represents a potential reactionary means for reestablishing hegemonic power via the hypermasculine excesses within its performances. Conservative groups outside the metal subculture reacted adversely to metal's lyrical and video portrayals of explicit sexuality, alcohol and drug consumption, and violence. Political detractors such as the Moral Majority and the

Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC) pushed for legislation mandating a ratings system for popular music. Similarly, religious leaders voiced concerns over metal's hedonism and use of satanic signifiers. Metal bands constituted nine of the PMRC's "Filthy Fifteen" list of objectionable songs. Metal's staunch reaction to the attacks and the subsequent "Parental Advisory" warning labels demonstrated a collective unity, positioning the subculture against the oppressive mainstream. Generational separation magnified this opposition. Messages of free speech and anti-censorship became prevalent in songs, liner notes, interviews, and fashion. Others embraced traditional values and packaged them with metal signifiers creating new markets such as Christian metal.

Despite metal's reputation as problematic and void of substance, the metal community's response to organizations like the PMRC suggests otherwise. Beyond censorship concerns, metallers explicitly presented multiple other political messages. The Rock the Vote campaign began in 1990 and featured a wide array of metal stars promoting voter registration via television public service announcements. Ronnie James Dio organized the Hear'n Aid project in 1985, a metal version of music for African famine relief paralleling USA for Africa and Band Aid. Public awareness spots concerning runaway children, AIDS awareness, and substance abuse prevention by performers such as Motley Crüe's Vince Neil, Dokken's Don Dokken, or Skid Row's Sebastian Bach were common. One such beneficiary was the Make-a-Difference Foundation, a non-profit organization dedicated to substance abuse awareness, prevention, and rehabilitation. The *Stairway to Heaven/Highway to Hell* (1989) compilation album and subsequent Moscow Music Peace Festival concerts featured numerous mainstream metal bands including Bon Jovi, Motley Crüe, the Scorpions and Ozzy Osbourne. The concerts also served as a popular cultural version of glasnost practices attempting to bridge Western and Soviet

political differences. Bands, particularly thrash metal bands such as Anthrax, Nuclear Assault, and Atheist, addressed environmental issues and homelessness concerns.

Metal's impact extends far beyond the United States. While American and British musicians have played the most prominent roles and English has become the predominant language of metal, bands from an assortment of geographies have contributed to the metal subculture. The ways in which these bands have interacted with the Western norm, both through their musical performance and their industrial marketing, merit critical consideration. Corporate strategies for commodifying exoticism and novelty specifically targeted the youthful metal market. Packaged rebellion, via taboos like sex, Satanism, and anti-authoritarianism, became a frequent means of accessing metal acceptance, thereby continuing a long history of rock identity construction.

“What Do You Know About Rock n Roll”: Previous Metal Scholarship

Partly as a result of its own popular success and its reappropriation of past performers such as Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, 1980s metal has become part of the rock music narrative. More often than not, however, mainstream popular music criticism and academic scholarship on rock music portray metal in the same manner as disco, a bleak period of floundering, vacuous music lacking the sanctity of the 60s golden age or the political antagonisms of late 70s punk. Musically, metal has often been critiqued as either void of skill or a masturbatory excess of guitar histrionics obfuscating musical integrity (Walley, 1998; Friedlander, 1996). In terms of performance, metal has been seen, at best, as derivative of Led Zeppelin's brand of cock rock machismo, or as second-generation androgyny along the lines of the New York Dolls. With its acknowledged target audience of teenage males, metal has also been considered as superficial and trite lyrically (Garafalo, 1997; Friedlander, 1996; Berger, 1999). As a result, there are few

scholarly attempts at situating heavy metal contextually or critically.

The first substantial wave of metal scholarship stemmed from developmental psychology and communication studies. During the mid 1980s, academics, responding to the sordid message being delivered by the conservatives of the era, considered how harmful metal could be on youths and their scholastic performance (Roe, 1995), their risk taking (Arnett, 1991; Arnett 1992), their use of violence (Sherman & Dominick, 1986), and their delinquency (Roe, 1995, Singer, Levine, & Jou, 1993). These works described metalheads as a blue collar, male, and adventurous group of youths looking for excitement and identity in their seemingly dark worlds. Commonly, this research suffered from methodological weaknesses such as problematic sampling, manipulative survey questions, and implied causality. As an example, Arnett's string of articles culminated in his 1992 book *Metalheads*. Here, Arnett compiled his many works, concluding that metal was a contributing factor to delinquency and anti-social behavior. Problematically, he relies on findings of previous research wherein his sampling method involved locating teens already in detention centers and asking their musical preferences. In his later research, he prompted set responses via leading questions like "what's the most reckless/wild/dangerous thing you've ever done?" thereby prompting the subjects to provide the materials needed to back his claims.

Later scholarly writing reiterated some of these claims while again failing to consider their limited, selective exposure to the subculture as a whole. Between the numerous factual errors and limited critical analysis, Gross' (1990) overview of metal offers little beyond noting that a metal scene existed at all. Gaines' (1991) research on a New Jersey community which experienced a series of teen suicides included some considerations of how music including metal impacted the surviving teens' lives. While effective at offering insight about this particular

group of teens and their relationship to music, Gaines offers little extended considerations of metal performers or the subculture as a whole. A second brief wave of scholarship resulted when researchers directed more focus to the subculture itself, rather than intentionally dredging up problematic aspects ascribed to metal. Deena Weinstein's initial (1991) and revised (2000) sociological examination of metal serve as a general overview of the subculture's image and values. The work's utility lies in its observable tendencies – what people looked like and how they acted, how and where metalheads consumed, the assorted movements and eventual fragmentation of metal into multiple subgenres, and a brief synopsis of the moral panic on explicit lyrics. Unfortunately, Weinstein stays predominantly at the level of description rather than critical analysis. There is little attempt to deconstruct and explain the political and power messages embedded in these practices. When such attempts are made, they are frequently hypotheses lacking formal explanation or methodological rigor. For example, Weinstein's (2000) declaration that “masculinity, blue-collar sentiments, youthfulness and, to a lesser, extent, “whiteness” are values shared and upheld by the metal audience” (p. 102) lacks any description on what she bases this assertion. In the introductory chapter, Weinstein lists participant observation, unstructured interviews and questionnaires, and non-participant field research as methodological practices, yet fails to provide any explicit methodological protocol or rationale for her choices. She also chooses to deemphasize addressing the actual products and performances of metal artists themselves.

Robert Walser's *Running with the Devil* is a very strong text and, despite its 1993 press date, remains the best piece of metal scholarship to date. An intricate blend of ethnomusicology and cultural studies, Walser's work convincingly situates metal in relation to a classical music theory discourse, while critiquing some of its popular practices and perceptions. A particular

strength of Walser's text lies in the critique of virtuosity and its role in metal. He also suggests how political ideologies and sociocultural meanings are present within selected metal performances. The analysis is often insightful but methodologically limited. Walser relies on selective exemplars that serve as representative illustrations of the whole. Typically, he privileges songs with a promotional music video for musicological and textual deconstruction. How and why he chooses these exemplars goes unexplained, nor is any basis given for their utility as representative generalizations. Beyond the need for more systematic rigor, Walser does not directly address issues of race or sexuality in detail. The homogeneity of metal performers as white males partly explains this. Regarding race, Walser devotes a paragraph to metal music's indebtedness to African American musical styles and the subsequent absence of African-American performers in metal. Considering sexuality in metal, Walser briefly examines the relationship between homophobia and heteronormativity in relation to fans' and performers' constructions of authenticity, without substantial analysis of the specific power loadings behind these sentiments.

"Methods of Madness": Methodology

My project serves to explore the ways in which the performances of metal artists negotiated the demands of art and commerce while operating within tightly defined subcultural norms. Unlike previous scholarship, I will consider a wide array of source documents within my textual analysis, allowing me to thematically deconstruct the performance of identity within 1980s metal. Metal audio and video releases, including music, artwork, and imagery, is an obviously telling source of information. However, an artist's performance exists beyond the release of a single album or music video. Considering the breadth of an artist's career through marketing, publicity, staging, and performing in media tangential to music, such as movie roles or

biographical books, adds to an understanding of how and what identity messages are delivered. A performer's identity derives from the Gestalt of its form, the sum more than its component parts. As a teen, my engagement with Twisted Sister went beyond listening to the *Stay Hungry* record. Rather, I took in the soundbytes, interviews, album art, video clips, and movie cameos. Dee Snider mattered because he was the band's vocalist, but also because of his hair, his being host of the early MTV metal program *Heavy Metal Half Hour*, his teeth being filed to points, and his participation during the Congressional hearings on controversial rock music lyrics. As seen in the Snider example, I gain additional understanding from considering the multiple performance outlets beyond that which focusing on the lone album would provide.

As metal's consumptive audience increased during the 1980s, multiple vehicles for publicizing metal emerged. Symbolic communication within the metal subculture can be accessed through media forms specifically targeting metal audiences. One such form is the metal magazine. Metal magazines served as one of the most pervasive, popular forms of publication covering the American and European consumer metal scene. Publications like *Hit Parader*, *Circus*, and *Kerrang* focused on the wide range of hard rock and heavy metal performers popular at the time through interviews, reviews, pictures and news of metal bands. Metal "video magazine" series were intended for rental or home sale. *Hard n' Heavy*, *Metalhead*, *Pump Up the Volume*, and the Christian metal *Heaven's Metal* each presented behind-the-scenes and "uncensored" coverage of bands, much like traditional print magazines but with continual visual accompaniment. Straight-to-video distribution avoided rating systems or age restrictions, allowing for more "authentic" coverage, including profanity, nudity, and, on occasion, presentation of videos banned on MTV because of content. The popularity of metal fueled these projects as profit vehicles while helping to further establish metal's presence within

the visual and televisual realm and heightening the visually performative expectations for bands.

My analysis of multiple source materials facilitates recognition of developments and negotiations within metal historically. This also aids in recognizing the role of industry practices as they contributed to metal bands and their performances. As performance styles develop and change, specific thematic interpretations emerge, thereby allowing me to assess the subcultural zeitgeist. For example, by viewing metal over the designated seven year span, I can see how and potentially why something like the Bay Area thrash scene took place, and what its relationship to mainstream metal might have been. Metalheads are notoriously inflexible in their adherence to metal's subcultural normative standards and are deeply devoted to the bands they follow (Bashe, 1985). If and when changes occur, the multiple metal media forms provide a symbolic communicative measure of subcultural negotiation. I see subcultural media such as print or video magazines offering direct links to artists' ideologies (interviews, pictorials, music critique), marketing strategies (advertisements, pictorials, promotions) and, to a lesser extent, fans' preferences (letter columns, fan polls).

Coming from the vantage point of the present and reflecting on the past, I also gain the benefit of retrospective knowledge. One example would be considering the coverage of Judas Priest vocalist Rob Halford. Having publicly declared his lifelong homosexuality in 1998, Halford acknowledged himself as a closeted gay man working in the homophobic metal world. I gain insight in critiquing metal's relationship to homosexuality/homophobia by considering not only Halford's own actions, but also the metal community's interpretation of Halford as heteronormative.

The metal performer's identity works in response to the context in which it exists. Often, metal performers intentionally emphasize their subcultural or resistant distinctiveness from mass

culture as a whole, despite being commodified as a product within that whole. A symbiotic relationship develops. Metal performers need commentary from outsiders to situate their own distinctive metal identities. Dee Snider publicly embraced the SMF (sick motherfucker) moniker as resistant; if he was not like his critics, then that was an identity to be proud of. As a result, I will consider commentaries and critiques on metal from sources outside the metal subculture. More importantly, I will consider how metal musicians reacted to these outside critiques as a means for establishing or reestablishing their identities. Popular criticism from music sources like *Rolling Stone* or *Spin* magazine and news media like *Newsweek* or *Time* were contextually influential on metal performers who responded directly to materials such as PRMC publications, Tipper Gore's manifesto *Raising PG Kids in an X-rated World* (1985), and the Peters brothers' *Why Knock Rock* (1984). I see metal performer's positioning as adversarial, utilizing generational distinctions, gender constructions, and social class delineations to create subcultural distinction from a traditional conservative norm.

By combining analysis of metal materials like records, videos, posters, and merchandising with both insider and outsider press coverage, I add considerable depth to my analysis, thereby addressing a limitation to previous metal research. The patterns I see are not simply derived from a single source or general overview. Rather, I am informed by roughly 2500 different examples of primary source materials. Looking at these materials in a systematic way, I also add a degree methodological validity to the thematic conclusions I derive. This occurs by considering the materials within a historical lineage. I will assess the materials for repetitive thematic contents within set time constructs. During each of these eras, I will find the prevailing subcultural values and negotiated sociocultural constructions for the given time period. Comparing and contrasting these patterns allows me to contextually situate my interpretations,

while providing needed organization in working through the material

Within metal, claims of authenticity, whether based on musical virtuosity, adherence to the rock ethos, or in the performance of masculinity, become rhetorically powerful. By textually analyzing such a wide array of materials, I can note where and how these claims originate and function. For example, over a given year, there might be anywhere from fifty to two hundred albums popularly released and distributed. Looking at these releases for repetitive thematic content, whether lyrical, artistic, or musical, suggests the popular or subcultural ideology for the time. Here, I can also assess the influence held by the most popular bands upon those striving for recognition. A leading band like Motley Crüe would likely merit greater subcultural status than a lesser-known band like Outlaw Blood or Blonz. My interests lie in considering metal identities as socioculturally meaningful. Viewing my themes in terms of constructs such as age, race, gender, sexuality, or class, I can assess the relative significance of how each of these constructs influenced metal's development and their lasting effects.

My personal background and experiences within the metal subculture informs my interpretation of source materials. As a heterosexual white male from a suburban community in the American Midwest, I perceive the world in ways that others might not. As I was representative metal's target demographic during the mid to late 80s and as I was (and still am) a metalhead, I recognize my investment in metal, its historical context, and its influence on my interpretations. While I see this ultimately as a strength, I feel compelled to formally situate myself, as this positioning directly corresponds to my theoretical perspective.

"Crash Course In Brain Surgery": Theoretical Background

Popular music is a perceptual phenomenon. All semiotically scripted or socioculturally embedded meanings in music are socially constructed. The vast number of messages must be

collectively negotiated and understood so that meaning results. This process results in what Berger and Luckmann (1966) consider “commonsense.” Commonsense derives from a system of “knowledge” which “is done in such a way that a taken-for-granted “reality” congeals for the man in the street” (p. 3). For music practices, specific interpretations of “commonsense” are dependent on the codes that are established within distinct musical subcultures. Normative behaviors come to be understood contextually, yet remain flexible and dynamic. Similar to Bourdieu’s (1993) notion of cultural capital, subcultural status is given to those who abide by the norms or those who innovate in ways that are agreeable to the whole. As a result, repeated patterns or manipulations of performance by those within a given subculture can be seen as affecting negotiated values. Those with subcultural capital can then influence the subculture’s subsequent evolution. Hebdige’s (1979) work on British punk subculture illustrates one such instance. Punks loading meaning onto otherwise innocuous objects fostered a distinctive, recognizable identity and ideology. Brake (1980), Walser (1993), and Weinstein (2000) examine similar practices within heavy metal.

My personal engagement with metal helps me in terms of this thematic deconstruction. Having an extensive historical knowledge of metal provides a context for my perceptions. This works two-fold. Having grown up on metal and personalized the identities of metal performers in the past, I can recognize my own personal development as being subculturally involved. My latter academic pursuits have provided me with the critical skills necessary for deconstructing metal in ways that an invested fan might not typically attempt. A person wanting to maintain a sense of social desirability (i.e., not wanting to publicly acknowledge investment in a stigmatized leisure pursuit) or not wanting to critique himself via personal investment (confronting negatives or hypocrisies present within a loved pastime) might choose to ignore or devalue problematic

aspects loaded within the subculture. My insider position as a participant in the metal subculture heightens my sensitivity to these areas, as I have had direct and extended encounters with the ideologies I seek to examine.

The metal subculture, performers and audience members alike, encompasses various geographies, lifestyles, and ideologies. As such, a performer is not simply a musician. One is a gendered, raced, aged, social-classed, and sexualized being. The temporary meaning given to any of these categories (let alone the complex fusion of them) is far from static. Rather, performances are instances in which meaning is manipulated and power differentiation results. Butler's (1990) notion of the performativity of gender, "a repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (p. 33), can be extended to constructs such as race or sexuality, provided one is sensitive to the distinctive ways in which the various identity constructs function. Musical performance styles develop and become understood as masculine or feminine (Frith and McRobbie, 1990; McClary, 1991; 1994), white or black (Lott, 1993; Lipsitz, 1994; Waksman, 1999), for youth or adults (Frith and McRobbie, 1990), or privileged or problematic (Soocher, 1999; Winfield and Davidson 1999; Walser 1993; Moynihan and Söderlink, 1998).

In each of these instances, negotiations of meaning and power are ideologically situated within and outside music subcultures. Althusser and Gramsci necessarily inform my considerations of hegemony. In addition to Butler, I find Foucault (1995; 1990) and his discursive construction of sexuality particularly useful for exploring gender and sexuality in metal identity construction: "to account for the fact that it is spoken about, to discover who does the speaking, the positions and viewpoints from which they speak, the institutions which prompt

people to speak about it and which store and distribute the things that are said” (p. 11). By negotiating expectations of behavior, society establishes mechanisms of control. Fashion, art, comics, movies, plays, television, books and the presentation of history all contribute to these expectations. For example, Poison’s androgynous appearance on the cover of their debut album prompted criticism and raised questions of sexual preference. Poison’s eventual shift away from this fashion style can be construed as a response to the criticisms presented. On occasions, conflict occurs when expectations are challenged, thereby requiring society to reconstruct its social definitions via the process of social drama (Turner, 1982). The resulting discourses selectively privilege certain ideologies, thereby impacting future expectations and behaviors. Similar to concerns about Elvis’ pelvis or John Lennon’s assessment of The Beatles’ popularity, the PMRC and its crusade against metal and the controversy surrounding Body Count’s “Cop Killer” serve as examples of metal performances provoking moral panic and instances in which social reconstruction occurs.

For a scenario such as the “Cop Killer” controversy, it is imperative to consider the racial significance of black performers acting within a homogeneously white context. The application of whiteness studies to heavy metal subculture has not yet been explored. The works of Lipsitz (1998) and Auslander (1999), while not metal-specific, provide considerations of how white racial constructs and rock music intersect. Also, the role of whiteness in metal can be critiqued with regard to its way of interacting with racial or cultural difference. The definition of what constitutes otherness becomes telling of how the hegemonic form constructs itself.

It is at junctures such as these that I concentrate my analytic deconstruction of metal. I will explore questions of power and practices specifically within the metal subculture itself and outside as a faction within mass culture. Metal’s legacy as hypermasculine, white, and

heteronormative, while valid, deserves detailed exploration. I will also situate this in terms of historical and political economic context. Since metal exists as a consumptive entity, the manipulative marketing practices of the recording industry must be considered as influential. Music's marketing of identity is politically loaded.

"Metal Meltdown": Chapter Breakdown

To establish a basis for my arguments about what occurs in metal between 1984 and 1991, I must first explain why metal as a corporate product made sense for that time. Chapter two explains metal's recovery from the popular musical dearth of the late 1970s to the start of its commercial highpoint of 1984. Chapter two explicitly serves to establish a historical baseline from which all the analysis contained within the following chapters is situated from. For chapter three, I will discuss the usual marketing strategies that contributed to publicizing and selling metal commodities for the time. Stemming from the recording industry's formulaic understanding of what the metal market was to be, the subculture was initially focused on catering to an audience of liminal teenage males. Between 1984 and 1991, metal fragmented into a number subgenre forms wherein each created its distinctive marketing and performative norms. By recognizing what the market was construed as and how the market was tactically approached as a result of these interpretations, I can then better address and understand the performed identities of metal musicians that take place between 1984 and 1991.

In my fourth chapter, I will critique metal's reliance on claims of authenticity. The confluence of authenticity and hypermasculine ideologies are explicitly intertwined. Here, manipulations of rebellion, power, strength, potency and sexuality, popularity, and devotion become evident through performances of music, fashion, personality, and posturing. Metal is also signified in terms of social class and generational division. Authenticity claims of

masculine standing incorporate some of these significations. As metal becomes fragmented into differing subgenres, I see the use of authenticity working distinctively for respective subgenres, yet ultimately recreating similar cock rock performance practices previously established within the rock narrative.

The subsequent chapter is heavily dependent on these authenticity claims. The homogeneity of metal particularly depends on the values reinforced by subcultural acceptance of authenticity claims. One form of reinforcing hegemony is to establish a categorical other against which one can contrast. Constructing categories of exclusion and locating the other is telling of what one's identity actually is made. The fifth chapter explores the ways in which the rarity of female or black performers in metal function to reinforce white hypermasculine standings. In the case of women, the roles of sexuality and gender become combined via exscription, thereby catering to male fantasy or male idolatry. In the case of blacks, the selective construction of metal's history through privileging white artists and the prevailing focus on masculinity versus racial constructs establishes a political and subcultural expectation; as the Body Count lyric states, "Don't they know rock's just for whites?" For those who would fit the classification of other yet wishing to gain entry, be it past the industry or popular gatekeepers, they must construct their identities in ways agreeable to the hegemonic whole. Often, this involves the assimilation of qualities of the dominant in favor of their respective native cultures. On other occasions, the novelty of otherness becomes exoticized thereby serving to reinforce the already established norms.

In the final chapter, I will briefly situate 1980s metal in terms of its lasting contribution to popular music of today. While metal continues to exist in various evolving forms, other genres such as riot grrl, goth, electronic and punk demonstrate some metal influence. In most cases,

however, the subcultural histories of these genres fail to acknowledge their relationship to metal. I see this as a lasting carryover from mainstream rock critics stigmatization of metal starting in the 1980s and continuing through the 1990s. Now, during the nostalgic return of metal, a softer, fonder view of metal has come to exist. I relate this to the change of mainstream 1980s metal bands in their performance styles, adopting more traditional rock staging today in place of their more flamboyant previous practices.

CHAPTER II. “YOU CAN’T STOP ROCK N ROLL”

This chapter serves to establish the historical context for heavy metal’s eventual peak of popularity during the mid to late 1980s. All of the practices employed within metal, both artistic and commercial, are historically dependent on the foundational artists from the mid 1970s through the early 1980s. Foremost in deconstructing and understanding metal during the period of 1984 through 1991 is that the whole endeavor was overseen by the music industry and its practices. If the record companies saw no possibility for profit or targeting a tangible audience market with what heavy metal musicians offered, no substantial scene could have emerged let alone become part of rock music’s ongoing history. A second point of consideration is that the business model of the recording industry was altered from staunch opposition to metal styles to an opportunistic embrace of what was considered as an exploitable golden goose. The economic and artistic conservatism of the music industry created stagnancy within popular rock music. A resulting niche emerged for metal to fulfill – that of rebellious rock and roll. This conservatism, despite hindering metal’s development every step of the way, eventually was won over through the subcultural growth of a musical scene that flourished via its own independent spirit and passion. Upon industry acceptance, mainstream metal in the 1980s began to take shape as certain formulaic components were established and certain performative practices were seen as effective. It is during this time that the industry outsiders begin shaping what had been a subcultural movement into a commercial product which could potentially reach mass audiences – something facilitated by the new marketing tool of MTV. Attempts to capitalize on this trend offered new opportunities for bands and fans alike. While innovative metal bands break new ground and become stars, the industry’s bottom line myopia spawns as innovators are readily cloned as formulaic commodities – a trap many bands also fall into.

“Let There Be Rock”: The Musical Climate of the Late 1970s and Early 1980s

Most rock histories pay little to no attention to the happenings between the late 1970s and early 1980s. The critic’s darling, punk, had manifested its “live fast, die young” mentality a bit too well with Sid Vicious serving as a prime example. Some punk bands like the Talking Heads and Blondie were recategorized as new wave bands where they earned some critical approval and popular notoriety. Some synthesizer-driven Europop bands, principally Kraftwerk, were underground critical successes but failed to register significant world sales. The previously most successful genre, disco, was dancing on its last legs. Likewise, within the guitar-driven rock world, there was little to be excited about. The traditional rock stalwarts had reached midlife or abuse crises – Led Zeppelin disbanded after John Bonham’s overdose death, The Who lost Keith Moon and coherent direction, Aerosmith was in fragmented shambles through drug-dependent squabbles, The Rolling Stones, Rod Stewart, and Kiss all went disco, and Alice Cooper was holed up watching monster movies all day. What remained is typically described as faceless, safe, corporate rock entities like Foreigner, REO Speedwagon, or Journey. As Garafalo (1997) describes, it, “it appeared that the mainstream music industry had become such a well-oiled machine that, with precious little in the way of innovation and next to nothing approaching passion, any second-rate rock group could be assured of radio play, full stadiums, and platinum records sales” (p. 303). While successful in garnering radio play and mass sales, these bands have become the critical scourge of rock’s development. Rock at this time also failed to capture the interest of a new generation of teen music purchasers. As Def Leppard’s Joe Elliot described, “Rock music was becoming a black hole. You’d go see Uriah Heep, you would be inundated with drum solos, bass solos, operatic vocal solos followed by guitar solos... Why

does it have to be a sixteen minute epic? Why? Because you can't write songs anymore” (Konow, 2002, p. 128).

This was the second generation of the baby boom. The generation raised on rock now parented a new generation knowing nothing but rock. The “machine” provided little to no distinctive identity for what could be this next generation’s “own” music. How rebellious could rock be when it was exactly what the folks were consuming too? Radio, adhering to its tried-and-true marketing strategies, offered no real options. MTV’s birth in 1981 provided an outlet, but failed to provide much in terms of rock musical innovation. British pop bands like Spandau Ballet and The Human League predominated MTV’s regular rotation between 1981 and 1983. This partly stemmed from the American music industry’s initial hesitance to invest in promotional videos whereas the Brits already had a nascent structure in place. Video popularity eventually sparked sales and increased top-40 radio play thereby foregrounding pop as the prevailing new musical style. Though the success of this “second British Invasion” prompted subsequent American video promotions, for the time being, the young rocker was left with few available rocking options.

For the first time in rock’s history, sales were failing to match previously established levels. From its peak of 1978’s \$4.1 billion in sales, American revenues declined eventually falling to \$3.6 billion in 1982. The ongoing American economic recession is partly to blame. Facing the crunch, recording industries downsized in order to save operating costs. These cuts included staff potentially discovering and pushing new acts as well as bands previously signed to the respective labels. Those bands with ongoing, successful track records were retained. Bands representing financial risk or sales uncertainty were jettisoned. This low-risk mentality fostered

an even more homogenous and conservatively drab musical climate, thereby perpetuating a bleaker sales result (Frith, 1988).

While dismal, the industry saw a minor trend. Some hard rock and metal performers succeeded during his time. Black Sabbath, though nowhere near their past glories, still maintained a considerable following despite the vocalist change from Ozzy Osbourne to Ronnie James Dio. Osbourne's subsequent solo releases reached platinum status. In 1978, Van Halen's debut album, without the benefit of any true radio singles, sold multiple millions of copies. The band's high-energy stage show prompted huge concert turnout and guitarist Eddie Van Halen's virtuosity earned honors from multiple magazine reader polls. AC/DC's sales and chart positions had steadily climbed through the late 70s. *Highway to Hell* (1979) proved a breakthrough album in the United States breaking into the Top 20. Though the overdose death of frontman Bon Scott later that year might have slowed momentum, 1980's *Back in Back*, proved a phenomenal success reaching number 1 in Britain and number 4 in the States. The follow-up release in 1981, *For Those About to Rock*, topped the American charts and 1983's *Flick of the Switch* peaked at number 15.

“Delivering the Goods”: The British Musical Scene and the Legacy of British Metal

British chart positions for early metal albums generally were higher than their respective American positions. One explanation for metal's expanding underground success relates to the mainstream pop music of the time and metal's subsequent resistant response. British new wave bands like Yaz and XTC were featured on the radio and the *Top of the Pops* television show relied heavily on synthesizers and electronic drums to create musically-safe dance music. Videos, as predominantly derived from the techniques of advertising, demonstrated a parallel subversive homoeroticism that was common in the fashion and advertising worlds (Savage,

1988; Gill 1995). This presence in fashion and advertising extended to the new wave music scene (Gill, 1995). Serving as talent scouts, managers, and writers for the music press, gay males fostered an independent scene successful and powerful enough to merit larger label attention. The performances of this new wave best epitomized by bands like Frankie Goes to Hollywood and Wham were just sexually indiscriminate enough to assure no major transgressions to the heteronormative status quo occurred. This ambiguous sexuality thereby allowed the new wave bands them to remain palatable to the pop audience as a whole.

Concurrently, enough latent homoeroticism lingered providing an insider's space within the whole. As Wicke (1990) describes, "the synthetic pop of Human League, Depeche Mode, Duran Duran, and Bronski Beat... dissolved the gender-specific code of stereotyped manhood in an oscillating image of homosexuality" (p.155). The version of masculinity demonstrated here – love songs, keyboards, and pretty boys – offered little in terms of the hypermasculinity or even traditional patriarchal reinforcement cockrock fans had come to expect (Frith & McRobbie, 1990). Rather, the scene left a void for hard rock or heavy metal to target and fill.

A second argument given for metal's greater appeal to the British public is the heightened class awareness and relation to the industrial working conditions. Thatcher-era Britain saw record numbers of unemployed teens (Bashe, 1985, Wicke, 1990, Konow, 2002). With factories closing and dismal prospects for escaping dole lines, a loud, angry, rebellious music grafted well onto dispirited teenage males. Unlike new wave bands who were typically fashionably dressed, manicured, and art school educated, metal bands consisted of regular blokes. The symbolic closeness between fan and band, both in terms of persona and philosophy, tightened.

British metal has historically come from industrial towns. Black Sabbath and Judas Priest, both from Birmingham, respectively noted their environment as having influence on their sound.

Black Sabbath guitarist Tony Iommi considered Birmingham as a “pretty depressing area” (Stark, 2002, p.4) which Sabbath drummer Bill Ward saw as offering little choice between a factory job and jail (Konow, 2002). Both Konow (2002) and Christie (2003) in their respective metal histories acknowledge metal’s ties to the blue collar. Konow describes Sabbath’s choice to downtune their guitars three steps as sonically representing the dismal mood Birmingham evoked. Christie concurs calling the city “a crumbling factory town” consisting of “bombed-out rubble left by massive Nazi bombing raids” (p. 1). Years after Sabbath, things did not change. Judas Priest guitarist Glenn Tipton similarly relates, “Where we lived, you could always hear the foundry. The big steam hammers. Day after day, when that’s pounding, you’ve got some sort of heavy metal in you from the word go” (Konow, 2002, p. 136). Elsewhere in England, Sheffield, birthplace of Def Leppard, was a town offering “steel mills and dole queues” (Beebee, 1997, p.43). As Joe Elliot suggests, “I would have taken soccer, bank robbery, anything other than a factory life” (Konow, 2002, p. 131).

“Heavy Metal Thunder”: The New Wave of British Heavy Metal Scene Develops

Combining the bleak atmosphere with the escapist mentality, a metal movement developed and maneuvered its way throughout England and into London’s center. Geographically, England offered a closeness for bands and their fans. A band like Def Leppard or Iron Maiden could tour in vans, bring a core of rowdy followers from their hometown to increase the draw, and subsequently have the seeded audience won over by the end of the night. By actively playing areas that might not get usual tours, a local band could build up a passionate and expanding regional following. This repeated practice leapfrogged a band closer and closer to the main performing areas of London, those that label artist and repertoire folks might attend and take notice.

As disco and new wave bands were en vogue, first attempts at winning over London and the music industry were largely rebuked. One local dj, Neal Kay, took favor to hard rock and metal and localized the scene at a nightclub, the Soundhouse, by establishing a heavy metal night every Wednesday. Here, crowds gathered to headbang, play air guitar, and form a community based on the music. The scene's growth prompted *Sounds* critic Geoff Barton to take note of the local metal movement. After writing an article on the Soundhouse scene, *Sounds* would publish a weekly Heavy Metal Chart based on requests taken from the nightclub. Many unsigned bands submitted demos to Kay. He would play them, and these demos, if popular enough, entered the chart and increased a band's notoriety. The influx of new bands gaining entry to *Sounds* in this way helped establish *Sounds* as the metal publication in England. Barton would later champion metal journalism by co-founding *Kerrang* magazine and giving the British metal its lasting label, the New Wave of British Heavy Metal (NWOBHM).

Def Leppard and Iron Maiden were the two leading metal bands among many spawned from the circuit and the Soundhouse. Def Leppard honed their skills playing gigs whenever possible. Their usual venues were local schools or private workingmen's clubs around the Sheffield area. The series of gigs around England became known by bands as "the turn." These clubs for dock or factory workers offered sets of entertainment between raffles or bingo games (Schwartz, 1984). Raven's John Gallagher described the experience: "You'd go before an audience that had no intention of being entertained by you and antagonize them into a reaction" (Christie, 2003, p. 32). A band would play mainly popular covers and some original songs while developing their stage performances and musical skills. As fellow NWOBHMer Jess Cox from Tygers of Pan Tang described, "It was a strange experience, but a great way to hone your act for the real world" (Christie, 2003, p. 32).

The next usual step for a band would be to record a self-produced EP. These demo-quality recordings were primarily intended as a tool to garner label interest. In the developing period of the NWOBHM, this usually went for naught. Upon rejection and already having the product made, either bands distributed and sold the recordings themselves or formed agreements with small independent labels such as Heavy Metal Records or Neat Records to release the material that way. In the case of Def Leppard, their three-song *Getcha Rocks Off* EP released in January 1979, the band eventually sold 24,000 copies over four separate pressings (the last 9000 released after signing to a major label). These sales were based on word-of-mouth, playing shows, and ads placed in the back of rock magazines like *Sounds*.

Iron Maiden was offered a recording contract as early as 1976, provided the band would “go punk” and leave their metal style behind (Wall, 1998). Refusing, the band played clubs and built a London area following. Christie (2003) argues Maiden’s success partly stemmed from their appropriation of notably British influences. Having “adopted Shakespearean stage tricks like smoke machines and haunting homemade props,” Maiden’s shows “evoked British frights as the Hammer Films ... of the 1960s and the medieval torture devices on display at the Tower of London” (p. 35). The *Soundhouse Tapes* (1979), a three track EP, was specifically recorded to give to Neil Kay at the Soundhouse in hopes of his playing the songs during metal nights. The ploy worked amazingly well as Maiden was voted as the year’s number one band even prior to the EP’s release for public sale. The 5000 copies were quickly sold out and Maiden decided not to release any more, thereby cultivating fervor for any new product. A compilation record tied to Neil Kay, *Metal for Muthas* (1979), offered two Maiden tracks. In Kay’s liner notes, he described the record serving as a collective triumph for the NWOBHM in spite of industry resistance. “The title of this LP virtually speaks for itself. Metal for all the muthas that have

been loyal to the cause, and who helped support it through the recent two-year crisis and, also metal for all the other muthas that together, contrived to bury it over the last few years” (Kay, 1979). The compilation, sold at a bargain price, also provided exposure to other fledging metal acts like Praying Mantis, Angel Witch, and Sledgehammer.

“Lightning to the Nations”: The NWOBHM Takes Off

Having regular press coverage, an active fan base, and most importantly, significant sales of independently-released EPs like *Getcha Rocks Off* and the *Soundhouse Tapes*, major labels finally began to take notice. Def Leppard signed to Phonogram and Maiden to EMI. By signing with the major labels, each band was added onto significant tours around England, opening for successful acts like UFO, Sammy Hagar, and AC/DC. Exposed to ten times the number of music fans per show, the popularity for each band swelled. With corporate backing, the demo quality EPs were rerecorded and expanded into full length albums. Though Def Leppard’s *On Through the Night* (1980) failed to capture the band’s energy live (Joe Elliot says the only way he can listen to the subpar performance is to be completely drunk), it reached #51 on the British album charts (Bashe, 1985). Iron Maiden’s self-titled LP (1980) performed significantly better. Via the carryover demand of the *Soundhouse Tapes* and a relentless touring schedule, the album entered the British charts and peaked at #4 and its two singles broke into the Top 40 (Martyn, 1984; Jeffries, 1993).

Three main consequences emerged. First, the fan demand prompted *Sounds* to create the *Kerrang* publication dedicated to heavy metal. The June 1981 issue was initially devised as a one-off. Tremendous sales prompted a second August issue. Issues remained monthly until February 1982 when demand dictated an issue every two weeks. By October 1987, the magazine became a weekly (Jeffries, 1993). The dedicated coverage to metal in *Kerrang*, particularly

when metal was being chastised in most other print media, made the magazine *the* metal media outlet across the globe. Second, *Kerrang's* back page ads became the site for subcultural contact. Fans separated by geography used ads in *Kerrang* to establish pen-pal communication with other metal fans. This underground tape trading network supplied not only information about unpublicized bands but also duplicated tapes for fans to trade amongst one another. The multiple generations of duplicated tapes, though suffering in terms of audio quality, gave fans opportunities to experience things far removed from most local record store shelves. The sense of community that evolved during this era grew to be one the tenets throughout metal's ongoing development. To be a metalhead was to celebrate metal's spirit and love the music and all it stood for. Finally, record labels began to see possibilities for a heavy metal market. Both the independent labels and the majors began signing groups making the turn in hopes of catching the next Maiden or Def Leppard. As a result, a slew of British artists found opportunities to record and locally tour. Bands like Saxon, Raven, Tygers of Pan Tang, Diamond Head, Angel Witch, Samson, and Witchfinder General were among the beneficiaries. Though, for the most part, NWOBHM bands' careers were not very long lasting and very few bands managed to achieve any measure of success in the US, the movement had lasting influence on the subcultural codes of what early 80s metal was to be.

“Denim and Leather”: NWOBHM (and Other British Metal) Shape the Future

There were few definitive expectations for the bands of this era and as a result, the scene lacked a distinctive image. This was both a blessing and a curse. As bands utilized a variety of styles, fashions, and sounds, they were not locked into a particular formula and could create music and performances to meet their artistic needs and interests. Consequently, the diversity also delayed the music industry from proactively recognizing and promoting the scene.

Particularly in regard to spreading to the States, a recognizable product seemed lacking. Raven's John Gallagher describes, "There were second-tier and third-tier bands trying to hop on the bandwagon. All the bands were different, which you don't see too often. It wasn't so homogenized. As usual, one or two had the connections or had a good look, or met the right people, and a lot of others fell by the wayside" (Christie, 2003, p. 44).

NWOBHM bands left their historical mark in terms of three main areas. Musically, bands like Iron Maiden, Def Leppard, and Saxon featured two guitarists equally capable of playing leads. Greatly influenced by bands like Thin Lizzy, Status Quo and Wishbone Ash, the emphasis of virtuosity in soloing raised the musical bar beyond the three chord ethic of Ramones-esque punk. Being more musically practiced, bands wrote more complex melody lines for songs and the songs tended to extend beyond the punk standard two and a half to three minute mark.

While transcending punk in terms of musicality, punk did hold considerable influence in terms of stage performance. The high energy created at punk shows was something NWOBHM bands strived for (Konow, 2002). One way to capture this energy was through aggressive performances which would inspire fans to headbang and play air guitar through the high tempo yet still intricately melodic songs. Lyrically, early efforts by NWOBHM bands drew parallels to punk by portraying life in the underbelly of British society. Christie (2003) notes the mild controversy created by the cover art of Iron Maiden's "Sanctuary" single (1980) as an example. Maiden's mascot, Eddie, is shown, knife in hand, standing over his victim, a woman looking distinctly like then Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher (see Figure 2). The attack seems premeditated by the Conservative Thatcher's attempt to tear down a Maiden poster. This could be interpreted as both a social critique of the political climate as well as a display of headbanger

solidarity overcoming outsider resistance. As the scene strengthened its foundation, bands embraced being a part of the scene and emphasized the scene's merit. Saxon was the leader in this respect by including at least one pro-scene song per record including "And the Band Played On" (1981), "Heavy Metal Thunder" (1980; 1982), and "This Town Rocks" (1983). Nineteen eighty-one's anthem "Denim and Leather" praises those tied to the history of the scene: "Where were you in '79 when the dam began to burst, Did you check us out down at the local show, Were you wearing denim, wearing leather, Did you run down to the front, Did you queue for your ticket through the ice and snow, Denim and Leather, Brought us all together."

To distinguish metal from punk visually, metal did take on a different fashion. As the Saxon lyrics suggest, denim and leather were predominant in the crowds. Celtic Frost's Tom G. Warrior (who would later rescind his stage name in favor of his given surname Fischer) describes the primary influence behind this as coming from the biker gangs of the US and Britain (Fischer, 2000). The working class, rough and tumble image embodied the toughness and strength the bands wished to represent. Judas Priest's Rob Halford went so far as to ride a Harley Davidson on stage to secure the association: "By definition, Harley-Davidsons work well within the big picture of rock and roll. They're loud, smelly, and they piss people off" (Konow, 2002, p. 138). For performers, Christie (2003) described the look as being more challenging than the rock acts of before: "the players even looked more aggressive after 1980 – instead of flowery open shirts, bell bottoms, and mustaches, heavy metal bands dressed in tight fitting black leather and slick synthetic materials decorated with abstract pointed angles, lightning bolts, and shiny metal" (p. 36). A major reason behind the move to leather was the tremendous success of the pre-NWOBHM band Judas Priest and their image.

Priest singer Rob Halford was a then-closeted gay man. Having been exposed to S&M fashions in the gay scene, he felt that the combination of studded leather and chains was an ideal visual complement for metal music. While Kiss had worn black leather as a portion of their stage outfits years earlier, the kabuki-facepaint and character-driven image drew more attention than the clothing itself. Kiss bassist Gene Simmons denied ever knowing of the sexual history tied to the fetishwear his band donned (Simmons, 2001; Christie, 2003). Halford used the gear as to challenge the visual code of everyday life in much the same way that punk appropriated bondage wear for shocking response. For punks, the clothing was rebellious and not necessarily a genuine signifier of being a part of the fetish scene. Judas Priest was interpreted at the time in a parallel way. The loading of homoeroticism, though blatantly present, was read for an audience outside the gay subculture as something more common or less transgressive – biker culture. (Chapter Five will explore Halford, homosexuality, and heavy metal in greater depth).

Another pre-NWOBHM band, Motörhead, extended the link between metal and biker culture. While far less successful than Judas Priest, Def Leppard, or Iron Maiden, Motörhead's influence on the eventual rise of speed metal is without question. Led by bassist and vocalist Lemmy Kilmister, the band played their music as loud and fast as possible without any version of corporate compromise. As such, they bounced from one independent label to another while touring consistently and building up their dedicated following. Lemmy, who cowrote "Iron Horse" (1977; 1981) with his Hell's Angels-president roommate, brought skull rings, bullet belts, and the iron cross into metal fashion. Their aggressive music fit their "warts and all" image – Lemmy had a number of large facial blemishes – as ruffians trying to make it on the strength of their music and not gimmicks like looks or a trendy single. In England, the releases

would break the Top 20 with *No Sleep til Hammersmith* (1981) reaching #1. In the US, no record ever broke the Top 100.

The last of the significant British metal influences is Venom. Part of the NWOBHM scene, Venom's performance was more focused on theatrics and volume than music. Members took on the pseudonyms of Chronos, Mantas, and Abaddon and offered a dark, rumbling version of satanic speed. The shoddy production of the records helped hide the flaws in the playing while also making the music all the more dangerous and extreme. Their debut, 1981's *Welcome to Hell*, featured a goat's head inside a pentagram as the cover art. Follow-up *Black Metal* (1982) became the template for the eventual development of black metal. The low-fi recording and Chronos' growling and barked vocals would also be largely influential for death metal's development and extreme metal's aesthetic claims of musical authenticity (to be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four).

"Hello America": Pros and Cons of Breaking into the Ultimate Market

For British bands, success in one's homeland was only a portion of their goal. Being on top of the British charts would equate to tens of thousands of albums sold. The United States, with its much larger population, offered the possibility of sales in terms of hundreds of thousands. Plans to market NWOBHM to the States were advanced. For the early 1980s, the musical climate in the States was not very accepting of metal. Radio refused to play the songs. Magazine coverage was generally dismissive or insulting. For example, *The New Rolling Stone Record Guide* called Judas Priest "grunting and vulgar," Maiden "aimless" and Sabbath "dull-witted and flatulent" (Marsh & Swenson, 1983). MTV had yet to take hold. The lone path to exposure was touring and trying to win over a fanbase one city at a time. Two philosophies prevailed regarding this practice. If one could secure a tour with a larger hard rock act, those

fans might appreciate a similarly-styled band and follow up on their interests. The second option was to play with an older corporate rock band and try to blow the bland headliners off the stage with an exciting performance full of sound and fury.

For the harder metal bands like Judas Priest and Iron Maiden, the first option was utilized. As Halford described, “These were the days of really slow communication. You just really had to go out on the road and stay on the road. ... It was extremely primitive and in its infancy” (Christie, 2003, p. 46). By touring with bands like Led Zeppelin, Kiss, Ted Nugent, and Blue Oyster Cult, Priest found their sales increasing. 1978’s *Stained Class* broke into the top 200 in the US. The band changed the title of *Killing Machine* to *Hell Bent for Leather* (1978) for the US market and it reached #128. The live EP, *Unleashed in the East* (1979) went to #70. Finally, by 1980’s *British Steel*, Priest cracked the top 40. *Screaming for Vengeance* (1982) and *Defenders of the Faith* (1984) each made the top 20 and went platinum within a year of their respective releases. By 1982, the core following for Judas Priest was solid enough to headline tours themselves. For both the *Vengeance* and *Defenders* tours, Priest took Iron Maiden as their opening act.

Iron Maiden exceeded Priest’s accomplishments to a point of becoming the top British metal act for the early 1980s, but their self-titled debut (1980) failed to chart in the US. Touring in the States helped Maiden’s follow-up album *Killers* (1981) gain considerable notoriety within the metal circles. The album peaked in the States at #78. Despite a change in vocalists, the bands expanded their touring to the US and reaped the benefits. *The Number of the Beast* (1982) topped the British charts and reached #33 in the States. A tour highlight included selling out a headline gig in the US at New York’s Palladium and the record’s first single, “Run to the Hills,” began receiving airplay on some rock radio stations. Nineteen-eighty-three found Maiden as

headliners in the US and the *Piece of Mind* album hit #14 in the charts. It went gold after 10 weeks, stayed in the charts for 43 consecutive weeks (Wall, 1998).

Maiden's leapfrog of Priest in terms of American popularity was fostered in two ways. Firstly, Maiden's releases in the US included songs released as singles for the British charts and not available on the full length European releases. As the underground metal scene in the States was tied to Britain and imported issues of *Kerrang*, reading about these songs and finding them available on LPs was a bonus. Secondly and more importantly, Maiden's ability to foster brand recognition triggered sales. An album's cover could tell the potential buyer what was within. As Kiss producer Bill Aucoin noted, "Sometimes you fell in love with the artwork, never mind the album, and you might buy it for that" (Konow, 2002, p. 129). Many metal historians accredit Maiden's invention of the character Eddie as being a savvy sales tool (Bashe, 1985; Chrisite, 2003; Konow, 2002; Jeffries, 1993). The ghoulish creature and the block Maiden script appeared on every record, single, and poster. The artwork was instantly identifiable and being readily recognized, the logo and mascot combination fostered poster and t-shirt sales. By 1982, Maiden was one of the top three marketing acts in the US (Christie, 2003). For a band without significant radio airplay, this was a huge accomplishment and a tremendous bargaining chip for Maiden's management.

Over the time span of the multiple releases, Judas Priest and Iron Maiden remained dedicated to their original visions – fast, intricate melodic songs that would not conform to commercial radio whims. Def Leppard, being more influenced by power pop bands like The Sweet, saw nothing wrong with crossing over to the larger pop audience. The band, hoping to avoid over-exposure in England, chose to limit touring in Britain in favor of going to the States. *On Through the Night* (1980) failed to break the band to the US despite extensive touring with

acts like Ted Nugent, Sammy Hagar, and Pat Travers. Having signed with the management team of Leber/Krebs, Def Leppard conveniently got the coveted opening slot for fellow Leber/Krebs client AC/DC. As *Back in Black* and the reissued *Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap* (1981) were topping the charts, touring with AC/DC was a godsend. The album sales perked up and the record reached #51 in the US. A second management decision was to release “Hello America” as the second single. The song expressed Joe Elliot’s teenage fantasies about experiencing the Californian culture glorified by Hollywood and past musical acts. Management saw the song as a tool to create a sympathetic inroad to a potentially dismissive American audience. The single was packaged with decidedly Americanized cover art, a white cowboy boot emblazoned with a shiny gold star. Retrospectively, bassist Ric Savage saw the move as damaging: “I listen to ‘Hello America’ and I cringe. I just can't stand listening to it because the lyrics and the whole atmosphere of the song is so Americanized and we didn't know that then! Joe had just got these lyrics about America and we just decided to stick them in this song! But we were so naïve we didn't realized (sic) the implications of it. But looking back now I think: ‘Why did we ever do that?’ We can see now that people will pick up on things like that but at the time we didn't realize” (“Timeline,” 2005).

For a NWOBHM band, to actively strive to appeal to America was to suggest that the tight-knit British community was of lesser importance. The perceived closeness of Def Leppard to their fans was tainted by cries of selling out to the corporate empire, or at minimum, to the crude Americans. A major criticism came from Geoff Barton. In the March 1, 1980 issue of *Sounds*, Barton questioned “has the Leppard changed its spots?” The article continued,

“If Def Leppard hadn't been...thrown into the wacky whirlpool of showbiz heavy metal they would still be making naive but hard-edged youthful rock songs. They once had the power to penetrate but unfortunately their complete trust in the business has rendered them useless...” HARSH WORDS indeed from our Mancunian correspondent Mick

Middles, lifted from his review of Def Leppard's 'Hello America' in the *Sounds* singles pages last week. Harsh words that hit the nail square on the head” (Barton, 1980).

By August 1980, returning to England for the Reading Fest, Def Leppard expected to arrive as conquering heroes. Rather, they were resoundly booed and pelted with objects. Though Joe Elliot disputes the severity of the crowd’s negative response, it was clear Def Leppard had alienated some of their fanbase at home (Beebee, 1997). This serves as an early example of the metal community questioning a band’s perceived authenticity and the subsequent backlash resulting from such transgression (Chapter Four focuses on an array of such instances).

For Def Leppard, commercial success in the States was certainly a goal. Leaning upon their AC/DC tie once again, the band secured mega-producer Mutt Lange to record second album 1981’s *High’n’Dry*. Known for his commercial ear and dictatorial drive, Lange tightened the Def Leppard sound to a clinical cleanliness. Songs were acts of studio creation as laborious overdubbing and multitracking created a sonically fuller, richer tone than the rawer *On Through the Night*. The band recorded a video of three songs performed live, first single “Let It Go,” the title track, and the ballad, “Bringing On the Heartbreak.” As Konow (2002) describes, album sales for *High’n’Dry* plateaued around 220,000 copies in the States. Suddenly, the album went gold. The sudden jump of 280,000 units? The fledgling MTV began running “Heartbreak” in heavy rotation and sales skyrocketed.

Band turmoil began affecting Def Leppard. Guitarist Pete Willis found celebrity taxing and relied heavily on alcohol to compensate. As a result, he was dismissed from the band and replaced by London scene veteran Phil Collen. The replacement process delayed recording of the next record for six months. Not wanting to lose the band’s buzz, “Heartbreak” was rerecorded and issued as a single. A new video was shot for the song which MTV quickly adopted. This time, the song featured a much more prominent keyboard track in hopes of

breaking into commercial top 40 radio. Keyboardist Thomas Dolby was credited under a pseudonym on the recording as the band feared backlash from recording a song with a new wave icon (Christie, 2003). The ploy worked as the single cracked the US Top 40 and the album went platinum. A year later, *High'n'Dry* was eventually reissued adding the keyboard-laden remixes of “Heartbreak” and “Me & My Wine” and went on to sell another million copies. Once again, the choices to utilize pop-oriented practices created some controversy for the band within metal circles.

As Def Leppard was becoming larger in the States, the homegrown American metal scene remained bleak. Bands in Los Angeles and New York City established significant local followings but industry representatives continued to dismiss the bands in favor of disco acts like Kool & the Gang and new wave acts like the Knack. Outside of these two industry hotspots, bands had little hope of getting noticed, let alone signed. Twisted Sister spent years developing their NYC fanbase through a combination of loud rocking anthems combined with a New York Dolls-influenced androgynous look. Despite their local success, Twisted Sister was rejected multiple times by every label in the New York area. Being involved in the tape-trading scene, band leader Dee Snider encouraged his bandmates to relocate to where metal was more appreciated, England. Combining a distinctly working-class attitude with anthemic songs, Twisted Sister offered music parallel to the NWOBHM scene. Unlike most of their British counterparts though, Twisted Sister consciously manipulated their look in terms of costuming and stage makeup. On one side of the album sleeve, the band presented themselves as a biker gang replete with scowls, mirrored sunglasses, and jean jackets emblazoned with Twisted Sister logos. On the other, the band amended their costumes to feature the standard studded leather but accented it with bold bright colors (see Figure 3). More significantly, the band adopted

garish clown-like makeup which, at the time, still read as an act of cross-dressing despite the considerable move toward the grotesque. In Snider's words, "'I don't think Twisted Sister is "glam" because that implies glamour, and we're not glamorous. We should be called "Hid" because we're hideous"' (Baktabak, 1985).

The band's audacity in concert and Snider's venomous handling of hecklers quickly earned the band a British fanbase. Having Motörhead in the band's corner certainly helped to break through to English fans. Instead of being immediately dismissed by the discerning and notoriously impatient Motörhead fans on the basis of appearance alone, the opening Twisted Sister had the benefit of the quintessential metalhead, Lemmy himself, introducing the band and showing support (Ling, 2003). The performance of credibility as derived by highlighting relationships to established acts would go on to become a common authenticity ploy for up-and-coming metal bands.

Following the NWOBHM pattern, Twisted released the four-track *Rough Cuts* EP on the independent Secret label in July of 1982. Playing the 1982 Reading Fest that August, Snider boldly challenged the 30,000 person audience to fight should the crowd continue throwing objects at the band while on stage. Here, Snider's sheer bravado demonstrated his affinity toward the larger-than-life rock god persona (a metal necessity explicitly described in Chapter Three) and earned the band an accepting audience. Later, after comparing the rowdy, aggressive Twisted Sister set with the rather sedate headlining UFO, writers for *Sounds* and *Kerrang* quickly championed Snider and company as one of their own.

Under the Blade (1982) suffered from a low-budget recording, but the British fans still supported the release. Reaching #74 on the British charts and continuing to tour, the band was finally making progress. Then, Secret Records declared bankruptcy and left Twisted Sister

flailing. After a notoriety gaining British TV appearance, an Atlantic Records A&R rep took interest in the band. Unfortunately, Atlantic had flatly refused the band five times prior. The band was so unwelcome that label president Doug Morris threatened anyone mentioning Twisted Sister with immediate termination. According to Snider, the band was signed by the rep's appealing to Morris' soft spot: "Twisted Sister may suck, but they were gonna make him a lot of money" (Ling, 2003).

With Atlantic offering little margin for error, *You Can't Stop Rock 'n' Roll* (1983) luckily overcame its first major setback, running \$4000 over budget. For a major label, \$4000 amounts to a pittance, but this serves to show the negative attitude held toward metal in general as well as Twisted Sister's particularly bleak situation. The band quickly set up a set of shows to repay Atlantic, which declared it would not issue the album in the States until the amount was recovered. Having product to actually sell, Twisted Sister returned to the States to tour. As a result of their path to success and strong British following, the band was often mistakenly thought to be British. According to Christie (2003), "with no real American counterpart, the London press had the power to introduce North American bands to their home countries" (p. 50). Snider concurred, "Just because we were in *Kerrang* a lot, we became affiliated with the NWOBHM" (Christie, 2003, p. 50). For the underground metal scene, being in *Kerrang* with its NWOBHM status offered instant credibility. The record reached #14 in Britain and charted three singles. Without much label support in the States, the record still sold 200,000 copies (Martyn, 1984). Though not a tremendous breakthrough, it was respectable enough to avoid being dropped.

"Hollywood Vampires": The American Scene Emerges in Los Angeles

As Twisted Sister sought glory via England, two interrelated scenes were slowly developing in the United States. Los Angeles, the west coast home of the music industry, had been the site of many rock bands' discovery. The Sunset Strip offered a number of clubs for bands to hone their craft and develop some sort of buzz. In 1977, Van Halen, one of very few bands really playing hard rock/metal at the time, was a top draw for the club scene. Having caught Gene Simmons' eye, the Kiss bassist funded and produced a demo with hopes of Van Halen securing a label deal. There were no takers. The band played more showcase gigs and finally secured support in producer Ted Templeman and Warner Brothers president Mo Ostin (Bashe, 1987). A quick eighteen day recording session led to 1978's self-titled debut. The immediate, tremendous success of the record did not automatically lead to a flood of other signings. Rather, as Dokken's George Lynch described, "It [Van Halen's success] might have closed some opportunities offered to us, because Van Halen had done so well. People thought, 'Well, that already happened – What's next?'" (Konow, 2002, p. 92).

While frontman David Lee Roth was a significant factor of Van Halen's presence, Eddie Van Halen's guitar playing was the star attraction. The LA scene did not officially open up until a second guitar god was reared from the strip. Ozzy Osbourne, having been fired from Black Sabbath in April of 1979 for his substance dependence issues, was trying to rebuild his career. Despite his legacy as Sabbath's voice and metal icon, record labels showed no interest. Through his manager Sharon Arden's volition, the drug-addled and defeated Ozzy recruited a band of top-notch musicians for writing and recording. Guitarist Randy Rhoads was plucked from Van Halen's successors on the Strip, Quiet Riot. Arden financed the recording of two records worth of material herself. Labels still declined. Finally in July, 1980, she secured a hesitant one-album deal from her father's Jet Records (though they had two records of material, Jet did not want to

be held financially accountable for the metal record's likely flop). Released September of 1980, *Blizzard of Ozz* started slowly, partly due to its not being released in the States until early 1981. Then, heightened publicity stemmed from Osbourne's alleged biting the head off a dove. Back in the limelight, the first single "Crazy Train" began receiving radio airplay and an American tour quickly followed. Rejuvenated by the energy and good natured persona of Rhoads, Osbourne regained his charisma as a live performer and, subsequently, his dwindling popularity was rekindled. *Blizzard of Ozz* reached #7 in Britain and #21 in the States, went gold within months of release, and reached platinum status by June of 1982. *Diary of a Madman* was quickly released in November 1981 to capitalize on the moment. *Diary* proved just as successful, reaching #16 in the US, going gold by early January and platinum in May of 1982. Rhoads untimely death from an airplane crash slowed Osbourne musically and personally. A live double-disc served as a contractual stopgap (still reaching #14 and going gold) until *Bark at the Moon* was released in December of 1983. Rhoads replacement, Jake E. Lee, was pilfered from yet another Strip scene band, Ratt.

With Van Halen and Ozzy Osbourne riding their respective guitar gods to platinum sales, by late 1983, the Sunset Strip was being mined by record labels like a gold strike. Just two years earlier, the scene was floundering. Bands on the Strip like Quiet Riot toiled in the bars receiving rejection upon rejection (in QR's case, 32 of them), while playing what was considered to be an outdated music style (Konow, 2002). Frustrated by the defection of Rhoads, vocalist Kevin DuBrow resisted the urge to quit or to change the formula. Having seen the strides being made in the States by Judas Priest and the Scorpions, DuBrow felt metal was primed for a comeback and aimed to capitalize upon it. One move was to rewrite the lyrics to an older song, "No More Booze" and turn it into "Bang Your Head (Metal Health)." Having been rejected so many times

before and desperate for a US deal in a then-barren metal climate, the band accepted producer Spencer Proffer's less-than-artist-friendly contract. DuBrow, guessing that it would take a couple of records to make headway across the US, knowingly signed away the band's publishing rights for the three-record deal. The deal also installed Proffer as producer for the album to be recorded in Proffer's home studio. During the recording process, Proffer felt some of the songs Quiet Riot had brought to the studio were inferior. He insisted the band hedge their bets by recording a cover song, Slade's "Cum On Feel the Noize," despite the band's disapproval (Konow, 2002). When the record was played for its distributor, CBS records, "Noize" was chosen as the single, again against the band's wishes, and a video was shot. The album, released in February of 1983 with the calculated title of *Metal Health*, became the first metal record to reach #1, finally overthrowing Michael Jackson's *Thriller* that November. "Noize" reached #5 on the singles chart and was certified gold. *Metal Health* would sell 4 million copies in the US during 1983 (Bashe, 1985).

Quiet Riot's story illustrates a few significant points that recur through metal's development. First, it demonstrates how little metal mattered to the industry at the time. Sizable local crowds and the buzz they generated equated to very little in the era's A&R game. Second, one sees the relative lack of power bands had during this era and how industry bigwigs used this to their advantage. Proffer was able to exploit profit from both the publishing and the production aspects to the industry because no other label was willing to get involved. Later metal bands, particularly those trying to break during metal's 1989 highpoint, were faced with a similar prospect of being taken advantage of. For the later metal bands, the vast number of what the industry viewed as interchangeable bands afforded the labels to sign some other outfit willing to. Finally, the use of a cover song as an inroad to mainstream radio accessibility became a

particularly formulaic tactic the recording industry would embrace throughout metal's evolution (Chapter Four elaborates on these ideas more thoroughly). That Proffer was in such a position to demand the band's deference again speaks to the power inequity of the time.

Regardless, hindsight proved Proffer to be right as Quiet Riot found themselves in the perfect place at the perfect time. As Bashe (1985) writes, "with Van Halen taking 1983 off and that other heavy metal competitors ... were between albums helped bolster *Metal Health's* sales" (p. 171). Having similar management, Quiet Riot received the opening act slot for the Scorpions, who were riding out their Top 10, platinum selling 1982 *Blackout* record. With the Scorpions signed on to play "Heavy Metal Sunday" at the US Festival, Quiet Riot was put onto the bill at the final moment. Their opening slot found them playing in front of 300,000 people and delivered their best performance. With the coverage of the US Festival success raising QR's profile, MTV included the video in its *Friday Night Video Fights* show. The show was a call-in competition wherein viewers would choose the video they liked best. QR was put up against The Rolling Stones on week one, and MTV expected a landslide in favor of the Stones. Voting suggested the opposite. The next weeks logged victories over stalwarts The Doors and Journey and the video became a fixture of high rotation (Konow, 2002).

The video itself was a masterful marketing tool. A teen sits in his bedroom listening to music. As the QR song plays, clips of the band performing on stage are intercut with the bedroom where the stereo grows to monumental proportions. The teen, overwhelmed by the supernatural force of the music, tries to control the experience through futile attempts at turning down an ever-larger volume knob. Finally, upon pulling out the oversized electrical plug, the wall crumbles away, and he finds himself face-to-face with the source of power – Quiet Riot themselves on stage. The combination of creating a setting for easy identification (the teen's

bedroom music sanctuary), with the symbolic visual novelty of the exaggerated size of the stereo and its relation to volume and power, the band's flamboyant stage moves, and an anthemic song featuring frequent lyric repetition ideal for remembering and singing along was perfect for the fledging MTV (Chapter Three describes how metal would further embrace these themes between 1984 and 1991).

A second Sunset Strip band played the US Festival that year. Motley Crüe was largely the vision of bassist Nikki Sixx. Combining influences like the rebellion of punk, the melodic hooks of bands like the Sweet and Slade, the gutter sleaziness of the New York Dolls, and the theatrics of Alice Cooper, Sixx and his bandmates quickly became Strip favorites for their sheer outrageousness. Musically they were raw, but the show of Mick Mars spitting blood, Nikki lighting his leather-clad legs on fire, Tommy Lee's flailing drum hysteria, and singer Vince Neil's raw sexuality combined in such a way that multiple, normally distinctly separate crowds came together in support of the band. Typically, crossover would not occur as subcultural territorial rights were grounds for verbal if not physical conflict. One rationale behind the band's crossover success stems from its ability to dabble in genre formulas and use just enough of them to maintain credibility across multiple audience bases.

Between 1981 and 1983, clean-cut pop rock was the LA norm as epitomized by bands like the Knack and the Romantics with their tailored suits and skinny black ties. Crüe, as influenced by their idols of Kiss, T Rex, and Alice Cooper, looked toward theatricality as one differentiator. For Crüe, leatherwear, visually distinctive from the pop rock fashion, served a theatrical point as it could be lit on fire without harm by pouring alcohol on it and lighting it, much the same as a fire eater would spit out alcohol and light it. Other aspects to the stage show also included such horror-esque props as spitting blood, torches, and satanic imagery (particularly the use of the

pentagram as band symbol), recalling bands like AC/DC or Black Sabbath. As well, the rise of the NWOBHM, best represented by Judas Priest, saw metal performers' fashion as featuring studded leather. Leather, as tied to fetish and the punk scene of the late 1970s, served as a challenge to authority by making taboo visible while also invoking biker culture (Steele, 1996; Hebdige, 1979). The meaningless *umlauts* for the Crüe's name demonstrated reference for bands like Motörhead and Blue Öyster Cult. The adoption of style through mimicry of already established metal performers placed Crüe within the metal scene. Punks accessed Crüe through their loud, fairly straight-forward music and exceedingly tall hairstyles. As one scenester recalled, "Their hair was so high, the punks could relate to them. They looked like no band before them" (Konow, 2002, p. 157). A second punk component was the Motley Crüe attitude. Sixx was fond of telling the media that the band was a gang with an "us against the world" approach. They also played up their relative poverty. Being from the streets gave the band's rebellious attitude credibility in terms of rock authenticity. As producer Tom Werman recalled, "It was like fuck everybody, fuck everything. They were completely irreverent" (Konow, 2002, p. 160).

Though Crüe's dangerous attitude made them attractive to fans, that same attitude made record executives leery of signing the band to a contract. The band's house was notorious for all-hours parties and rampant drug use, with Crüe quite openly acknowledging their rock and roll decadence. After a self-produced single sold out of its 1000 copy pressing, the band decided to self-produce a full length album in hopes of securing major label support, the Leathür records print of *Too Fast For Love* (1981). A crude, unpolished recording, the album was most notable for its attitude and its cover art. Alluding to the Rolling Stones' *Sticky Fingers* lp, a shot of Vince Neil's leather clad crotch dictated a change away from the earlier generation of rock.

Through a span of three months, the first two printings (11,000 copies produced) available only in the LA area had quickly sold out. In January of 1982, Crüe secured extended distribution to the whole US and England. The 20,000 copy third printing quickly disappeared as well. After a small bidding war, Elektra records signed Motley Crüe and promptly had the band rerecord *To Fast For Love*. Released in August 1982, the record debuted at #157 in the charts, eventually rising to #77. A photo shoot for *Oui Magazine* that November helped publicize the Crüe's hedonistic image while flaunting their sexual bravado (Chapter Three explores how metal bands would consistently perform and market rebellion and bravado in greater detail. Chapter Four specifically addresses how Crüe utilized allusions to earlier rock practices as authenticity markers).

Following in the wake of Quiet Riot and Motley Crüe, a number of bands were adapting to the increasingly popular heavy metal style, and Los Angeles was slowly becoming known as a metal stronghold. In 1981, radio dj, record store employee, and NWOBHM fan Brian Slagel became frustrated that the US had neither a version of the British scene's development nor media coverage of metal like *Kerrang* offered. Using information gathered from his tape trading friends, Slagel started the *New Heavy Metal Revue* fanzine. Through the fanzine, bands began sending Slagel demos for review or for airplay on his radio show. The store Slagel worked at eventually became an unofficial metal meeting point. Slagel described, "A couple guys came in and told me about local bands. Prior to that it was only Van Halen and Quiet Riot. They told me about Motley Crüe and Bitch" (Christie, 2003, p. 55). Slagel increased his involvement by orchestrating local concerts for bands like the aforementioned Crüe and Bitch once he became acquainted with them. As the scene developed, Slagel wanted to go a step farther and release a record. Using the *Metal for Muthas* compilations as inspiration, Slagel contacted record

distributors as to their willingness to carry an American-based metal sampler. Having secured enough support, Slagel contacted friends in bands and pieced together a number of demos for June 1982's *Metal Massacre* album on Slagel's Metal Blade label. Bands appearing on the record included Ratt, Malice, Black n Blue, and Bitch. A Motley Crüe track was to be included but Slagel felt their current success with the Leathür version of *Too Fast For Love* was sufficient enough exposure. In their place, Slagel agreed to let a friend and fellow tape trader have the last remaining slot. The friend, Lars Ulrich, quickly whipped together his band, Metallica, and provided the album most revered song, "Hit the Lights." The record sold out of its initial 5000 copy pressing and a credible, independent metal label was established in the States. (Mike Varney's Shrapnel Records produced *US Metal* (1981) and *US Metal II* (1982) before *Metal Massacre*, but without the same degree of success. Shrapnel would not gain notoriety as an independent metal label until 1983 and the Steeler *S/T* release.) A series of *Metal Massacre* recordings followed suit released on roughly an every six months basis. Bands from across the globe would gain their first exposure on *Massacre* compilations and many found later label success, including Trouble, Fates Warning, Armored Saint, Overkill, Possessed, Hellhammer, and Slayer.

"Metal Thrashing Mad": The Independent Labels and the Onset of Speed Metal

Of the *Massacre* performers, Metallica and Slayer went on to become the two of the most influential of all metal bands. Each drifted away from the LA Strip Scene and its gradual adoption of a spandex and sparkle style. Originally a band playing Maiden and Priest covers, Slayer carved out their own identity by playing the fastest of any of the LA bands at that time. Slayer, raised on hardcore punk like the Dead Kennedys, Black Flag, and T.S.O.L., also wanted to provoke a sensation of threat and aggressive mayhem, sharply contrasting with the partying

good times of the usual club scene. Originally, Slayer incorporated costuming and makeup as a component of their act. In guitarist Jeff Hanneman's words, "All the bands like Motley Crüe and Pandamonium were wearing makeup but it was girly. We wanted to look like men, so we looked like football players!" (Christie, 2003, p. 108). The leather and dark eye makeup did not last long (though Kerry King's nine-inch spiked gauntlets remained). Primarily, a scene of bands playing hyperspeed metal songs had sprung up around San Francisco. Metallica, having trouble finding places to play on the Strip, moved their faster and darker musical style north and was received with open arms. When Slayer played their first gig in the Bay area, crowds liked the music but ridiculed their look as being trite and contrived. Seeing their fellow speed merchant bands being successful without the costuming gimmick brought about the change. The new scene viewed bands as colleagues (much of their audience were members of bands themselves) and the valued look was that of a typical metal fan: jeans and a metal group's t-shirt. The stripped down approach was focused on the music itself rather than the trappings of what was considered as a less authentic, superficial display (this is explored more thoroughly in Chapter Four).

Slayer differed slightly from the Bay area scene in two ways. Slayer, in hopes of provocation, unabashedly embraced the use of socially-problematic signifiers. Like many metal bands, they used satanic references (Chapter Three offers an analysis of this particular phenomenon). The cover of their first album, *Show No Mercy* (1983), has a goat-headed devil flanking a pentagram made out of swords. They also, however, were unique in their use of Nazi symbology (Nikki Sixx of Motley Crüe did dabble with the swastika very briefly during the *Shout at the Devil* era but quickly gave it up). The Slayer "s" is similar to that of the Nazi German SS troops, and they called their fan club the Slaytanic Wehrmacht. One version of a

Slayer logo was the pentagram placed in front of a German war eagle (see Figure 4). The band routinely explained their choice using the traditional argument paralleling that of the late 70s punks – the signifiers were used for their shock value rather than as endorsements of past political loadings. The second major difference between Slayer and the Bay area bands was lyrical content. In addition to songs about evil, Slayer wrote songs detailing war, violence, and death in explicit detail. On 1984's *Haunting the Chapel* EP, "Chemical Warfare" introduced the use of graphic imagery for depictions of the macabre as a means for provoking reaction. This would prove greatly influential as death metal and its offshoot, grindcore, used Slayer's lyrical style as a template.

Metallica was greatly influenced by the NWOBHM and strived to maintain the melodic intricacies of that movement while increasing the speed to breakneck levels. Similarly, they eschewed the love song or the sex song in favor of what was considered more serious lyrical topics like war, death, and metal music itself. After the notoriety boost from *Metal Massacre I*, the band quickly followed up with a seven song demo, *No Life Til Leather* (1982). Inspired by the tremendous response they had received from the Bay area crowds, Metallica relocated there. After a few lineup changes, Metallica was ready to record their first full album. They had assumed that Brian Slagel and Metal Blade would support them. However, Slagel could not raise the \$8000 necessary for studio time and manufacturing. Left in the lurch, Metallica found themselves as the beneficiaries of the tape trading network.

In New Jersey, a record store owner and metal fan, John Zazula, had been sponsoring concerts for bands like Raven and Anvil in New York City. Zazula tried shopping the *Leather* demo in New York to no avail. Frustrated by the lack of label interest, Zazula offered Metallica the chance to record for his fledgling Megaforce label. Living in a warehouse that doubled as a

rehearsal room on whatever money Zazula could afford to give them, the band honed their craft. After the dismissal of guitarist Dave Mustaine for his drinking (whose subsequent thrash band Megadeth would become hugely successful), the debut record, *Kill 'Em All*, was released in 1983. Though not a huge seller, for an underground metal band on an independent label, *Kill 'Em All* sold 17,000 copies in its first two weeks of availability. Songs like “Hit the Lights” and “Metal Militia” made inroads with the appreciative underground metal community. More importantly for the band, an Elektra Records executive loved the album and made it a point to sign the band once they returned from a European tour (Farr, 1994).

Zazula would go on to duplicate Metal Blade’s west coast operations. With Megaforce, he would sign the east coast bands that appealed to the devout customers of his store. One such signee was the band that shared Metallica’s rehearsal space, Anthrax. Anthrax looked up to the older Metallica and followed their lead in writing songs that celebrated the metal scene. Debut *Fistful of Metal*’s (1984) cover art had a studded fist punching its way through a metalhead’s face (see Figure 5). Songs like “Soldier of Metal” were anthems for the crowd to shout along with and “Metal Thrashing Mad” gave speed metal a second, more striking name, thrash. Thrashing also referred to the crowd’s physical response to the music’s rhythmic drive. Adapting the slam dancing of punk with the exaggerated steps of Anthrax’s Scott Ian on stage, a form of metal-specific movement called moshing also resulted – something Anthrax would formally declare on “Caught in a Mosh” from their 1987 release *Among the Living*.

“King of the Mountain”: Metal and MTV’s Gold and Platinum Alchemy

While thrash slowly grew as an underground metal movement, mainstream metal, though showing some forward signs, still needed sales to bolster the confidence of the major labels. The independents might have been happy selling 20,000 to 50,000 copies of a record but that

was not enough to warrant strong major label support. With *High n Dry*, Def Leppard showed considerable promise. More influentially, Def Leppard's taste of American success primed them to want to go even further. Their approach was to build off the success of the "Bringing On the Heartbreak" single and move even more toward video success. As Joe Elliot described, "We wanted a really commercial-sounding album. We were up for the challenge in trying to make a crossover record" (Konow, 2002, p. 150). To this point, metal bands cared little for branching away from their own developed sound and style. But Def Leppard felt that letting Mutt Lange have even more control over the recording process was imperative to appealing to American ears. On 1983's *Pyromania*, Lange's slicked up, multilayered recording was miles away from *On Through the Night*. The intent was to duplicate the MTV boost *High n Dry* received by releasing catchy singles with videos that were visually engaging enough to hold a viewer's attention come chorus time. Def Leppard was also a bit savvier in terms of their fashion performances. Wanting to avoid backlash British fans for forgetting their origins, Joe Elliot made it a point to wear a British flag t-shirt for the first video, "Photograph." Subsequent videos had drummer Rick Allen wearing Union Jack shorts; there would be no doubt as to the band's origin and allegiances. Concerts would feature Elliot in his Union Jack shirt as well. For the gigs in the States, however, there was a slight alteration. As the show was nearing its close, Elliot would strip off the Union Jack to reveal a Stars and Stripes shirt much to the crowd's delight (Martyn, 1984).

Pyromania was a huge success. The frequent MTV play of the videos had increased audiences tenfold. By the close of the tour with Leppard opening for rock radio favorite Billy Squier, Leppard were outselling the headliner Squier's merchandise five to one (Beebee, 1997). *Pyromania* ended the year as the #2 record in the US trailing only Michael Jackson's record

setting *Thriller*. By the end of 1983, *Pyromania* sold 5 million copies and charted three singles. By the close of 1984, sales reached 9 million.

Twisted Sister returned to the States after *You Can't Stop Rock and Roll* tapered out with sales of roughly 200,000. For an independent label, this would be exceptional. To a major label, it was potentially worthy of being dropped. As Atlantic was not particularly supportive of Twisted Sister in the first place, the band needed a hit. 1984's *Stay Hungry* was just that. Much of its sales success is credited to the videos for singles "We're Not Gonna Take It" and "I Wanna Rock." Like Quiet Riot's videos, the Twisted videos were focused on a teen's everyday life. In each, the teen faces the wrathful abuse of an adult figure and reverts to Twisted Sister's music as sanctuary. The actor portraying the adult in both videos, Mark Metcalf, reprised his loathsome Niedermeyer character from the film *Animal House*, first as the teen's father and later as a high school teacher. The band retaliates against the adult for his abusive transgressions in acts of violence taken directly from Road Runner/Wile E. Coyote cartoons. In all, no real damage is done as the foil continually comes back for further humiliating abuse. The conquering Twisted Sister and their celebratory music were shown to provide the rebellious strength needed to overcome the tribulations of being a teen.

While the rebellion was ideal for identification and the cartoon allusions made the images seem familiar, the real success of the video was the band's outrageous appearance. The combination of Dee Snider's sneering, mascara-covered face, the bold pink and black contrast of his costume, and his frizzy, massive, permed blond hair was a perfect eye-catcher. MTV needed something visually unusual or striking to get casual viewers to stop and take notice. Twisted Sister offered both at once. The videos worked so well that parents eventually would become threatened by the violence, and Twisted Sister eventually became one of the leading targets for

metal naysayers. Carried by the strength of the videos, “We’re Not Gonna Take it” reached #21 on the singles chart. *Stay Hungry* hit #15 on the album chart and went platinum within a year of its release, reaching 2 million sales by March, 1985.

Another band that used visual appeal to stimulate their sales at this time was Motley Crüe. Over their entire career, Motley Crüe effectively balanced the successful performative practices of past bands while putting their own innovative spin. For their second record, the image moved from a more common studded leather fashion to a more radical, distinctive look. Blending costuming ideas from films like *Escape From New York* and *The Road Warrior* with a touch satanic symbology, Crüe aimed to be the ideal band to scare parents with while celebrating the collective power of youth. Stylistically, *Shout at the Devil*, released October of 1983, showed three distinct departures from the preceding album: their look, their use of anti-social lyrical themes, and their appropriation of satanic signifiers. The costuming change fostered a bleaker, more theatric appearance than before. An amalgamation of spandex, mesh, studded leather, and pseudo-armor with more elaborate, teased hair and increasingly noticeable facial makeup, the band became a staged garish spectacle in terms of constructing a performance image distinct from their everyday lives or other bands of the time.

In terms of music, the album was darker and moodier, with songs taking on themes of street violence, rebellion versus authority, and self-reliant independence. These sentiments were also framed in terms of the second major development, the explicit use of satanic signifiers. The album’s front cover featured a straight black field with an embossed pentagram as the sole, central focus. (The compact disc cover, released approximately a year later, did not have the pentagram. Rather, it showed close-ups of the band member’s faces as taken from the inside album art.) Three tracks, the album opening “In the Beginning,” the title track, and “God Bless

the Children of the Beast” specifically held direct satanic reference and extended the album’s dark mood. The inclusion of the warning line “this album may contain subliminal messages” was one more intended step at flirting with the illicit specter of evil for the album.

Retrospectively, even metal insiders have critiqued the album as being manipulative and childishly simplistic in its attempts to push the buttons of conservative America (Klosterman, 2002; Popoff 1997). At the time, however, it worked perfectly, going platinum with four months while *Too Fast For Love* rode *Shout*’s coattails to platinum status as well.

The band was an ideal metal sales package on multiple levels. They rapidly became a metal magazine favorite as band photos were visually exciting and interviews were dripping with illicit acts. The sexual exploits offered vicarious thrills. Their partying was of legendary rock star proportions. The packaged rebellion against authority figures fit a teen’s escapist dreams. The pentagrams and alleged backmasking challenged restrictive religious naysayers. Most importantly, it was youth that was deemed all powerful. After “In the Beginning” attributes the downfall of society to failed forms of adult control, Crüe declares that “those who have the youth, have the future” and induces them to “come now children of the beast, be strong, and shout at the devil.” Having secured the triad of rock mandates – sex, drugs, and generationally-empowered rock and roll, Crüe was set as a leading metal act for the future.

Nineteen eighty-four proved to be the crucial year for metal in terms of corporate backing. Having shown that megasales for relatively new bands like Quiet Riot, Def Leppard, Twisted Sister, and Motley Crüe could occur in the States, the wheels of the industry’s marketing machine began to spin. MTV was attracting advertising sponsors with metal’s teenage audience and would readily keep programming the videos to secure this line of revenue. The video exposure fueled album sales and radio requests which, in turn, fueled radio play. The greater the

exposure, the greater the potential audience could become. In 1983, metal's market share was 8%. In 1984, market share jumped to 20% (Martin & Seagrave, 1988). In 1984, twenty different metal records were certified gold or platinum. With sales being generated, major labels scrambled over themselves to sign the potential next big thing – the LA strip being the most likely source. It was an ideal situation for creating a secure niche market, if not a phenomenon.

CHAPTER III. “YOUTH GONE WILD”

This chapter explores how metal grew over the time span of 1985-1991. Particularly, the ways in which metal bands performed their professional identities on and off stage were the marketing devices used for selling metal to an initially homogenous audience which grew over time to a far greater size and far more diverse composition. As metal bands and recording industry executives initially saw metal as music for teenage males, the vast majority of metal bands created personas and products that appealed to the desires for this buying public. Specifically, bands targeted the liminality of being a teenage male – desiring control, independence, and confidence, yet structurally and experientially unable to meet these wishes. By fostering a relatively homogenous construction of metal’s subcultural definition, the music industry (both performers and record companies alike) encouraged a formulaic reference point for what would eventually serve as “authentic” in ongoing subcultural negotiations. The discursive tactic of defining metal in terms of itself and in terms of its contrast to “the other” accentuated this process.

“Boyz Are Gonna Rock”: Metal Marketing

In 1991, *How to Break into Heavy Metal (Without Getting Screwed)* was released as a straight-to-video documentary targeting a young, hopeful, heavy metal audience base dreaming of stardom for themselves (Kalikow & Rosenberg, 1991). Over the span of an hour, this video had advice from an assortment of musicians, label representatives, lawyers, and artist and repertoire people, all essentially saying the same thing: work hard enough and you’ll be the next big thing. Needless to say, this was not quite the case. Between 1983 and 1991, metal had become a dominant force within the recording industry. The countless record sales and extensive chart success, the heavy rotation on MTV, the multiple merchandising spin-offs, the

synergy between metal and other medias – all sprung from metal spawning an active, dedicated fanbase. Partially as a result of this degree of success and exposure, competition between bands and record companies for access to this market became highly competitive. The industry itself fostered the genre as a whole. By the late 1980s, the industry also became highly limited in its patience and support of metal. If a band did not take immediately, it was done (provided they got to the point of being noticed and signed to a label in the first place). This chapter serves to illustrate some of the tactics and practices used by metal bands and their labels to help create the desired popular and financial success. Through a consideration of the subculture, the industry, band construction and performances, and the context of the media world during the mid-to-late 1980s, I aim to highlight some of the ways in which metal arose, thrived, and eventually positioned itself for a grunge-influenced fall.

The key to metal's subculture and its lasting influence is based on the audience itself. Music catered to fans' interests and, as a result, shaped the normative values centering the scene. Most metal scholarship suggests that young, white, working class males made up the predominant share of the music's original fanbase (Gross, 1991; Bashe, 1985; Weinstein, 2000). As the music garnered higher exposure and took on different niches, this shifted to include higher numbers of female fans as well as more middle and upper class males (Walser, 1993; Weinstein 2000). Teens were still targeted but the loyalty of the fanbase resulted in a wider demographic spread. Those introduced to metal earlier remained metalheads, yet the growth of the metal fanbase resulted in the dilution of a specific identity marker of being a metal fan. For bands working within the metal subculture, staying attuned to the formulaic conventions of metal traditionally fostered acceptance when metal was in its earlier incarnations. As metal became more mainstream, the distance between metal's origins and more contemporary commercialized

tactics created conflict. Still, throughout metal's ongoing history, the directed push of targeting teenage males helped establish the performance standards of metal by satisfying the teenage male's desires.

Erikson (1959) suggests the teenage years as a time of negotiating one's own identity outside of being seen as solely related to one's parents. Highlighted by experimentation and plays for independence, the teen, if successful, manages to develop a stable sense of self. The next stage of development, young adulthood, focuses on issues of meaningful relationships. As the teenager gets some understanding of who he or she is, they then attempt to find other people to bond with. While this typology is primarily considered from a romantic standpoint, platonic relationships are also at issue as well. Successful development manifests itself as allowing for intimacy and interaction versus a sense of isolation from others.

Viewed from this perspective, one could consider the teenage boy caught between discovering who he is and who he is wanting to be with. The negotiation of these two questions is a period of anxiety and question, a time of uncertainty and discovery. Coupled with puberty, body changes, and ranging maturation times, the boy must come to terms with his physical body. High school careers are seen as eventually coming to an end. This raises issues of future direction: does one get a job, go to college, live at home, move out, etc. Entry into the dating world offers another opportunity for facing the unknown and potential rejection. The freedom of mobility (via the ability to drive a car) is countered by a financial dependence on parental provision of that freedom. As Alice Cooper's song "I'm Eighteen" describes, "I'm a boy and I'm a man."

"Hold On to 18": Facilitating Identification with Metal

The frustrations of negotiating the liminality of being both “boy” and “man” served as early metal’s impetus. By catering to the anxieties teenage males had and providing escapist solutions allowing for a rebuilding of self, metal was able to appease this audience in ways other forms of music could not. This was partly due to a conscious choice to foster identification to the teen while also providing performative images that fulfilled areas of teenage insecurity. Metal moved quickly to highlight its role in representing the teen. As described in Chapter Two, bands like Quiet Riot, Motley Crüe and Twisted Sister encouraged the solidarity between being a metal fan and being young. I had argued that Quiet Riot’s “Cum on Feel the Noize” video partly worked through its setting of the typical teen’s bedroom. By locating either consumption or song narratives in terms of sites for teens, metal acknowledged the teen world (which was often ignored or trivialized by older generations) and actually celebrated the teen for who he was.

Metal, particularly from 1983-1986, followed the successful lead of prior artists. As the NWOBHM used the developing metal subculture as a songwriting theme, so did subsequent metal acts. Implicit in celebrating the scene was celebrating youth and its distinctiveness from outsiders. Fancubs like Motley Crüe’s S.I.N. Club (Safety in Numbers) and Twisted Sister’s SMFFoTS (Sick Muthafuckin’ Fans of Twisted Sister) offered unity like that of the Kiss Army a few years earlier. In the case of Crüe, the club came into being with *Shout at the Devil* and its youth-oriented themes. For Twisted Sister, Dee Snider enthusiastically described the SMF origin. Others would degrade TS for their look, sound, or ideology by calling them sick mother fuckers. In a move of political appropriation, the outcast Snider wore the label as a badge of pride showing separation from the boring, conservative norm (which Snider proudly sneered during the Congressional hearing on rock lyrics). These norms were explicitly declared through the *Stay Hungry* videos – the metalheads versus the generationally separate controlling adults.

Songs commonly included calls for unity or collective strength particularly tied to youth. Def Leppard's megasuccessful *Pyromania* (1983) featured two anthemic calls for rock, "Rock of Ages" and "Rock Rock (Til You Drop)." In "Rock Rock," the teen is also reminded that "your mama don't mind what your mama don't see." Dio's "Rock and Roll Children" and "Hungry to Heaven" off *Sacred Heart* (1985) are two of his many pro-youth songs. In each, teens are specifically left isolated by the failings of an adult-controlled society. It is their youth and link to rock that proves the impetus for overcoming their situation and being independent. Bon Jovi's "Runaway" (1984) tells of a father's unwillingness to relate to his isolated daughter's penchant for excitement and rock. Keel's second record invoked *The Right to Rock* (1985): "Don't let anyone tell you, How to live your life, We won't turn it off, We won't turn it down, 'Cause it's our way of life... You got it, the right to rock." The chorus featured a common tactic of metal anthems, having a crowd of backing voices collectively singing the rebellious refrain. This would further foster a strength-in-numbers mentality. Black n Blue advised in their first single off their self-titled album (1984) to "Hold on to 18" and Y&T's "In the Name of Rock" wrote out the dream of rock stardom and status: "He was a tough fifteen, He heard a guitar scream, and he knew he'd never be the same... He played it loud, To shut the whole world out, He thought he heard the crowd scream, Calling out his name, And he showed them all, In the name of rock and roll, He stood tall" (1985).

Complementing lyrical allusions were visual ones. Dio's video for "The Last in Line" had its youthful protagonist breaking free from an auditorium designed for a *Clockwork Orange*-esque brainwashing (an image readily repeated by many metal bands through the 80s). Quiet Riot's videos for "Metal Health (Bang Your Head)" and the follow-up album, *Condition Critical*'s (1984) singles, "Mama Weer All Crazee Now" and "Party All Night" were teen-

loaded. For the first, the iron mask captured by the metal teen in “Cum on Feel the Noize” returns. Here, the mask’s wearer turns out to be a fluctuating persona between the teen and singer Kevin DuBrow. The masked person sits in a padded room having been institutionalized. Lyrically, the song recounts his trouble fitting: “mama says I never ever mind her” and “teacher says I’m one big pain.” As the song progresses, the teen escapes and frees his fellow captured youth from what is suggested as an asylum for other mask-wearing metal fans deemed “crazy” by everyday society. *Condition Critical* attempted to repeat *Metal Health*’s formula exactly right down to the Slade coversong of “Mama Weer...” and anthems like “Sign of the Times” and the aforementioned “Party All Night.” For the “Craze” video, DuBrow grows larger than life through metal’s power (only to be dwarfed by the mask-clad teen from the previous videos). “Party All Night” showed a house party breaking out when high school geeks call a pizza place for their illicit highjinks while parents are away. The arrival of metalheads with booze, babes, and destruction soon convert the geeks to metal’s hedonistic side.

Schools were common sites for metal identification. Following the historical influence of Alice Cooper’s classic “School’s Out,” writing a song or filming a video about conquering high school miseries automatically accessed teens. In some songs, education was condemned as ignoring the teen’s concerns in favor of adult wishes. Sacred Reich’s “Administrative Decisions” serves as one of the more caustic examples of this: “Faculty not ready to accept our needs, Schools geared to what parents want to see, Knowledge comes second to doing what you’re told, We deny you exist we have an image to uphold” (1987). In other cases, the mundane school day was escaped through introducing sexuality into the normally stilted classroom. Krokus covered “School’s Out” on *Change of Address* (1986), an album whose covert art featured an exploding high school. In the video for the song, a student’s daydreams conjure up a

lingerie clad model. Venom's "Teacher's Pet" (1982) usurped the authority of the teacher by turning her into a sexual conquest. Cover art for S.A.D.O.'s *Dirty Fantasy* (1988) transformed the schoolmarm teacher into a leather-wearing dominatrix (see Figure 6). Van Halen's "Hot For Teacher" (1984) and its video turned the otherwise tedious world of education into the equivalent of a strip club/beauty pageant as teachers like Miss Chemistry flaunt their pedagogy for an appreciative male classroom. The dominatrix theme was also utilized as detention gets portrayed as a cell overseen by a whip-wielding, sneering captor in a black lace negligee. The teacher might still represent a threat, but the sexualization of that threat offers an allure of fantasy.

W.A.S.P. deliberately created the first side of their debut self-titled record (1984) to cater to teens. Commonly dubbed the "American" side, the songs are either celebrations of youthful desire for independence, rebellious anthems against authority figures, or sexual extravagance. Blackie Lawless admitted in interviews that since the American audience was likely to be teens, these songs were intentionally written to their tastes whereas the record's flip side catered to the darker, more mature British audience raised on NWOBHM and punk. "I Wanna Be Somebody" centers on accumulating material wealth and experiential satisfaction without having to "nine to five my fingers to the bone" yet "never getting old." "L.O.V.E. Machine" and "The Flame" are sex songs. "B.A.D." addresses problems with parents. The last song on the record is "School Daze." Here, Blackie predictably targets academics. The chorus offers, "school daze, I'm here doin' time, School daze, my age is my crime, School daze, school daze, I'm attending hell high." In the verses, Blackie understands the teen's difficulties. In the "textbook mad-house" and "juvenile jail" in which "I'm here locked up in a cage," Blackie explains "I pledge no allegiance" because "Nobody here is understanding me." Hence, "I'm dying here and trying to get free."

The frustrations of high school are explicitly declared in full detail. Blackie even provides a hope for escape: “A firebell is ringin' hell and I'd sure love to see it blaze - BURN IT DOWN!!”

Finally, someone seemed to understand what was going on for teenage males. Not only that, but they were providing ways to safely rebel or feel good or at least not be ashamed about struggling through the awkward pains of growing up. W.A.S.P. expressed another version of teenage male life quite directly in the song “Sex Drive” off the follow up *The Last Command* (1985): “You’re lyin’ in bed and it runs through your head, Cause you can’t get it off your mind, You’ve been thinkin’ pink and you’re losing sleep, The rush is almost all you can stand now, You feel it gettin’ hard, your cock starts to throb, It’s body language you understand, I’m talking ‘bout a sex drive.” It was in this regard that metal was specifically constructed. The music, while constructed and performed by older adults, related to the teenage male and the tribulations of his being. Identifying with the performer and idolizing their lifestyle’s privilege fostered the adult side of the liminality. The texts offered direct relations to everyday life and its many struggles. In particular, issues of control and power were emphasized highlighting masculine strength and dominance.

“Bad Boys Running Wild”: The Homosocial World of Metal

As teenage males were uncertain of their own standing, the creation of a homosocial world to engage in was one solution for dealing with development. Brake (1980) suggests that most subcultures function as male bastions wherein members are able to act without the fear of reproach or threat of women. Walser (1993) suggests this as occurring within metal as women are exscripted from the scene. To prevent problematic issues of homoeroticism from arising, women are used as tokens to appease male sexual interests yet are scripted in such a way such that they hold little or no power. Women simply exist as beautiful playthings to be enjoyed by

the rock stars and the voyeuristic teen males identifying with the musicians. The sexual confidence and simulated prowess serves as a wishful surrogate for the metal fan desperately attempting to find security in his own life. Song lyrics, album art, videos, publicity spreads and media coverage all work in establishing this exscription. While Chapter Four will discuss negotiations of masculinities with metal more specifically, Chapter Five will explore the role of women as musical performers in metal in greater detail.

For the teenage male, the source of identification was the band itself. What they did on stage, in videos, said in magazines, and claimed to do in the backs of busses and limos contributed to this idealized, homosocial world where men could be men without those pesky life challenges like rejection, poverty, or authority figures. Knowing this full well, the team of musicians and marketers sought to exploit these insecurities to full advantage (and in some cases, full pocketbooks). One version of this was to simply highlight the hedonistic. Showing life as a raucous party free from care or responsibility provided an outline from the doldrums of being the liminal teen. This becomes important to consider both in terms of its marketing functionality but also its potential sociocultural impact.

In one of the two main academic works on metal, Deena Weinstein (2000) suggests “the themes of heavy metal fall into two clusters defined by a binary opposition: Dionysian and Chaotic” (p. 35). Where Chaos “refers to the absence or destruction of relationships, which can run from confusion, through various forms of anomaly, conflict, and violence, to death” (p. 38), according to Weinstein, “Dionysian experience celebrates the vital forces of life through various forms of ecstasy. It is embodied by the unholy trinity of sex, drugs, and rock and roll.” Additionally, it “is juxtaposed to a strong emotional involvement in all that challenges the order and hegemony of everyday life: the monsters, the underworld and hell, the grotesque and

horrifying, disasters, mayhem, carnage, injustice, death and rebellion” (p. 35). I find her constructions of the Chaotic/Dionysian binary somewhat limiting. In terms of identity construction, the larger-than-life rock star serves as a vehicle for making the performer a consumptive product for audiences to embrace. If one considers metal as serving as a means to fulfill otherwise unfulfilled wishes and desires, the performance of being larger-than-life becomes imperative to maintain the draw. Consistently, bands would also fluctuate between positions of hedonistic and emotional susceptibility – a second subtlety Weinstein’s binary seems to omit. For the liminal teen, each form offers some degree of personal identification. The key to this duality’s effectiveness relies upon the ability to reclaim an idealized image – acknowledging challenge but succeeding in the end. A third concern stems from her conceptualization as metal as a counter hegemonic discourse.. While, for example, a rockstar’s sexually promiscuity might counter traditional constructions of monogamy, the oft-mentioned sexism of heavy metal certainly holds power in terms of gender and sexuality. Consider Vince Neil of Motley Crüe. As described by Konow (2002), “Neil’s main priorities were getting paid and getting laid... Neil wanted to be like ... Hugh Hefner when he got old: living in a big mansion with plenty of money and young chicks around” (p. 156). Despite the tours and groupie indulgences, the stripclubs, and the string of relationships, Neil did eventually get married (and remarried... and remarried) and start a family as did most of his metal colleagues. Should Neil have achieved his Hefnerian goal, there is still a hegemonic intent behind this pursuit, that of privileging the hypermasculine fantasy of women sexually submitting to the whims of a single male’s desire. One final consideration, I argue that the consumed identities of sex, drugs, and rock and roll, even at their simplest of levels, serve as sites for the constructions of meaning. For me as a teen, reading of the sexual satisfactions of my idols served as projected vicarious wishes

for someone struggling to become romantically or sexually active. By identifying with the tales of debauchery, I could escape the mundane world of high school hallways and awkward phone calls by seeing the power the metal could provide. This would also extend to rockstars having affairs with models or porn stars as tokens of vicariously attaining the unattainable or imagining the sexual potency of such couplings.

“Animal (I Fuck Like a Beast)”: Hypermasculinity, Sex, and Metal

As such, the construction of hypermasculinity in relation to sexuality is a telling theme of heavy metal. Particularly for the most androgynous of bands, the image of heterosexual sexual prowess mattered. Granted, androgyny has been present in rock and roll and pop music for some time and has been rightly considered as blurring the traditional cockrock/teenybop dichotomy and traditional masculinity constructions (Martin, 1995). One distinction between the androgyny of Adam Ant, Robert Smith from the Cure, or early David Bowie and metal bands like Poison or Motley Crüe was the conscious performance manipulations that accompanied the fashions. For those metal bands that had confused some of the traditional markers of gender image via hair, clothing, and make-up, compensatory steps were almost always taken to reestablish one's sexual credibility. When discussing metal, Denski and Sholle (1992) argue it is the performance of sexuality that becomes the grounds for acceptance or dismissal thereby establishing a Foucauldian parameter of judgment and censor. Though they acknowledge that history plays a significant role in establishing this code, Denski and Sholle offer little exploration of how metal's history achieved this state. I argue that it is specifically because of this developed history that when sexuality markers become potentially problematic, compensatory signifiers become necessary for resolving any incongruity.

Following Motley Crüe's successful embrace of androgyny for 1985's *Theatre of Pain*, a relatively short-lived scene based on increasing androgyny arose with Poison being its champions. London glam metal band Tigertailz tried to follow Poison's lead by using extravagant image as their attention-gathering hook. Their 1987 debut record *Young and Crazy*'s cover photo shows the band members in full glam regalia with pouty, pinkish red lips and 6 inch tall hair (see Figure 7). On the record, three blatant sex songs offered rebuttal to claims of the band's glam appearance being gay or less than fully heteronormative. In all three songs, the lyrics tell of a young woman gladly providing whatever sexual wishes were desired and always remaining ready for more. The inner sleeve's art was a cartoon rendering of the band with Steevi Jaimz holding a liquor bottle in one hand and a pert-breasted lass in the other (see Figure 8). This parallels Poison's use of music videos to supplement their usual magazine interview snippets as tools for reestablishing hegemonic masculine status.

For mainstream bands using a more conventional metal strategy like Cinderella, the pattern reoccurs. Cinderella frequently recounted the story behind their band's name as being derived from the 1977 soft-core porn movie. Instead of leaving impressions of Disney or fairy tales, I see this as a version of constructing the image of homosocial behavior wherein "boys will be boys," watching late night Cinemax movies showing countless unclad breasts. Their debut single, "Shake Me" told of meeting and satisfying a very sexually charged woman "all night long" and "still going strong" in the subsequent morning. In case any additional emphasis was needed, the lyrics inform that throughout the ongoing relationship, "it sure felt tight" despite multiple rambunctious sessions and sexual prowess was demonstrated by her "comin' in the middle of the night screaming harder."

The tendency for exploitation of female sexuality by male band members was rampant in metal. Dangerous Toys infamous “Sport’n a Woody” pre-dates Rohypnol by a few years: “Well I wish you were sedated, So I could at least penetrate you, For an hour, maybe three yeah” (1989). Skid Row’s tribute to groupies offered advice for after the dalliance, “Get the Fuck Out” (1991). Many bands including Guns n Roses and Poison took advantage of the generosity of female fans before signing to major labels. Once signed, inevitably they would gloatingly recount stories of callously emptying refrigerators, having sex, stealing goods, and walking out to find the next available mark. Dokken admittedly went out of their way to try and live up to the rock star image they thought was necessary. Guitarist George Lynch related, “There was a lot of pressure around you to emulate what a rock star is supposed to be. The stereotype was alive and well then. I was pretty weak-spirited. I’m ashamed of myself that I followed along so easily” (Konow, 2002, p. 162).

A partial explanation to this stems from attempting to lay claim to rock/metal authenticity. The privilege of rock celebrity and abusing its power has been constructed as a marker of authenticity, something Weinstein (2000) sees as crucial to the metal subculture. Though this will be covered more thoroughly in Chapter Four, a brief mention is necessary here. One must be seen as a true rock star for credibility purposes. A story like Led Zeppelin’s use of a mudshark as sexual device for a groupie, no matter how factual or fallacious, creates the mythic marauder to threaten the necessary chastity of youthful women. Followers, thereby, must perform this threat so that, as Motley Crüe’s “Bad Boy Boogie” (1987) suggests, the need to “lock up your daughters when the Motleys hit the road” becomes plausible. As another Crüe lyric from the same album further explains, “for sex and sex I’d sell my soul, all in the name of

rock and roll.” By repeatedly expressing their libidos in song, video, and publicity, a band like Motley Crüe fulfills the stereotype George Lynch referred to.

Misogyny additionally contributes to the stereotype. Tales of filming sex with groupies without their knowing, degrading treatment of sexual partners, and having sex with multiple women concurrently were common. The woman and her rights, privacy, or feelings were often disregarded in lieu of masculine desire or privilege. Lyrically, sexual violence in songs like Crüe’s “Too Young to Fall in Love” (“Well now I’m killing you, watch your face turning blue” [1984]), and Skid Row’s “Psycho Love” (“Legs at ten and two, Chain her down that’s what you do, King tut and snake-eyed slut, In the pink but screamin’ blue” [1991]) might not have been the norm for sex songs, but were still fairly common within glam and mainstream metal. As many critics of metal have noted, women in videos were quite commonly reduced to the objectified status of being eye candy for teenage boys (Jhally, 1997; Vincent, 1989). This could also include performances of some female metal musicians, as will be addressed in Chapter 5.

In considering image as constructed for a primarily teenage male audience base, the insecurity of sexual experience and the potential threat of rejection might also explain the frequency of misogyny. In describing W.A.S.P.’s early stagemuscle inclusion of the simulated killing of a scantily-clad woman chained to a rack, Blackie Lawless notes, “I never get tired of looking at the faces in the audience; it’s every 15-year-old’s dream, hell it’s every grown man’s dream” (Millar, 1984).

The early-to-mid 1980s has been suggested as a time of the emasculation of traditional patriarchy (Falludi, 1991; Robinson, 1994). As was argued in Chapter Two, rock music in the late 70s and early 80s had grown safe and stagnant with regard to its ability to provoke and inspire. Metal rekindled overt masculinity performances in an era that found men eating quiche,

wearing pastels, and becoming sensitive, soft “girlie men” (a term and concept that metalhead favorite Arnold Schwarzenegger resurrected as recently as 2005). At an extreme, Artch’s (1989) “Power to the Man” cites the women’s liberation movement as a “tyranny” in which a man’s right to drink, have sex, and consume porn at will has been shockingly curtailed. The metal horror film *Trick or Treat* (Smith, 1986) exemplifies the emasculation occurring at this time. The film characterizes its protagonist, Ragman, as the emotionally neglected teenage child of a single mom. No male role model is there at home for the boy. Rather, the closest immediate male figure in Ragman’s life is the mother’s boyfriend, a ridiculous scrawny, balding bespectacled man in his fifties. To extend the image, the boyfriend is shown pathetically dressed as Rambo for Halloween. The juxtaposition between the comicbook hypermasculine Rambo character and the weakling acting out the fantasy of masculinity becomes all the more evident. Ragman uses music and the fictional metal icon of Sammi Curr as a respite. The rise of the Yuppie and the sensitive 80s man placed cockrock machismo in a tenuous position. As such, some have argued that the rise of violent, action heroes like Sylvester Stallone and Arnold Schwarzenegger aimed to compensate for this loss. Through metal, creating a boys’/men’s subcultural space espousing simplified, fantastic versions of hypermasculine strength and security (as do the action movies) in a world professing feminist rights compliments the ability to resolve adolescent gender and sexual insecurities.

One version of this was to bring attention to controlling the phallus. As Bordo (1999) describes, the relationship between the phallic and the phallus is symbolic much like the heart as functional organ and metaphoric symbol. To be able to manage the phallic in competent ways can symbolically generate the underlying power loaded into the phallus. In charting the history of phallic power, Bordo finds the phallus’s power derives from the gods. To control the phallus

is not merely human; it is to be godlike (Bordo, 1999). Viewed in terms of performativity, the male metal performer assumes a role in which he becomes the target of gaze. The spectacular nature of the display, however, is empowering rather than being submissively controlled by the audience. The combination of a raised stage, focused lighting, and the protective barrier of bouncers and backstage passes indicate the musician's position of privilege and separation from the masses. To perform powerfully offers chance to fulfill the metal code of being larger than life, of earning the label of rock god.

Mainstream metal, following its cockrock origins highlighted the male as a visual spectacle. In the past, the tight trousers were denim. During the late 70s, they were a leather second skin. By the mid 80s, all-revealing spandex became the norm. Similar to how Klein (1993) describes bodybuilders, early mainstream metal performers "project an image to the outside world... that cries out 'Look at me!'" Their look, their clothes, their photos, their gait are nothing more than attempts to approximate, via exaggeration, conventional notions of masculinity" (p. 247). Wherein the penis has been socially constructed to be hidden, overt display of the masculine body is, as Bordo (1999) suggests, the equivalent of the endowed male showing off in the locker room: "the guy intimidated by the large penis of the cocksmen... isn't afraid of what the burly penis could do to him in a fight; but he probably does tend to imagine that the guy who flaunts it so brazenly has the 'balls' to clobber him" (p. 88). Metal artists knowingly draw attention to their crotch, as did Elvis' shaking so many years before, but in this case, the subtlety of insinuation is far removed.

Spandex, while practical in terms of facilitating the movement necessary on stage, offered a visual spectacle suitable for signifying the stage as a privileged performative space. It was transgressive by showing the body, yet coded to be read as acceptable for its conditional purpose,

that of being a rockstar much the same way as a Speedo works for the competitive swimmer but might be problematic for some at the local public pool. Often, the crotch was framed by either alternating colors of the fabric or by wearing chaps over the spandex. For mainstream metal bands, the fashion norm of spandex became manipulated as well. Not wanting to appear lacking, many bands had additional pouches sewn into the crotch of their stage pants to appear larger than natural (Konow, 2002). Others, like Ratt's Stephen Pearcy used socks (Konow, 2002) bringing validity to *This is Spinal Tap*'s (Reiner, 1984) cucumber gag created years earlier. Apparently, metal performers didn't view a separation between the phallus, the phallic, and what could be done with it. Even today, the Metal Sludge website's Penis Chart provides accounts (and criticisms) of rockstars' anatomies (and their performances) in measured detail.

The codpiece served as another fashion tool for mainstream metal. Serving the dual purpose of literally covering the spandex-exposed penis while drawing attention to the groin, the codpiece has its origins in medieval armor. There, the protective qualities moved from mere function to phallic symbolism (Ucko, 1969; Vincent, 2003). In metal, ranging from Alice Cooper's athletic cup to Lizzie Borden's diaper-sized plastic shield, codpieces normally contrasted in color from the rest of the outfit, notably accentuating the difference (see Figure 9). In its most extreme instance, Blackie Lawless fabricated a codpiece that would fire a fifteen foot stream of sparks out from his crotch so that even the furthest arena seat recognized his orgasmic intent (see Figure 10).

The most readily recognized phallic symbol in metal is that of the guitar, the music's main instrumental component. As Kiss' Paul Stanley describes, "heavy metal is the true rock and roll of the 80s. And rock and roll was basically music made by people who were thinking with their crotches" (Spheeris, 1987). From the extension of the neck and the headstock to being worn at

groin level, the guitar is a fairly obvious phallic symbol. Musicians on stage or in videos frequently thrust hips and gesture laviciously with their instruments. A common move is to approach a fellow bandmate from behind and place the guitar neck between the other person's legs. During guitar solos, it is common for a note to be sustained while extending the guitar out from the torso. The grimaced face and strained body hold orgasmic resemblances. By rotating the guitar, a guitarist can point the neck directly out toward the audience in a form of phallic challenge. With the pickhand in continuous motion, the guitar is slowly aimed at segments of the crowd visually resembling a machine gun sweep or a target shoot. As an example, in the "Yankee Rose" video (1986), David Lee Roth raises a giant inflatable microphone up from his crotch as a mock erection. Later, Steve Vai repeatedly slams his guitar downward, the neck sliding through his hand resembling penetration. Between the sonic power the guitar creates and the gesticulation, the guitar player portrays phallic power and receives the crowd's adulation for mastering that power. This coincides with Steve Waksman's (1999) conception of the guitar as technophallus. Here, Waksman posits the guitar and its ability to be played with amplified power and virtuous skill symbolically is loaded and subsequently read as being heteromasculinely sexually empowered.

"Too Young to Die, Too Drunk to Live": Hypermasculinity, Partying, and Metal

The sexualized perception of empowerment afforded through vicarious experience offered one form of identity escapism for the teen. The second component in Weinstein's unholy trinity, drugs and alcohol, works on multiple identity levels, wavering between hedonism, rebellion, and hegemony. The fan could engage in substance use for oneself and directly access the experiences, or one could identify with the rockstar and their idealized, simplified world once again. The long-running image of a rock star is that of the hard partying miscreant. Referring

back to the role of perceived authenticity, for fans meeting a rock star, the performance does not end once the stage show is completed. One expects the wild parties described in the magazines and the never-ending supply of booze that goes with it. Many metal bands embraced this legacy with open arms.

Bands from all the different metal subcategories (excepting Christian metal) made it a point to highlight their alcohol consumption. Van Halen's Michael Anthony had a custom-made bass resembling a Jack Daniels bottle fabricated. Lita Ford followed suit with a Stolichnaya vodka guitar. Metallica commonly referred to themselves as Alcoholica. Most Guns n Roses pictures featured scores of empty bottles and Slash's Black Death vodka t-shirt. Tankard built a career on writing songs praising drunkenness and the Dogs D'Amour proudly titled their third record *Graveyard of Empty Bottles* (1989). Bon Jovi recorded a version of "Love for Sale" (1988) and Warrant covered "Train, Train" (1990). These recordings were respectively attributed in liner notes to the result of many hours of drinking during the studio session. One final example seems telling. AC/DC's "Have a Drink on Me" (1980), was a posthumous tribute to Bon Scott, their former lead singer who literally drank himself to death.

Getting drunk was considered a good time, a release, and a way to indulge in the excesses a rock and roll lifestyle provided. To the teen, these practices were a way of expressing "adulthood." For the United States, the legal drinking age of twenty-one marked alcohol consumption as being for adults. The teen drinking, much like teens smoking cigarettes, was an act of mimicry and desired association. If Nikki Sixx says his bottle of Jack Daniels is his best friend, than it must be good to do. It also is an act in which control over the body takes place. One has the ability to manipulate the body by flooding it with depressants. This might be comparable to claims of anorexic teen girls feeling a sense of control over their body through

their strict dieting practices. With beer, whiskey, and cheap wine as the drinks of choice, one can infer class and masculine influence as well. Only macho drinks would be praised and consumed, with wines like *Night Train* and beer catering to limited monetary budgets. Stories of excessive consumption could become badges of status both for bands and the teenage fan alike, on par with drinking contests or fuzzily recount stories of getting “fucked up.”

While booze seemed palatable to metal bands, other drugs were approached a bit more cautiously. For the teenage fan growing up in a “Just Say No” era, booze seemed far more pragmatic than cocaine or heroin. The illicitness of dealers and the prohibitive cost made getting stoned far less plausible than getting an older buddy to pick up a twelve-pack or a fifth. For performers, access to drugs, be it in terms of wealth, connections, or celebrity expectations, greatly increased. As such, many bands indulged wholeheartedly but rarely did so for the public’s viewing. Rather, drugs became a performative act when rehab ensued.

As with most things in metal, Motley Crüe was at the front end of drug use. The liner notes for *Shout at the Devil* (1984) report that the album was recorded via “Foster’s Lager, Budweiser, Bombay Gin, lots of Jack Daniels, Kahlua and Brandy, Quackers and Krell, and Wild Women!” The pseudonyms of Quackers (Quaaludes) and Krell (cocaine) offered minimal but enough distancing to shield outright endorsement and the retaliatory criticism endorsement would provoke. In magazine coverage, a tour story of one-upmanship between Ozzy Osbourne and Crüe recounted competitions for snorting cocaine. Ozzy won when, immensely stoned, he snorted a trail of ants, an act even too debauched for Crüe’s liberal standards. The fun and games of drugs quickly transformed into cautionary tales. During a three night binge party, Vince Neil’s beer run was abruptly terminated in a car wreck that left three people dead. Community service, jail time, a fine, and fan backlash sent the Crüe vocalist to rehab.

Meanwhile, Crüe bassist Nikki Sixx overdosed on heroin twice. The second time, he was pronounced legally dead and had to be revived via an adrenaline shot to the heart. While Sixx still revels in telling this story of living fast, he also acknowledges his stupidity in taking careless risks and falling prey to the clichéd trappings of rock.

The iconic band Aerosmith revived their career in the mid 1980s by aligning itself with the metal scene. Their well documented past of cocaine and heroin abuse – band leaders Stephen Tyler and Joe Perry well deserved their “Toxic Twins” nickname – was frequently recounted as the band professed the effectiveness of 12-step programs and being sober. Many American bands cited Aerosmith as influences and potentially learned from their mistakes. Young bands hoping for increased exposure by touring with Aerosmith would have to agree that any contact between the band and Aerosmith on the tour would remain drug and alcohol free. Lyrically, Aerosmith regularly referenced the hardships of dependence and its debilitating effects. The band also was an enthusiastic contributor to the Rock Against Drugs public service project.

The Rock Against Drugs campaign (1986-1990) featured many metal performers giving short 15 second testimonials of how they either didn’t do drugs or had learned harsh lessons from their past experimentation. The clips were frequently shown on MTV and were tagged onto the end of some home video tapes such as the *Hard n Heavy* video magazine series. Most interviews for *Hard n Heavy* addressed drug use; the vast majority of responses were critical in nature. Risk of dependence or the debilitating effects on musical performance were the most common rationales given for avoiding drugs. This was, in some instances, sheer lip service. The Make a Difference Foundation was devised to heighten substance abuse awareness and sponsor prevention and rehabilitation programs. The reality behind the foundation was a plea bargain to keep Motley Crüe and Bon Jovi manager Doc McGhee out of jail for smuggling a large quantity

of marijuana into the country (Lee et al, 2001). A number of bands contributed cover songs to an album whose proceeds would go to the Foundation. These same bands would also take part in the Foundation's Moscow Music Peace Festival, the first major concert staged in the Soviet Union. As acknowledged by some participants, on camera the bands spoke of being sober. Off camera, the entire trip was a drug and alcohol fueled debacle. Christie (2003) relates how the metal media enabled this hypocrisy. He quotes a journalist for *Circus* as saying, "Mostly we were writing about the positive stuff and not writing a lot of dirt, but we saw all kinds of stuff that didn't go into the articles" (p. 227).

One possible explanation for metal's reluctance to publicize drug use was simple pragmatism. As heavy metal was becoming a more prevalent entertainment, it also was becoming more the subject of criticism from parents, government officials, and religious leaders. By publicly declaring drugs harmful, metal musicians defused one potential publicity bomb (though many others remained). This also sat well with the labels and their large corporate backing whose interests in political lobbying could and would be served by playing along with drug awareness rhetoric. Since metal was already being viewed as child corrupter #1, blatant drug use would bring even more scrutiny upon any band touring. Being under the watchful eye of law enforcement or being subject to extensive searches when crossing borders was made all the more difficult if a band carried the reputation as drug users.

Practicality also related to performing on stage. Marijuana tended to subdue, and metal stage shows were certainly not subdued. Weinstein (2000) mentions some musicians relied upon heroin as a means to combat the anxiety of performing live. From an image standpoint, the larger-than-life metal god could hardly afford to mention a frailty like stage fright. As a corollary, not being able to adjust to the changeover from the arousal of being on stage to its

absence has been suggested as reason for drug use – Alice Cooper as one such example (Cooper & Gaines, 1976). Again, for metal, where performing hypermasculinity is strived for, to publicly suggest trouble in compensating would appear as a weakness. As Walser (1993) notes, metal musicianship showed a considerable increase in intricacy as metal matured. Being under the influence hindered the valued musical performance, and one would not want to risk appearing inept on stage. Damaging the musical product because of drug abuse was commonly given as a reason for musician's dismissal from a band though the face-saving “musical differences” was often publicly announced.

Concern over losing face with fans themselves also reduced the likelihood for announcing drug use. When the strongly pro-alcohol Metallica released the *Cliff 'Em All* (Erin & Freel, 1987) video as a posthumous tribute to their fallen bass player Cliff Burton, the band debated about including footage of Burton smoking marijuana. The footage was included with the justification that it was part of Burton's lifestyle. The fanbase had shown no prior resistance to the band's alcoholic endeavors. However, the pot smoking brought on an immediate backlash from fans in the forms of forum letters to metal magazines, letters to the band's fanclub and to the band itself, and, in some extreme cases, record and merchandise burnings.

Thrash was particularly, but at times hypocritically, anti-drug. Metallica's third record, *Master of Puppets* (1986) went gold and broke into the Top 100 despite having no video for MTV and little to no radio airplay. The title track was an explicit condemnation of cocaine addiction and the debilitating control the drug holds over the abuser. Lars Ulrich, Metallica's drummer, however, has been well documented as a long time cocaine user. Megadeth had a string of addictions and lineup changes yet still included “Mary Jane”, a song about madness with a less than subtle problematization of marijuana, on their third record, *So Far, So Good... So*

What ! (1988). More genuinely, Anthrax (1987) condemned addiction with the scathing “Efilnikufesin (N.F.L.). Annihilator records had an anti-drug statement printed in the liner notes, and Roadrunner Records, a thrash independent label, added an anti-drug label on their releases.

“Fight for Rock”: Hypermasculinity, Independency, and Metal

Another area of power and control targeting the teen male would be claims for independence from authority figures. Rebellion against parents or law enforcement served as a means of declaring one’s distinct role in society. For the liminal teen struggling to come to terms with exactly who he was, metal offered strong, secure personas to identify with. Being restrained by the dictates of others was the reality of everyday life, be it as a minor, a student, an offspring, or an employee. But, in metal, complaints against teachers, parents, or cops could be safely expressed and a fantasy world of teen control or teen status could (temporarily) replace the real, underprivileged one. This also complements rock’s longstanding status as rebellious, challenging the ways of the generations past. One such example occurs in Megadeth’s “Peace Sells” video. Midway through the song, the video cuts to a scene depicting a straggly-haired teen watching videos. The gruff, disheveled father barges in, changes the channel, and edicts “turn that garbage off. I want to watch the news.” The boy responds scowling, “this is the news” and switches back to Megadeth’s music. The family room is reappropriated as a teen’s outlet to life and immediate control rather than succumb to parental whim.

As described earlier, metal bands’ choice to make song references to settings familiar to teens served as an identification facilitator. Casting the school as a place of mundane subservience certainly worked. Being able to usurp that authority was even better as was seen in the first release on *Theatre of Pain* (1985), Motley Crüe’s “Smokin’ in the Boys Room” video. The metalhead teen has his homework stolen by a dog. After the teacher (portrayed by Nancy

Parsons, the woman who played Beulah Balbricker in *Porky's*) refuses his excuse and believes him to be lying, the teen is sent to the principal's office (portrayed by Michael Berryman, known for his role in *The Hills Have Eyes*) where he is subjected to a paddling. After the humiliation of punishment, he seeks refuge in the bathroom and queries to a mirror, "Why doesn't anybody ever see my side of things?" Crüe appears in the mirror and pulls the boy into an alternate, parallel world. The school workers now wear military uniforms, video cameras keep watch over everything, the students are wired to tv screens and headphones whose power source is labeled "conform," and the doors are those of jail cells. Prom has an elderly man playing accordion to which dancers move robotically. Crüe takes over the stage and the students begin rocking of their own accord. Having shown the teen the power of rebellion, he is cast back to reality. The principal appears in the bathroom holding the graded homework (an "A") and offers an apology. The teen rips the paper in half, throws it into the principal's face, and leaves the room, pausing on the way out to retort, "Now maybe they'll see my side of things."

The video serves to epitomize the ways in which high school authority is undermined. Everything about the school is either ridiculed (the appearances of the faculty, the paddle labeled as "the board of education"), or negatively exaggerated (the uniforms, the jail motif, the Big Brother-esque panopticon and the conformity of instruction). While Kaplan (1987) makes many of the same observations of the video, she explains the video as carnivalesque by showing a "crazy" world of the "grotesque in which all bourgeois restraints are released" (p. 69). While I agree that inversion does occur, it is not so much as a free-for-all but a symbolic projection of redemption for a teen's wrongful punishment. The teen isn't necessarily breaking rules (he was honest after all, plus he did "A" work – conformance acts in and of themselves) so much as the

rule structure fails him. It is the lack of personal acknowledgment, his silenced voice, that prompts the rebellion.

As the LA bands became increasingly popular, earlier established metal bands commonly appropriated LA metal tactics. Judas Priest's *Turbo* (1986) saw a marked shift of fashion, musical tone, and lyrical themes from their previous releases. The pursuit of mainstream metal fans found a synthesized guitar tone, sequined spandex replacing the studded leather, and more teen-oriented songwriting. The most blatant of these songs was "Parental Guidance." Representative of the song is its second verse feeding into the chorus: "Every day you scream at me, To turn the music low, Well if you keep on screaming, You'll make me deaf you know. You always chew me out, because I stay out late, Until your three-piece suit comes back in date Get one thing straight ,We don't need no, No no no, Parental guidance here." On a rhetorical level, the common choice of metal bands to intentionally misspell their band names, song titles, or words in their lyrics or liner notes – or in this case break grammar conventions with the double negative – serves to defy "proper" expectations.

Another, slightly more subtle way to market independence through rebellion was to break social norms. Again, the listener or viewer could experience these things without necessarily having to take full responsibility – it was the band doing the real transgression. The secondary consumption of this rebellion simply expressed the wishes that were there. Breeching taboos, such as using profanity, showing nudity in videos, flaunting traditional decorum, or showing irreverence for figures or institutions made up of generationally removed individuals served such a purpose. While videos were a great means of publicizing a band and the main tool for instigating record sales, a secondary market involving repackaging the videos and selling them unexpectedly resulted. These home videos commonly would include brief amounts of extra

footage that would not have to be catered to television standards. Interview snippets could allow the band to say “fuck” or complain about MTV’s restrictive practices. “Uncensored” videos peaked interest by showing a cut of the video containing something presumed as problematic to the censors (in some cases, this was the case; in others, the video would never be intended for MTV or other such media outlets but the rhetoric of being censored by regulatory vehicles proved useful). Metal video magazines like *Hard n Heavy* and *Metalhead* were available for rental or home sale and served a similar purpose. By using a straight-to-video distribution, these magazines avoided rating systems or age restrictions on purchasing making the inclusion of illicit material (predominantly mentioned on the videos’ outside packaging) all the more enticing.

Inevitably, if something could piss off parents, metal found a way to put it to use. Sheer volume was one useful tool. First off, volume complemented the value of performing hypermasculine power that metal music represented. Then, playing upon the tendency for angry parents to complain about volume, metal prompted teens to turn it up and framed the use of this power as a rebellious act. Capitalizing on the generational distancing of volume, Autograph inserted the by-then clichéd “if it’s too loud, then you’re too old” into the chorus of 1987’s “Loud and Clear.” Twisted Sister referenced this in “I Wanna Rock” and as Manowar declared on “All Men Play on Ten” from the *Sign of the Hammer* (1984) album : “I made a rock-n-roll sin, When I tried giving in, to make money had to turn down loud, They said, "Why be proud, don't play so loud, Be like us and get a sound that's real thin, Wear a polyester suit, act happy, look cute, get a haircut, And buy small gear, That's when I turned to them and said, hold it, right there... All men play on ten, never gonna turn down again.” The sheer volume by which the music was designed – guitars distorted through stacks of Marshall amps, pounding drum sets,

and either banshee wails or guttural rumbles for vocals – worked to emphasize the extremes to which the music was being taken. Symbolically, the loin-cloth wearing, bodybuilder-physiquest Manowar’s reluctance to use “small gear” also demonstrates the phallic power of sound and size. “Bigger, stronger, faster, louder” became a credo by which bands would base their design and performance style. AC/DC’s use of cannons on *For Those About to Rock* (1982), the extravagant pyrotechnic displays of stage performances, Manowar setting the Guinness Record for loudest stage performance, and Spinal Tap’s parody of Marshall’s “going to eleven” all serve as examples in which power through extremes was pursued.

“Choir of the Damned”: Satanic Imagery in Metal

Aside from sex, the taboo that caused the most uproar was metal’s use of satanic imagery. Ranging back to the early blues legend of Robert Johnson selling his soul at the crossroads, the mysticism and power perceived in evil has been utilized for performer gain, be it notoriety, image, belief, or novelty. Heavy metal, especially during its growth and run of mainstream success during the mid 1980s, displayed satanic imagery in new, visible, and blatant ways that previous practices had shied away from. Use of inverted crosses, pentagrams, goat’s heads, and the like were prominently displayed on album covers and in band fashion (see Fig. 11). Subgenres of metal, specifically black metal, focused on satanic lyrical themes. By employing these signifiers, metal provoked reaction from the very people that teens felt alienated by – those of their parents’ generation (Badderley, 1999).

Conservative critics like the Moral Majority or the PMRC viewed bands using satanic imagery very differently in comparison to those within the metal circle. As reactionary outsiders to the metal scene, their impressions of what the bands represented and endorsed took on very distinct meanings and were used in purposefully argumentative ways. Presenting itself as the

role of authority and morality, conservative groups manipulated their impressions to best serve their intent, showing metal as harmful to youth. This was the exact type of thing that the teen was accustomed to – having choice or freedom denigrated by restrictive elders. As outsiders to the metal scene, the conservative critics of metal, particularly those representing Christian constituencies, would pursue their agenda fervently despite rhetorical and conceptual shortcomings.

To those outside the metal scene, Satanism was presented as the embodiment of anti-Christian ideals, a position strongly contrasting that of the metal bands utilizing satanic signifiers. For those not in the metal subculture, the classic constructions of the satanic, including the personification of the devil as horned and with a forked tail and the idea that Satanism simply embraced evil, sin, and desecration, exemplified the outsider's view of Satanism. Subsequently, satanic metal performances were viewed similarly. Little distinction was made between satanic bands and those eschewing satanic markers. Rather, for critics like the Moral Majority, a totalizing view was adopted in which all metal music was seen as harmful. These critics believed extended exposure to metal's corruptive power would foster anti-social or personally dangerous behavior. Inevitably, this would then manifest itself by eroding a child's solid moral values. Metal fans were presented as brainwashed by the devil's music and capable of atrocities ranging from violence and crime to the sins of sex and drugs to the blasphemy of holy order and parental control. As Jeff Godwin (1985) warns, "If your child possesses this album (Motley Crüe's *Shout at the Devil*), you should immediately do two things. Listen to the album ONCE to familiarize yourself with its contents, then destroy it. Burn it, break it, throw it in the garbage, but get rid of it! Your youngster's immortal soul is at stake" (p. 123).

The metal community responded to such allegations in a variety of ways. Primarily, denial, ridicule, and trivialization of the critics were the most common reactions. One common defense was to claim that images or lyrics were misconstrued or taken out of context. Often times, outsiders pointed to isolated lyrical excerpts as proof of satanic accusations. Iron Maiden's "The Number of the Beast" (1982) illustrates such an instance. The line "666, the one for you and me," prompted many to suggest Maiden were a satanic band. Rather, as songwriter Steve Harris repeatedly explained, the song recounted a nightmare he had after watching the movie *Omen II*. Cover art shows the band's mascot in control of a devil image connoting power outside of Satan rather than under Satan. Conservative critics also suggested a second song on the album, "Children of the Damned," as satanic without recognizing its origins in the film of the same name.

A second common accusation placed upon metal artists by outside critics regarded backmasking. Outsiders claimed backward lyrical messages were hidden in songs, and listeners were subliminally susceptible to their undue influences. Using a turntable, records were spun backwards allowing access to the "backward messages" intermixed within the garbled sounds created. Most frequently, outsiders would choose albums by metal performers and note the satanic, suicidal, or anti-social messages they perceived (for example Peters, & Peters, 1984; Raschke, 1990). Most metal performers found this as a desperate, ridiculous act since the backward "messages" were sketchy at best if not completely unintelligible. The sinfulness was suggested as lying in the eyes of the critics rather than the metal performers since it was their imaginations that brought these ideas out.

A third counterargument put forth by metal artists focused on the conservative conflation of arguments. To the outsiders, claims of Satanism in music were combined with claims of the

music being violent or inducing suicide or drug use. By conflating these arguments, conservative criticism regarding metal exaggerated the severity of their rhetoric. From a metal subculture's position, the examples were mutually exclusive of one another. A selection from the Peters and Peters book *Why Knock Rock* (1984) illustrates an example of this quality:

Iron Maiden has come under fire for making more satanic music than any other band except Ozzy Osbourne. Many of its songs refer to the Antichrist; most of its lyrics are obsessed with hellish imagery ("Purgatory") or ghoulish themes ("Transylvania"); and seven out of eight songs on one album pertain to themes of death and assorted evils" (p. 75).

Both Iron Maiden and Ozzy Osbourne refute the claims of being satanic. Though some songs are acknowledged as being occult-inspired, no formal endorsement of Satanism had ever been made. "Purgatory" is a song about the fear of death, and "Transylvania" is an instrumental. Death itself is not evil; rather it is a portion of everyday life. Many *Kerrang* articles noted that conservative critics were typically American, the place where teens were becoming more and more involved in purchasing metal music. Throughout the 1980s, Iron Maiden's Bruce Dickinson and Steve Harris frequently referred to extreme reaction to alleged satanic images in the States versus their relative absence in Britain (for example, Bashe 1985; Wall, 1998).

"Method to the Madness": The Utility of Satanic Marketing

Regardless of the legitimacy of the conservative claims about metal, many bands did utilize satanic imagery. From album art and wardrobe designs to writing songs that expressed satanic themes, metal bands utilized Satanism under a variety of causes. Most commonly, bands aimed to contrast the status quo and generate publicity, to provoke the conservative authority figures and establish rebellious credibility, or to tap into the religious power loaded into darker images.

The level of involvement ranged from simple novelty and empty gestures to fervently believed and practiced Satanism.

The use of satanic markers for rebellious purposes is reminiscent of 1970s punk and its appropriation of the swastika and fetish-wear as transgressive (Hebdige, 1979). Predominantly stifled in the conformative settings of school, home, and church, the liminal teen sought outlets to express their resentment and frustration stemming from the lack of independence in their everyday lives (theoretically, see Erikson [1959]; as an illustrative example, see Gaines [2001]). As political folks like Tipper Gore and religious leaders reacted adversely to the metal's Satanism, metal music's appeal became even greater for the rebellious youth. To gain a reaction was to command attention and energy, a powerful act in and of itself. Since parents and authority figures reacted in such extreme fashions to something seen as trivial and harmless to the teen (an ideology many of the metal bands using satanic imagery would routinely express in interviews), the authority of the older generation was undermined in the eyes of the teen. In the instances of backmasking and ill-conceived anti-metal arguments, parents and teachers offered the opportunity to be ridiculed and trivialized. Teens could then assume a sense of power by showing their overseers as less legitimate or irrational.

For metal artists, the utilization images of the occult and mysticism tied to "the dark side of life" was a way of asserting power. Outsiders reacted, in turn, to symbols like a pentagram or an inverted cross with aversion and shock. In its simplest sense, for bands, this could be used as a gimmick for standing out from the ordinary. Mythified stories of black magic and masses created horrific images of a secret power outside the bounds of the status quo. Using references to these taboo acts within songs, album art, or stage performance helped appropriate this illicit sense of power. Typified by the vast metal interest in Alistair Crowley, whose prominence in

metal circles likely stems from Led Zeppelin guitarist Jimmy Page's particular obsessions with the black magician, and Anton Levey, author of the *Satanic Bible*, metal's inversion of social custom serves to claim empowerment from something typically feared. Fans resignified these markers to indicate subcultural cohesion. Being unified in rebellion against the mainstream fostered a form of "strength in numbers" cohesion. Though they enjoyed the publicity and symbolic power afforded to satanic signifiers, many bands rarely acknowledged any explicit intentions behind their performative displays of the occult. Rather, the symbols were explained as simply cool looking icons able to be remembered and recognized. Again, parallels with punk swastikas come to mind.

On several occasions, however, a much more serious, practiced version of Satanism was endorsed. Best exemplified by King Diamond of Mercyful Fate (and his later solo career), bands with members genuinely practicing Satanism promoted a Leveyan version of satanic religion. As mentioned earlier, outsiders viewed Satanism as a mirrored inversion of Christianity; Satan and sin replaced Christ and righteousness. But to a Leveyan Satanist, this was ludicrous. Rather, precepts taken from the *Satanic Bible* promoted the religion as a concentrated version of self-reliance and self-control. Bordering on hedonism, bands called for living life as one wished and rejecting the controls of others – a fiercely self-reliant and independent world view. Crowley's edict "Do what thou wilt" serves as a fitting exemplar for this ideology. Leveyan Satanists like King Diamond commonly noted the hypocrisies within Christianity as examples of the religion's weakness and subservience. Again, a sense of reclaiming power and control can be seen through the rhetoric. One need not submit to those social entities that traditionally limited free choice. Rather, choice and control was suggested as being directly attainable by the listener through rejection of conformity and embrace of the metal subculture.

The ways in which Satanism was utilized as a marketing device followed an evolutionary pattern of development. Even amongst the most dedicated and genuine satanic bands, the use of signifiers or writing satanic songs seemed confined to earlier stages of the band's career. As careers progressed and popularity increased, bands frequently eliminated the satanic signifiers in favor of other forms of recognition or identity. In nearly all cases, these shifts away from satanic markers were permanent. Additionally, non-satanic bands that had already attained a secure fanbase never seemed to adopt satanic signifiers later in their career.

Early in a band's career arc, the desire for recognition was crucially important. Being mentioned within conversations allowed for a buzz to develop, and an easy way of generating buzz was through use of a gimmick. Satanic, over-the-top, controversial performances could create memorable shock value. Bands like Slayer (and the subsequent black and death metal scenes) used extreme cover art and lyrics to create a distinct identity for the band. Signifiers like pentagrams and goat's heads fostered memorable visual spectacle. Controversy resulting from conservative backlash also added to a band's exposure, recalling the entertainment cliché, "there's no such thing as bad publicity." The most criticized bands would then become fan darlings as they represented the antithesis to conservative conformity. Due to the notoriety and success of bands like Slayer, Motley Crüe, and their metal forefathers Black Sabbath, many other bands attempted similar ploys for recognition.

Due to the common practice of bands using the satanic gimmick, the shock value and taboo-ness afforded to satanic signifiers quickly eroded within the metal subculture. Though conservative critics still condemned the practice, over time metallers came to consider satanic markers as insignificant; the act was simply just an act. By mid-to-late 1987, typically no additional press coverage or publicity hype resulted nor was an excessively notorious reputation

guaranteed. Instead, bands increasingly followed a more traditional rock trajectory. A catalogue of multiple albums and a larger fanbase allowed for longer tours, more elaborate videos, and yet more albums. Fan articles now focused on these topics rather than expressing a gimmick that had now been considered as dated and passé.

Corporate influence also affected this pattern. The strength and influence of groups like the PMRC made some record companies adjust their approaches to releases. As an example, interview snippets with King Diamond suggest that his record company had requested that he distance himself from his previous satanic ideas. While still practicing Satanism, Diamond shifted his songwriting to more of a horror-based focus replacing the satanic hymn of old with stories of supernatural happenings and the macabre. For metal bands as a whole, the increasing trend toward canceled concerts, city-wide bans of presumed satanic artists, and limited record distribution (primarily in chain stores endorsing “family values”) made satanic signification less economically sound.

“Soldiers Under Command”: Christian Metal as a Godly Alternative

Interestingly enough, the Christian metal movement could be understood as a conservative reaction to the satanic metal scene. As metal’s popularity increased and generational backlash became more prevalent, teens wanting the energy and display of metal but fearing the repercussions of devilish music found recourse within the growing Christian metal movement. Most of these bands followed the subgenre’s leader, Stryper, in preaching Christian ideals under the guise of mainstream heavy metal. Starting in late 1985, an array of Christian metal acts including Barren Cross, Bride, Holy Solidier, Guardian, Sacred Warrior, and Rage of Angels emerged. By 1989, Christian metal expanded to the point of having bands representing most of metal’s different scenes, including death metal (Vengeance Rising, Mortification). The

Christian metal movement rapidly expanded to include a Christian branch of independent labels (such as Pure Metal, R.E.X., and Star Song), magazine and video media outlets (*Heaven's Metal* the most popular), and a distribution chain (Christian book stores) emerged apart from the secular alternatives.

On the surface, Christian metal seemed identical to mainstream metal in terms of fashion, performance styles, and sound. This performative choice was commonly explained by utilizing the “sinful” attractiveness of metal – give the sinners a recognizable ritual and spectacle but reload it with a new, faith-based ideology. But the rock and roll lifestyle norms for metal bands were contested in favor of Christian chastity and sanctity. Stryper, distributed Bibles at concerts, and the band’s lyrics directly addressed “Christian” ideals. Other bands like the thrash bands Deliverance or Tourniquet used Biblical passages for lyrics. Metal fans embraced Stryper (arguably more commercially successful than any of the satanic bands except Motley Crüe), and Christian metal became a significant niche within the metal subculture. The ideals of Christianity were directly presented in a traditional metal style (good times and personal satisfaction) while countering the anti-Christian arguments presented by the Leveyan Satanists of metal. It is also worth noting that Stryper, despite their well-established Christian ideals, were targeted by a small number of Christian conservatives as problematic. Since metal in any form was “the devil’s music” to these critics, Christian metal’s appropriation of the metal style, despite its positive intention, was considered just as harmful as bands employing satanic signifiers.

“They can stick their censorship where the sun don’t shine”: Metal Against its Critics

Though the Christian metal bands seemed acceptable to some conservative metal critics, heavy metal as a musical genre was still considered problematic by those outside the subculture.

Metal musicians accentuated the separation between metalheads and those outside the metal subculture by readily creating performances featuring taboo subjects like Satanism, war, destruction, graphic depictions of death, and hedonistic consumption of alcohol and sex. The more extreme a presentation, the greater its reaction was. One of the biggest worries was that if teens (or younger children) would hear vile words and illicit depictions of drug use or see lascivious videos, then teens would mimic the sinful actions themselves (for example, Gore, 1987; Larson, 1987; Raschke, 1990). Lyrics describing graphic violence seemed uncouth (Gore, 1987). Concerts that dabbled with the occult were considered blasphemous (Peters & Peters, 1984; Larson, 1987; Godwin, 1985). Videos that showed sexuality were pornographic (Gore, 1987; Godwin, 1985). Collectively, it all raised the ire of groups like the PMRC or the Moral Majority. That reaction was the primary drive for the teenage audience as it suggested rebellion and distance from their parents' or teachers' wishes.

Embrace of the taboo could also be seen as appealing to the hypermasculine. The chance one takes by going against the mainstream serves as an identifier of uniqueness. In metal's instance, the solidarity of fellow transgressors created a community where recognition and status could be derived in an otherwise ambivalent world. A vast number of image-conscious metal bands including Motley Crüe, Poison, Faster Pussycat, Vain, and L.A. Guns appropriated police apparel (hats in particular) as a mockingly transgressive act. Be it a "live fast, die young" mentality of Motley Crüe or Blackie Lawless from W.A.S.P. telling Tipper Gore to "suck me, suck me, eat me raw" on their *Live in the Raw* (1987) album, the dedication to youth supremacy was framed by tough postures of defiance.

A "Parental Advisory" sticker was reappropriated as a badge of honor for metallers. Metal fans seeing the sticker had an instant indicator that the record offered something that

should rankle on an outsider's nerves. The extra coverage given to a band and its music for being problematic didn't hurt either. As Bill Lindsay, leader of the theatrically-gory band Impaler, described, "I thought it was great for a band like Impaler to have our album held up by Tipper Gore on all those T.V. shows and magazines...I laughed all the way to the bank" ("Impaler Interview," 2004).

While the publicity served as a credibility boost for metal bands, the political reality of the situation began to trouble the recording industry and its larger corporate entities. The businesses of music looked out for its own interests rather than that of its artists. Founded in April 1985, the Parents Music Resource Center (PMRC) benefited from a politically-powerful constituency. According to Nuzum (2001), a letter from the organization sent to the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) in May of 1985 included the signatures of "the wives of twenty influential Washington businessmen and legislators" (p. 20). The "Washington Wives" subsequently prompted their Congressional husbands to look into the moral quality of popular music, ultimately culminating in a Congressional hearing held on September 19, 1985. Concurrently, the recording industry was also anticipating a ruling regarding home taping. Interestingly enough, Nuzum (2001) notes that among those who signed the PMRC's letter to the RIAA, "at least four of those (were married to) influential legislators (who) sat on committees that were due to hear arguments for the Home Audio Recording Act (HARA)" (p. 20). Should a favorable ruling result, the recording industry would receive a commission on every blank cassette tape sold thereby serving to assuage the predicted losses in revenue the recording industry faced as a result of home-taping and its facilitation of copyright infringement. A label publicly supporting a band which had a song appear on the "Filthy Fifteen," a list of songs the PMRC considered most objectionable, was the equivalent of disrespecting a Congressman's

family and potentially losing his (or one of his Congressional colleagues) much needed backing. The power of the Federal Communication Committee (FCC) also became a concern for media outlets. Advertisers, fearing backlash or boycott for sponsoring programming that featured “filth” began backing away from broadcasts that might be deemed offensive. MTV, in 1985, went through a short period where metal was cut from its rotation by a third (Walser, 1993). Without the exposure of MTV in particular, labels feared tremendous losses in terms of revenue. Some labels requested bands avoid being too provocative and others demanded to see lyric sheets prior to manufacture. Despite the ongoing strength of metal’s sales and the publicity boost from being iconoclasts, some metal bands followed advice and toned down their initial rebellion in hopes of remaining radio and MTV friendly.

Between 1985 and 1991, metal bands released a vast number of cover songs that were released as singles. This served a number of purposes for both bands and record labels. In trying to release records quickly to capitalize on the market’s potential, time for writing original songs was greatly reduced. A group’s debut record allowed the liberty of a lifetime’s worth of writing. Labels typically demanded a second record be released within maximally one year’s time. A cover song was readily available and, more than likely, was already well practiced since most bands played cover songs before developing their own material. Familiar songs could be more easily recognized and sung along to thereby speeding up the process of fans (or program directors) getting to know and enjoy a particular release. Another function of the cover song was to subtly flatter older generations. By showing reverence to the “classics,” metal bands could appear less distant to older generations and potentially reduce the animosity held toward metal. At the minimum, one couldn’t complain about the content of a previously accepted song. During the highpoint of the PMRC’s crusade, Motley Crüe (“Smokin’ in the Boys Room” [1985]),

Krokus (“Ballroom Blitz” [1984], School’s Out” [1986]), WASP (“I Don’t Need No Doctor” [1986], “The Real Me” [1989]), Great White (“Substitute” [1984;1988], “Gimme Some Lovin’” [1986]), Keel (“Because the Night” [1986]), and Twisted Sister (“Leader of the Pack” [1986]) were among the many groups who utilized this tactic.

The PMRC and other like-minded organizations provided a worthy adversary for the metal community to join forces against. The PMRC’s combination of scholastic, governmental, parental, and generational removal from metal’s ethos made its public outcry a rallying point for metal subculture. Tipper Gore, the face of the PMRC, received the most targeted metal attacks. The vast majority of interviews included condemnations of her and the PMRC. Pop metallers Warrant included a 54 second collection of profanity taken from live shows titled “Ode to Tipper Gore” on their *Cherry Pie* (1990) release. Suicidal Tendencies’ “Lovely” (1990) mocked Tipper’s Pollyanna pursuits when other more-pressing issues existed. Revolutionary Comics, publishers of comic book biographies of metal bands, offered *Tipper Gore’s Comics and Stories* (1989), a fantasy-based fictional horror comic capitalizing on the metal subculture’s animosity toward the PMRC’s spokesperson.

After Twisted Sister vocalist Dee Snider’s appearance at a Congressional hearing on rock lyrics, censorship concerns became a major lyrical topic for metal bands. Grim Reaper on the title track from *Rock You to Hell* (1987) argued, “So they want to censor music, And if we don’t fight we’ll lose it, It’s only entertainment can’t they see.” Megadeth’s (1988) “Hook in Mouth” increased the acerbity: “F, is for fighting, R is for red, Ancestors' blood in battles they've shed, E, we elect them, E, we eject them, In the land of the free and the home of the brave, D, for your dying, O, your overture, M, will cover your grave with manure, This spells out FREEDOM, it means nothing to me, As long as there's P.M.R.C.” Among their many songs about the issue,

Anthrax's (1991) "Startin' Up a Posse" made the point explicitly clear: "Shit, fuck, Satan, death, sex, drugs, rape, These seven words you're tryin' to take, Shit, fuck, Satan, death, sex, drugs, rape, Right or wrong it's our choice to make, America the beautiful land of the free, Don't change the word to land of hypocrisy..." and later: "You can't censor my feelings, You can't censor my thought, Censorship's against, everything America stands for."

As authority figures like parents and governmental officials became useful targets for establishing metal's rebellious identity, a third group, Christian televangelists, solidified the division between an older generation and youth. For one, Christian conservatives frequently condemned metal for its hedonistic ideologies. A number of detractor's works, while arguing rock's continuing historical sinfulness, denounced metal as an unprecedented display of debauchery and wickedness (Larson, 1987; Peters & Peters, 1984; Godwin, 1985; Raschke 1990). Higher profile televangelists like Billy Graham and Pat Robertson were also among metal's detractors. Their arguments decrying the metal subculture followed a typical pattern of exposure. First, as the arguments were delivered via Christian-based media, the parental or grandparental generations typically consuming the televangelist programming became sensitized to the moral panic surrounding metal. This, then, moved the arguments against metal from the televised pulpit to within the home. The newly informed parent or grandparent was now primed to confront a teenaged metal fan. Second, as the arguments gained momentum, they would spread to mainstream secular formats. Appearing on television programs like *20/20* or *Nightline* or having coverage in magazines like *US News and World Report* not only increased the publicity or celebrity status of the spokesperson (and potential revenues from a growing base of supporting followers), but breached the traditional rhetorical separation of being merely a pursuit for the Christian devout to one meriting collective popular concern. Finally, as the secular

resistance to metal became more widespread, reduced radio airplay in some markets, difficulties in securing bookings (or protests outside concert venues) and the eventual political involvement of Congress forced the metal community to pragmatically address the issue. A common way that many metal bands established their adversarial position was to publicize the hypocrisy of the Christian critics.

The easiest targets for most metal bands were the figureheads representing the Christian conservative movement. Paralleling the PMRC being personified by Tipper Gore, many bands referenced religious celebrities like Jim and Tammy Faye Baker as their symbolic nemeses. Other bands simply condemned the entire realm of populist televangelists as being exploitive con artists. In general, mainstream metals bands were less aggressive in their attacks than their thrash metal peers. Still, it was quite common for band members to raise criticisms during interviews about censorship concerns. Queensryche's *Operation Mindcrime* (1987) concept album cynically attacked Catholicism wherein a nun was "taken once a week at the altar like a sacrifice" by her mentoring priest. Cinderella's (1990) video for the gospel-tinged "Shelter Me" parodied fundraising telethons and televangelism by positioning the band as the charitable benefactor while Little Richard donned full religious regalia on their behalf. Suicidal Tendencies (1990) utilized a similar motif for their "Send Me You Money" single. Comic Sam Kinison (1988), a former preacher himself, dabbled in the metal market by releasing a novelty cover of the Troggs' classic "Wild Thing." With an audience including members of Guns n Roses, Whitesnake, Ratt, Bon Jovi, Billy Idol, and Aerosmith, Kinison mockingly frolics with a breast-augmented Jessica Hahn, the former PTL secretary whose adulterous relationship with Jim Bakker prompted the decimation of the organization.

Ozzy Osbourne was the most prominent mainstream metal performer critiquing fundamentalists. In large part, this was likely due to Osbourne's long history of being condemned by such groups. A born-again Christian, Osbourne was not anti-religious or satanic as commonly claimed. Rather, his stage banter intermixed pleas for the crowd to "go fucking crazy" with a frequent wish of "God bless you all." According to Osbourne, a major problem he had with his detractors was their tendency to wrongfully displace blame (hence, the title of his video compilation, *Don't Blame Me*) upon his performative rock-persona rather than more immediate issues. Best epitomized by the "Suicide Solution" trial, Osbourne was accused of indirectly promoting a fan's failed suicide. Eventually dismissed, the litigant's case against Osbourne overlooked the song's anti-drug and suicide message, the fan's long history of psychological problems, and a less-than-supportive home environment in favor of backward subliminal messages and a presence that "demonstrate(s) a preoccupation with death" (Soocher, 1999, p. 159). One video, 1987's "Miracle Man," featured Osbourne and band performing in a country church turned barnyard. Often donning a Jim Bakker mask, Osbourne cavorts with pigs as the chorus reminds that the miracle man "got busted." A second expressive example was Osbourne's role in the metal horror film *Trick or Treat* (Smith, 1986). The specific casting of Ozzy Osbourne as the fundamentalist preacher spouting anti-rock edicts parodies the conservative movements against rock in the 1980s while celebrating Ozzy and his legacy as being metal's most notorious madman. Here, by referencing metal's controversial past, the division between a youthful metal subculture and an older, critical generation is magnified. The fictional yet symbolically representative Sammi Curr supernaturally kills Ozzy's character while Osbourne spouts stereotypical anti-rock rhetoric during a *20/20*-styled news magazine interview. The murder certainly serves the plot function of marking the demonic killer as being evil. It also

serves as a moment of symbolic triumph in which a retaliatory strike is successfully made on someone spouting the rhetoric of metal's detractors. The added irony of Ozzy's casting in the role alludes to his own past of having faced multiple accusations and condemnations stemming from his time in Black Sabbath and throughout his solo career.

For thrash bands, the critique of religious authority was far more important than for mainstream metal. Partly, this was due to thrash's own conventions regarding metal and its meaning as serious-minded in comparison to their mainstream peers (this will be more fully explored in Chapter Four). Having limited their lyrical scope to solely "serious" topics, thrash bands lost the relative freedom of writing about sex or partying. As such, the convention of writing generationally-based criticisms of authority figures became commonplace. Topics like religious hypocrisy, political shortcomings, or corporate exploitations were the most prominent. For a teen audience member facing a liminally uncertain world, metal bands offered an easily-understood perspective in which youthful incongruities of power and control could be conveniently solved. In most instances, the failures of the parental generation were constructed as having left the teen susceptible to a problematic world.

"Doomsday for the Deceiver": Thrash Metal and Criticisms of the Older Generation

Walser (1993) posits that metal's embrace of the taboo and the rebellious partly stems from the metal audience being the first generation expected to fail to match their parent's economic achievement. In his argument, fans had grown accustomed to middle-class privilege and faced the harsh consequences of failing Reaganomics thereby decreasing the likelihood of achieving or maintaining these standards. Rather than nihilistically removing themselves from everyday life, metal offered to youth "opportunities for expressing individual rage... creating communal bonds that will help weather the strains of modernity" (p. 162). Walser sees constructing the other as

empowering to the metal subculture by exposing “everything hegemonic society does not want to acknowledge, the dark side of the daylight enlightened adult world” (p. 162).

While I see Walser’s argument as primarily sound, I feel a slight clarification is in order. Stephen King describes horror as the most Republican and conservative of all genres of writing (Underwood & Miller, 1988). In horror, transgression is always accounted for and cultural normalcy is inevitably reestablished as the expected and the desired. In embracing a taboo, be it Satanism, death, violence and gore, the possibility of nuclear destruction, or graphic sexuality, one implicitly acknowledges the existence of a hegemonic norm. More often than not, the subcultural outsider will simply dismiss or trivialize the non-conforming transgressor as lesser: immature, sophomoric, uncivilized, uncouth, or simply perverse or deranged. The backlash that arose against metal lyrics certainly demonstrated this tendency as far as the mainstream public was concerned. More specifically related to Walser’s premise, metal, and in particular thrash metal’s generational criticisms, only *occasionally* served as truly counterhegemonic despite the genre’s enthusiasms for exposing the dark sides of everyday life. The system itself was not generally shown to be at fault. Rather, the exposed problems typically came from older generations failing to meet the hegemonic expectancies of propriety, honesty, and justice. Hypocrisy, particularly by religious or political figures, served as an instance from which the liminal teen could gain a sense of stability. This worked in two ways. First, instead of invalidating the entire limited worldview of the teen’s development to this point (the socialization process behind political, economic, and philosophical ideologies), problematizing select individuals within this system offered a convenient safety net. The teen’s world and worldview weren’t fundamentally flawed and hopeless. Rather, those who were dysfunctional within the system were to blame. The second source of stability fits Walser’s assertion of

subcultural unity. The teen's world might be confusing and scary, but by treading into the realms of the taboo, he or she not only claimed the authority necessary for facing such illicit topics, but also weakened the authoritative positions of those adults claiming superiority in the first place.

Many thrash bands presented themselves as staunch supporters of the individual and the individual's right to think, debate, and choose for oneself. This mindset offered support for the liminal teen by reinforcing self-belief and a sense of independence. One particular focus was resisting those individuals who were seen as limiting the teen's musical and personal freedoms. For thrash bands, law enforcement officials represented one such target. However, more often than not, thrash criticisms were raised only when police abused their authority. Nuclear Assault's "Search and Seizure" (1989), Violence's "Officer Nice" (1990) and Rumble Militia's "Boys in Blue" (1991) each represent police profiling and excessive force as abuses of power. In interviews, metal band members would often complain about noise ordinances or harassment for having long hair.

As mentioned previously, thrash bands were among the most vocal in the debate of lyrical censorship. Metal's detractors, the religious and political conservatives, were subsequently the recipients of scathing counterattacks. Many bands found religious institutions, in particular televangelical ministries, to be easy targets. Representative examples include Metallica's (1987) "Leper Messiah" ("Make your contribution and you'll get the better seat"), Nuclear Assault's (1991) "Preaching to the Deaf" ("But praise the Lord and send in your donations, Even though I have sinned against you... .. and never mind those dirty pictures that are circulating, with the little girl in the saddle"), and Suicidal Tendencies' (1990) "Send Me Your Money" ("Here comes another con hiding behind a collar, His only god is the almighty dollar, He ain't no

prophet, he ain't no healer, He's just a two bit goddamn money stealer" and "So whose gonna be the next king of the fakers, Whose gonna take the place of Jim and Tammy Faye Bakker?").

Anthrax's (1988) "Make Me Laugh" is typically contemptuous. The first two lines of a verse are mockingly sung, as indicated with a lower register. Vocalist Joey Belladonna returns to his usual register for the remainder of the verse, the prechorus, and the chorus thereby signifying the separation of Anthrax's belief.

Spread the word
Through me God is heard
You're making me laugh
Tell me your killin' joke
Evangelist
You're making me laugh
Jesus saves
But only after I've been paid
You're making me laugh
Tell me your killin' joke
Evangelist
End your hoax

God say's (sic) have a T.V. show
God say's (sic) baby do some blow
God say's (sic) taxes are a sin
God say's (sic) pour the money in

Rape the poor, faith no more
Faith for cash, make me laugh
Faith no more, face the whore
Rape your past, make me laugh

Most of the songs on the *State of Euphoria* (1988) album, "Make Me Laugh" included, concern topics of social corruption. Discriminatory practices are condemned in songs like the racially-aware "Schism." Social class issues are addressed in the cover version of Trust's "Antisocial" and Anthrax's original composition, "Who Cares Wins." The latter serves as a harsh criticism of the lack of regard paid to the plight of New York City's homeless. The song's video featured a montage of clips of dilapidated urban landscapes, the homeless, and their dreary

living conditions. Lyrically, those of privilege are criticized for ignoring the suffering of fellow beings: “Invisible could be my name, your excuses are so lame, real pleas fall on deaf ears, look away when I’m near... self help and preservation, not now I’m on vacation, priority is you, and screw all those around you.” The greed of the “Me decade” takes on generational relevance here as wealth and its social welfare potential is converted into privilege for the wealthy. Workers toil, but as the title track of Xentrix’s second album asks, *For Whose Advantage?* (1990).

The choice of aligning oneself with working class positions stems partly from metal’s origins as a working class musical movement (see Chapter Two’s description of Def Leppard and Black Sabbath). A second contributing argument is based on a version of the rock/blues mythos. The blues represented loss and exploitation – the working class, the disenfranchised, and the hopeless. Ideologically, a person of privilege would have little to feel the blues about. Hence, the more destitute one was and the more dedicated one was to his/her art, the greater the prestige potential could be. If a musician committed his/her scant resources to furthering his/her musical ambitions versus his/her own worldly comforts, they would fit the idealized artist persona – the art above all else. Many bands would situate photos shoots in junkyards, graffiti-covered alleys, or industrial factories to connote their being of the streets. Examples from thrash bands include Defiance’s “The Last Resort (Welcome to Poverty)” (1990) and Overkill’s “Hello from the Gutter”(1988). In terms of mainstream metal examples, Warrant, whose first album expressed their desire to be *Dirty Rotten Stinking Filthy Rich* (1988), actually sang of having only 32 pennies in a Ragu jar. Half of the songs on Love/Hate’s *Blackout in the Red Room* (1990) mention scrounging for cash, beer, or pot. Guns n Roses vocalist Axl Rose describes himself an “urchin livin’ under the street” and a “charity case” in “Paradise City” (1987) and the bands Skid Row, Junkyard, and the Poorboys named themselves accordingly.

A third explanation behind the working class presentation stems from the earning potential of teens themselves. Teen's part-time jobs are typically neither high-paying nor prestigious. Metal band's choice to highlight poverty offered a potential sense of commonality. In mainstream metal, Poison's chose to script a dishwasher in the video for "Nothin' But a Good Time" (1988), thereby serving a source for audience identification. Motley Crüe's Nikki Sixx's frequently recounted his tale of needing to steal his first guitar. Countless interview snippets relayed how band members lived in roach-infested hellholes while hoping to get signed. Thrash band Metal Church illustrated this on "Date with Poverty" (1991) wherein they struggle with bounced checks, bill collectors, and "interest rates that terrify, they knock you senselessly." Annihilator's *Never Neverland* (1990) liner notes explain "Kraf Dinner" their song in honor of macaroni and cheese: "... probably the heavy metal musician's best friend! By 'living' off the stuff, I saved enough money to pay the rent on a rehearsal space and buy cigarettes each day! What a happy teenager I was!!" (Waters, 1990).

"Thank God for the Bomb": Metal, the Military, and Governmental Politics

Both mainstream metal and thrash bands agreed that governmental officials and their hypocritical policies deserved critical attention. For thrash bands, it was quite common for a song to depict the young soldier being trained to blindly follow orders delivered by leaders far removed from actual danger. While songs such as Metallica's "Disposable Heroes" (1987) or Atrophy's "Killing Machine" (1989) followed the historical precedent set by Black Sabbath's "War Pigs" (1971) or Credence Clearwater Revival's "Fortunate Son" (1969) (a song the metal bands Reverend [1991] and TT Quick [1984] each covered), they also explicitly stressed the class separation between the dying youth and the older, privileged politico.

It should be noted that many metal songs praised military combat itself as an opportunity for the individual to demonstrate perseverance, valor, honor, and strength. The act of war was also not problematized per se. The traditional gender loading of the military as a homosocial space for celebrating hegemonic masculinity certainly offered an easily engagable identity marker to the liminal teen. Ranging from cover art, lyrical themes, band names, album titles, and video plots, metal bands utilized military markers across history, be it battleaxe-wielding barbarians, trench-dwelling foot soldiers, dueling fighter pilots, or “killing machine” assassins. The heavily masculinized performance of war correlated quite well with metal’s own performative intent.

A second area of criticism concerned abuses of governance and choosing personal agendas over representing the wishes of the constituency. For example, nearly every song on Warrior Soul’s *Drug, God and the New Republic* (1991) album criticizes the Bush presidency for its willingness to cater to big business at the expense of the working man or the environment. Bitter End’s “Just Say Yes” (1990) satirizes the Reagan/Bush-era “Just Say No” campaign as a misguided distraction: “they’ll make the average bozo pay... the big fish get to swim away, Iran-Contra Pentagon, but we all know what’s going on, and we’re the ones who’ll pay the cost, and if anyone’s guilty it’s them not us!!!” Cerebral Fix expressed their sentiments by titling their 1991 album after those who exploit privilege, *Bastards*. Testament’s (1987) “Time Is Coming” names the president as the person most resented for forgoing liberty and justice. In many of these instances, thrash bands see greed as being the cause of corruption. Bribes, payoffs, or corporate kickbacks are linked to turning a blind eye to unethical business practice (i.e. Faith or Fear’s “What Would You Expect” [1989]) or abuses of justice (i.e. Metallica’s “And Justice For All” [1989]).

Contextually, however, the ongoing battle between US and Soviet military and political supremacy proved a fertile ground for stoking crowd allegiances. Choosing to align oneself to an American audience base made financial sense (in terms of sheer population and potential consumers), and many mainstream metal bands consciously worked to include patriotic imagery into their performances. For European bands, the intent was to create some sort of rapport (Chapter Two's depiction of Def Leppard's "Hello America" illustrates this). For American groups, the performed patriotism centered on the collective sense of unity derived from anthemicly inclusive acts. Whether it was a performer like Lizzy Borden prompting the crowd to sing a chorus of "We all need American metal!" (1986), an elder statesman like Ted Nugent proposing, in a *Metalhead* video segment, that "Say-damn Hu-sane" could "suck my dead dog's dick" (Modi, 1990b), or a band like Artillery condemning the "Khomaniac" (1990), the simplification of world politics into a dichotomy of "us" and "them" allowed audiences to also easily declare their allegiances. Similar to professional wrestling's characterizations like the Iranian, Iron Sheik or the Soviet, Nikolai Volkoff, metal bands selectively combined rhetorical extremes like terrorist acts or fascist regimes with a flag-waving ethnocentrism informed by a dogmatic acceptance of nationalistic and capitalistic ideals. Bands tendency to invoke the American Constitutional right of the First Amendment as an absolute rather than a political tenet serves to illustrate this. When individual choice or speech was perceived to be censoring, one might as well been "living in Russia." Whether colloquial or genuine, the Western/American standard was sweepingly applied regardless of contextual applicability.

Stormtroopers of Death (SOD), an Anthrax side project, demonstrates one particular instance where this dichotomy was misconstrued. On break from touring and facing a delay in further Anthrax recording, drummer Charlie Benante and guitarist Scott Ian recruited former

Anthrax bassist Danny Lilker and roadie Billy Milano for jamming (Bukspzan, 2003). The result was a novelty album of twenty-one songs lasting 29 minutes which featured a power-chord cross of Anthrax's usual crunching thrash and hardcore punk. Lyrically, *Speak English or Die* (1985) covered three main themes: diminishing the subcultural division between metal and punk, using humor to satirize the stereotypical metal perception, and being irreverent for irreverence's sake. Benante reveals, "The thing about S.O.D. is that we're four people with four very warped senses of humor. People need to remember that the outcome of our writing is purely satire" ("S.O.D. Bio," 2005). Ian offered, "We were very much aware of what we were doing and how we were satirizing things. People didn't understand political incorrectness back then because we didn't have that (label) then" (Konow, 2002, p. 239). The result was an exaggeration of many of metal's stereotypes and deliberate affronts of "proper" decorum.

The "sensitive male" is lampooned with "Pussywhipped" and "Pre-Menstrual Princess Blues" played up a menstruating woman as histrionic from passing "clots the size of basketballs." A Washington DC punk movement that refused metal was called out in "Douche Crew," and overly-enthusiastic metal fans were mocked in "Fist Banging Mania." The context of reading the songs as jokes was made even clearer in with songs like "What's That Noise?" "Milk," "The Ballad of Jimi Hendrix," and "Diamonds and Rust (Extended Version)." "Noise" recounts a studio session wherein feedback infuriates the band members who repeatedly ask the producer, "What the fuck's that noise?". "Milk" exaggerates everyday frustrations: "Opened the fridge, and to my dismay, There was no milk, my mother will pay... I wish I had some god damn milk, my Cheerios just ain't the same." "The Ballad of Jimi Hendrix" essentially consisted of the riff for "Purple Haze" played once followed by the declaration, "He's dead." The next "extended" track, "Diamonds and Rust" lasted a total of five seconds.

Within this coarse humorous context, the band raised issues of nationalism and its xenophobic extreme. Ian created “Sergeant D” as a satire of the overly gung-ho military persona. The lyrics of “Fuck the Middle East” and “Speak English or Die” were explained by Ian as fables wherein the intolerant American fails to adapt to a multinational world, let alone a diverse American cityscape (“S.O.D. Bio,” 2005). Fans and critics alike missed the sarcasm completely thereby creating an unintended consumption a la *All in the Family*’s Archie Bunker a decade before. Chuck Klosterman (2001) utilizes the same allusion when arguing how Ted Nugent and pro wrestling are parallel low culture pleasures serving to exist as a means of othering, of being down with the bad guy. Klosterman explains this form of anti-intellectualism as “what probably started as a gimmick has evolved into a very real, somewhat scary philosophy” (p. 216). The relative straight-forwardness of the satirical perspective becomes misconstrued. In S.O.D.’s instance, the general tendency for metal bands to foster facile readings coupled with the larger cultural context of American nationalism undermined S.O.D.’s artistic and political intent resulting in the satire’s literal interpretation.

The East versus West nuclear standoff spawned other satiric or sarcastic metal critiques of governmental practices. Nuclear Assault adopted a mutant, one-eyed smiley face as a symbol for merchandising. Megadeth’s “Hangar 18” (1990) explained “military intelligence, two words combined that can’t make sense.” Warrior Soul’s (1991) described a slew of problematic practices in the verses feeding into “Jump For Joy(’s)” sarcastic chorus. Cover art for Powermad’s *Absolute Power* (1989) featured a Big Brother-esque baby-doll head overseeing an infinite mass of soldiers while Atrophy’s *Socialized Hate* (1988) had a jester, missile in each hand, grinning maniacally while surrounded by US and Soviet warheads (see Figures 12 and 13). Ozzy Osbourne ironically yielded to the madness of the situation: “war is just another game,

tailor made for the insane, but make a threat about their annihilation, and then nobody wants to play, if that's the only thing that keeps the peace, then thank God for the bomb... nuke ya, nuke ya" (1986).

It was from this perspective that metal bands found fault in governmental approaches toward nuclear warfare and atomic power. The second coming of the cold war was constructed as Reagan posturing blindly rather than accounting for the wellbeing of the world. Nuclear holocaust was routinely depicted in song lyrics. Depictions of bombed out cityscapes populated album art, and stock footage of mushroom clouds frequently cropped up in videos. Reactor smokestacks were shown as dilapidated and radiation exposure served as a popular cause of morbidity for death metal bands. Band names like Megadeth, Nuclear Assault, and Biohazard, songs like Annihilator's "Reduced to Ash" (1990), Exodus' "Fabulous Disaster" (1989), and Cryptic Slaughter's "M.A.D." (mutually assured destruction) (1986) and "Insanity by the Numbers" (1990), album art like Grave Digger's *War Games* (1986) or Toxik's *World Circus* (1988) or *Think This* (1990), and the metal record label Nuclear Blast all serve as illustrative examples. Across these instances, the possibility of megadeath represented the ultimate threat, or as the Ozzy Osbourne album which included "Thank God for the Bomb" called it, *The Ultimate Sin* (1986).

Another source of discontent centered on the abuse of the environment. Similar to complaints of nuclear annihilation, metal bands condemned those that would allow the eventual destruction of the earth in favor of corporate or governmental exploitation. Chernobyl and its aftermath was a particular interview topic for many continental European bands whereas their American or British counterparts addressed the issue more broadly. While mainstream metal examples like Warrior's *Fighting for the Earth* (1985) album and White Lion's (1989) "Little

Fighter” (the song triumphs the cause of the sunken Greenpeace vessel, the *Rainbow Warrior*) existed, thrash, again, raised the more staunch criticisms. Topics addressed include ozone depletion (Kreator’s “When the Sun Burns Red” [1990] and Sacrifice’s “As the World Burns” [1991]), the greenhouse effect (Testament’s “Greenhouse Effect” [1989]), soil erosion and strip mining (Viking’s “They Raped the Land” [1989]), inhumane animal research (Rumble Militia’s “Stop this Shit” [1991]) and industrial pollution (Faith or Fear’s “What Would You Expect” [1989] and Annihilator’s “Stonewall” [1990]).

As a final summarizing example, Exodus’ “Corruption” (1989), hits on nearly all the particulars of generationally-targeted misgivings in one fell swoop:

The lowest form of life that's crawling in our streets
 From seedy dope pushers to the politicians we meet
 The sorry religious vomit that infests in our TVs
 The weapons that we sell to the trash in the middle east
 Murderous drug smugglers pay their way to pass
 They look the other way when they take the kickback
 We've got to put a stop to this senseless bullshit
 Take all these people and throw them in the pit

Let us know - where our tax dollars are spent
 Tell us how - how much it costs to repent
 Time has come - for us to take a stand
 Let us know - when you meet our demands

From laundering money to hookers on the make
 There's always a scandal, someone's on the take
 They payoff for secrets, sell plans to a spy
 They cover their asses and say it's a lie
 Society cries when the vermin go free
 When they're done, what's left for me?
 This social disorder that's causing us pain
 Indecent disease, it's they who are to blame

In each instance, the targets are not particularly systemic. Rather, those individuals who fail to adhere to their ethical, professional, or social responsibility are subjected to “the pit,” a dually loaded term blending the metal connotation of the site for moshing with visions of

torment and death. Those engaging in corruption are to blame. The positions expressed in the song are both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic. As expected, corrupt cops, politicians and the “religious vomit” are called out. There are class sympathies for those being exploited and resentment of those trying to shirk their responsibilities. However, condemnation of traitors or calling Middle Easterners “trash” contextually demonstrates a nationalistic pride in the United States. The multiple narcotic references fit the “just say no/war against drugs” rhetoric of the time. Asking for an accounting of tax dollars advocates political engagement – something high school civics courses have encouraged for generations.

“For Whose Advantage?”: Marketing, the Industry and Metal’s Changing Composition

The realities of rebellion, corporate and governmental criticism, and generational separation become clouded when considering the source of such messages, metal performers, and their mediums for expressing them, the recording and mass communication industries. In an interview segment of *Metalhead Volume 1* (Modi, 1990a), Rick Ruben admits that his Def American label is strictly a teenage record label – be it their rap, metal, or pop artists. The target market is cynically appropriated for business reasons and the consumer is given a crassly constructed product tailored to what is assumed to be his or her wishes. As a later Anthrax recording complained, the “packaged rebellion” expressed little art or true social upheaval. Rather, teenage metal fans were offered an easily-assimilated acknowledgment of their liminal uncertainties by members of the very same older generation they are being othered against. When older performers like Ronnie James Dio, Judas Priest’s Rob Halford, or LA Guns’ Phil Lewis would mention how they performed for the kids in the audience, their very awareness of an audience’s composition offered a scripting of what metal was assumed to be.

With this in mind, the ongoing development of metal as a subcultural musical movement referenced this constructed teenage market as a component of the “true metal” community. Between 1984 and 1987, the relative novelty of metal performances in and of themselves allowed for a more consistent version of metal’s performative boundaries. Both consumers and producers looked for certain established codes – be it onstage apparel, band names, design logos and art work themes, instrumentation and a musical derivation of Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, Aerosmith, or Alice Cooper. As the market grew and sales reached the millions, more efforts were made at targeting the metal market while at the same time aspiring to stretch it beyond the original focus, the teenage male.

From 1987 to 1991, these shifts toward a more broadly determined metal style had multiple effects. First, the greater willingness of the recording industry to sell metal bands (and enjoy their profits from such endeavors) influenced more up-and-coming bands to adopt metal performative practices. This willingness also opened up outlets for other forms of media and celebrity exposure thereby increasing metal’s visibility and furthering its potential commercial spread. Second, for some of these newer bands whose adoption of metal was cynically opportunistic, their more heartfelt intentions were assimilated into what was promoted as a metal product. This included musical influences, performative styles, and instrumentation choices. Third, the additional glut of performers forced increased market competition (both for recording contracts and gaining entry into business and later being able to generate consumer purchases), necessitating a greater need for a gimmick to stand out from the rest of the crowd or to retain one’s position as a vital contributor to the scene. Fourth, the original metal consumer base was aging beyond the teenage bracket with some moving onto different musical scenes and other retaining metal allegiances. Fifth, a new teenage cohort, partly defined by their increasing access

to cable television and recorded video programs, now existed. Finally, the cumulative results of these ongoing factors fostered both emic and etic redefinitions of the metal subculture encompassing multiple social dramas in which a performer's metal "authenticity" was assessed, argued, and accounted for.

CHAPTER IV. “THE REAL THING”

This chapter explores how subcultural negotiations within metal helped shape and reshape the future of metal and its formulaic conventions, again, with the combined influences of the recording industry and the performer playing a crucial role. The broadening of metal’s overall popularity and commercial power fostered appeal toward a wider audience base and away from the specifically-targeted teenage-male market. As metal bands introduced new ideas into the formulaic norms, the subcultural climate splintered into fragmented subgenres which subscribed to some and rejected other notions of what metal had come to represent. The recording industry (and bands themselves), trying to cross over into other musical styles in hopes of increasing sales and mass popularity, was a large contributor to this fragmentation. The move to make songs more radio-friendly and to attract female audiences plays a crucial role in this development. Subcultural arguments couched in terms of “authenticity” referenced previously established rock and metal mythos as a means for reclaiming lost subcultural identity and definition.

“We’re Gonna Make It”: The Gimmick and Gaining Notoriety

Bands, as well as management and labels, wanted to stand out from the others trying to achieve control of the market share. To stand out, a gimmick was usually pursued and utilized for quick notoriety. The buzz gained from the gimmick would be enough to help stimulate radio or video play, create touring opportunities, or increase press coverage, which would all subsequently aid record sales. If effective, the gimmick could be pursued until there was a sufficient fanbase to support the band. Should this occur, the band would then likely adopt performance strategies in a manner consistent with traditional rock expectations. If the original gimmick proved ineffective, either a new gimmick was attempted or the band simplified their approach by “going back to their roots” and switching to a more conventional metal aesthetic.

Claims of toughness, poverty, or the performance of various masculinity markers were employed as gimmickry. Successful manipulations of masculinity such as those of scene leaders Motley Crüe helped pave the way for bands like Poison or Faster Pussycat. Some bands referenced metal archetypes like Alice Cooper, Aerosmith, and Kiss by emphasizing the theatricality of a stage-show as gimmick. Here, the flamboyant theatrics like Kiss' Gene Simmons splitting blood and fire or Alice Cooper's mock-decapitation created spectacle. Bands like W.A.S.P., with their torture rack, Dio and his battling laser-knights stage, and GWAR, with their entire existence, followed suit. In some cases, simply having the support of an established act served as an effective gimmick. Having the opportunity to tour with the top-name act, having a star's involvement in producing or promoting, or having some established lineage to others within a scene could each aid credibility and, subsequently, be used as a sales ploy.

Many bands aimed for recognition by altering their approach to established metal musical conventions. Early usage of power ballads could be seen as a gimmick as was the smiling, less confrontational or rebellious approach of bands like Bon Jovi or Warrant. In these instances, their success was mimicked by other acts, and a pop metal subgenre emerged. Other subgenres evolved in relation or in direct opposition to pop metal's conventions. Thrash metal arose from the gimmick of playing hyperfast music. Thrash then morphed into death metal by altering vocal style and lyrical focus. As discussed in Chapter Three, using satanic imagery for band logos or in lyrics served as a means for making a band noteworthy. This strategy later fostered the development of the black metal subgenre, a style which solely addressed themes of the occult. Other marketable musical styles were crossed with metal aesthetics, initiating further derivative subgenres such as funk metal, industrial metal, goth metal, and metalcore.

Also, highlighting a single performer, commonly the lead singer or lead guitar player, could create star-power which then could serve as a marketable gimmick. Centering attention on specific individuals added glamour and focus for the band's publicity. This tactic also helped establish normative standards for virtuosity within metal musicianship. Players like Yngwie Malmsteen or Eddie Van Halen emerged as guitar heroes to emulate. The physical attractiveness (and macho posturing) of frontmen like Skid Row's Sebastian Bach or White Lion's Mike Tramp could be highlighted, thereby increasing a band's potential recognition. For bands with female members, their mere presence served as the gimmick – especially when they accentuated their sexuality and attractiveness. Lita Ford and Warlock's Doro Pesch used this to great advantage in breaking into the predominantly-male metal scene. Artists of color, particularly black artists or artists who were not native English speakers, could also be seen as out of the ordinary and, therefore, memorably marketable. Chapter Five specifically addresses the ways in which women, artists of color, and non-native English speakers negotiated their respective positions within the metal subculture.

“There's Only One Way to Rock”: Metal Authenticity and Rock Roots

While postmodern scholars find concepts like “authenticity” as conceptually problematic, the metal subculture commonly used rhetorical arguments based on the perceived metal-worthiness of performances. Many metal bands claimed authenticity by utilizing previously-established performance styles, touring expectations (both on and off stage), and publicity tactics. As such, these bands were readily exposed to and, for the most part, committed to the hypermasculine cockrock ethos as epitomized by rock icons Led Zeppelin, the Rolling Stones, and The Who. Larger-than-life marauding through arenas and clubs, leaving a trail of empty bottles, tossed-aside groupies, and destroyed hotel rooms along the way, served as the

entitlement to those meriting a record label's tour support. The privilege of rock stardom also came attached to other rock mythologies including artistry over commercialism, commitment to the rock ethos over selling out, and maintaining a proper reverence for one's role as rock star by adopting historically-consistent hypermasculine performativity. Metal from its onset, being a subgenre of rock and performed by musicians contextually located within rock's scope, found little difficulty in embracing these tenets. As metal evolved, the subcultural identity of metal began to distinguish itself from rock; the core rock values of independence and rebellious distrust of outsiders remained stable if not intensified. Since mainstream rock dignitaries (labels, writers, disc jockeys, etc.) commonly dismissed metal as artistically-substandard to classic rock artists, metal bands often invoked an adversarial "us-versus-them" argument. This, then, served to strengthen metal's unified underground identity. Many mainstream metal artists emphasized how having an active interest in both visual and musical aesthetics contrasted previously-established rock expectations, and, subsequently, this difference diminished critical standing within the mainstream rock world.

"Lipstick and Leather": Metal Gets Pretty (and Brings in the Babes)

As metal's fanbase evolved, metal bands employed a variety of new strategies for targeting audiences beyond metal's initial working-class, teenage-male demographic. First, metal shifted its marketing focus to suburban teens and their greater discretionary income. This can be partly attributed to the growth of cable television markets and the growth of Music Television (MTV). With cable television becoming more prevalent in suburban households, access to a great number of teenage viewers facilitated marketing toward teens. MTV needed music programming that held visual interest. Metal, with its established reputation as a teen-friendly musical style and its visually distinctive look of studded leather and long hair, proved an ideal fit (Kaplan, 1991;

Weinstein, 2000; Walser, 1993). To illustrate metal's popularity on MTV, *Dial MTV*, a show which aired the top-ten audience requests for the given day, was routinely comprised of predominantly metal videos. One video, Motley Crüe's ballad "Home Sweet Home" (1985), remained in the #1 slot for six months straight, which prevented similar exposure for newer releases and caused record industry officials to fume. Thus, MTV changed its policies for *Dial MTV*, thereby limiting the span over which a particular video could be appear on the program to two months after the video's initial release.

MTV's marketing power necessitated the creation of a visual image to enhance a band's presentation. Whereas previously, a band's visual presentation might have been limited to print media or live performances, the immediate accessibility of television drastically increased visual exposure; one's appearance now became a crucial element in fostering recognition and subsequent success. The song and its video representation became equally capable of generating buzz. Thus, bands offering more televisual appeal benefited, be it performative like that of Dee Snider and Twisted Sister or aesthetic like the physical attractiveness of Jon Bon Jovi. This trend soon proved problematic to many, both within and outside metal circles.

Despite the criticism, metal bands found themselves devoted to MTV's marketing power and potential platinum payoffs. In the case of bands like Bon Jovi, White Lion, or Winger, highlighting the visual attractiveness of their respective frontmen strategically targeted female viewers and their purchasing capacity. Though deviating from metal's traditional practice, the record industry (and often the bands themselves) greatly desired the inclusion of women as audience members. For the industry, it simply meant far more potential purchasers. Bands, while not complaining about greater sales and royalties, also liked the increased potential for sex

by having additional women in audiences, at record signings, and lining up for backstage privileges.

While the shift in audience composition prompted debate within the metal subculture over metal's potential loss of masculine power, more often than not, the female fans catered to the prevailing ideals of hegemonic masculinity. For example, dress codes for female fans typically worked in one of two forms. In the first, female metal fan performativity imitated that of the women seen in metal videos or on album art. Revealing dress, heavy facial makeup, and the adoption of a "bitch goddess" persona were common (Weinstein, 2000, p. 134). Male fans at shows could then ogle these women as objects or desire them for sexual fulfillment. In this instance, the teenage female's motivations might be interpreted as paralleling those of their liminal male counterparts; each strives for adult identity status. Here, the teenage females would be rewarded with attention derived from displaying their "adult" body and its potential sexuality. In terms of power, however, the women cater to the masculine gaze as passive recipients and occupy a position of sexual subservience to male desire. This, ultimately, represents what Dworkin (1981) declares as a masculine power: "Sexual power is an attribute of the male, something that inheres in him as a taker of what he wants or needs" (p. 24). The other common style was simply taking on the standard dress of males – jeans and t-shirt with leather or denim jacket. Here, no effort is made at distinguishing gender differences which Weinstein (2000) argues replicates "the masculinist code" (p. 134) of metal. Regardless of which style was chosen, the female fan replicated the "normalcy" of patricarchal gender-coding.

In terms of metal band performativity, the targeting of female fans fostered two distinct changes in terms of songwriting and publicity strategies. Sonically, bands that typically attracted female fans were far closer to pop songwriting standards – more emphasis on melodies written in

major keys and vocal lines sung with clear, clean vocals – ultimately leading to the power ballad. Typically, the metal bands which emphasized attracting a greater female audience would often also choose to arrange photo shoots in ways parallel to teenage pinups, shots commonly seen in *Teen Beat* or the like. Instead of scowling and trying to look tough, vocalists or lead guitar players would be brightly lit and pictured smiling. As Frith and McRobbie (1990) suggest, females consumed these images of pop idols in a personal, private way, and thus the potential threat of masculine dominance or sexual advance perceived by the female fan becomes lessened by the pictured artists' softer, more inviting poses and facial expressions.

The essence of the authenticity debate surrounding what constituted a male performer's acceptable appearance amounted to a perceived transgression of masculine power. As described in Chapter Three, performative display could contribute to establishing one's phallic dominance. However, to overemphasize passivity in such displays proved grounds for phallic loss. Foregrounding appearance and image without sufficiently maintaining metal's masculine expectancy standards was to shift attention away from musicality and toward being the recipient of gaze. As Mulvey (1975) describes, "In a world ordered by sexual imbalance, pleasure in looking has been split between active/male and passive/female" (p. 11). Here, male metal performers took on roles typically acted out by women: "women are simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness" (p. 11). The choice toward "to-be-looked-at-ness" created anomaly within a system of hegemonic masculinity: "the male figure cannot bear the burden of sexual objectification. Man is reluctant to gaze at his exhibitionist like" (p. 12). Choosing to shift toward more pop sensibilities infers a conscious choice to forgo the phallus – something the cockrocker would never allow. Rather, as described in Chapter Three, metal's cockrock

performance legacy was unquestionably being performed to be codified as hegemonically masculine.

According to Connell (1995), hegemonic masculinity is “the masculinity that occupies the hegemonic position in a given pattern of gendered relations” (p. 77). For metal, actions demonstrating performative male strength and heterosexual prowess were those most privileged. Personas linked to masculine strength, commonly enacted and reinforced within metal, included: warriors (Manowar, Battleaxe), cowboys (Ratt’s “Wanted Man” [1984] video, W.A.S.P.’s “Blind in Texas” [1985], Jon Bon Jovi’s *Blaze for Glory* [1990], the band Tangier), athletes (Raven circa *The Pack Is Back* [1986]), and biker gangs (Crüe, The Almighty, Circus of Power). Accoutrements of traditional masculine prowess or position were also commonly appropriated: motorcycles (LA Guns’ “Electric Gypsy” [1987] video, Motley Crüe’s *Girls, Girls, Girls* [1987] cover), cars (Vince Neil and Stephen Percy’s involvement with drag racing; Sammy Hagar meeting Eddie Van Halen via their Lamborghini mechanic), armor and weaponry (nearly everything dealing with Manowar or Armored Saint, Gene Simmons’ battleaxe bass), the military (Accept’s *Russian Roulette* [1986] cover art, Ace Frehley’s “Rock Soldiers” [1987]), and fighting (kicking ass or threatening to kick somebody’s ass). Electricity and volume was presented as phallic via harnessing the power within: AC/DC’s logo, Kix’s *Blow My Fuse* (1988) cover art, and Manowar’s “Blow Your Speakers” (1987). Demonstrating these behaviors effectively proved one’s metal standing and worthiness of masculine standing. When a band would chose to forgo volume and power in favor of subtlety or tenderness, their performed masculinity was temporarily sidetracked. One such example was the power ballad.

Commonly featuring piano, synthesizer, or acoustic guitar, the power ballad displayed a softer side to the usually aggressive metal pose. The shift in tone reflected the more traditional

pop sensibility that Frith and McRobbie (1990) described females as being more accustomed to. For males, the power ballad marked only a single song that varied from the formula (the ballad itself eventually becoming part of the metal album's formulaic construction) and could be accepted if the rest of the album remained heavy. Even so, power ballads usually retained the traditional guitar solo, incorporating the amplified and distorted guitar tone so desired within metal. However, when too many ballads were presented or the remaining record did not rock enough to outweigh the ballad's poppishness (for example, all the Aerosmith releases after *Pump* [1989] or Extreme's *Pornograffiti* [1990]), the band was subject to criticism of either being too weak or too commercial. This, according to metal standards, equated to an inauthentic act.

From a recording industry perspective, the power ballad made a great deal of sense. As the song fit mainstream music tendencies better than the usual metal style, wider audience acceptance could be accessed. People opposed to the idea of a metal album might buy a single or an album based on the lone, softer track released as a single. Thus, labels released singles in a formulaically-strategic pattern. After luring the metal fans with the first release (commonly a more authentically-metal track), the second release (the power ballad) would target wider sales beyond the metal audience already exposed to the album via the first single. A third rocking single would then commonly serve the purpose of reclaiming one's metal credibility. Additionally, via the power ballad or covers of historically-approved songs, programmers of radio or video shows would not have to be as leery of metal since these versions better fit mainstream standards. Power ballads, commonly romantic love songs, would not be problematically too loud or too risqué for securing advertisers.

As the power ballad became a formulaic component to mainstream metal, some metal acts disparaged ballads and the bands that performed them as a means for claiming musical

authenticity. Groups like Manowar, with their claims of “Death to false metal,” directly questioned the authenticity of softer songs. The speed and death metal movements of the mid-1980s could also be read as a reaction to the mainstreaming of metal. By focusing on faster, louder, and less commercially-accessible song constructions, speed and death metal bands remained closer to metal’s more underground, less commercial roots. Here, the sense of subcultural loyalty to metal’s past also protects metal’s distinctive identity (both as musical style and masculine realm). The ballad is presented as inauthentic because it blurs the division between the mainstream and “true” metal.

A second, less common compromise made between formula and toughness was the not-so-nice power ballad. Instead of soft, tender lyrical themes, the ballad was done as parody or about decidedly confrontational lyrical topics. The title of Anthrax’s “N.F.B. (Dallabnikufesin)” (1987) – read the song’s title backwards – illustrates the song’s parodic intent. Lyrically, a love song is lampooned as the lamenting boyfriend, despite sleeping with all his ex-girlfriend’s friends, exaggeratedly weeps after “she was hit by a truck.” Another example of a parodic ballad, Ugly Kid Joe’s “Everything About You” (1991), describes how the performer hates everything about his former girlfriend. Love/Hate’s “Don’t Fuck With Me” (1992), a song about stereotyping and discrimination, unavoidably foregrounds obscenity in the chorus. Guns n’ Roses’ “I Used to Love Her (but had to kill her)” (1988) and Motley Crüe’s “You’re All I Need” (1987) lyrically center on the misogynistic murders of girlfriends. In the instance of the anti-ballad, masculinity gets restored through counterbalancing the stylistic feminization of the ballad with lyrics demonstrating hypermasculine toughness.

Additionally, many within the metal scene presented thinly-veiled arguments against synthesizers, a common ballad instrument, as being wimpy and inauthentic (Klosterman, 2002;

Hunter 2004). Backlash against synthesizers partly stemmed from the instrument's prominence in the era's pop music. New wave and dance bands heavily relied on the bright, chirpy tones of the synthesizer, and the instrument became an easy target for establishing discursive and subcultural boundaries. To incorporate keyboards too prominently was to threaten the dichotomy of metal and not metal. For example, Europe's "The Final Countdown" (1986) received considerable condemnation for the prominence of the synthesizer in its melody line. (Interestingly, the song became a top-ten hit which potentially also speaks to metal's territoriality.) Anthrax's Charlie Benante famously declared the keyboards were "gay" unless performed by a band like UFO, whose long track-record of rock credibility allowed them such freedoms (Walser, 1993). Many albums of the era made certain that the statement "this album contains no synthesizers" was prominently displayed on its outside packaging. When artists like Cinderella and Ozzy Osbourne routinely used keyboards in their recordings and in live performances, they often did not allow a keyboardist to appear on stage. This mild deception preserved the "sanctity" of the performance. When stalwarts Judas Priest and Iron Maiden used "guitar synthesizers" on their albums, each band made it a point of describing that the tones being processed were the result of playing a guitar and not a keyboard-based instrument. Despite the mid-80s invention of the hybrid "key-tar," synthesizers still lacked the guitar's phallic power and symbolically implied a phallic castration for those bands employing them extensively – something Benante's "gay" critique seems to colloquially point toward.

A second source of keyboard-related criticism related to the role of musicianship in metal. The possibility of programmed tones or rhythms raised doubts of performative credibility or musical authenticity. For metal, where guitar solos were used as a measuring standard of merit, not being able to play one's studio versions note-for-note in a live setting was anathema.

Likewise, relying on studio trickery versus actual musicianship failed to display the mastery a true rock god wields. In traditional rock discourse, a band should ultimately be able to perform as musicians and artists (Frith, 1986). The rise of complaints about newly successful, more MTV-driven bands centered on those bands displaying dubious musical credits – be it simplistic songs, hack playing, plagiarism of worthy rock predecessors, or studio wizardry. In the historical context of Grammy winning, lip-synching phonies Milli Vanilli, Phil Auslander (1999) suggests that during the late 1980s and early 1990s, the perceived liveness of musical performance proved paramount. As such, metal bands, particularly the glam metal bands, found themselves needing to defend their musicianship regularly. Both “live” albums and “unplugged” performances aimed toward this goal.

“Got Live If You Want It”: Concerts, Copycats, and Authenticity Claims

Albums documenting concert performances had been industry staples since the mid 1970s when records by Cheap Trick, Peter Frampton, and Kiss became multiplatinum sellers. Metal acts typically released a live album following their second or third studio release. Beyond generating additional album sales, bands also liked issuing live recordings because it doubled their publishing and performance royalties without having to write new material. Calling the records “live” was a misnomer as the core recordings were very often cleaned up in the studio. Punched-in notes and studio vocals were commonly added to the basic tracks. Conveniently mixing the audience to the fore, particularly during sing-a-longs or when prompted by the vocalist to “scream for me” would also make atmosphere sound far more energetic. Three of the most successful “live” metal albums, Ozzy Osbourne’s *Tribute* (1987), Iron Maiden’s *Live After Death* (1985), and the Scorpions’ *World Wide Live* (1985), fit these tendencies. Regardless of their veracity, the impression left was of a talented band playing to supremely appreciative

crowds all over the world. The concert video was another common ploy for performing authenticity as a live band. Here, showing the band cavorting on stage with a mass of crazed fans ecstatically savoring every moment supposedly proved their metallic mettle.

A slightly more calculated version of this was the “unplugged” performance. Again a misnomer, the bands played acoustic instruments which were miked and then run through amplifiers to create a less distorted tone. The electric power was still present, but the spectacular stage show of flashpots, fancy lighting rigs, and large props was removed. Typically recorded in a television studio or smaller theater space, the intimacy of the venue strategically rekindled the nostalgic simplicity of the musician playing directly for his or her fans. Bon Jovi’s *MTV Video Awards* (1989) performances of “Livin on a Prayer” and “Wanted Dead or Alive” were so well received that MTV routinely ran the clips as high-rotation music videos, not to mention garnering MTV a nice piece of self-publicity (Hoye et al, 2001). A second such MTV-generated hit, Great White’s (1990) cover of Led Zeppelin’s “Babe I’m Gonna Leave You” followed suit. When Tesla’s *Five Man Acoustical Jam* (1990) reached #12 in the US album charts and a single from the album, a cover of the Five Man Electrical Band’s “Signs,” hit #8 on the singles chart, many other metal bands began to incorporate acoustic styles.

By this point, MTV had established a regular series featuring unplugged performances simply titled “Unplugged.” For mainstream metal bands, doing the show was not only prime exposure, but also served as a direct answer to critical questions of musical capability. For bands like Ratt, Vixen, and Poison, this was crucially important as they were commonly accused of lip-synching during live performances. Of the nineteen episodes comprising the show’s first season (1990), Ratt, Vixen, Great White, Tesla, Aerosmith, Damn Yankees, and Poison all appeared. In the following season, Winger and Slaughter appeared in one of the seven aired episodes.

Pragmatically, having a need to maximally fill only 60 minutes for the televised portion (often it was far less), the format allowed bands to simply prepare minimal material (ranging from two to seven songs) that would be eventually seen. While musical ability was necessary for this, the editing process allowed for the choice cuts to be kept and distributed. (This is best exemplified by Neil Young taking full advantage of the pseudo-live format. Young chose to play a single song four times in repetition to get a version he deemed salvageable. A viewer seeing the televised final product would interpret the performance as live and singular, but would not necessarily see the full process as it was produced [Colletti et al, 1995].)

Auslander (1999) argues live performance epitomizes claims for musical authenticity: “while recordings and the visual artifacts of rock culture proffer evidence of authenticity, only the live performance can certify it for rock ideology” (p. 76). In framing an argument about Eric Clapton’s 1992 *Unplugged* performance serving as an industry-wide response to its ongoing lip-synching crisis, Auslander offers, “that this artificial resuscitation of rock ideology occurred under the sign of simulacrum is apparent from the way an appearance on *MTV Unplugged* became a rite of passage for all kinds of popular musicians, even those whose work in musical genres for which liveness and acoustic musicianship valorized in rock are not traditional signs of authenticity” (p. 98). Unfortunately, Auslander’s text, like most writing on rock music topics, fails to address or deconstruct any of the multiple metal artists who appeared on the show. Though his argument is based on either canonical artists like Clapton, Paul McCartney and Rod Stewart or pop music icons like Mariah Carey and REM, his claims apply in that, simulacrum or not, the act of a metal artist performing this “rite of passage” could garner authenticity credibility. Most metal bands appearing unplugged would also choose to include at least one

cover version of a song popularized by a canonical artist. This choice served as a means to accentuate one's respectful position in the historical legacy of true rock standing.

The instance of Great White's "Babe, I'm Gonna Leave You" proved anomalous in terms of authenticity. Musically, the band's performance was eerily close to Led Zeppelin's original studio recording; singer Jack Russell's performance was particularly exact. This, in and of itself, shows dedication to craft and extreme skill in duplicating without the benefit of multiple takes or a producer's assistance – something worthy of claims to musical credibility. Many bands, in fact, did pay tribute to their influences and garnered some degree of status based on the credibility of their musical roots. However, by being too exact in their multiple Zeppelin covers (going so far as to eventually release a full Zeppelin tribute record in 1998), Great White found themselves harshly criticized for being unoriginal copyists. Rock ideology commonly demands that a true artist writes and performs one's own genuine material. Covering the songs of someone else, while potentially commercially viable and quite commonly enacted, casts the performer a step away from artistic authenticity. Unless a remarkably-changed arrangement demonstrates a new artistic twist on the song being covered, a band must create enough sufficiently-original work to counterbalance the potential loss of authenticity that results from over-reliance on outside authorship. In Great White's case, recording and releasing too many by-the-numbers cover songs on too many separate occasions damned the group's overall reputation. Both within and outside the metal circle, the rhetoric of a band lacking originality became a common critique.

It is important to recognize that placing a commercial product into a historical discourse of authenticity is postmodernly problematic; using Benjamin's (1937) ideas on mechanical reproduction, the sheer act of replication automatically decreases a performance's authenticity,

transforming it into an artifact without its original aura. In this instance, what matters is how the contextual history of metal and rock selectively privilege performative tactics. Being first to write the song doesn't necessarily matter; rather, being the first to gain substantial credit for a particular performative tactic fosters the rights to claim authenticity. Led Zeppelin might have been musically ripping off Willie Dixon, but their tone, look, and attitude coupled with their historical moment eventually earned them iconic status. However, when Kingdom Come tried the same tactic using Led Zeppelin as their model, they were critically blasted as plagiarists. Since Zeppelin was a well-known entity, no claims to valid authenticity could be made. Similarly, Guns n Roses vocalist Axl Rose might have stolen his stage moves from fellow LA scenester Richard Black, but by the time Black's band Shark Island got signed and received wider exposure, it was a moot point. The inauthentic Rose was considered authentic based on the timing of Guns n Roses' popular breakthrough. Subsequently, Black would be subjected to the label of "an Axl-clone" despite his artistic precedence.

Despite the strategic authenticity tactics of metal bands playing live, playing unplugged, or playing up their links to rock credibility, mainstream rock critics remained staunchly unimpressed by metal artists and liberally voiced their opinions as such. By forgoing either the classic rock canon (Beatles, The Rolling Stones, The Doors, The Who, etc.) or those with more current college radio cache (Talking Heads, U2, REM, etc.) in favor of what rock writers considered either unskilled, derivative, or stupid, metal fans undercut the critics' claim to elite status. This rejection incensed the rock writers even more. For example, the *Rolling Stone Album Guide* offers (DeCurtis et al, 1992):

Twisted Sister: "pretty flimsy reshuffling of several vintage anthems... a mediocre song with a strong visual hook."

Bon Jovi: “Hard rock hackwork of the most banal sort... hinted at rock & roll grandeur but delivered little more than empty flash.”

Ratt: “the words are insipid, the guitar riffing is an exercise in recycling... a retread of David Lee Roth period Van Halen... Glossy but thunderous, this may not be art, but for the genre, it’s state-of-the-art.”

Poison: “Poison masters its plastic form. ‘Something to Believe In’ is Poison scaling heights of dim-wit portentousness.”

Motley Crüe: “initial fame had more to do with makeup, attitude, and umlauts than with its music... a distressingly mild mannered distillation of Kiss and Aerosmith clichés... all the usual teen titillation.”

W.A.S.P.: “awful plod metal of the sex-apocalypse school... masters the gothic ballad all metalheads employ when aping sincerity.”

Whitesnake: “a derivative dinosaur playing to the inbred conservatism of album-rock radio... retrofitting Led Zeppelin riffs into ‘Still of the Night,’ although the genuine pop smarts of ‘Here I Go Again’ mitigates the album’s lack of originality... *Slip* ends up unusually empty-sounding even by Whitesnake standards.”

Great White: “neither makes the band worth listening to, but with music this prosaic, even the slightest distinctions help.”

Judas Priest: “Halford can match the range and sharp impact of Robert Plant, but his shrieks and moans aren’t nearly as deep... mincing desecration of Joan Baez’ “Diamonds and Rust”... encapsulates the metal experience for true believers – many of whom will be listening to something else in five years.”

For the most part, mainstream rock critics dismissed metal as disposable – something the Judas Priest excerpt certainly demonstrates. The few occasions when metal did garner critical favor, it was still couched in less-than-flattering language:

Metallica: “almost single-handedly reinvented thrash, transforming it from monochromatic hyperspeed sludge into a music capable of remarkable depth, resonance, and beauty. Granted, “beauty” is not an adjective that readily springs to mind when faced with titles like “Creeping Death,” “Leper Messiah,” or “To Live Is To Die” nor is Metallica’s dark vision in any way compatible with conventional notions of rock accessibility.”

Megadeth: “Thrash acts may play at virtuosity, but when push comes to shove most have to fudge, covering their lack of articulation in a blur of angrily buzzing noise. Not

Megadeth though... And while it's not always enough to salvage the low-budget nihilism of frontman Dave Mustaine's material, it does at least put some teeth into the band's apocalyptic worldview."

Joe Satriani: "Unlike the work of other axe heroes, Satriani's compositions aren't just riff-a-rama launching pads for fleet-fingered solos; they're actual songs...."

The ability to deliver the goods visually, commercially, or musically garnered attention. In the case of Joe Satriani, his combined musical prestige earned from both inside and outside the metal world and platinum selling instrumental record *Surfing With the Alien* (1987) opened a new way for metal bands to begrudgingly get critics to offer praise.

"The Art of Shred": Virtuosity and Authenticity Claims

Mastery of musical performance afforded power and prestige. Creating a reputation as a stellar guitar player could spark sales. One means to achieve this was through performing virtuosity. Many labels, following the small-but-notable success of Shrapnel Records and its catalog of instrumental "shred" records, subsequently released albums specifically designed to showcase a guitarist's particular technical skills – Satriani's proving the most commercially successful. A number of the Shrapnel shredders received formal training from the Guitar Institute of Technology thereby adding a dose of credibility to their "guitar god" claims. Walser (1993) describes how guitar players like Randy Rhoads and Yngwie Malmsteen used their classical music backgrounds as a means for establishing musical legitimacy. Basing one's creations in musical theory would then complement traditional music discourse as being canonically sound.

As mentioned in Chapter Three, Steve Waksman (1999) argues the electric guitar comes to represent sexual potency. A musician's virtuosity coupled with the technological savvy of creating tangibly large, distorted, amplified sound becomes signified as phallic power. Hence, the shredder utilizes his ability to wield the technophallus in such a way as to earn symbolic

sexualized capital. Very rarely did instrumentalists other than guitarists earn this type of reverence. When it did occur, it was the extremity of a performance that garnered attention and was subsequently exploited as a marketing gimmick. TNT's Tony Harnell and Nitro's Jim Gillette both proudly recounted stories of earning their bands respective recording contracts by shattering a glass with falsetto screams. Dave Lombardo's double-bass kick drumming was so fast that once he left Slayer, his new band, Grip Inc., was immediately signed and promoted by featuring his skills. The plucky thwapping of Les Claypool's bass playing pushed the eccentric Primus into a metal marketing scheme.

Failure to demonstrate the technical proficiency was to fall prey to the critical condemnation of "sucking" (again, a phallosexually-loaded term), yet being too driven by technique was also grounds for critique. Yngwie Malmsteen's sweep-picking style afforded him the ability to play far faster and cleaner than many of his contemporaries. Though his skill earned him status as a guitar god, Malmsteen was also lambasted for recording songs with no genuine feeling. His pretentious attitude toward his peers certainly didn't help his standing with metal circles. For one, he was unable to keep a consistent band together, thereby undermining the sense of band loyalty and unity metal embraced. Then, he openly disparaged fellow metal guitarists and thereby insulted most of the metal world. Lastly, in viewing himself on par with his idols Bach and Paganini, Malmsteen overperformed his credibility ploy to a point of othering himself to the fringes of the metal scene.

"Death to False Metal": Constructed Authenticity and Metal Discourse

Many of metal's authenticity debates were centered on metal's ability to offer a rebellious alternative to mainstream pop styles. The traditional rock music rhetoric of "selling out" and labeling artists as "posers" became a common outcry for both metal bands and fans

alike. The metal subculture commonly used rhetorical arguments based on the perceived validity of what performances constituted metal worthiness and which did not. From 1986 through 1991, record companies rightfully saw the increased market potential for metal music. As described in Chapter Two, labels tended to view emerging scenes, like metal, in terms of pragmatics rather than artistic constructs – whatever seemed to sell should be duplicated in hopes of the successors selling as well. Increasing record sales, higher chart positions, and lucrative exploitive recording contracts with up-and-coming bands offered greater income potentials. As such, the industry attempted to force-fit most guitar-based acts into a formulaic metal mold with hopes of discovering the next Motley Crüe or Def Leppard. Commonly, both newer and established bands willingly acquiesced to this tendency as record labels controlled the marketing and distribution necessary for fostering financial gains. Artists that might have fallen outside of metal’s usual domain would adopt versions of metal signification with hopes of cashing in. This list would include as disparate of performers as Iggy Pop (1988’s *Instinct*), David Bowie (his 1989 band Tin Machine), Michael Jackson (solos by Eddie Van Halen [1982] and Slash [1992] and Jennifer Batten playing on 1987’s *Bad*), Was Not Was (1983) (Ozzy Osbourne as guest vocalist on “Shake Your Head[Let’s Go to Bed]”, Heart (1985’s *S/T*), Aldo Nova (1991’s *Blood on the Bricks*), Ice-T (his 1991 band Body Count), hardcore’s Bad Brains (1989’s *Quickness*), punk’s TSOL (1990’s *Strange Love*) and the Sex Pistols’ Steve Jones (1987’s *Mercy* and 1989’s *Fire and Gasoline*), former goths The Cult (1989’s *Electric* and 1991’s *Sonic Temple*) and eventually, the ultimate extreme Pat Boone (1997’s *In a Metal Mood*). With each respective addition to the metal market, opportunity for invention and redefinition occurred.

While invention could provide genre growth and ongoing artistic development, the rigid expectancies of the metal subculture periodically proved difficult to negotiate. As described in

Chapter Two, metal has, for its history, prided itself on being metal and nothing but metal. By utilizing a discourse of othering, each invention would need to be referenced in terms of its respective metalness or otherness. Four potential results occurred. If the idea or action fit the metal ethos, it was accepted. If it held some degree of problematic “otherness” but could be argued as fitting the general metal ethos, it was accepted. If the potentially problematic invention was framed with sufficient compensatory metal signifiers surrounding the invention, it could be deemed acceptable, provided the invention’s relation to “otherness” clearly offered little threat to overall metal credibility. If the invention in question lacked sufficient compensatory signifiers or was simply too far “other” to be ignored, it was deemed problematic with grounds for status loss, ridicule, or outright dismissal.

To better demonstrate the ways in which the metal subculture negotiated their claims of traditional rock authenticity with their ever-changing standards of metal authenticity, I offer two specific case studies. Each instance represents a generalized tendency subsequently duplicated by many other metal bands. Throughout these instances, a variety of authenticity arguments become illustrated – both through band actions and the reactions of other artists within the metal subculture. In the first example, Motley Crüe, a trendsetter within mainstream metal, exemplified how the manipulative blend of masculinity markers with traditional rock iconography coalesced in the popular, yet accepted, version of mainstream metal performance. In the second example, a second generation Los Angeles (LA) band, Poison, initiated a subcultural debate over their controversial androgynous image and lack of metal and musical credibility, a debate which impacted the band’s future performance choices.

“Looks That Kill”: Motley Crüe and their Legacy of Mainstream Metal Performance

As described in Chapter Two, Motley Crüe was an early success story from the LA Strip scene. The band's ability to innovatively recycle the successful promotional gambits of others, in such a way as to still come across as fresh, led them to prominence, first within LA, and later to the mainstream metal world as a whole. With the recording industry and upstart bands trying to replicate successful formulas, Crüe proved remarkably influential as the group's ongoing evolution of fashion and performative practices marked them a subcultural leader. Though potentially transgressive in both early crossover-audience and mid-career adoption of androgynous glam, Crüe's manipulation of masculinity markers and rock authenticity tenets maintained the band's credibility as metal trendsetters.

The first Crüe release, *Too Fast For Love* (1983), serves as an early example of the group's marketing savvy. The band members consciously manipulated their performed personas as to balance out their respective image portrayals. This, in and of itself, has a long history within the rock and pop world as exemplified by The Beatles, Kiss, and countless boy bands. As the frontman, Vince Neil's bleached-blond hair and red leather outfit set him apart from the rest of the band. Articles mentioned him as the band's heartthrob, and his appearance could be read as the most notably androgynous during this time. While photo shoots commonly showed Neil with pouts reminiscent of female pornographic photography, photos of Neil in performance adhered to cock rock vocalist standards (Frith & McRobbie, 1990); the bared chest, clenched fist, and angry sneer rectified any potential authenticity concerns. In complete contrast to Neil, guitar player Mick Mars represented the horrific extreme. Mars spat blood, wore ghoulish makeup ala Alice Cooper, and was frequently photographed in mid-scream, a ploy commonly used by all Crüe members throughout their career to connote noise, anger, and rage. Bridging the gap between the two were playfully-adolescent drummer Tommy Lee (and his Mighty Mouse stuffed

animal strapped to his drum set) and rebellious bassist Nikki Sixx. Sixx's early use of the upside-down cross as stage prop suggests danger and inversion of normative mainstream values, and his frequent use of a bottle of Jack Daniels as prop in photo shoots emphasized the "live fast, die young" ethos idealized within rock mythology. While their approaches in fashion would change over time, Crüe would maintain this version of personalized marketing throughout its career.

During the *Too Fast For Love* era, the band rehashed previously established strategies to help them enter and succeed within the subculture. This fits Donnelly's (1981) depiction of the process of entry into subcultures. According to Donnelly, as normative standards are learned and practiced, the process of becoming socialized into the whole is facilitated. Pushing traditional performance standards to new extremes via theatricality (for example, Sixx breathing fire, Mars spitting blood, Lee twirling and throwing drumsticks, and Neil running all over the stage) helped highlight Crüe's performative credibility, a quality strongly desired within the masculine metal realm (Weinstein, 2000; Walser, 1993). Large degrees of innovation were not seen during this era. This seems reasonable as a starting band would not yet have developed enough subcultural capital to challenge too many normative standards directly. The overall success of the album, however, did propel Crüe to a level of notoriety. As a result, the band merited large-scale fan praise and consistent monthly coverage in metal magazines like *Hit Parader*.

Motley Crüe's second album, *Shout at the Devil* (1984), introduced darker and moodier songs, taking on themes of street violence, rebellion versus authority, and self-reliant independence. Visually, the album featured pentagrams, fire, and *Mad Max*-ian fashions. Whereas *Too Fast for Love* was written and recorded in a brighter, poppier tone, *Shout* emphasized its lower end by downtuning the guitar and extending the depth of contrast between

the rhythm parts and Vince Neil's much sharper, less nasal vocals. Additionally, "In the Beginning" and "God Bless the Children of the Beast" were interludes specifically used to establish mood. The first was a poetry reading creating a buildup of tension for "Shout at the Devil," and the second was essentially an acoustic guitar instrumental, feeding into the album's lone cover song, a faster, distorted version of the Beatles' "Helter Skelter." The result of this scripting made the feature songs seem more powerful and darker by emphasizing their distinction from the qualities of the intros. These tactics collectively created a sense of strength and heaviness for the album to make the band appear to demonstrate the masculine qualities of metal music as valued by the subculture as a whole.

Consistent with the ideas presented in Chapter Three, satanic imagery and referencing served to extend a sense of danger and power. By invoking the taboo of Satanism, the band directly confronted traditional authority stances. When challenged about its satanic imagery, Crüe claimed the performances were empty acts of rebellion rather than carrying genuine intent. This is similar to Hebdige's (1979) description of how punks used the swastika as an affront to the British mainstream rather than for pro-Nazi sympathy. Occurring at a time when backmasking was of conservative concern (as seen in works like the Peters' brothers *Why Knock Rock* (1984) and the beginnings of the PMRC), printing "This album may contain subliminal messages" on *Shout*'s cover art was another manipulation used to appeal to a rebellious, teenaged target audience. In these instances, Crüe unabashedly followed the historical precedent of the Beatles (backmasking), Led Zeppelin (Satanism) and the British punks (rhetorical distancing), linking them to strategic practices accepted within rock authenticity.

Crüe's choice to release "Helter Skelter" as a third single (1985) (a picture disc with poster; there was no video) illustrates multiple authenticity maneuvers. As described in Chapter Three,

the traditional masculinity markers of rebellion and generational separation served to appeal to teenage males. Here, Crüe flaunts generational notions of decorum by glorifying the song's infamous Charles Manson tie-in by featuring an illustration of a refrigerator besmirched with bloody handprints on its album sleeve. By appropriating the Tate murders as a version of misogynistic masculine toughness, Crüe can claim to be a band to be feared yet respected by its ability to harness the power to perform violence. Elsewhere, one band photo has Nikki Sixx prominently displaying "Eat Me" and "FTW" (clarified in interviews as "fuck the world") written on his arm for further effect. Pentagram-emblazoned bandanas served to not only push their flamboyantly-teased hair even higher, but also make sure the taboo of Satanism was not forgotten. This also marks an early version of the band's tattoos' position of prominence in photo shoots; both Vince Neil and Tommy Lee make sure the artwork on their arms is clearly visible. For the second time in as many albums, Crüe referenced a canonical rock band for contrasting their musical metal currency with that of the historically-distant classic rock past. Yet, the choice of "Helter Skelter" itself also shows a historical awareness of rock's past, and Sixx, in particular, acknowledged in interviews The Beatles' rightful iconic position within rock.

Through the videos and album art of *Shout*, the Crüe demonstrate their new look, a blend of spandex, mesh, studded leather, and pseudo-armor with more elaborate, teased hair and increasingly-noticeable facial makeup. Again, like *Too Fast For Love*, Vince Neil was distinguished from the others by his more feminine appearance, though Sixx and Lee are closer to Neil than the ghoulish Mars. Lead video "Looks that Kill" sets the Crüe in a desolate futurescape in which the band is attempting to overcome a dominant woman dressed in a style resembling that of the band. Walser (1993) describes this video as a way to reinforce masculine dominance; the femme fatale is defeated, thereby reducing any threat women might present.

Framing their new provocative look in a post-apocalyptic future, greater distance between the performance and the everyday allows the viewer an out. Androgyny is not a challenge within the real world; it is only a fantastic display. While *Hit Parader* photos most commonly showed the Crüe in their stage gear, offstage photos showed the Crüe in traditional fan fashions of t-shirts and torn jeans. Offstage, Crüe highlighted their real world conformity to subcultural norms and declared the performativity as seen on stage as a separate entity.

Additional distance could also be suggested from the contextual qualities described previously. Use of a darker mood and tone, the taboo, and violent imagery countered some of the potentially-anomalous reads the more stylized, androgynous Crüe might otherwise present. Despite the makeup, the band members still performed masculinity sufficiently. The success of *Shout* suggests the metal fanbase's acceptance further increased the band's subcultural status. Crüe's accumulation of considerable subcultural capital to this point would then allow for a greater breadth of performative freedoms as manifested in the third album, *Theater of Pain*.

Released in 1985, *Theater* was a significant departure from *Shout*. Influenced by the theme of medieval court entertainment, Crüe members portrayed themselves as jesters who faced the ultimate stakes – either succeeding in entertaining the audience or failing and facing the consequence of death. Theatricality brought out a very different version of the band. In contrast to the dark, devilish image of *Shout*, *Theater* was as colorful as the album's pink cover. The fashions of the band were inspired by those of the jester, and songs branched out beyond the sex- and street-focused scope of previous albums. In total, this new version of Crüe helped make *Theater* the Crüe's most commercially successful album, expanding fandom beyond that of simply the metal world.

One major departure centers on the use of color, specifically pink, and its usual feminine loading. For a band like the Crüe, an established history of masculine prowess helped provide freedom to alter its dark and dismal legacy without recourse. Vince Neil's outfit, pink spandex pants split at the outseam by white lace and what appeared as a dangling, unhooked garter belt, holds the most direct ties to cross-dressing. Walser (1993) suggests through androgyny "at the symbolic level, prestige – male presence, gesture, musical power – is conferred upon 'female' signs, which, because they mark gender difference and are used to attract and manipulate, men pretend are trivial but take very seriously" (p. 131). If masculinity becomes reloaded onto these "female" signs, it is through the power of the male actor to create this reloading.

Viewing gender in Butler's (1990) terms of performative actions (as described in Chapter One), it is the fluidity of the significations of makeup and color that essentially are resignified as being hypermasculine, despite their seemingly anomalous state. To maintain masculine prowess by rereading potential conflicts as acceptable simply reinforces the security of masculinity in the first place. The distancing from homoeroticism in sports serves as one such example wherein the masculinity and heterosexuality of athletes goes unquestioned, despite the bodily contact and suggestive positions of dominance sports like wrestling, football, and rugby present. This can be extended to the extreme of a scenario like that of rugby players performing an "elephant walk," a procession in which naked males walk in line and participants hold the preceding person's shoulder and the trailing person's penis without in-group questioning; the homosocial arena is created so securely that doubts of heterosexual security are eliminated (Donnelly & Young, 1988).

Within the masculinist realm of metal, the spectacular nature of Crüe's fashion was not formally questioned within magazine coverage, suggesting subcultural acceptance. Only later

when new bands without established histories like Poison or Pretty Boy Floyd enacted glam styles did androgynous challenges provoke social drama (something which is addressed more specifically later in this chapter). Even with the Crüe's history, additional performative steps were enacted to provide more traditional masculine signifying cues. One such example is the poster series released concurrently with *Theater* that set the band as prohibition-era gangsters (see Figure 14). Here, despite the potentially anomalous facial make-up, Crüe's references the masculinity of gangster mythos through their Tommy gun props and old styled suits to reestablish whatever phallus might have been lost by the feminized presentation.

A second way in which the *Theater* aesthetic was configured was through the construction of the band as being targets for female interests and affections. Magazines like *Hit Parader* provided extended publicity to Tommy Lee's impending marriage to Heather Locklear, a well-known model and actress epitomizing Hollywood beauty. The band's second video for the ballad "Home Sweet Home" showed numerous clips of female fans at shows reminiscent of clips Beatlemania – screaming and ogling their desired men. The long form of this video, as released on the home video *Uncensored*, showed Neil, out of stage costume and in traditional rock-fan apparel, being surrounded by multiple beautiful women who appear to be willingly there as sexual partners for the lone male. By scripting the band in such heteronormative ways, convenient solutions to potential anomaly were provided. A final example of this includes the album's back cover artwork. The photo is a version of "see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil." Mars, Lee and Sixx, clad in black outfits and standing in front of a white background, have their "sins" respectively covered by pink-finger-nailed, manicured women's hands. Neil, in contrast, wears his pink and white ensemble in front of a black backdrop. Multiple women's hands cover Neil's body, two directly on his chest and three encircling his crotch. The women's hands

highlight Neil's potential seductiveness while immediately contrasting the transgression of Neil's outfit.

While sustaining their popularity within metal, *Theater* marked a change in the band's pursuit of a more mainstream target audience. The album's songs increased the prominence of keyboards and brighter backing vocals in the mix while shifting away from the darkness and heaviness of *Shout*. In particular, the ballad "Home Sweet Home" featured the piano as a primary instrument. The song's slower tempo shifted away from the traditional metal song aesthetic toward a more pop-oriented style. While ballads had been previously present within metal (most notably, the Scorpions "Still Loving You"), the blend of Mars' distortion-laden guitar solo within the song's context extended the range for the ballad's construction – the power ballad. More importantly, its popularity, especially with increasingly large female audiences, led to the power ballad's inclusion within mainstream metal's formula.

Bands, noting Crüe's success, followed up on both the visual and sonic constructions of *Theater*. Normative constructions of the established formula prompted fragmentation within the metal scene (Weinstein, 2000). Groups challenging the glamorous imagery and pop-influenced sounds of mainstream metal arose as well. This new niche, best epitomized by bands like Metallica, Anthrax, and Megadeth favored faster riffs, political song topics, and fashions similar to that of the audience, t-shirt and jeans. This construction (which will be more fully covered later in this chapter) could be seen as rebuilding the masculine, cock rock prominence of metal versus integrating metal toward more teenybop sensibilities and its subsequent inclusion of female fans.

Perhaps in association to these developments, Crüe's fourth album, *Girls, Girls, Girls*, saw, once again, a distinct change of fashion and song construction. Released in 1987, *Girls* is best

described as more blues-influenced, and its seedier, groove-oriented songs praised hypermasculine, homosocial pursuits. The album's title track and first video serve as a tribute to strip clubs. This choice alone helped to restate Crüe's masculine toughness and heterosexual desire. Continued battles with substance abuse are referenced (both musically and in the press), yet praise of hedonism continued. The band reestablished their masculine image by blending motorcycles, sex, and the utility of a *Wild One*-esque defiance, a motif reminiscent of the 1950s. This move equally established distance from *Theater*'s flamboyance while reclaiming the gang-mentality embraced on *Too Fast* and *Shout*.

The songs on *Girls* emphasized the four-piece band by reducing the prevalence of keyboards previously heard on *Theater*. Mars' increased use of slide guitar, Neil's use of a lower octave, looser backing vocals, and the inclusion of the Nasty Habits, two scantily-clad female backing singers, sonically brought out a gritty, urban feel associated with the origins of rock, black blues performers. The final cut, a live version of "Jailhouse Rock" is a direct reference to the 1950s and rock's roots. Coupling the song construction with the visuals of Harley Davidson motorcycles (also used as a sound effect on "Girls, Girls, Girls"), dark, back-alley settings (including the back cover's public urination pose – itself revisiting an iconic rock standard, *Who's Next*), and the increased prominence of tattoos brings Crüe back to the mythic, rebellious authenticity that *Too Fast* was based upon.

A second, related maneuver toward reclaiming authenticity featured performing hegemonic masculinity through heterosexual desire and claims of toughness. "All in the Name Of..." a song depicting the sexual attractiveness of a fifteen year-old girl (a choice reminiscent Chapter Three's discussion on bands fostering teenage identification), featured the chorus refrain of "For sex and sex I'd sell my soul, all in the name of rock 'n roll." "Sumthin' for Nuthin'" recounted

Sixx's gigolo past and sexual prowess. Most explicitly, the strip club setting of "Girls, Girls, Girls" showed the Crüe as a switchblade-carrying biker gang, ogling and eventually possessing the dancers for their sexual pleasure. While conforming to metal's formula, the album's third video "You're All I Need" had the sonics of a power ballad, yet lyrically reversed the ballad expectation. Instead of romantic praise, the narrative tells of a man murdering his love because "killing you helped me keep you at home." Sixx deflected the misogyny by saying the song was inspired by a news story. Still, working on multiple levels, the feminization of the ballad is countered by a violent, misogynistic construction, allowing for distance from female audiences and thereby reclaiming masculine standing. MTV subsequently banned the video for its graphic content, further adding to the Crüe's dangerous reputation.

The use of the strippers in the first video and the Nasty Habits on stage placed women in positions catering to male privilege and power. In a way, this also helps to separate Crüe from the imagery of *Theater*. Fashions remained stylized and hairstyles stayed large and flamboyant, but the black-and-blue color motif returned to a more traditionally masculine metallic style. Denim and leather, reminiscent of NWOBHM era described in Chapter Two, were featured instead of the lace and spandex of the Crüe's more immediate past. Tattoos became increasingly visible through press coverage, initiating the trend of metallers to come. Viewed contextually, the shift away from androgynous flamboyance toward more traditionally-masculine styles makes sense as a reponse to the rise of thrash metal in relation to the more pop-oriented commercialism being practiced by many mainstream metal acts at the time.

The overall effect is a return to roots in which the band celebrates masculinity via male bonding. This fits what Walser (1993) describes as working toward the exscription of women from metal. Male potency is celebrated through the "articulation of fantastic worlds without

women” (p. 110) or constructions that “are just another arena for enactments of male power” (p. 116). By focusing on homosocial spaces like the strip club or gangland’s streets, Crüe is allowed to perform as males without any real threat of masculinity. As well, by distancing themselves from song or fashion styles which were thought attractive to women, assertions of selling out could then be countered in favor of an authenticity claim. Occurring at a time when metal itself was fragmenting through claims of masculine and musical authenticity and considering Crüe’s own historical contribution to those arguments, *Girls* appears an understandable construction seeking to reclaim prominence within the subculture.

Later Crüe recordings stayed consistent to the same aesthetic style as performed on *Girls*. Both in terms of sound and vision, Crüe seemed to have reached its comfort zone by going on to release one more highly successful album before Neil left the fold. Upon later resurrection in 1995, the influence of grunge and the commercial downfall of mainstream metal marked the end of Crüe’s reign as the top metal band. The band’s reinvention adopted the popular grunge aesthetics positioning the band as a follower rather than as the innovators they were during the 1980s. However, during the span of 1984-1992, Crüe managed to leave a meaningful legacy on how metal was to be approached and understood inside and outside the subculture as a whole.

In terms of authenticity, Crüe’s history of performing hegemonic masculinity provided the band with the subcultural capital needed to push the boundaries of metal’s performative norms. Be it through the performance of sexual prowess, prodigious alcohol and drug use, rebellion against established authority figures, or a reverential respect to rock’s historical legacy, Crüe continually reinforced its metal credibility. The metal subculture subsequently accepted the band as “true metal” despite incidents where Crüe performed what otherwise might read as anomalous or inauthentic. In contrast, a band demonstrating similar anomalous tactics yet lacking Crüe’s

status within the metal subculture would be subject to scrutiny, criticism, or outright rejection. The glam metal band Poison exemplifies such a case.

“Look What the Cat Dragged In”: Poison’s Drama of Authenticity Transgressions

One band strongly influenced by Motley Crüe’s pathway to success was Poison. Originally from Pennsylvania, vocalist Bret Michaels, bassist Bobby Dahl, and drummer Rikki Rockett moved to LA, found a new guitarist, CC Deville, and quickly became Strip scene favorites. Part of this success was due to their relentless fliering and willingness to hound passers-by into going to their show. Substantial crowds earned the band improved venues and performing slots, which subsequently fostered word-of-mouth credibility within the scene.

The second contributor to their success was their appearance. Drummer Rikki Rockett, a trained cosmologist and hairdresser, created an exaggeratedly bright and flamboyant stage fashion for the band. The combination of heavy lipstick, eyeliner, rouge, and mascara coupled with teased, dyed hair created a glamorous androgyny that exceeded other Strip bands. With the aid of their manager Vicki Hamilton, whose ties to LA rock radio KNAC certainly didn’t hurt, Poison was quickly signed by Capitol Records. Poison released their debut album *Look What the Cat Dragged In* in 1986. The cover image showed face shots of the four band members, each wearing considerable amounts of makeup, thereby obscuring masculine gender signifiers. This made the band members appear minimally androgynous or, to some, decidedly feminine (see Figure 15). Within the hegemonically masculine world of metal, this represented a significant challenge to the norm. With *Theatre of Pain*, there was little doubt to Motley Crüe’s masculinity, both in terms of their appearance or when taking into account their established history as heterosexual hedonists. In Poison’s instance, a band with no popular metal credibility or subcultural status was pushing new limits of androgyny. This performative display created

controversy surrounding the appropriateness of this new form, and social drama occurred (Turner, 1982).

As a metalhead during this time, I clearly remember the passions with which my friends and I argued our cases. The metal community as a whole, through magazine articles, television shows, interviews, concert reviews, and friendly discussion, was engaged in public debate. While the music itself proved a factor, the true source of debate stemmed from glam's image of androgyny and presumed sexual inferences linked to androgynous individuals. Poison, as metal's first and most publicized band employing glam imagery, eventually emerged as the iconic glam metal band. In terms of metal authenticity, the arguments underlying the social drama of Poison reflect the usual debates of what constituted true metal in terms of appearance, attitude, sexuality, and sound. Quite often, the metal scene used Poison as a measuring stick for good or bad, accepted or not.

Poison's publicity coverage from late 1986 to mid 1987 included descriptions of music, style, image, songwriting and musicianship, touring and band history, and the band's appearance. Most often, articles on the band repeated a formulaic structure featuring three sections: Poison's appearance, Poison's music, and Poison's lifestyle. Mention of Poison or glam metal in general did not usually occur in the metal press during this time. On the rare occasions this did happen, two issues were commonly addressed: questions of musical proficiency and acceptability of the glam image.

Poison's appearance was highlighted in nearly every article written specifically about the band. Vocalist Bret Michaels was commonly referred to as "beautiful Bret" or other similar expressions. Make-up references were also very common:

“Add to the flashy clothes a two-week supply of rouge and lipstick applied all at once and you’d imagine they’d just be beggin’ for trouble.” (Gallotta, 1987d)

“enough make-up to keep the Avon lady busy for weeks...” (Secher, 1987c)

“‘We’re not an effeminate band. It makes you look better. That’s all,’ deadpans C.C., ‘That’s why we use it. It’s not a gimmick or ploy.’” (Gallotta, 1987a)

“‘We never set out to make a statement,’ says Rikki Rockett. ‘We only set out to sell excitement – not a huge line of cosmetics for Max Factor.’” (Gallotta, 1987c)

Rockett: “the make-up has gotten us a lot of notoriety, both pro and con, but why we wear it is because we feel we look good in it. We don’t wear it to shock people. The fans like it, otherwise we wouldn’t be wearing it. We certainly don’t wear it to prove you can be a man, wear lipstick and not get shit for it.” (Gallotta, 1987c)

One can infer from these statements that appearance was an important factor to Poison’s image and media appeal in their early stages. To those writing about or interviewing Poison, clothing choices did not seem to matter near as much as the band’s make-up use. The quantity of space devoted to appearance roughly equated to twenty-five percent of the text. The press coverage’s emphasis on image and appearance presented image as the defining quality of the band. Viewed as a whole, this continual referencing of appearance takes on typically negative connotations. The use of cosmetic brand names or reference to excessive make-up quantity indicates a sense of derision within the writing; instead of focusing on the band’s music, attention is superficially directed to eyeliner and lip-gloss. The many photos of the band added to this visually-dominating impression. Other popular metal bands did not receive this type of commentary, situating Poison as embodying glamness. While hairstyles did receive brief coverage for other metal performers (most commonly complaints about short hair on rockers like Rob Halford of Judas Priest), and Motley Crüe and Kiss had worn make-up for its theatrical effect previously, the emphasis on Poison’s cosmetic use was unusually extensive.

In response, Poison's members defensively offered rationale for their make-up usage and significance. By specifically explaining how "just looking good" fit their "not effeminate" gender status, the band reacted rhetorically by positioning themselves to defuse potential subcultural backlash. Viewed in terms of social drama, an explanation for a perceived breach takes place (Turner, 1982). Poison's responses offered a symbolic redefinition for the makeup's signification, while concurrently expressing their desire to be a part of the greater metal subculture.

One strategy for subcultural inclusion enacted by the band centered on the band's emphasis of its musical ability and its adherence to the rock and roll lifestyle. Through magazine coverage, Poison is described as being youth-targeted and formulaic. A general theme of simplicity also seems to come across:

"Underneath the mound of coifed hair, artfully applied make-up and creatively designed clothes lurks a band capable of churning out some of the most infectious teen anthems heard in many a year... and yes the group's entire musical vocabulary can be contained in a few well-chosen notes..." (Secher, 1987d)

"Bret summarizes, 'Poison's not a musician's band. We're a fun-loving rock and roll band.'" (Wieder, 1987)

Rockett: "critics say that we're sloppily executed and unoriginal and yeah, most of the stuff is three or four chords" (Gallotta, 1987b)

The band embraced their musical approach of simplicity and ease. Though the common riffs and reliance on power chords to form songs fit the scope of metal musicianship, many metallers viewed Poison derisively. Although reviews from metal magazines were generally positive if not flattering, a number of articles referenced the bashing Poison received at the hands of the critical mainstream rock press. By framing the band through these negative references, Poison is afforded the opportunity to establish themselves as an underdog metal band.

Early Poison press coverage highlights the band's willingness to live the metal lifestyle.

Antics on stage, backstage, and in the hotel room were commonly depicted with the vast majority of these depictions relating to groupies and sexual activities with agreeable female fans:

"... the band that's risen from virtual obscurity in the last year to challenge the likes of Motley Crüe as rock's premier groupie grope." (Secher, 1987d)

"For Michaels, guitarist C.C. Deville, bassist Bobby Dahl, and drummer Rikki Rockett, life on the road is an endless three-ring circus of wine, women, and song." (Andrews, 1987a)

"Girls of all shapes and sizes waited impatiently for the backstage doors to open and give them access to Poison's inner sanctum." (McDaniel, 1987)

"'I can top that one,' Rockett said, knocking the game of one-upmanship into full swing... 'this really hot looking chick was out front begging to meet the blond guy in the band. She was ready to do anything.'" (Secher, 1987d)

From these portrayals, one sees Poison as embracing the fast-living, "sex, drugs and rock and roll" lifestyle commonly associated with bands on tour. The frequency of groupie sex stories accounted for approximately twenty to twenty-five percent of text on Poison during the band's early coverage. Poison's willingness to define itself in terms of hedonistic, heterosexual conquest can be considered a compensatory tactic to counter the ambiguous gender statement associated with make-up and clothing styles. The phallic power lost via passive appearance is performatively reclaimed – why would they have prodigious amounts of sex with women if they were as gay as the make-up might infer? As well, the use of women in videos (starting with *Look*'s third video single, "I Want Action") provided additional heteronormative signifiers for the metal and global public to interpret. As objectification of women in metal music videos was considered the norm at this time, Poison simply followed the convention thereby asserting their adherence to sexual norms.

In terms of social drama, Poison tried to prove their breach was not a breach after all. The backstage romps demonstrated their commitment to the masculine metal world. While the fashions might have provided discrepant connotations, the overall message communicated by the group was that of heterosexual desire. The metal media's choice to report these stories suggests a couple of possibilities. First, the band could simply represent a hot topic for the magazine's targeted audience group. Teenage boys are fascinated with sex; coverage simply ties to an interest in their lives. A second explanation involves the magazines themselves wishing to alleviate the controversy surrounding a band with a growing following. Removing sexuality concerns by showing them as "normal" to the metal world would ease the convictions of the metal public and help sell future magazine issues without offending diehards. Misogyny represents far less of a transgression to metalheads than homosexuality.

The three general themes derived from the specific discourse on Poison hold some correlation to the articles written about other bands or topics, which make reference to Poison. In the few instances where glam or Poison was specifically referenced, criticisms of Poison's musical ability and image were the common themes:

"though (Iron Maiden's Bruce) Dickinson remains generally upbeat about the music scene, one thing bothers him – as well as several other rockers interviewed – is the importance of a band's look overpowering their musical substance. While fashion has always played a major role in the popularity of metal, some people fear that today's bands worry too much about their look before they even start working on their sound." (Andrews, 1987b)

"The whole 'lets look good and fuck the music attitude really makes us sick,' Megadeth's Dave Mustaine stated. There are a lot of people out there who believe in the music and really don't give a fuck about the way a band looks or how much they've spent on costumes.'" (Andrews, 1987b)

"'Nobody's gonna confuse us with Poison,' (Grim Reaper's Steve) Grimmitt states. 'We don't look as good in lipstick as they do... but we are proud that people will listen to the music before they think about the way we look.'" (Secher, 1987a)

In these illustrative quotes, the musical validity of a glam metal band is brought into question. The usual complaint, as Mustaine's quote indicates, derived from glam bands' perceived a lack of skill or their valuing material success over musical artistry. Interestingly, the Dickinson and Mustaine snippets were separated by Bret Michaels' defense of Poison's appearance. This seems to suggest Poison represents both the bothersome quality Dickinson mentions and the cynicism in Mustaine's definition of musical worthiness. No ringing endorsements of glam styling or Poison were found, but rather, Poison was used as a vehicle for contrast, such as the one seen in the Grimmer quote.

The debate over musical authenticity enacted here partly stems from traditional rock ideology and its privileging of the live performance. A second contributor to this debate pragmatically stems from Poison's increasing coverage at the expense of other competing metal bands. Simply being referenced by other artists indicates the extent to which Poison's influence spread. Magazine readers must have had some interest in the band, hence the subsequent coverage. At the same time, the debate between factions of the metal community demonstrated concerns over the visual culture that MTV had spawned. To some within the metal world, the value of musicianship was being undermined by some of these glam metal acts (Poison again shown as outsider/convention breaker), yet album sales dramatically increased.

From mid 1987 to mid 1988, Poison's publicity remained fairly consistent. While many of the earlier themes did recur, new topics arose. Michaels' diabetes, the preparation involved for making the second album, touring with David Lee Roth, and dealing with success took up more text space than issues regarding appearance or musical (in)ability. Though Poison's visual image remained a common topic, it received significantly less coverage than before. References to Poison in articles on other bands and in forum letters increased. Response here was mixed.

Those respondents favoring the band typically either praised the band's music or expressed how Poison represented heterosexual attractiveness. Those respondents viewing the band negatively were more musically or homophobically driven.

The shift in coverage can be interpreted as a sign of Poison's greater acceptance within the metal community. Moving away from stories on cosmetics to stories of the band and their musical career shows the writing taking on a more traditional form. One factor contributing to this shift concerned Poison's change of image during the course of touring and promoting *Look*. The fourth video single from *Look*, "I Won't Forget You," showed the wearied band living life on the road and demonstrated multiple authenticity claims. In terms of musical performance and live credibility, the band included concert footage shot at Texas Jam, a performance where the band played to a crowd of 100,000 people. While conveniently not mentioning its low billing on the festival's lineup, the band appeared to have drawn a huge crowd for its own performance. Multiple clips showed band members exhausted on the bus with their stringy, sweat-caked hair matted down, and their fatigued bodies slumped over. Inter-cut with concert clips, one assumes the tiredness stems from the tremendous energy put into their stage performance. Michaels is shown on stage with an attractive female fan reaching up from the crowd, her arms draped about his neck as she sings each word along with her idol. This suggested not only the band's sexual appeal but their fans' true devotion in learning songs word for word. Finally, Dahl is shown incapacitated on stage, so much so that roadies are required to carry his presumably-wasted body off the stage. Here, the glorification of hedonistic overindulgence, literally being too fucked up to stand, suggested Poison's credibility as meriting rock star status.

Pragmatically, the chaotic lifestyle of bus and hotel life coupled with nightly shows prohibited the full glam performance as originally constructed. Energy and time are not as

prevalent on tour as they might be during studio recording. As a result, simplification becomes necessary; the amount of make-up is reduced, or it is simply left off. Opening slots on arena tours added distance between the fans and the band and reduced the visual immediacy of the makeup. Hot stage lights also reduce make-up's utility since sweat diminishes its effect anyway. The magazine pictures of the band during this mid 1987 to mid 1988 time period show a more traditional band appearance and not the garish, androgynous version portrayed on *Look*'s album cover. Still, the band's look and sexuality remained issues:

Rockett: "two years ago, no record company would even think about us long enough to hate us. Oh, they're New York Dolls clones, they look like girls, and they can't play." (Goldstein, 1987)

Michaels: "I'm aware that some bands have claimed Poison is unoriginal. I personally feel a lot of those bands, rather than working on their look or their music are pointing their finger at us and saying that we're poseurs." (Gallotta, 1987e)

Michaels: "Then he (David Wayne from Metal Church) came up to us after the show and said he was really surprised. He had heard we were poseurs and phonies." (Gallotta, 1987b)

"'We won't be dropping the make-up,' C.C. and Rikki both assure. 'We're not gay or anything,' C.C. laughs, 'we just look better with make-up.'" (Stone, 1988b)

Michaels: "It has nothing to do with homosexuality – we probably fuck more women than any band." (Stone, 1988a)

Here, a sense of responding to earlier detractors comes across. Again, Poison claimed itself as viably belonging to the metal community. In metal, "poseur" is a derisive term indicating inauthenticity. Poison members worked to separate themselves from poseurs by claiming their heteromasculine prowess or relaying the support of fellow metal artists. Directly stating sexual preference indicates that perceived sexuality remained a source of contention for the band. Thus, Poison continued to make the metal public aware of the band's heterosexuality.

The third snippet infers other bands communicated about Poison, its image, and the band members' musical abilities. Competition within the marketplace explains some of the tensions found in the critiques. When criticism occurred during this mid-1987 to mid-1988 timeframe, its severity increased, especially from a select group of fans as seen in the forum sections to the magazines:

MSG's Robin McAuley: "I didn't particularly like "Talk Dirty to Me" either but they're not my kind of band. It might be unfair to say their lyrics are classroom, but their music is also classroom." (Crespo, 1988)

Former Scorpions guitarist Michael Schenker: "The intro sound is terrible.... I don't understand how they sold so many albums." (Crespo, 1988)

Former Kiss guitarist Vinnie Vincent: "when we were out on the road with Maiden and I realized glam and metal don't mix" (Andrews, 1987c)

"... this group landed a record contract on the strength of their music – a true rarity in today's rock world. Aided by the production wizardry of Ric Browde (the man who helped shoot Poison's Look What the Cat Dragged into the top of the charts) ..."
(Hunter, 1988)

"It's so alarming to me to see how the rock scene has deteriorated over the years into a bunch of make-up using, leather wearing, faggot looking muthafuckers." (Jarboe, 1988)

"Before I begin this letter, I would like to say at first, I thought Poison was just a bunch of fags with no talent." (Thrash Rules, 1988)

Anti-Poison and anti-glam sentiments were fairly common during this timeframe. The first three excerpts come from other metal performers. The final two excerpts were forum letters. In the first instances, Poison's (or glam metal's) musical authenticity is questioned to the point where refuting glam metal aesthetics appeared necessary to some metal artists. Trivializing Poison's fan base shows evidence of concerns regarding Poison's artistic merit. First, describing the band as "classroom" suggests a simplicity that goes against metal's privileging of musical virtuosity. Second, for metal, Poison attracted a disproportionately-large number of female followers. While metal has always had some semblance of a female fanbase, the music's

prevailing hegemonic masculinity fostered a symbolic link between masculinity and authenticity. The shift in audience composition can be read as potentially threatening this link, and, thus, might be considered as another breach of metal authenticity.

In the fourth quote, credit for Poison's success seems to be given to the production wizard rather than the performers. Musical criticisms such as this aimed to undermine Poison's status within metal while reinforcing virtuosity as a privileged commodity. The forum letters demonstrate the homophobia traditionally ascribed to the metal scene. (This will be explored in greater detail in Chapter Five.) Interestingly, one letter combined a critique of make-up use as gay with a critique of Poison being too sexually exploitive of groupies. Here, one fan considered Poison's over-performed hypermasculinity as exceeding the bounds of acceptable heterosexuality; Poison's performative compensation may have gone too far.

By mid 1988, *Look* had gone platinum and was on its way to double platinum status. Poison's coverage in the magazines remained consistently frequent and the band received higher-profile positioning. Magazine issues provided a monthly update on the band's progress on the second album's recording. Poison was becoming one of the top three metal bands in terms of sales and merchandising. By late 1988, Poison had become a fixture on MTV and within the metal music media. Themes derived from Poison's publicity during this timeframe predominantly focused on the band's second album, *Open Up and Say Ah*. Michael's diabetes was occasionally referenced and the band's ongoing struggles against poseur labels continued. The group's detractors still existed, but the frequency and intensity of criticisms against Poison began to resemble those directed toward other bands. Many more references of support were seen. Overall, Poison had finally become an accepted mainstream metal band. A legacy of criticism had become an expected and understood part of Poison's history.

The band's artistic development moved away from the original glam image to a more common appearance. Magazine coverage subsequently focused on topics such as stage design and touring plans versus fashion or cosmetic use:

“‘It’s gonna be huge!’ enthuses C.C. ‘The biggest pyros, some rear projection stuff... Rikki has a new drum set...’” (Stone, 1988b)

“Bobby realizes that his band not only receives criticism from music industry bigwigs and the press but from fellow musicians as well... ‘there are a lot of people who have a lot of negative things to say and they direct the toward us. Let ‘em do it! I’m *flattered* that they work all their lives to become rock & roll stars and when they get the chance to do interviews, they have nothing better to do than to complain about me.’” (Raso, 1988)

Michaels: “We’ve been rocking and rolling long before anyone knew who I was and I’ll be doing it long after anyone gives a fuck who I am.” (Gallotta, 1988a)

Rockett: “I think any time you go out on a limb with image or show or anything like that, you’re gonna get knocked down. It happened with Alice Cooper, it happened with Kiss, it happened with Elvis Presley.” (Gallotta, 1988b)

DeVille: “But I’ve got to admit that the guitar magazines have been showing a lot more interest in me this time around. I think we’re finally beginning to get some respect for our writing and playing. People are beginning to realize that a band doesn’t sell millions of albums all around the world just because they have cool hair.” (Clark, 1988)

At this point of their career, the members of Poison acknowledged the complaints but used them in a constructive way. They appropriated the negative words and empowered themselves by linking themselves to either status (as trendsetters) or history (with other rock icons). By saying how indebted Poison is to metal music demonstrated loyalty to rock beyond simply desiring fame. Poison situated traditional rock tenets such as rebellion and confronting criticism as authenticity claims. Additionally, by conforming to rock and metal normative standards, Poison alleviated a considerable portion of their outside criticism. Toning down their make-up and focusing on *Open*’s musicality invited less controversy.

References made about Poison in articles covering other bands became far less prevalent than previously seen. On the occasions when negativity occurred, it was commonly also countered. Predominantly, critiques of Poison now related to the popularity of Guns n Roses, a band which presented itself as much more street-oriented and working class than those of the glam metal scene. Since the two bands shared a LA history (Slash, the Guns n Roses guitarist, once auditioned for Poison), a minor war of words ensued. Subsequent conversations dismissed the complaints and cohesion resumed. Poison appeared as just another successful band.

Europe drummer Ian Haugland: “Personally, I’m not into the newer rock bands like Poison, Guns N’ Roses or Motley Crüe. It bores me to pieces the way everybody tries to look, with way blown up hair and a lot of make-up on. Have you seen a picture of that guy in Poison where it doesn’t look like his mouth is caught in a mousetrap? Or Slash, he’s always holding a bottle of Jack Daniels. I can’t believe he’s that thirsty!” (“Quotes,” 1989.)

Slash: “when they were playing clubs out here, they really had nothing to offer other than the fact that they wore lots of makeup. They never rocked out. It made us sick that we had to be on the same scene that they were. That glam image shit sucks.” (Sechner, 1987b)

“I’m really pissed off at Slash... The guys in Poison are a heck of alot better looking than Guns N’Posers... But Poison wouldn’t waste their time on such trash! Fuck off Slash!” (Poison rules, 1988)

Overall, it seems that over the course of two years, the Poison dilemma had resolved itself. In the *Hard ‘n Heavy* videotape series (1990-1991), only one anti-glam statement was mentioned (out of approximately 24 hours worth of material), and it was quite fleeting. Poison was not singled out at all. The band, once vilified for its first impression, now held a strong position in the mainstream metal world. By adapting to metal’s conventions, Poison’s changes in appearance and strategies to defuse complaints worked to rectify the social drama. The source of breach was redefined; glam metal, in its own way, became accepted by the whole.

In terms of authenticity, Poison's intentional shift away from its androgynous extremes to presenting more traditional rock and metal authenticity claims like sexual prowess or live musical performance helped rectify the band's initial anomalous standing within metal. Though the buzz generated by the make-up was considerable, Poison's limited performance of authenticity markers early in their career ultimately fostered the social drama surrounding their credibility as a "true metal" band. Unlike the established Motley Crüe, the newcomers had yet to demonstrate sufficient hegemonic masculinity and were thus subject to criticism. Only after performing acceptable rock authenticity, predominantly via hegemonic masculinity, could Poison be accepted as an authentic metal band.

When successful, a gimmick such as Poison's could spawn a follow-up scene. Bands like TigerTailz and Pretty Boy Floyd would push the excesses of appearance even farther in hopes of attaining their own form of recognition. For each subsequent iteration, the metal subculture faced greater anomaly and more tenuous ties to established authenticity claims. The recording industry, again, facilitated these pursuits with aspirations for replicating the success of previously-tread ground. As producer Beau Hill put it, "Labels expected you could sign any piece of shit band, and as long as they had pouty lips, it would go gold" (Konow, 2002, p. 270). To the recording industry, establishing defined subgenres of metal helped to better target specific audiences. By establishing a generalized purchasing public, the recording industry could then initiate carryover sales (Negus, 1998). Fans dedicated to metal demonstrated product loyalty, be it to a band, a record label, a particular subgenre, or a geographic scene associated with metal.

One subgenre of metal which took full advantage of such practices was thrash. Fans informed that a band was part of the Bay Area scene or the Florida scene had an automatic point of access, became invested in the band, even if they had no direct experience with the band's

music. Recognition of metal labels like Megaforce, Metal Blade (or Metal Blade's even more underground Death Records), Combat or Noise, all of which featured less mainstream varieties of metal, might provoke a purchase for a consumer who simply knew the contents would be metal. Major labels wanting to portray themselves in a similar light as the independents created offshoot labels such as MCA's Mechanix, Atlantic's ATCO, and IRS' IRS Metal.

Initially, the loyalty of the metal public would typically extend to bands that were labeled metal even if, on first appearances, the artists held questionable metal credentials. Early marketing of bands like the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Living Colour, and the early grunge releases of Pearl Jam, Soundgarden, and Nirvana framed these groups as metal in hopes of accessing the already-established buying public. As metal continued to diversify and dilute, this fragmentation proved problematic; the process of defining the self through othering became increasingly complex. While subgenres allowed for more specific elaboration on select themes or tendencies already established within metal, it also brought about confrontation centered on "selling out" the authentic validity of true metal.

"Dallabnikifesin": Thrash and Death Metal Go Further Underground

The thrash and death metal movements of the mid 1980s could be read as reactionary to the mainstreaming of metal. With aims of keeping metal distinctively subcultural rather than having it be co-opted by larger, less distinctive musical styles, thrash and death metal bands forwent melody in favor of less readily-engagable tones. The gimmick of playing riffs faster and faster served as a means for generating recognition, going back to the late 1970s with Motörhead's claims of being the world's fastest band. Beyond achieving sheer notoriety, choosing this strategy limited a group's mainstream accessibility. This then could be framed as an argument for claiming authenticity. Rock critic Chuck Klosterman (2001), in his apologist's

book on being a metal fan despite its lack of cultural credibility, described the difference between metal and thrash in terms of feel: “the riffs come quicker and quicker, it would still seem like Guns n’ Roses, and it would still sound like a rock song. But at some juncture in the acceleration – and I can’t specify when – it would become speed metal... There is a point of no return that changes the meaning of a sound” (p. 187). That changed sound and its shift from the recognizable rock aesthetic into the realm of thrash excluded the pop sensibilities mainstream ears were attuned to. Those outside the thrash scene would refute the style, thereby preserving the sanctity of thrash’s subcultural isolation.

Thrash’s guitar tone and the music’s speed and complexity of riffs defined its style. By combining a crunchier, more-distorted tone with a barrage of muted, quickly-picked rhythm notes, the baseline whirl of thrash fostered a sense of manic energy. Songs themselves veered away from straightforward three-chord blues progressions and verse-chorus-verse arrangements in favor of intricately complicated combinations of fingering patterns and an array of musical themes featuring shifting time signatures and tonal qualities. Here, the musicality of the composition read as a serious skill thereby othering mainstream metal’s vapid simplicity. Thrash artists when interviewed, particularly during appearance on MTV’s *Headbanger’s Ball* or in magazine “rate a record” features, would condescendingly mock and criticize bands like Warrant or Poison. Over two special issues of *Hard n Heavy* featuring thrash (Keefer, 1990) and grindcore (Picasso & Carr, 1991), three separate bands and Earache Records founder Digby Pearson each specifically referenced Bon Jovi as being a musical act far removed from their own musical and performative direction. In a home video documenting the making of the *Metallica* record, Metallica used a pin-up picture of Winger’s frontman, Kip Winger, for a dart target

(Dubin, 1992). Exodus' Paul Baloff's onstage shtick calling for the death of posers specifically mocked bands with teased, hair-sprayed hair and makeup.

This distancing of thrash and eventually death metal varieties is partly attributed to the authenticity notion of not selling out. Like many other underground movements in rock history, the popularity of bands catering to MTV or radio was scripted as a willingness to subvert the art in favor of commercial appeal. By using mainstream metal as a source for othering, the underground metal bands could then claim their rightful authenticity. Choosing to write songs with durations over five-minutes and without traditionally melodic hooks reflected a conscious decision to forgo commercial radio standards. Making the music more homosocially masculine also eliminated the corrupting-female influence. The music's physical expression, moshing, invited harsh physical contact as the jumpy, angular dance of elbows and knees was designed as a violent reflection of the music's power. Lyrically, partying and screwing, let alone love songs, were the domain of the Motley Crües of the world. Rather, the extreme metal bands chose to focus on what they claimed were weightier, more seriously-credible issues like thermonuclear war, independency, and environmental destruction. For publicity pictures, the bands usually scowled at cameras affording little chance of being mistaken as cute. Both on and off stage, thrash bands typically wore jeans and a t-shirt emblazoned with the logo of a fellow thrash artist versus the fancy stage outfits their mainstream brethren donned. This expectation of appearance eventually became so conformative that Anthrax's choice to wear skater shorts or Metallica's choice to cut their hair prior to their 1991 *S/T* record invoked within-scene controversy.

The most successful of the extreme bands, Metallica, gained substantial subcultural credit by refusing to make a video to promote the singles from its first three albums (St Michael, 1992). A product of a relentless touring schedule, Metallica found itself the beneficiary of an intensely-

loyal fanbase developed through considerable word-of-mouth growth. The group's third record, *Master of Puppets* (1987), amazingly went platinum without the benefit of significant radio or MTV airplay. Following Cliff Burton's untimely death via a tourbus accident, a new bassist was hired and a stopgap, 1987's *Garage Days Re-Revisited*, pragmatically sustained the band's buzz while the transition took place. Instead of being seen as a cashgrab, the EP managed to earn the band additional subcultural credit. In this instance, the EP's obscure cover versions of NWOBHM artists Diamond Head and Holocaust showed their metal reverence, its Misfits medley offered skatepunk credibility, and its Budgie and Killing Joke covers demonstrated a music insider's knowledge that few mainstream metal fans embodied.

By the time they did release a video, *...And Justice For All's* "One" (1988), the hype surrounding the video's novelty outweighed their move toward conformity or its seeming-pretentiousness as it was offered in three different versions, a longform, a shortened radio edit, and the "jam" version omitting the *Johnny Got His Gun* (1971) film clips interspersed within the other two versions. By their fifth record, Metallica finally committed its first in a series of inexcusable transgressions; band members cut their hair and wore fashionably tailored outfits. They also switched producers to Bob Rock, a known hit-making commodity, and edited their song lengths down to a radio-manageable four minutes. Lastly, there were two ballads, each released as singles. Moving five million copies of *S/T* that year alone, Metallica's literal "selling out" fueled thrash subculture's figurative cries, voices nearly as loud as Metallica's own concert sets.

Bands like Anthrax, Slayer, and Megadeth soon found themselves courted by major labels and each signed lucrative recording deals during this time. To the record label, each artist might just well be the next Metallica-esque megaseller and were marketable accordingly. Dave

Mustaine, having often bashed MTV during the band's formative years, now was hired by the channel as a correspondent covering the Democratic National Convention. Suddenly, these underground entities were celebrities, and their underground cache became viewed as tainted. Carcass guitarist Mike Arnott recalled, "I hated thrash because I was totally death metal... seeing little kids in ...*And Justice For All* t-shirts just made me angry" (Mudrian, 2004, p. 101)." Death metal and eventually grindcore aimed at moving to even farther extremes, thereby guaranteeing immunity from being co-opted. Metal journalist Kevin Sharp described the era as, "everyone was sick of hearing low-grade Bay thrash. It lost its fucking edge and they were looking for something more" (Mudrian, 2004, p. 146).

Death metal originated around central Florida's Morrisound Studios where producer Scott Burns was known for creating a thunderous low-ended sound that rumbled and grinded through the speakers, yet retained its clarity even at the music's intense speed. With many scenesters actively involved in tape trading, most death metal and grindcore bands gained insider notoriety long before they had properly recorded albums or label representation. To these fans, the multi-generationally dubbed cassettes didn't need to sound acoustically perfect, but any improvements in a death metal band's original recording certainly helped promote the scene. Still, what truly mattered was maintaining the intense noise of it all.

By the time indie labels like Roadrunner and Earache got involved, the extremity of sound was the utmost key. A Burns production earned automatic prestige and scene-stalwarts, the band Death, became the namesake of the movement. Sonically, hyperfast blastbeats (a drum technique in which the snare and bass drum are played hysterically fast) relentlessly pummeled the listener while guitars switched between half-stepped, down-tuned riffs and squealing, chaotic solos. Most importantly, the vocals were growled, groaned, barked, or vomited out. Anything

remotely melodic and therefore accessible to outsiders' ears was considered too commercial. In case someone read liner notes, bands either wrote about the most macabre ways one could imagine a person to die or about the most anti-Christian, blasphemous subjects. Either tactic would guarantee to offend mainstream standards. Band logos were intentionally designed to require concentrated deciphering amid the multiple prongs, drips, tendrils, and spikes they contained. The steadfast dismissal of melodic tone was to claim true metal authenticity; sales or popularity be damned. In time, Florida became a hotbed of death metal with bands like Death, Obituary, Morbid Angel, Atheist, Deicide, and Massacre rising to scene prominence. A parallel movement was taking place in London where Earache Records founder Digby Pearson recruited friends Napalm Death to record for his label. Soon, Carcass, Cathedral, and Bolt Thrower followed suit, and a grindcore scene emerged. The essential difference between death metal and grindcore was song length, grindcore as typically two minutes and less with a wider lyrical scope than death metal's more specific focus. .

Specific geographically-bound scenes would establish a band's credibility in a particular metal subgenre. Knowing that Forbidden or Heathen was a part of the Bay Area scene and was friends with Metallica, particularly because they either toured together or had listed their more-famous buddies in the "thank you" section of liner notes, assured a potential purchaser of getting the real thing – after all, if Metallica's James Hetfield approved, it must be good. Specific scenes also simplified a label's artist and repertoire work. Pragmatically, by staying in one centralized area, resources contributed to discovery would be reduced since more direct comparisons could be made within one locale versus various places across the globe. A form of authenticity also stemmed from this centralized spot.

Styles bred from a set area became the standards for a particular scene. Aspiring groups would then move to whatever region highlighted the particular style the up-and-comers wished to pursue. As a result, a region's notoriety served to privilege those bands already associated with the scene as being authentic. With a scene's reputation already established, the second generation bands looking to break into the scene would script themselves according to the prevailing formula. Again, the recording industry's cyclical routine of signing new artists and releasing even more products from these particular regions transpired. Eventually, either the once-authentic scene exhausted itself, or a new hot scene emerged.

For a metal subculture that valued its distinctiveness, the routine commercial exploitation of emerging scenes had two overriding effects: the implosion of a meaningful subcultural identity and the erosion of metal's earlier rebellious significance. The distinctive identity of metal had become diluted since so many labels cross-marketed bands within and outside the metal circle. Metal was no longer simply a musical movement. Rather, the marketing of metal had spread into various other media areas. While initially serving the constructive purpose of raising metal's notoriety in the subculture's early stages, the ongoing process of seeing metal significations in an array of diverging entities eventually undermined metal's specific receptive power. Simply put, overexposure positioned metal as just another mass culture entity.

Aerosmith and Motley Crüe had licensed their respective images to videogames. A series of comic books recounted a variety of metal bands' biographies. *Circus* and *Hit Parader* were joined by upstart magazines like *Metal Edge*, *Rip*, and the video tape monthlies. Dee Snider had his *Teenage Survival Guide* (Snider & Bashe, 1987) published by a major press. Alice Cooper recruited his metal friends to his celebrity golf tournaments while Vince Neil, and Stephen Pearcy brought them to the racetrack.

Cinematic attempts at tapping into the metal goldmine included having metal bands do numerous soundtrack songs, having band members do cameo roles in films (such as Guns n Roses' appearance in the opening scenes of *The Dead Pool* [1988], Twisted Sister's appearance toward the end of *Pee Wee's Big Adventure* [1985], or Powermad's bar appearance in *Wild at Heart* [1990]), or having documentaries made directly featuring metal music like *Decline of Western Civilization Part II: the Metal Years* (1987) or the *Ultimate Revenge* series of concert films (1985; 1988). In particular, metal was linked to horror films, especially through soundtracks. Having long been publicly associated with the occult and the power of darkness, use of metal songs for horror movies seems to make sense in creating a similarly scary musical tone (Weinstein 2000, Gross 1990). More importantly, the creation of buzz could be associated to the music, thereby prompting metalheads into the theaters (Negus, 1999). A few of the numerous examples would include *Nightmare on Elm Street (parts 3-5)* (1987; 1988; 1989), *Texas Chainsaw Massacre 2* (1986), *Fright Night* (1985), *Shocker* (1989), *Maximum Overdrive* (1986), and *Gremlins 2* (1990).

Though metal's association with low budget horror films certainly didn't help critical appeal, *Decline of Western Civilization II* (Spheeris, 1987) was particularly damning. In terms of authenticity, the film managed to decimate the LA scene as superficial, bloated, and plastically-empty. Poison, the single LA scene success story covered in the film, comes off as ridiculous through a series of interview snippets intertwining strings of dumb jokes with even dumber commentary on the music industry. Kiss' Gene Simmons and Paul Stanley offer metal as crass misogyny: Simmons smugly self-promotes while creepily-leering at women in a trashy lingerie shop; Stanley offers himself in bed surrounded by his harem of scantily clad women. Ozzy Osbourne reads as pathetic when combining his effeminizing bathrobe, his mumbled

speech evidencing his drug abuse and its effects, and his haphazard inability to master the task of pouring orange juice into a glass. Alice Cooper complains of the inability of new bands to be creative and original. Most damning, W.A.S.P. guitarist Chris Holmes incoherently bemoans fame as he floats, clad in full stage regalia, in a luxurious pool. During this tirade, he admits the emptiness of his career fosters his suicidal thoughts and alcoholism which he proudly tries to illustrate by pouring a fifth of vodka all over himself. To make matters all the more discomfiting, Holmes' mother sits in the background and watches with shame and disgust.

Director Penelope Spheeris, an admitted punk fan, treats thrash metal slightly more kindly, but in the process still problematizes the LA scene as inauthentic. In the final segment of the film, Megadeth is interviewed and, in most instances, band members use derogatory comparisons to mainstream metal for establishing their subcultural standing. Dave Mustaine calls the rock star persona "megalomania" and professes he doesn't "have any pretentious values" and doesn't "write music for the dollar sign" while implicitly implying that others within the metal scene certainly do. Bassist Dave Ellefson discredits those who recount "perverted sexual games on tour" or "drugs" or the "same old rehashed stuff the bands keep doing over and over again in this business." He goes on to say that Megadeth plays "technical music" that is "harder to play than most of the average rock bands out there." Guitarist Jeff Young adds that he won't "cheat the audience" by being high or drunk when performing. Drummer Chuck Beehler thinks a band shouldn't need to "put makeup on and stuff like that" for a show's success. Rather one simply "needs to play for themselves... a wall of Marshalls and your band playing, that's a show."

For "lacking pretension," Megadeth made certain to establish their version of metal artistry as a more genuine version than that of their more glamour-directed cohorts. Based on Spheeris' direction and editing, it becomes quite apparent how glam metal was commonly constructed as

inauthentic. Many of the artists featured in the film were later incensed about being taken out of context; artists felt misrepresented by selective interview editing and having self-effacing humor or sarcastic punchlines cut away, leaving the viewer with a wrongful impression of an artist's deluded sense of grandeur. As Konow (2002) put it, "the only thing that was accurate about many of the interviews was how insincere the LA scene had become" (p. 313). The debauched, selfishly "me first" 1980s mindset was pushed to the forefront, and many chose to take whatever path, honest or otherwise, to get there.

Use Your Illusion: Guns n Roses and Authentic Inauthenticity

Conspicuously absent but ever-present in the *Decline of Western Civilization II*, Guns n Roses (GnR) were the top LA band at that time. The group's influence was unquestionable as a four-year reign as metal's most popular and seemingly-dangerous band helped establish the climate that ultimately did metal's mainstream popularity in. Their rise from the club scene was tumultuous due to constant band in-fighting and heavy substance abuse. Unashamed, their initial conception played upon this angle, offering the gimmick of being dirtier, rougher versions of the bad boy persona than those which had been seen before. While authentically disreputable, their career arc was a strongly-calculated and marketed corporate phenomenon.

Signed to Geffen in early 1986, the band's management actively hid this knowledge from the public to better establish GnR as street-urchin underdogs. Geffen funded their *Live Like a Suicide* (1986) EP, but it was released under the band's own Uzi Suicide label with aims of rekindling the immediate street buzz Motley Crüe experienced with their Leathür Records demo (Wall, 1991). For a debut record, GnR was given a large advance allowing producer Mike Clink to create a remarkably deep and involved recording. When *Appetite for Destruction* (1987) was released, the album stagnated. It was only after direct intervention with MTV from a Geffen top

official (one version of the story has it as David Geffen himself) that the channel agreed to air the video for “Welcome to the Jungle.” Slowly, a buzz started to develop. Once again, the label pushed the track to radio with a special promotional package enticing radio stations to “not play this record because MTV won’t.” Sure enough, reverse psychology pushed the single into radio rotation, and the surge was on (Konow, 2002). The band’s liberal use of “fuck” afforded them outlaw status, and Slash’s drunken utterance of the obscenity at the Grammy Awards solidified their bad-boy reputation. Like a train wreck one can’t look away from, GnR mesmerized the metal scene and later conquered the rock world. Geffen milked the album for five singles, racking up a #1 chart position and album sales to the multiple millions (currently at 15 million and counting).

Countless tours with increasingly higher-status artists wanting a piece of the upstart’s hype, from The Cult to Aerosmith to The Rolling Stones, certainly aided GnR’s popular recognition. While the band juggled addictions and vocalist Axl Rose’s increasingly narcissistic tantrums, Geffen reissued the previously recorded *Suicide* EP (again, with no mention of its original major label backing), this time accompanied by four original acoustic tracks. *GnR Lies* (1988) used a tabloid motif for its cover art playing upon the sensationalistic press coverage of the sex, drugs, and rock lifestyle the band shamelessly flaunted. By the time the band was ready to record its next studio album, an entirely new GnR would emerge. The street urchins were gone and replaced by self-indulgently wealthy divas; instead of Nightrain, the band now drank Cristal.

The larger-than-life excesses fueled Rose’s ego (and insecurities) all the more. His clout garnered his buddy, club owner Riki Rachtman, a job hosting MTV’s Headbanger’s Ball. His love of Hanoi Rocks prompted Geffen to obtain copyrights and reissue Hanoi’s back catalogue. For the next record, Rose’s professed love of Elton John and Queen morphed “November Rain”

into a full-orchestral piece far removed from its gritty, bar-band origins. Rose included two songs, “Coma” and “My World,” laden with studio gadgetry and programmed synthesizer tones. The label, with the band’s full endorsement, released *Use You Illusion I* (1991) and *Use Your Illusion II* (1991) as two separate one-disc albums instead of one double-disc album to simply generate greater sales and royalty income; the purchaser’s cost of a double album, though greater than single album recordings, is far less than the cost of two separate LP purchases. Furthermore, the first three videos were presented as cinematic extravaganzas intended as a high-art trilogy. Their storyline also served as a pseudo-autobiography of Rose himself. On tour, Rose would often fail to go on stage until hours after the scheduled starting time. When he did begin performing, he would commonly quit the performance should anything displease him in any way leaving thousands of fans, and his bandmates, in the lurch.

Three short years later, the band, and Rose in particular, were far removed from traditional rock ideology. Their money and clout fostered a pretension that belied their previously-authentic street credibility. Straightforward rock and blues sensibility had been replaced by inorganic studio trickery and bombastic orchestral arrangements. The anger of the debut now read as the whining of a petulant child not getting his way – *Illusion II*’s “Get in the Ring” with its lyrical challenge of a fistfight directed specifically toward *Spin Magazine* boss Bob Guccione Jr. (retaliating for what Rose perceived as the magazine’s negative press coverage) serves as a prime example. Most importantly, the fans were presented as immaterial. Whether the band delivered or not didn’t take precedent. Rather, it was Rose’s own personal issues that mattered. For a subculture so strongly devoted to its idols, the metal audience was becoming forced to recognize all was not as it was.

“Kiss of Death”: Metal Markets Itself onto the Chopping Block

Guns n’ Roses became the biggest band around, and so anything resembling tattooed gypsies tugged out from the gutter became trendy. One version had artists like the Dogs D’amour, the London Quireboys, Junkyard, and Company of Wolves updating the boozy blues of The Faces, complete with honky-tonk piano, harmonica, and some slide guitar. A stronger devotion to Aerosmith’s sleaze carved a niche for a plethora of second generation bands like Faster Pussycat, Cats n Bootz, Spread Eagle, Slik Toxik, Electric Angels, and rekindled solo careers for former Hanoi Rocks frontman Michael Monroe and Billy Idol guitarist Steve Stevens. The tougher, grimmer, “biker” version included bands like Circus of Power, The Almighty, Zodiac Mindwarp and the Love Reaction, and the Tattooed Love Boys. Yet again, once a label’s artist and repertoire division saw a workable formula, the label exploited it to the fullest.

Metal bands, and those trying to access the metal marketplace, employed multiple musical-crossover maneuvers and further diminished metal’s subcultural distinction. Recognizing what metal was not partly defined what metal was in the first place. By 1990, metal had been hybridized with a variety of other musical genres with some degree of popular success. The Red Hot Chili Peppers, an alternative rock band, were marketed through metal media outlets. Their funk-inspired rock album *Mother’s Milk* (1989) generated considerable attention and follow-up *Blood Sugar Sex Magik* (1991) went to #3 prompting A&R folks to push funk metal. Followers like Mordred, White Trash, Animal Bag, Electric Boys, and Atom Seed incorporated slap bass playing and horn sections within metal aesthetics. Another alternative band, Faith No More, offered something more postmodernly eclectic. Songs varied from the novelty pseudo-rap of “We Care a Lot” (1985) and the rap/rock hybrid of smash hit “Epic” (1988), which actually closes with a tender piano theme, to the proto-death metal of “Surprise Your Dead.” Deeper

album tracks went from “End of the World(’s)” (1988) jazzy lounge-swing to a violin instrumental (“Woodpecker From Mars” [1988]) to a cheerleader’s chant as featured on “Be Aggressive” (1992).

The combination of Aerosmith’s collaboration with Run DMC (1986), the Beastie Boys *License to Ill* (1986) and Anthrax’s surprise hit with the novelty rap song “I’m the Man” (1987) opened the door to rap/metal crossovers including Faster Pussycat’s “Babylon” (1987) and Anthrax’s own collaboration with Public Enemy, reworking P.E.’s “Bring the Noize” (1991). Celtic Frost experimented with sampling, and Godflesh embraced it. Soon, technology-dependent industrial bands like Ministry and Nine Inch Nails were being pushed as metal. The flashy outfits of Enuff Z’nuff and the haircut of King’s X’s Doug Pinnick allowed their respective bands, with their Beatles-esque harmonies, to be categorized as metal. Even as saccharine a band as Nelson, whose “Love and Affection” (1990) epitomizes Frith and McRobbie’s (1990) teenybop convention, was a regular in *Headbanger’s Ball*’s rotation. Since the Nelson twins had really long hair extensions, which were almost as white as their shiny, smiling teeth, metal marketing ensued.

With so many divergent instruments, styles, looks, and attitudes all being marketed as metal, the original subcultural understanding was destroyed. Originally, metal wasn’t supposed to be about keyboards or horns or harmonicas or drum machines or sappy love songs or whether a band tied scarves to their mikestand or not. Metal was supposed to be distinctly different from all the others who did these sorts things because metal’s use of othering, as a way to authenticate itself, defined those who practiced such tactics as wimpy pop-band sellouts. But if metal wasn’t supposed to sound like the music one’s parents listened to, why were all these slide guitar solos and piano ballads showing up on the records? Didn’t all these musicians say rap was crap

because there wasn't any musicianship involved? If so, why are they now rapping in their songs? If metal was supposed to be about "Fight(ing) for Rock," about being "Youth Gone Wild," about "Violence and Bloodshed," and about "Loud Guitars, Fast Cars, and Wild, Wild Livin'," then what sense comes from being told to "Get the Funk Out," that one should care "when the children sing, a new world begins," or that one is supposed to feel contented in "Silent Lucidity?"

As ongoing exposure continued to spread, the novelty of metal as being authentically challenging had quickly eroded. Rather, it was becoming a jaded facsimile of what it had originally represented. The extremes of appearance, performance, hedonism, and hypermasculinity had been pushed to such extents that relatively no new ground was being explored. Rather, metal was being considered as a corporately-controlled behemoth far removed from the commonsense (as described in Chapter One) understanding of what constituted rock authenticity. Any successful gimmick was pushed to the point of its absurdity. There was little in the way of marketing a bigger stage show since the level of bombast had reached a point of parody. Death metal lyrics became strings of medical dictionary jargon desperately looking for the more obtuse ways to describe the decomposition process. Profanity as a shock tactic became the blunted repetition of fucking this and fucking that. Volume levels were maxed out and adding even more Marshall stacks wouldn't really matter anymore. The intricacy of virtuosity betrayed itself as "math metal" bands like Watchtower created convoluted songs simply for the purpose of playing in as many unorthodox time signatures as possible. The double-neck guitar became Nitro's Michael Angelo's four-necked monstrosity. As metal critic Martin Popoff (1997) described it, Leatherwolf's advertised "triple axe attack" sounded like half of one. Moves back to the roots had also been tried and retried, leaving no tangible direction for the scene to

explore. Most problematically, the sheer number of releases, many by under-skilled bands rushed onto the market over a span of three years, finally oversaturated the buying public. To my tally, the number of new metal releases doubled from 1983 to 1988 (see Appendix A). From 1988 to 1991, nearly 200 new metal albums were issued with many of these being first-time artists. With so much product released in so little time, bands that might have stood out were conflated with the also-rans, leaving a consuming public drowning with too many versions of what came across as the exact same thing. Resentment of metal's top standing set the genre on a precarious pedestal waiting to be knocked off. Grunge, with its slacker fashion and dirtier, punk-influenced simplicity, capitalized on the excesses of the over-exposed metal world.

"Smells Like Teen Spirit": The Industry Invites Metal's Demise

By setting up grunge discourse, the underdog mocking corporate-favorite pop metal, taste and power shifts were primed to occur. Even though grunge bands were being cross-marketed as metal and "alternative" by record labels, and bands like Soundgarden and Nirvana appeared in metal press outlets like *Metal Edge* or on shows like *Headbanger's Ball*, early nineties bands were quick to distance themselves from the metal scene. Where Alice in Chains would gladly accept an opening slot for a Van Halen or the Clash of the Titans tour (featuring four metal artists), their management actively silenced any mention of the group's glam metal past. Bad Religion's Brian Barker avoided questions about his time in Junkyard. Kurt Cobain and wife Courtney Love openly mocked Axl Rose and his prima-donna concert protocol as being the self-indulgent whims of a megalomaniac versus an authentically-true artist committed to his craft and the fans that supported him.

The excesses of metal performance proved prime examples of metal's gluttony and separation from rock's core ethos. Wherein metal of the early 1980s had started as a music

played with an immediate contact to fans (something the thrash scene had again championed in the mid 1980s), by the late 1980s and early 1990s, metal comprised a scene of bloated superstars with celebrity tastes and appetites. Private jets, lavish mansions, and publicized tantrums, like that of Axl Rose's regular refusal to take the stage until hours after the posted show time, undermined the claimed rhetoric of rock mythos: being hungry, dedicated, disenfranchised rebels. Rather, seeing Vince Neil on the cover of the January 1992 issue of *Musician* magazine, smiling ear-to-ear and lighting a cigar with a hundred dollar bill while bragging about Motley Crüe's new \$40 million contract with Elektra Records, showed just the opposite; the Crüe were perceived as pale imitations of what they once had been.

Concert ticket prices had skyrocketed during the mid-to-late 1980s in order to recoup the cost of extravagant arena-sized stage shows, bloated road crews, and the coddled comforts of touring bands. Grunge acts, bemoaning the Spinal Tap-ish qualities of shows featuring battling laser-knights, could tour charging far less expensive ticket prices while simultaneously mocking those bands that relied glitter and flash versus just playing the music. The arena itself distanced metal bands from the fanbase. Retaining walls, security forces that prevented stage-diving, and by-the-numbers performances with clichéd stage raps and feigned enthusiasm only visible via a projection screen for seats three balconies away offered little in terms of the energy or enthusiasm a club show once previously provided.

Faced with grunge criticisms, many metal bands certainly did nothing to help their own cause. Seeing the start of grunge's popularity swell, bands like Poison and Motley Crüe found themselves "flying the flannel" as followers rather than the trend-setters they had been in the past. Stryper forwent both their trademark yellow and black spandex as well as their Christian lyrical focus in favor of a darker, more serious image. In interviews, bands ranging from Def

Leppard and Ratt to Iron Maiden and Kiss claimed to having never been metal bands. Rather, they declared they were simply rock bands lumped into a category by magazines and record industry types. For a metal subculture, which initiated itself on subcultural pride and a collective unity in opposition to the critical outsiders, these denials proved quite overwhelming.

Similarly, thrash, a scene which aimed to subvert mainstream's more populist tendencies, soon found themselves lured by major label advances. The independent labels, tired of losing their top notch talents to the majors with little to show for it, formed mergers with the major labels, in essence, selling their independence and authenticity claims out from underneath themselves. The buying public, seeing Metal Blade teamed up with Warner Brothers or the Earache logo alongside the Sony Columbia one, felt betrayed as the most jarring noise of Napalm Death was now just another corporate entity. The historical rhetoric of subcultural pride was completely shunned leaving whatever remaining loyal fanbase there might have been insulted and undercut.

Some metal bands tried to wait out the alternative/grunge movement, but as its popularity stretched longer and longer, metal bands found their popular currency fading fast. New releases received less promotional hype, and subsequently, less public engagement led to diminished sales. The buyout of many midlevel labels by megacorporations like Sony and BMG also proved problematic. With each new acquisition, the parent company cut staffing and trimmed artist rosters. Since metal records were selling far fewer copies than before, many formerly-successful metal bands were dropped from their label's roster. Touring budgets were chopped, forcing bands to give up their spectacular stage shows. Instead, they played shorter tours in smaller venues with smaller audiences, which read to the public as metal declining in popularity, thereby accelerating the downward spiral all the more. The same metal bands that a few short

years before were seen as rock champions were stigmatized as inauthentic, a reputation that would continue to haunt metal bands for several years to come.

Throughout this chapter, I have described a variety of ways in which the metal subculture negotiated its membership expectations in terms of a band's perceived authenticity. For metal artists, balancing art, commerce, and subculture proved tricky. Failure to adequately account for art would result in claims of being derivative, unoriginal, or dismissibly-boring. Failure to adequately account for commerce would prohibit a band from accessing the infrastructure necessary to function not only as a publicity-generating force, but also as a revenue-generating one. Finally, failure to adequately represent the metal subculture and meet its normative expectations was to be subject to the ultimate condemnations, being labeled a "false metal" poser or a sell-out. For metal, these expectations were predominantly centered on three core areas. The first, hegemonic masculinity, maintained the integrity of the metal subculture's gendered self-definition while establishing an "other" for comparison's sake. The second, subcultural distinctiveness, sought to maintain the separation of metal from the popular mainstream, thereby keeping metal free from being co-opted and ultimately undermined. Finally, the metal subculture incorporated the traditional rock mythos of being dedicated to one's art and celebrating performances of virtuosity into its normative expectations. Collectively, these qualities underlying metal authenticity informed the generation (and subsequent condemnation or praise) of emerging metal subgenres, leading to the metal subculture's eventual implosion and loss of commercial popularity.

CHAPTER V. “STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND”

Metal had come to be understood by record executives as resembling whatever happened to sell in the past. One result of this mindset was the ongoing pattern of record labels searching out bands that looked, sounded, and derived from the same particular backgrounds as Motley Crüe, Iron Maiden, Guns n Roses, Metallica, or Obituary. With this myopic approach fully entrenched, most signed metal bands predictably looked, sounded and came from the exact same places, thereby creating a uniform sense of what metal was defined to be – young, white, heterosexual music by English speaking men. In terms of structural self-fulfilling prophecies, folks who wished to become musicians could see what the role entailed and, by inference, what didn’t quite match up.

Similar to any other large popular movement, eventually some form of the atypical outsider will look for inclusion. For metal bands, finding a way to stand out from the rest of the crowded marketplace was imperative for success. As described in Chapter Four, be it musicianship, stageman, fashion choices, or some memorable performed ideology, a gimmick was an essential tool for meeting this demand. Since appearances presented an opportunity to highlight one’s distinctiveness, the few metal artists not representing the normative, white-male stereotype found their performances commonly marketed as an exotic novelty for the metal scene. While the structural design of metal’s recruitment system inherently limited access for women and artists of color, a select number of such artists established careers within metal. Most successfully, women performing metal fostered a small cottage industry within the metal scene. Partly, the anomaly of seeing any woman performing in a rock and roll forum was grounds for some publicity and maybe an eyebrow raise or two. For a woman to perform in such a hypermasculine realm became an event. As discussed in Chapters Two, Three, and Four, the

metal subculture utilized a system of othering to establish its own self-definitions. Regarding female artists, the hegemonically masculine subculture faced a series of negotiations as to how women and their performed gender practices ascribed to, transgressed against, or fostered new interpretations as to what was acceptable, authentic metal performativity.

Occurring with far less frequency than women in metal, the racial appearances of black, Asian, or Hispanic artists automatically marked these musicians to be potentially othered. Once again, since metal relied upon othering for its own self-definition, the interpretation of what constituted “authentic” music made by people of color prompted an additional layer of debate, a debate conducted by a predominantly white subculture whose dogma was rarely challenged or actively considered. This particular scenario necessitated artists of color or artists from non-Anglo cultures to develop particular strategies for accessing and existing within the homogeneously-white metal world.

Negus (1999) describes the desire within the music industry to find international artists as serving two distinct purposes. First, accessing new regional styles and audiences might generate markets which had been previously overlooked. Second, buzz created by the novelty and exoticism of foreign artists often prompted record buyers to expand their consumptive boundaries. In the instance of Japanese or Brazilian metal bands coming to the United States with hopes of commercial success, an additional level of othering arose. Beyond being racially marked as other, these artists also faced the ongoing challenge of being non-native English speakers. Even for white artists coming from continental Europe, the geographic and cultural differences between American metal and their respective native countries required the development of adaptation strategies. In many instances, the pursuit of the American commercial market resulted in specific performative practices which, though aimed at being

more American-friendly, essentially problematized the foreign band's underlying authenticity claims.

Homosexuality represents one final minority within metal. The pervasiveness of hegemonic masculinity within metal fostered an immensely strong climate of heteronormativity. Combined with a streak of homophobic actions performed by select hypermasculine artists, metal's climate presented itself as a less-than-accommodating space for musicians who happened to be gay to perform as publicly gay musicians. Apart from rumors and innuendo, by 1991, there were no actively declared gay musicians in mainstream metal. While other minorities in metal utilized their abject status as a gimmick, gayness was not explicitly employed. In 1998, metal legend Rob Halford of Judas Priest publicly announced his lifelong homosexuality. As a leading figure throughout metal's development, Halford's artistic involvement with Judas Priest offers insight at the ways in which both audience and performer functioned within the climate of heteronormativity to selectively interpret homoerotically-loaded cues in such a fashion that metal's hegemonic masculinity went unthreatened.

"I wear my balls up here": Female Artists in the Metal Boy's Club

From performers and frontwomen such as Lita Ford, Doro Pesch, and Lorraine Lewis for bands like Vixen and Girlschool, women were creators in the metal scene. While images cast from videos, concert audiences, album covers, and song lyrics contributed to the expectations of female roles within metal, female metal artists added a significant voice to metal's sense of who a metallor could be. The establishment of sexuality norms within metal was also partly attributable to the performances of female metal artists. Still, these performances were always situated in the context of rock music and its hegemonically masculine domain. As Chapters Three and Four explain, metal, a form of what Frith and McRobbie (1990) call "cock rock" (p.

374), extensively performed masculinity as a means for generating subcultural capital. For female metal artists, this proved a considerable hindrance toward their pursuits of claiming rock authenticity.

As Frith (1981) describes, rock music is a “masturbatory celebration of penis power” (p. 227) ceremoniously hosted by icons like Mick Jagger and Robert Plant and carried on by every successive generation of rock musicians since. Be it on stage or in hotel rooms, the cock-rock star serves as a hegemonically masculine powerhouse ambivalently eschewing monogamous relationships with women in favor of indulging in the hedonistic potency of phallic privilege. In essence, rock is a man’s domain. Women need not apply.

According to Martin (1995), the music defined as feminine by the mid 1960s, romantic rock and folk, moved farther and farther from the realms of “serious” rock artists. This further marginalized women from rock. Critics enhanced this seriousness by devaluing teenybop bands/performers, thereby leading to a “naturalization” of rock as being gendered masculine. Rock becomes a man’s domain where “women are left to attend to music that was not real rock and roll (like teenybopper music), or they could participate in aggressive male rock and roll as its objects” (Martin, 1995, p. 68). Later cock rock evolution demonstrated this to the extent that in the music videos of the mid 1980s, female presence was either absent or only occurred in objectified, sexualized, sadistic or misogynized forms, replicating the male gaze of classic Hollywood film (Mulvey, 1975; Kaplan, 1987; see also the previous two chapters’ discussion of phallic performativity).

A blend of rock’s usual sexualized stance and the negotiated standards for metal performance by males reified the heterosexuality of metal (Straw, 1990; Weinstein, 2000; Schippers, 2002). Weinstein (2000) describes metal’s construction of traditional gender roles as

“rooted in the order of things” (p. 104). Bashe (1985) supports this assumption by describing metal’s tendency to bash any music “embodying hints of ambisexuality” (p. 7) such as disco or pop. This ultraconservative stance contributes to the ideology of homophobia linked to metal (Straw, 1990; Walser, 1993; Weinstein, 2000). The reinforcement of normative gender roles and masculine power occurs by adhering to a traditionally-sexualized ideology. The performance of maleness becomes even more masculine through the naturalization of heterosexuality as tied to the male gender. In Weinstein’s (1991) terms, “Masculinity is understood in the metal subculture to be the binary opposite of femininity” (p. 104).

This tendency becomes apparent when looking at the predominant roles for women that were available and legitimated in metal. One usual female image was that of the model seen in videos or on album covers. Here, the sexualized female was silent, seductively dressed (if dressed at all) and postured to facilitate the “to-be-looked-at-ness” underlying the male gaze (Mulvey, 1975, p.12). The sexual stimulus of the female form pleased the heterosexual male metalhead while dismissing any potential threat of challenge. Considering the typical teenage to young-adult age of metal fans, this simplified portrayal of woman works as Walser (1993) suggests:

to trigger desire... but serves as a reminder why exscription is necessary; the greater the seductiveness of the female image, the greater the threat to masculine control. Moreover, the presence of women as sex objects stabilizes the potentially troubling homoeroticism suggested by male display (p. 116).

According to Walser (1993), exscription serves as a “total denial of gender anxieties through articulations of fantastic worlds without women” (p.100). In the metal subculture, exscription either eliminated the female presence entirely or subverted it to a form conforming to

hegemonic masculinity (like the female models in videos). Tensions of interacting with female authority figures (be it with mothers, teachers, or potential dating partners) and expectations of a controlled Western society (with rules, and spouses) are seen as feminine, thereby feeding into the rebellious desire to exscript (Weinstein, 2000). The model, then, is role performed by women and serves as a sexist token for controlling, using, and discarding female representations.

A second female role in metal, the female fan, afforded some degree of agency for women. In many cases however, these resultant identities served much of the same purpose as that of the model. As referenced in Chapter Three, one version of the female fan “tries to emulate the bitch goddess they see in their heroes’ videos,” thereby recreating the model-role and its susceptibility of exscription (Bashe, 1985, p. 8). The appearance of the bitch goddess is also linked to getting backstage; her provocative appearance and sexual representation serve as the reason for being allowed into an otherwise sacred male space. Common publicity is given to the groupie, the woman willing to accommodate the sexually promiscuous and fleeting rock star. Here, the image of sexuality takes precedence over relationship, further fueling the exscripted image of females in metal; she provides for male sexual satisfaction and is then dismissed. As Weinstein (1991) describes, groupies are “not only passive but they are also one dimensional” thus “fitting the image of women in heavy metal’s ideology” (p. 101).

Other female fans take on the dress and behavior code of the males. According to Weinstein (2000), these women are accepted as equal peers, particularly if they display a knowledge and passion for the music. This seems a bit misleading in that by taking on the characteristics of male-defined norms, the woman’s performance of gender necessitates a denial of her own gendered self. Rather than achieving an equaled acceptance which respects gendered

difference, the woman is solely accepted provided she simulates masculinity standards and caters to a system of definition designed to privilege males.

Irigaray's (1985) idea that gender becomes subject to phallogocentric definition comes to mind: "female sexuality has always been conceptualized on the basis of masculine parameters" (p. 23). Additionally, Irigaray declares, "the rejection, the exclusion of a female imaginary certainly put woman in a position of experiencing herself only fragmentily, in the little-structured margins of a dominant ideology, as waste, or excess, what is left of a mirror invested by the (masculine) subject to reflect himself, to copy himself" (p. 30). The woman's acceptance in metal occurs provided she projects herself as fragmented, through taking on the masculinized attributes of appearance and behavior. Again, the idea of exscription applies; the potential threat presented by woman is removed since the provocation of difference is set aside, thereby reinforcing masculine control.

In each of the female metal roles described above, one could also argue that women fulfilling these roles could potentially gain from their participation in metal. The fan gains camaraderie or uses the images of the rock star for her enjoyment, something Walser [1993] described in much the same vein as a teenybopper's use of pop idols. In particular, the model profits financially, while the groupie achieves power or prestige from her interaction with celebrity. While these arguments might present some degree of logic, the fact that each of these roles depends upon a greater contextual structure derived from masculine definition diminishes the potential agency these roles might inherently contain. However, the role within metal in which agency *could* be accessed most readily is that of the female metal performer. The artist has access to creative control, and her status as "star" affords her the subcultural capital necessary to access the metal insider's world. Her position of visibility alone suggests some

degree of acceptance by the subculture as a whole. But in the instance of female metal performers, by being so visible and performing in such a hegemonically masculine realm, the construction of identity takes place so that the female performer adapts her identity to accommodate metal's norms.

"Dancin' on the Edge": Female Performers in Metal

While males were the predominant figures on the metal stage, women musicians did have their occasional place of notoriety. Stemming from the punk/new wave traditions of the Pretender's Chrissie Hynde and the Plasmatics' Wendy O'Williams, women rockers were first seen in the frontwoman role. Though bands like Heart, Girlschool, and the Runaways helped to establish women as instrumentalists, female musicians in rock and metal were exceptional commodities that rarely garnered critical praise for their performances. In early 1980s metal, the band, Girlschool, and former Runaway Lita Ford were the most recognizable of the female artists, yet each lacked considerable regard from both fans and critics alike. Stemming from Ford's 1988 *Lita* album, its videos "Kiss Me Deadly" and "Close My Eyes Forever," and its platinum sales, record labels promoted and released other women-fronted bands like Warlock (whose vocalist Doro Pesch eventually went solo) and Femme Fatale (featuring vocalist Lorraine Lewis). Further success allowed bands comprised of all-female members like Vixen and Precious Metal to find public distribution. This trend continued until 1991 when metal's over-saturation of the marketplace facilitated the rise of grunge. This essentially ended the period of female metallers – and many male metal bands as well – through poor sales, being dropped from major labels, and band breakups.

Over this brief period of success, these women were left in a position to create a niche for themselves in a precariously gendered world, the metal subculture. Their success stemmed from

their merits and works as performers and the aid of media publicity. In assessing how metal women created this niche, one must ask how issues of sexuality and gender were addressed in creating a legitimated rocker identity.

When considering the context of the music industry at the time, men occupied nearly all positions of authority, decision-making, career management, and technical production. Though recognizing the music industry was far from having gendered equality, one knows that minimally at least the woman performer(s) had some degree of agency in creating and packaging her/their form of metal. By looking at the works of female metal artists, a more direct form of identity construction might be accessed. The bands comprising solely female members present a particularly interesting case. Since all male musical performance was removed, these creations could potentially challenge normative masculinity more blatantly than those acts which simply had the contributions of a lone female singer. While male influence might occur at other steps in the process (managers, producers, and the like), the presence of some version of female voice seems a valid assumption.

Themes derived from metal magazines

The coverage given to women artists in metal magazines was significantly less than males. The majority of the few articles dealing with female performers focused on Lita Ford. Written in a very formulaic style, the semi-monthly reports covered the same information in much the same way (typically using the same words, phrases and transitions!). Other female artists reported on (as listed in relative frequency) were Vixen, Warlock/Doro Pesch, Girlschool, Saraya, Princess Pang, The Great Kat, Lee Aaron, Lisa Dominique, Fiona and Harlow. Large advertisements were seen for Lita Ford, Doro, Vixen, Smashed Gladys, and Precious Metal.

The anomalous presence of a woman in the traditionally male rock realm was very commonly mentioned. Typically, this was addressed either by defining the female performer as a gimmick or by reestablishing the usual masculinely-defined metal norms. Regarding the gimmick approach, it was commonly suggested that women's performance lacked the same performative skill as their male counterparts. Another common tactic used by reporters was, in interviews, to ask how often "women as gimmick" was brought up. Examples illustrating this include:

"Doro Pesch, Warlock's 5-foot tall, blond, leather-clad 'gimmick' is more than just something nice for the boys to look at." (Andrews, 1988)

"Vixen is more than a gimmick; they can deliver the rock goods." (Secher, 1989)

Lita Ford: "Some people think that because I'm a woman, I'm somehow getting by on my looks or on some gimmick. Let me tell 'em right now I'm not." (Thompson, 1990)

"Are you still getting the lines, 'You're good for girls' from fans?" (Leighton, 1990)

"and while some things about the staunchly sexist rock business never change, like Ford's near novelty status as a female rock guitarist – 'Everyone still asks we what it's like to be a girl,' she snorts.'" (McCormick, 1990)

A second theme expressed the ways in which female metal artists related to and relied upon males, becoming professional benefactors of male successes. Here, it was common to highlight the female skill but in a usually backhanded, glib fashion. Magazine coverage commonly drew attention to instances in which males contributed to female metallers' albums as guests, songwriters or co-writers, or as powerful friends within the industry. A later theme emerged where female metallers made a conscious effort to forego outside help and establish autonomy over performance. Examples illustrating this include:

"... including Paul Stanley of Kiss – who wonder about women having the balls to play rock and roll. Well, this LA based quartet can rock with anyone." (Leighton, 1990)

“put her in superstar strata... Considering Ford’s obvious sex appeal, her instrumental skill, and ability to find top-flight material, such a dream could very well become reality.” (Butler, 1989)

“It’s no secret that Vixen wasn’t the tightest band around musically when your last album came out – especially on stage. But now you hold your own with anyone. How difficult was that growth process?” (Secher, 1990b)

“Already proven themselves to be the most talented of the all-female group of all time. Admittedly, the list of femme-metal acts that preceded them is rather small – the Runaways, Girlschool, and Rock Goddess. But unlike those rather feeble attempts...” (Cox, 1989)

“Such notables as Jon Butcher, Whitesnake’s Vivian Campbell, and the aforementioned Richard Marx contributed either songs or guest solos to Vixen’s album, turning it into an all-star affair...” (Cox, 1989)

“It’s always been difficult for a woman to lead an all-male band into action...” (Andrews, 1990b)

As the second excerpt suggests, the woman rocker’s appearance was also commonly commented upon. The magazine’s format included numerous pictures, which typically reinforced the impressions left by the written text. Predictably, the female artist’s sexual attractiveness, either face or body, was highlighted. Photos were relatively evenly split between standard performance shots and pinup/posed publicity shots. Publicity shots generally highlighted the body in a sexualized way through revealing clothing or body positioning.

Examples of the writing style include:

“when it comes to lovely Lita... her alluring smile and attractive figure only highlight the hard-hitting tunes she’s crafted...” (Andrews, 1990a)

“...though having cleavage in a man’s world hasn’t been easy...” (Arkoff, 1989)

“But there’s no question that it’s Foster’s blonde good looks that have attracted the lion’s share of attention.” (Winters, 1990)

“Looks that Thrill, Riffs that Kill” (ad for Precious Metal)

“‘I feel so happy,’ Doro gushes when Slayer’s Tom Araya, who’s often expressed his admiration for both her music and body, asks how she’s doing.” (Summers, 1988)

The final theme, derived from press coverage, is illustrated by the last quote. The magazine portrayals of women in metal commonly presented the women rockers as having traditionally-defined feminine signifiers, particularly when offstage and outside the rock realm. Be it the little girl enthusiasm seen above or references to boyfriends, dating, or marriage, women rockers are framed in traditionally heteronormative forms. Examples of this theme include:

“Blackie Lawless comes in, looking like a dark gruesome monster next to the diminutive Doro.” (Summers, 1988).

Lita Ford: “I pretty much stick to myself on the road.... Being female, I have to watch myself. People will talk and I’m not that kind of person.” (Gallotta, 1990).

Lita Ford: “Ann Wilson was so good, she brought tears to my eyes.... presented me with this platinum album in front of 30,000 people, I was so happy I had tears in my eyes.” (Gallotta, 1990)

“We’re so thankful for the success we’ve had – we’d love to give every guy who bought our album a kiss (“Hanging,” 1989)

Lita Ford: “There’s *Big Gun*, which is kind of the female reply to Skid Row’s *Big Guns*. Their song was about their favorite part of a girl’s anatomy, but mine’s about my favorite part of a guy’s!” (Secher, 1989a)

“It’s no secret that in her younger days Lita cut quite a path through rock society, having relationships with the likes of Nikki Sixx and Tomy Iommi before settling down with her ‘mean man’ Chris” (Andrews, 1990a).

Vixen’s Roxy Petrucci: “If you’re asking us if we have male groupies, the answer is yes, but it’s not quite the same thing as it is when the groupies are girls chasing male musicians.” (Secher, 1990b)

Vixen’s Jan Kuehnemund: “It’s difficult to keep a boyfriend on the road,” Jan lamented.... So why not take the hunk along? “I don’t think they’d want to feel like the boyfriend hanging on.” (Levitan, 1990)

Themes derived from female performer works

While the magazines provided one image of the female rocker, the women themselves provided statements of identity through their own musical and artistic expressions. Using albums released between 1984 and 1991, thirty different female artists were analyzed. When possible, supplemental releases (singles, videos, promotional packets) were also included. Performers included in the study were: Lee Aaron, Arsenal, Betsy, Bitch, Chastain, Cycle Sluts From Hell, Doro, Femme Fatale, Fiona, Lita Ford, Girlschool, the Great Kat, Hellion, Leather, Malteze, Phantom Blue, Precious Metal, Princess Pang, Private Life, Sacred Child, Saraya, Scarlet Red, Sentinel Beast, Siren, Smashed Gladys, Chrissy Steele, Vixen, Warlock, Zed Yago, and Znowwhite. Their performances, through lyrics, album artwork, and videos, express four distinct identity themes: women as rockers, as individuals deserving respect both in and outside rock, as romantic partners, and as sexualized beings.

The first theme comes predominantly from song lyrics. As commonly heard in metal as a whole, lyrics focusing on the rock experience and a rebellious mentality were prevalent in works by female performers. Specific themes of partying with loud music, having hedonistic fun, rebelling against authority, and demonstrating power and control recurred in the female performers' works. In some instances, rebellious acts were cautioned against in fear of negative consequences. The anthemic bridge and chorus to the Doro (1990) song "Hellraiser" serves as an example of the traditional rocker theme:

So rise up – forget about the stories you tell
 Rise up – and let me hear your renegade heart yell
 Oh, oh, oh, oh, rock on Hellraiser
 Oh, oh, oh, oh, raze it Hellraiser

Vixen albums provide multiple examples of the cautions behind overindulging in the rocker persona. Consecutive songs on the *Rev It Up* (1990) album provide examples:

You're always on the edge, but you never find a thrill
 Fame and fortune's left you hungry still
 You win young innocence with sly seduction
 Indulgence paves the road to destruction ("Bad Reputation")

Shoot out came down in a police raid but a Smith & Wesson .38 at 17 he met his fate
 Fallen Hero, what were you trying to prove?
 Fallen hero, all you got was front page news
 It's too late, tough break, read your epitaph,
 How many others will follow in your path? ("Fallen Hero")

A second theme addressed the female rocker's experiences as a woman within metal.

Appearance in video and on albums provides one illustration of women creating a rocker image. Especially common in the heavier metal bands, the typical leather and denim wardrobe was worn (see Figure 16). Lyrically, songs addressing the difficulties of women gaining credibility in metal were present. These took two forms. In the first, anthemic persistence against adversity was highlighted. "Rev It Up," Vixen's second album's title track, illustrates this theme:

We were just startin' out on a dream young enough to believe
 Everyone was on our side and no one would deceive
 Sometime the truth gets served on knife – you gotta stand up and fight
 We turned to each other and kicked it in gear to earn our rock and roll right...
 If anyone tries to hold you back don't let them run you off the track
 Give it all you got – Rev it up

The second form was a more forward, assertively-proud stance. Female strength was highlighted through self-promotion. At the extreme, liner notes from The Great Kat's *Beethoven on Speed* (1990) album declare her virtuosity beyond compare: "Special praise to The Great Kat! The most brilliant genius in the entire universe! The rest of the inferior world can fuck-off! The Great Kat's non-ending, blinding brilliance and genius transcends the mediocrity of mere mortals!" Slightly more subtle, "We Came," a song from Girlschool's (1992) self-titled album emphasizes pride in womanhood:

Words of power and dedication with these things we'll all go far
 A little magic, a love potion cos every man's woman is a star

We came, we saw and grew stronger

Lita Ford's *Lita* (1988) album provides another illustration of female confidence and self-esteem:

Don't try to push the strong arm on me, you better think twice I ain't no Sandra Dee...
I been a fool, 'n' I been wise, I've seen shit 'n' paradise
And I still got the aces up my sleeve, fast mover, 'n' ya can't catch me ("Can't Catch Me")

While a stronger, more progressive female image gets expressed in some of the works, the theme of romantic relationships confuses the overall impression of works by the female metal performer. In some instances, the woman embraces an assertive role in the relationship. More often, traditional roles of women devoted to or depending on men are expressed through lyrics. In the case of Vixen's "How Much Love," the woman's role in her relationship is ambiguously defined:

I'm reachin' for you, gettin' so close but you're always a step away
I wanna touch you, give my love – tell me what's it gonna take
I can see it in your eyes, that you want to let me in
But you're scared you'll get hurt again

Depending on the listener's interpretation, the woman could represent a secure and assertive force, attempting to take control of her situation. Contrarily, she could also be seen as the nurturer providing support for the romantic partner. Dependence upon a romantic partner was the most common theme seen in the music data. Girlschool's "Don't Walk Away" (1989) provides an example of devotion or dependence to a flawed relationship:

Run and hide time after time, you go the power to hypnotize
Running for cover, your promises were lies, I got the message from the look in your eyes
Don't walk away, you give me what I need
Don't walk away won't set you free

A second example comes from Saraya's self-titled album (1989):

I know you love 'em and leave 'em but I don't care
Cuz I've been loved and left before
Lord if I could get you to look my way, I know I'll get my foot in the door

I've done my time, gonna make you mine. I'm one night away ("One Night Away")

The desire for partnership, be it romantic or sexual, is commonly portrayed in an irrational, reckless style. As seen with the examples above, the woman commonly recognizes the flaws behind her desires, but pursues them anyway. The thought/experience of being romantically attractive to another overcomes rationality.

Sexuality is the final theme derived from female performer works. Most commonly, the visual images of women metallers display their bodies as sexually provocative. Poses and fashions emphasize breasts, midriffs/waists, and legs. Facial expressions commonly feature full, red lips and a seductive gaze. Album art provides many examples of this (see Figures 17, 18, and 19). The most successful video for the era, Lita Ford's "Kiss Me Deadly" (1988), features Ford, posing seductively in one of two outfits, a half-shirt and spandex pants or low-cut, strapless dress.

Lyrically, sexuality was just as prominent. In one of her many sexually-centered songs, Ford's "Big Gun" (1990) described her fondness for sex with a man's sizable penis. Other examples illustrating themes of sexuality include Girlschool's "Can't Keep a Good Girl Down" (1992) and Precious Metal's "In the Mood" (1990).

Lean clean mean, my pleasure machine
 My jaguar, c'mon let's make it obscene
 I need some bad behaviour, skin touching skin
 Looks like I'm lost in love and trouble again ("Can't Keep a Good Girl Down")

I'm in the mood to fool around, down dirty on the ground
 Come mess around with me, give it all we got you know
 I'm in the mood to fool around ("In the Mood")

In each of these excerpts, the desire for sex is readily apparent. The lyric portrayal of sex commonly expressed the woman's sexuality as active; the woman is an interested, desiring, and

satisfied partner. In some instances, the desire was expressed through metaphor, but typically, a more blatant approach was utilized.

Construction of female metal performer identity

When considering the ways in which female metal artists were portrayed in the press and on their albums, one can begin to see the anomalies that arise for the female metal artist. Forms of trivialization get contrasted with assertion. Sexualized identity panders to the male gaze and misogyny, yet sexual independence becomes a marker of independent womanhood. Stereotypes of emotional sensitivity and nurturing are coupled with anger, obscenity, and rebellion. Co-authoring music with males is sometimes encouraged and at other times contested.

Acknowledging the female identity is periodically deemed problematic while occasionally it is utilized as a beneficial attention-getter. The blend of these disparate acts seems to fit into Butler's theory of gender as performance. Butler (1990) describes gender as "a repeated stylization of the body, a set of repeated acts within a highly rigid regulatory frame that congeal over time to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being" (p. 33). Gender, then, exists when free-floating signifiers are given cultural meaning. The person displaying the now-meaningful signifiers becomes gendered and socialized as such. Certainty of performance does not exist. Rather, it is constructed and redefined over the course of experience. The women act in ways that are considered as acceptable for their gender's definition. In metal's case, the role for women is that of the male's exscription of them.

Considering the overwhelming hegemonic masculinity of heavy metal, a woman's performance of the traditional stereotypical roles seems fairly predictable. To gain acceptance within a subculture, one must adhere to the subcultural forms; deviance potentially leads to ostracization (Brake, 1980). Female performers playing up their feminine sexuality (through

video especially) fit the normative expectation of women being objectified for serving masculine desires. The related economic rationale also influences this conscious choice. For sales to occur, the consumer must be given a product they are willing to consume. The performer and, as seen in this study's data collection, the magazine/record company provide numerous examples of objectified female metallers through pinup shots and provocative videos. The woman becomes exscripted and less dangerous to male power. Due to the predominance of sexualized women metallers at this time (and the relative lack of popularity to those who did not flaunt or express sexuality like Znowwhite's Nicole Lee), exscription in metal seems particularly supported.

One of my personal concert experiences helps to demonstrate this. In 1990, I attended a Mr. Big/Princess Pang show. As the opening band, Princess Pang's music was virtually ignored. Though the set was musically-sound, the predominantly male crowd was more focused on vocalist Jeni Foster's body than any song played. The frequent audience cry of "show us your tits" visibly upset Foster. Her objectification fits the exscripted image where the female body becomes the simplified focus, and the woman is disempowered. Regardless of skill, trivialization is the result. The male definition of female metal performer becomes an accepted standard.

The influence of male standards on females in metal is also seen in the process of creating the music. On many albums, the female performer was not an active creator of the music product. This was especially true of first albums or albums by bands like Princess Pang with women serving only as vocalists/frontpersons. The vocalist, while usually extensively trained, is not considered a musician in the same sense as instrumentalists (Frith, 1991). Credibility to the music performance is not accessed through voice (death metal growls come to mind) but rather through instrumental virtuosity. For women to gain this credibility, the extra

barrier of being compared to the male standard-bearer becomes evident. Lita Ford's frequently repeated line, "I wear my balls up here," highlights this comparison. She is a proficient guitarist but needs to symbolically mutate her breasts into testicles in order to gain respect as a musician within metal.

Furthermore, magazine coverage of "guest stars" publicly trivializes the female's accomplishment within metal. Every instance of male performative claims on the works of female artists raises questions of female agency. As discussed in Chapter Four, a musician holds more subcultural capital provided he or she writes and performs his or her own original works. When Lita Ford has Motorhead's Lemmy Kilmister or Motley Crüe's Nikki Sixx co-write songs, the potential credit for such authorship is colored by the man's participation. At a greater extreme, instances like that of the Cycle Sluts From Hell, discovered to be the creation of Overkill's Bobby Gustafson and EZO's Hiro Homma, served to undermine the female musician's status even further. The male-created expectation of naturalized male musical (and gender) superiority within metal becomes all the stronger.

Musical style adds to this expectation. In most cases, the female metal performers created music that would be classified as pop metal. The frequency of ballads or the inclusion of keyboards provided a lighter, brighter sound in comparison to other, more distorted, guitar-driven bands. As discussed in Chapter Four, the keyboard afforded little instrumental credibility in metal. By performing in the softer metal style, women metallers did not push the boundaries of traditional masculine metal too far. Rather, they targeted a niche where they would be accepted while exacerbating the likelihood of female metal performance being trivialized. The popularity of Lita Ford and Vixen prompted corporate attempts at capitalizing on the opportunity by selectively looking for and signing female pop metal acts. Partly due to this typecasting,

women could have been diverted away from more underground metal subgenres, thereby explaining the lack of any particularly-successful female artists in any extreme metal subgenre. A second argument could viably be made for the hegemonic masculinity of metal's defining structure, which simply prevented the acceptance of any woman attempting to gain access to the underground's more homosocially-defined masculine realm.

Female rockers conforming to the male expectation also seem to reinforce the traditional stereotype of nurturing, physically weaker, and dependent. Magazine themes highlighting the small physical stature or emotional susceptibility of women rockers suggest this. The numerous "relationship desire" songs and interview snippets of female metallers wanting boyfriends suggest an acceptance of patriarchy and a reinforcement of traditional gender roles. If viewed in terms of exscription, this seems a likely scenario. However, when looking at later albums, there seems to be a more assertive, less dependent stance taken by those artists successful enough to produce multiple recordings. Two potential explanations can be asserted for this. First, success provided more independence and control (i.e. Lita Ford's *Stiletto* or Vixen's *Rev It Up* not having the male guest stars). As a result, a more genuinely "female" voice could be heard from female performers. Secondly, the exposure of women to metal had led to a greater acceptance of women within metal. The need for pandering to the stereotype was not as strong, and therefore, songs could express more progressive feminine perspectives. While not as common as the traditional female stereotypes in metal, some degree of redefinition to the female identity was indicated.

The metal lifestyle also provided outlets for women rockers to assert more traditionally masculine behaviors. Songs with themes of rock rebellion and perseverance against adversity display confidence. In some, albeit less-usual instances, appearance or sexuality was not the

directed focus. This compliments Weinstein's (1991) suggestion of that the metal subculture would accept women provided the women would take on masculine qualities. The development of the riot grrl movement as an outgrowth of grunge, with its punk and metal influences, sees a recurrence of some of these themes as well (Coates, 1997; Wald, 1988). Considering metal as a predecessor to riot grrl, one can recognize a historically-contextual relationship.

A vast amount of the magazine data centers on Lita Ford. In part, her longevity in metal was one contributing factor. Additionally, she was the most successful of the women rockers. As such, she becomes an interesting case study herself. When considering Ford singularly, my overall impression of female rocker identity construction becomes reinforced. With Ford's prominent coverage in the magazines, she frequently complained about being considered as a woman in rock versus simply being a rocker. Yet, in her performances in music and in publicity, she manifested her female character in both progressive and stereotypical ways. She chose provocative costumes, posed seductively or with boyfriends/husbands, and wrote sexualized songs like 'Big Gun.' In contrast, she practiced the not-so-traditional qualities of rock hedonism (alcohol use, aggressive attitude, profanity), was an accomplished guitarist and songwriter, and actively directed her independent musical career. Ford's duality typified the female metal performer.

"There Goes the Neighborhood": Black Artists in a White Metal World

For music so widespread and popular, one that arose from black origins, there were very few black performers within metal; only one band, Living Colour, achieved considerable popular success. The paucity of such representation partly stems from the recording industry's artist and repertoire practice of trying to duplicate past successes. As described in Chapter Four, the industry simply looked in the scene for the formulaic components and rarely went beyond

replicating that.

Academic attempts to explain the lack of black presence in metal are nearly as limited. Two of the major pieces of metal scholarship mention race and problematize its lack of coverage, but then go on to readily avoid deconstructing the problems race provides. Weinstein (2000) devotes three paragraphs to race. Her main explanation for the lack of black representation in metal lies in the filtering of metal from Britain to the United States at a time of civil unrest. “It encountered a situation of cultural self-segregation by American blacks, which blocked them from appropriating it” (p. 66). Her generalizations go on to suggest, “the audience was made up mainly of blue-collar, white, adolescent males, a group not known for their sympathy for blacks. Thus the post 1960s social retrenchment made heavy metal an unattractive option for aspiring black musical artists” (p. 66). Even if I was to accept her macro-level explanation for the 1970s, I question its residual power in the face of changing time contexts and the implied racism metal fans are suggested to practice. The acceptance of white fans to 1980s artists like Michael Jackson, Prince, and Lionel Ritchie speaks to some degree of the popular acceptance of musical miscegenation occurring during this time. As well, the metal audience’s composition shifted in terms of demographics, becoming far more middle class and gender-mixed as the 1980s progressed.

In addition, Walser (1993) explains the relative absence of black performers within the context of music by referencing rock music’s legacy of exploiting black styles without providing adequate compensation: “the motive for much white music making has been the imperative of reproducing black culture without the black people in it” (p. 17). Faced with such a dismal prospect, black artists showed little interest in staying involved within the rock scene. Bands using urban-blues aesthetics without acknowledging their original source, or in Walser’s terms,

the common practice of “rip(ping) off black artists and their songs shamelessly” (p. 17), proved the primary impetus for blacks voluntarily abandoning rock. Walser also notes the role of rock historians in contributing to metal’s whiteness: “A heavy metal genealogy ought to trace the music back to African-American blues, but this is seldom done” (p. 8). Ranging from the role of the occult to vocal and guitar styles, Walser suggests, rightly so, that historically-black performance aesthetics are present within metal despite the lack of active black presence performing metal.

In an attempt to partially rewrite this history including black presence, Steve Waksman’s book on the electric guitar offers some explanation as to how the instrument itself had been resignified over time (1999). With the guitar being a staple of heavy metal’s sound and image, Waksman unfortunately ends his historical critique before metal’s rise. However, his consideration of two of metal’s most revered performers, Jimi Hendrix and Led Zeppelin’s Jimmy Page, provides some insight.

While considering Hendrix as being strongly influenced by black blues performers, Waksman (1999) establishes a distance between Hendrix and traditional blues. “Voodoo Chile (Slight Return)” serves as his example in which disarticulation of blackness occurs and “the savage guitar rites... disfigure the more conventional blues sounds of the earlier version to such an extent that blackness itself is left as an open category” (p. 187). The category is then filled by a combination of meanings as influenced by whites – the loading of black sexuality and the loading of energy and technology. Considering Hendrix as stimulating white desire to have black sexual power, the transference of black sexual power onto virtuosity and flamboyant command of the guitar obfuscates racial envy. Distancing occurs wherein the guitar performance becomes a mediator between confronting blackness and viewing virtuosity as mediated within

the instrument. Artists become minstrel-like in their style using black expressions, techniques, standards, and style to achieve their own performative power.

One of Hendrix's contemporaries, Jimmy Page, followed the pathway of many British rock guitarists in idolizing old blues recordings and trying to achieve a similar degree of accomplishment. While Page was involved in many bands across his career, Led Zeppelin was the band with which Page established his reputation as one of the preeminent guitar gods. The phenomenal success and lingering legacy of Zeppelin has also made the band the archetype for heavy metal bands, as well as masculine-centered "cock rock" in general (Frith & McRobbie, 1990). Waksman (1999) sees Page as a crucial contributor to establishing the guitar as a technophallus, thereby linking sexuality with guitar virtuosity. Stemming from Hendrix's use of the guitar and the conflation of his black sexuality with his skill, the guitar is seen as an extension of the body, a symbolic technological marker of the phallus both in terms of sound and image. For Page, his ability to play the guitar, as coupled with his use of occultic imagery and off-stage sexual endeavors, accentuated his dangerousness and larger-than-life status. Most importantly, it made Page appear hegemonically masculine to the point of idolatry and formulaic expectation – this is what a guitar god should be.

The explanation of the shift from Hendrix to Page as guitar god is cut short largely in part by Hendrix's overdose death in 1970. The rise of Page at this time is not inconsequential; Page quickly replaced Hendrix as top innovator and virtuoso. Interestingly, Waksman does not necessarily read Page as a minstrel artist, though he notes his blues influence and adoption of the distorted, loud guitar in terms of sexuality. Where Waksman extends his discussion on Page, however, is the meaning given to loudness. Sound itself serves to complement the performative grandeur that a live rock concert demands. This provides a modality in which the male's

sexuality is heightened; his degree of power and control are now allowed to flood out over the audience. The notoriety Zeppelin received for their sexual hedonism and misogynistic dalliances with groupies fostered this conflation as well. Just as Hendrix was read as having sexual prowess through his guitar work, Page was perceived as having sexual charisma in part due to his stage performance and its representative power.

The culturally significant move here was a loading of sexuality onto a white man. The power that was once feared and mimicked by whites was now held on their own. The legacy of black influence, while still ever present, was slowly being hidden from view by white performers much the same as was done with Elvis, The Beatles, and The Rolling Stones. The lingering presence of whites as performers accessing sexual power created the expectation of whites as performers. As a result, a version of perceived naturalization takes place – the music reloaded as being just sexual rather than being racially-loaded and sexual. Exscripting the blackness from rock served as a means of creating a homosocial space much in the same way Walser (1993) describes the exscription of women. The threat is removed as a result of its being reappropriated and controlled by tactics in which the power is resignified. The ongoing investment of rock's whiteness distances the discourse of race from rock music, leaving whites in positions of privilege. According to Lipsitz (1998), "As the unmarked category which difference is constructed, whiteness never has to speak its name, never has to acknowledge its role as an organizing principle in social and cultural relations" (p. 1). With limited racial discourse in metal, the assumed neutrality presupposes whiteness' privilege. Even the term "rock and roll" being shortened to "rock" serves as one such example wherein the blues sexual referent is distanced in favor of a less racially-suggestive term.

It is in this context that heavy metal established its prominence. With Zeppelin and Black

Sabbath as archetypes, later metal bands fashioned themselves with these successful styles in mind. The longer this trend continued, the greater the strength of the expectation and subsequent disappearance of blacks from metal, if not rock in general. Genre expectations were quite probably aided by corporate practice as well. As successful bands emerged, those styles were actively searched for in hopes of cashing in on their trend. Since artist and repertoire executives would look for bands with set images, bands would then cater their constructions to this image and thereby reinforce the cycle even more (Negus, 1992). This was not only taking place at the level of the recording industry, but also at the club and radio levels. Citing these institutional hurdles, Living Colour's Vernon Reid acknowledged, "It was really clear that a black band doing this music was a challenge" (Allen, 2004, p. 137). By the early-to-mid 1980s, the pattern had solidified itself to a point of going unquestioned. Again, as Reid describes, "at some point... a rock and roll band became cemented in the public mind as 'this is a music of white guys with long hair'" (p. 135). The role of blackness within metal had been effectively dissolved.

Metal's use of othering as a means to define itself offers another potential contributing explanation. In the mid-to-late 1970s, metal positioned itself as the antithesis of disco. While rock as a whole was generally opposed to disco, some classic rock artists, most notably The Rolling Stones, The BeeGees, and Kiss, appropriated its commercial appeal to platinum sales. For metal bands like Twisted Sister or AC/DC, disco represented a musical style in which musicians themselves took an ancillary position to a Studio 54-lifestyle, fancy dance steps, and synthetic orchestral backing tracks. From the perspective of rock authenticity and privileged musical performance, this certainly seems understandable. A corollary to this, however, holds racial and sexual importance. In terms of historical and musical context, by creating such a strong rhetorical opposition to disco, metal simultaneously created distance from those who

performed and consumed disco. Whether explicitly intended or not, the carryover effect was a climate of isolation which pushed aside the black and gay audiences that disco accessed so successfully. Couching this musical distancing discourse in derogatory terms extended the negative impressions to those particular publics.

The mid 1980s saw a parallel practice emerge as rap music entered the mainstream rock and pop world. Again, both rock and metal artists took issue with what was claimed as a lack of musicianship shown in rap styles. For one, using turntables to sample riffs or drum machines to manufacture beats was considered as undermining the instrumental devotion or creativity demonstrated by those who recorded “authentic” music (this ideology is explored in Chapter Four). Songs like Metal Church’s “The Human Factor” (1991) explicitly condemned the use of sampling as fraudulent: “I don’t have the talent, I’ll just get by this way.” Others condemned rap’s vocal style as not requiring the technical ability to sing. Again, while the music genre itself might be the declared target, rap’s blackness could be seen as a correlating source of metal’s declaration of otherness.

With public and corporate expectations as one-dimensional as they were, it seems understandable that black presence was infrequent, if not nonexistent. Still, there were rare occasions where a band with either black members or all-black membership would arise. In looking across the careers of these performers, two repeated themes occur. In one case, the qualities of the band or the particular member’s blackness were highlighted, and reference was drawn back to traditional black music forms or styles. In the second, overt performances of blackness were specifically avoided in favor of a style more consistent with rock’s prevailing whiteness.

The most recognizable and successful of all of these bands was Living Colour, a

traditional four-piece band. Living Colour's first album, *Vivid*, was widely popular upon its release in 1988. MTV aired the album's first video "Cult of Personality" in heavy rotation, sparking the release of four singles off the album. A relationship with Mick Jagger aided the band by linking Jagger's name and, thus, rock credibility to them. As Vernon Reid's comments about the difficulties in accessing the industry's inner circle, acknowledged a few paragraphs before, the role of Jagger's assistance certainly merits attention. Jagger not only produced their demo and effectively got the band signed to Epic at his behest, he then served as *Vivid*'s producer, sang backing vocals, and secured an opening spot for band on The Rolling Stones' tour that summer. Viewed in relation to women metal artists, this parallels the authenticating moves of Lita Ford and Vixen who enlisted established rock and metal veterans for their respective projects, providing sufficient cultural capital to be taken seriously. Regardless of the skill or ingenuity Living Colour might have had, their overall ability to gain entry to the rock business was inevitably tied to white privilege and power within rock. *Vivid*, as a whole, ranged widely in styles, but through the prevalence of Vernon Reid's frenetic guitar work, it was categorized as mainstream metal for the time. This was also most likely the desire of Living Colour's label, Epic Records, as the metal genre was one of the strongest selling musical styles of the time.

Despite Reid's influence, the album diverges from formulaic metal construction. Most notably are the combined influences of Corey Glover's vocals and the prominence of funk-inspired songs. Glover's style and inflection are reminiscent of 70s soul with their silky flow from note to note and the liberal shifting from note to note and octave to octave, from falsetto to growl. Songs like "I Want to Know" or "Open Letter (to a Landlord)" demonstrate this skill. With the recognizable influence of black style, the music becomes marked in terms of blackness. Song styles, especially notable on "Funny Vibe" or "Glamour Boys" continue this pattern.

Relying on thick bass grooves highlighted by Muzz Skilling's slap bass countered by Reid's bright, choppy, strummed accompaniment, the songs are based in funk, if not more appropriately labeled as funk. The addition of a Public Enemy rap sample within "Funny Vibe" adds to the black referencing all the more.

Blackness is also performed in lyrical themes across the album. Ranging from urban ghettos concerns ("Open Letter") to ignored racial conflict ("Which Way to America?") to the stigma of being black ("Funny Vibe"), direct challenges to whiteness as experienced in black American life are presented. Subsequent albums were not as well received or as commercially successful as *Vivid*. Arguably, one reason for this stems from the band extending their musical diversity, stylistically ranging from punk to funk to tender ballads, yet still maintaining their social awareness. Deviating farther from the accepted rock/metal formula potentially made the challenge of black rock harder to accept for a largely white audience base. The band caused a bit of controversy on their second release, *Times Up* (1990), when lead single "Elvis is Dead" condemned the rock world for its ongoing deification of Presley despite his personal and symbolic racist historical lineage. In all, Living Colour's presentation of their own blackness was very prominent, providing the band with considerable press and, cynically, novelty within the rock world. The novelty having ridden its course, the upfront performance ultimately served as the band's commercial downfall.

Paralleling Living Colour in their performance of blackness is Body Count's 1992 self titled album. Coming at the tail end of metal's reign as the prevailing rock subgenre, Body Count was best known as the creation of Ice T, the band's vocalist and lyricist. Their first appearance, a single track on T's rap album *O.G. Original Gangster* (1991), served as a preview of the 1992 release. T's past musical endeavors as a gangsta rap artist were heavily present

within the band's music and presentation. Centering on themes of the black urban male, Body Count blended the music of punk-inspired hardcore metal with the somewhat monotone half rap/half sung vocals of T. Here, the rap aesthetic came through as depictions of violence ("Momma's Gotta Die Tonight"), street and prison life ("Bowels of the Devil," "Cop Killer"), and racial unrest ("Body Count") were prominent. Of particular interest is the song "There Goes the Neighborhood." The first release and video, "Neighborhood" specifically addresses the perceived transgression of blacks playing rock music and the threat it presents. The pre-chorus lyrics of "Don't they know rock's just for whites, don't they know the rules" specifically raises this issue. Here as well, an invocation of black sexuality is blatantly raised – "That nigga plays so good, he took my motherfuckin' girl" – while simultaneously referencing rock's sexual signification. The song, however, only held minimal popularity before being replaced by another focus.

Popular press coverage of the album surged when the song "Cop Killer" initiated considerable controversy. Intended as a narrative describing the fictional retaliatory killing of a police officer with a history of racist brutality, the song was targeted as an anthem for black on white violence (T, 1994). Eric Nuzum (2001) argues that the prominence of Body Count's blackness was crucial to this interpretation. Viewing Eric Clapton's (1974) "I Shot the Sheriff" as a lyrical parallel, Nuzum offers that Clapton's rendition of the Bob Marley tune essentially covers the same conceptual ground: "a storyteller seeks revenge against the police for brutality committed against innocent citizens" (p. 100). For the established and credible Clapton, a number one single caused no discernible controversy. For Body Count, a band of black musicians operating within a white-defined medium, all hell broke loose.

Though the controversy prompted significant sales, the ways in which the controversy

emerged dismissed Body Count's position as a rock/metal band. Media scripting of the scenario capitalized on Ice T's popularity as a rapper and directed the attention upon the rapper vs. the rock star. By doing this, Body Count was marginalized into a comfortable construction of blackness (rap versus rock) while accentuating its problematic blackness (the violent, corrupting criminal) all the more. Lipsitz (1998), in his analysis of the OJ Simpson trial, argues a move like this serves as an investment in whiteness; fostering the white fear of blackness creates an artificial dichotomy: "black people who do not belong on *The Cosby Show* belong on *Cops*" (p. 112). The media parallel here collapses Body Count into a well-learned, well-practiced archetype serving white privilege and reinforcing rock's hegemonic whiteness. Subsequently, from an industry perspective, supporting Body Count was commercial and political suicide. The label, with the band's blessing, reissued the record omitting "Cop Killer" and Body Count was soon released from their Time Warner contract. Ultimately, these moves restored metal to its usual equilibrium point of prevailing whiteness.

Both Living Colour and Body Count explicitly referenced their blackness. In terms of metal's acceptance to this music, I see two prominent contributors. First, the cultural capital of established performers offered the bands opportunity for performing in the first place. Without Mick Jagger's or Ice T's track record, it is quite doubtful that either band would be signed or given such marketing support. Second, the blatancy of blackness served as an allowable marker affording its inclusion; the security of rock's sexual signification need not be challenged when the potential for trivialization exists. For blacks playing rock music, the prevalence of blackness fosters the perception of exoticism. Seen as a temporary excursion, the power of challenge gets undermined by loading it into convenient scripts. The performers and performances, because they reference such black styles, are seen outside of the whole. Similar to women performers in

metal, their works are enjoyed for their novelty or reinforcement of the desired traits that are conveniently located there. For many of the black performers in metal, this can be considered the case. Bands or performers like 24-7 Spyz, Bad Brains, the Eric Gales Band, and Chuck Mosley from early Faith No More (as well as Living Colour and Body Count) all fit this depiction. The sanctity of white rock remains secure provided enough markers of blackness exist to distance the performances far enough away from rock.

This prevalence of invoking blackness can also be interpreted as a version of minstrelsy. As black metal performers have to frame their constructions within traditional black guises, one could suggest a catering to white desire. Those qualities marking one's otherness are cyclically reinscribed to show blacks rightfully producing the music of otherness like blues, rap, reggae, or funk. Appearance contributes as well, such as the flamboyant mishmash of colors in Living Colour's fashion or Body Count's band photo in which all members are wearing Syndicate garments in rap style. Blacks are seen as performing the stereotypes given to them by whites. Here again, should those stereotypes serve to replicate racial hegemonies, the ease of reading rock by black artists as an aberration becomes all the more easy.

While bands like Living Colour and Body Count accounted for the most popular and prevalent of the black metal performers, a second style also emerged. Here, the performers did not actively demonstrate any overt signs of blackness other than skin color. Rather, they conformed to the norms of metal and failed to raise race as an issue, if not actively working to avoid racial mention at all. While bands or performers like Greg Howe, Greg Fulton (also using the stage name Ian Tafoya) from Znowwhite and later Cyclone Temple, Rocky George from Suicidal Tendencies, and Terrance Hobbs of the death metal band Suffocation represent this form, the four most prominent examples are Slash from Guns n Roses, Tony MacAlpine, Doug

Pinnick of King's X and the band, Sound Barrier.

For the first two Sound Barrier releases, major label *Total Control* (1984) and self-produced EP *Born to Run* (1985), the band featured an all-black lineup. Their third and final indie-label release, *Speed of Light* (1986), saw the departure of bassist Stanley E, and Emil Lech, a white Finnish musician, took his place. Sound Barrier's music was very typical of the time, album-oriented with direct comparison to early Judas Priest or many of the New Wave of British Heavy metal bands. Regarding the first two albums, the band does not actively note their blackness through lyrical themes or through specific sound markers (long out of print, I was unable to obtain *Speed of Light* for lyrical analysis. Tracklistings and cover art appear consistent with the first two records however). Bernie K sounds interchangeable with many of the vocalists of the time. As well, the band follows usual metal structures sounds, and image – their fashion is standard studded leather.

In what little press coverage I found, the band made it a point of wanting to be seen as musicians rather than black musicians while claiming an allegiance with European bands rather than their LA contemporaries (Liventen, 1985). In this way, the band attempts to claim metal authenticity as located in its white-dominated definition or tied to British origins rather than black ones. As well, by diffusing the prominence of race as secondary, they seem to adhere to the mainstream standards of approaching metal without engaging or challenging racial loadings. As Weinstein (2000) suggests about women metal performers, “women, on stage or in the audience, are either sex objects to be used or abused, or must renounce their gender and pretend to be one of the boys” (p. 221). I see Sound Barrier doing the same thing. Instead of highlighting their blackness in fashion, paralleling the way a woman like Betsy from Bitch reveals her body and plays up her sexuality, they keep it hidden by minimizing the extent to

which their blackness appears. The normative codes go unchallenged and, thus, are reinforced.

A second example of this adherence and endorsement of traditional norms can be seen with Tony MacAlpine. A black guitar “shredder,” MacAlpine is best known for his numerous instrumental recordings which feature his impeccable technique and classically-inspired songcraft. Instead of the showy, sexualized performance of Jimi Hendrix, MacAlpine utilizes a much more reserved approach. This partly derives from his classical training as a pianist and, later, a guitarist. On *Maximum Security* (1987), one song, “Porcelain Doll” is a variation on a Chopin piece, while Chopin’s “Etude #4 Opus #10” is played as originally composed. Preceding album *Edge of Insanity* (1985) also features a Chopin piece. Here, it seems as though MacAlpine is utilizing the classical tradition for accessing authenticity.

During the mid 1980s, Shrapnel Records featured many guitarists fusing the power and distortion of metal with the technical skill and posterity of classical compositions. As well, as described in Chapter Four, Yngwie Malmsteen’s success fostered the era of shredders as markers of virtuosity. Walser (1993) describes this stage in metal as being a period where drawing on the classical canon established legitimacy and prestige. For someone like MacAlpine, it seems noteworthy that he pursues the white European canon. Playing music in this way, his blackness can be countered within traditionally-white frameworks.

Doug Pinnick of King’s X demonstrates a related version of the appropriation of white-signified sounds instead of performing overt blackness. King’s X was best known for their Beatle-esque harmonies, arranged in a progressive metal style. As well, the band’s first albums contained an assortment of spiritual references professing their Christian beliefs. The influence of The Beatles provides a convenient white-signified archetype in which to read the King’s X sound. The contextual rise of Christian metal concurrent with King’s X’s period of success adds

to Pinnick's potential symbolic whitening.

In large part, due to the success of metal and the Christian conservatives' concern with "problematic messages" expressed by secular metal bands, many Christian metal bands cropped up to deliver their words of faith to a "susceptible" audience in a style that was already agreeable to them. Specialized record labels like Pure Metal, Rugged, and Regency emerged, and bands like Stryper and Guardian had moderate success. Paralleling mainstream metal, these bands were predominantly white (Pinnick being the lone black I could find; Vengeance Rising's John Martinez is the lone Hispanic I discovered). Richard Dyer (1999) argues, "Not only did Christianity become the religion and religious export of Europe, indelibly marking its culture and consciousness, it has also been thought and felt in distinctly white ways for most of its history" (p. 17). By placing himself within this forum while not explicitly pressing racial issues within King's X music, Pinnick repeats the exscription pattern seen before. When something even remotely representing a call for unity does arise as on *Faith, Hope and Love*'s (1990) first single "It's Love," the shared vocals of Pinnick and bandmate Ty Tabor, combined with the Christian overtones of universal brotherhood, outweigh any overt racial message. Markers of blackness are minimized in such a way that their meaning does not displace the well-established whiteness of metal as a whole.

The final example, Guns n Roses' guitarist Slash, reached the highest point of success as his band became the standard-bearer for metal during its heyday. As his biographical description from a book on the black experience in rock describes, "Although almost never mentioned in the media, the original guitarist of 1980s poster children of bad boy rock, Guns n' Roses, is actually black" (Crazy Horse, 2004, p. 212). More specifically, Slash, born Saul Hudson, is the biracial son of a white father and a black mother. During his time with Guns n'

Roses, Slash obscured his face for nearly all photographs and videoshoots through the combination of his long black curls and his trademark top hat. His lighter skin tone and biracial features offered less definitive signs of being non-white, and, as such, his racial heritage was not immediately evident. In interviews, he made no formal mention of his background and often tried to shift away from the topic in general.

One particularly telling performance of racial obfuscation was Slash's reaction to the backlash caused by "One in a Million (1988)." Vocalist Axl Rose's account of naively moving to LA and feeling preyed upon by the streetwise locals, "Million" includes lyrical condemnations of multiple groups in a less-than-politically-correct fashion: "police and niggers, that's right, get out of my way, don't want to buy none of your gold chains today" and "immigrants and faggots, they make no sense to me, they come to our country and think they do as they please, like start a mini-Iran, or spread some fuckin disease, they talk so many goddamn ways, it's all Greek to me." Inevitably, Slash was sought out for his opinions about the song, its meaning, and his position as a biracial person. In nearly every instance, Slash acknowledged he didn't necessarily like the song's lyrics, but simply went along with Rose and Rose's insistence that the lyrics represented Rose's past – and not his present feelings; it was simply a character portrayal and not an actual endorsement of bigotry. An interview from 1988 offers a representative sample:

There's a line in the song... that I didn't want him to sing but Axl's the kind of person who will sing whatever it is he feels like singing... What that line was supposed to mean, though, was police and niggers, OK, but not necessarily talking about the black race. He wasn't talking about black people so much, he was more or less talking about the sort of street thugs that you run into. Especially if you're a naive mid-western kid coming to the city for the first time... It's a heavy, heavy, *heavily* intimidating thing for somebody like that. I've been living in Hollywood for so long I'm used to it (Wall, 1991, p. 80).

But that kind of thing does bother me. Me, in particular, I mean, I'm part black. I don't have anything against black individuals... It doesn't have to be about blacks. The term nigger goes for Chinese, Caucasian, Mexicans... blacks too, sure. But it's like the type of people that, you know, are street dealers and pushers (Wall, 1991, p. 81).

Rhetorically, Slash immediately follows his immediate-yet-somewhat-understated disapproval with a deflection of responsibility. It was Rose's issue and not his. He then invokes his second common maneuver, redefining the term "nigger" in such a way as to lose its specific racial loading in favor of a "street thugs" connotation. Here again, Slash intentionally moves himself further from the bigotry by offering himself as a diluted, safer version of an accommodating minority, rescripting the offense in such a way as to not ruffle feathers.

Reducing the issue to a personal level ("I don't have anything against blacks") is a standard means to shift blame to an amorphous other versus acknowledging one's own contribution – something Lipsitz (1998) cites as a crucial practice of maintaining the power of whiteness: "As long as we define social life as the sum total of conscious and deliberative individual activities, we will be able to discern as racist only individual manifestations of personal prejudice and hostility. Systemic, collective, and coordinated group behavior consequently drops out of sight" (p. 20). Years later Slash still relied on the same rhetorical tactics of distancing himself from black-signification while deferring the issue to the level of the individual (Willis, 2004):

JW: Did you ever define yourself as a black musician? Was that ever an issue?
 Slash: No, it wasn't really an issue. I never really defined myself as anything when it comes down to it.... so I never really differentiated between black music and white music, or what kind of musician I was (p. 196).

I didn't necessarily allow him to do it, you know, but... The guy was so insensitive about anybody else, and at the same time wanting to get his own (p. 197-8)

The only times I ever did feel in certain places, in school, a couple of weird comments from some of my colleagues over the years. One guy, I won't name his name you know, said black people shouldn't have tattoos. I was like, what? (p. 198)

Again, Slash actively works to exscript himself of particular blackness markers. The final quote interestingly offers the assumptive loading of tattoos as a whiteness marker. While Slash denies

its validity, he doesn't necessarily challenge its proponent or engage in body modification's cultural history. Rather, he seems to simply accept tattoos as a marker of the rock musician and thereby obliquely reinforces the bigot's stance – tattoos (or rock tattoos) as not carrying black significance.

Through a combination of either overtly highlighting blackness as a form of exoticism or conspicuously denouncing it in favor of exscription, the loading of the security of whiteness within metal seems to have been reinforced. As the representation of black performers as a whole was so little, potential challenge to the assumed whiteness of metal was additionally reduced. While the rise of grunge during the early 1990s found metal with a weakened commercial status, the subculture has continued, maintaining a relatively similar racial construction – whiteness prevails though other bands with performers of color have found varying degrees of commercial success including Sevendust, Sepultura, and Puya.

“Heavy Metal Breakdown”: Non-native English Speakers within Metal

The novelty of metal music from other regions was one form of gimmickry pursued by record labels. Bands like Japan's Loudness, Brazil's Sepultura, or scenes like the German thrash and power metal scene allowed for exoticism to take place. While catering to normative American/Anglo styles, the inclusion of their foreign backgrounds tweaked the formula just enough to create something new. There was also the hope of targeting world music sales; the band's local region might become more exposed to metal, and the exported music style might become attractive to the US or Britain (Harris, 2000; Negus, 1998; Fenster & Swiss, 1999). In the instances of Japan and Brazil, moderate early success of particular native bands prompted small scenes to develop. In Japan, Loudness was soon followed by EZO, Anthem, Earthshaker and a reformed Vow Wow. To a lesser extent, the Brazilian band Sepultura was followed by

Overdose, Sarcofago, and Krisiun. The greatest impact of any non-Anglo scene was that generated by German artists.

“Roots Bloody Roots”: The Exoticization of the Japanese and Brazilian Scenes

Brazil’s Sepultura started their career through the underground tape-trading scene. As metal records were both scarce and extremely expensive imports, the band relied upon their international contacts to mail them copies of the most extreme metal they could find. Strongly influenced by bands like Slayer, Hellhammer, and Venom, the band’s initial demos built a buzz among the tape trading and bootlegging scene and eventually caught the attention of Roadrunner Records’ Monte Conner. Signing the group of teenagers, Conner rushed *Beneath the Remains* (1989) to stores and actively pushed the Brazilian angle to a more-than-accommodating metal press. As a result, *Remains* sold an unprecedented 100,000 copies (Mudrian, 2004). The video for “Dead Embryonic Cells” from 1991’s *Arise* was in heavy rotation on MTV. 1993’s *Chaos AD* furthered their success, garnering them their first top 40 album (#37) and their first Brazilian MTV Video Award. By 1995, Sepultura became one of the most successful thrash acts in metal. Their *Roots* (1995) album is commonly cited among classic thrash albums as its innovation of incorporating indigenous Brazilian tribal rhythms to thrash resulted in a new exciting dimension.

Keith Harris (2000) deconstructs Sepultura’s career in terms of their accessing the thrash metal scene. As he admits, their early recordings simply serve as approximations of other popular underground recordings of the time. He also acknowledges the stereotypical Satanism expressed in “ungrammatical English” (p. 16) marked the early recordings as subcultural followers. Because of the band’s involvement with tape trading though, he views their subcultural capital as being significant enough to eventually forge a Brazilian scene. I find this idea a bit misleading. While Sepultura’s capital did increase through tape trading, its ultimate

result wasn't so much innovative music or performance (rather, they were strongly derivative). Instead, it was largely the novelty of their exotic geographic origin that served as the publicity angle which then generated sales. Harris suggests the band, and their contemporary Sarcófago, were non-hegemonic in their native Brazil by playing metal and attempting to write in English. I see the larger hegemonic frame of rock music being Anglicized, necessitating the extra step of lyric translation for claiming rock authenticity. Once the privilege of having a sales track record and label support had been achieved, only then did sufficient subcultural capital allow for Sepultura's inclusion of more Brazilian markers. The inclusion of tribal rhythms and returning to *Roots* also speaks to a claim of authenticity parallel to the use of blues in the rock world. This can be read as a version of investing in whiteness as well: one positions the past as nostalgically genuine while replicating the stereotypical divide of white (civilized) and non-white (tribal) (Lipsitz, 1998).

For the Japanese bands, physical appearance automatically placed the performers in an othered category. Instead of fighting against this, the few Japanese bands that crossed over to the American marketplace all embraced their distinctiveness as a marketing gimmick while making sure to cater toward Western tastes. Similar to Sepultura, bands aiming for notoriety outside of Japan used English for lyrics (either self-written or finding outside help as EZO did). In the cases of EZO, having ties to Gene Simmons, who discovered the band and produced their 1987 *S/T* debut, especially aided their pursuits. Simmons' influence was also seen in their choice to perform in Kabuki-styled makeup highly reminiscent of Kiss. Loudness' first direct attempt at breaking into the US market was 1985's *Thunder in the East*. Beyond the title, its cover art featured a rising sun on the front and their leather-clad selves on the back, affording little doubt as to their ethnicity.

Thunder was a success, breaking the US Top100 (#74) despite Minoru Niihara's heavily-accented phonetic English vocals and received considerable ribbing from the metal press. Whereas previous releases were either solely Japanese, English/Japanese blends, or, in the case of 1984's *Disillusion*, dually-recorded with both English and Japanese vocals, the band chose to entirely forego Japanese lyrics on *Thunder*. Critical praise particularly focused on guitarist Akira Takasaki, as the band's music to this point highlighted his considerable talents. Follow-up *Lightning Strikes* (1986) repeated the approach (reaching #64) while *Hurricane Eyes* (1987) was intended to be more American-focused. New producers Eddie Kramer and Andy Johns added keyboards and larger group choruses to a set of more mainstream metal songs. The result was a significant popularity decline; the album barely entered the US charts, only reaching #190.

The disappointment of *Hurricane Eyes* might have logically had the band return to their metal roots. Rather, the band fired Niihara and brought in an American, Mike Vescera, with hopes that a genuine American vocal was all that was needed to finally break out in the States. This failed miserably as both *Soldier of Fortune* (1989) and *On the Prowl* (1991) failed to chart at all; consequently, Loudness was dropped from their major label and American distribution deals. Adding insult to injury, *On the Prowl* essentially comprised songs taken from the earlier Japanese catalog and rerecorded with Vescera's English lyrics and vocals.

What gains the band had made were ultimately lost as Loudness tried to overconform to what was considered American metal tastes. Their choice to give up their Japanese gimmick in favor of more American styles and sounds found the band sounding like the countless other also-rans, like Vescera's previous band Obsession, that weren't quite making it. Whatever fanbase that had developed through *Thunder in the East* was challenged with a new, more mainstream style that ultimately read as selling out. Despite Loudness' cautionary tale, their career arc was

fairly common for bands coming from other non-Anglo scenes. To a large extent, bands from Norway (TNT), Holland (Vengeance), Denmark (D.A.D.) and Switzerland (Krokus, Coroner, Celtic Frost) followed parallel patterns of development, accessing the scene through their original works and then having difficulty once attempting more “American” tactics.

“Reflections of a Shadow”: German Metal Moves Westward

Historically, Germany had been a minor player in the worldwide metal scene. Though the Scorpions and UFO were notable, widespread international popularity did not occur until the MTV-era helped break the Scorpions’ *Love at First Sting* in 1984. Yet, beginning roughly 1986, a new metal movement was taking shape in West Germany, labeled German power metal. This style, sonically influenced by melodic New Wave of British Heavy Metal bands and the thrash metal bands of San Francisco and New York, emphasized fast riffs, operatic vocals, and driving rhythms. A second movement, German thrash, focused itself more on the matching the energy and intensity of bands like Slayer and Venom.

One primary difference between Germany and the other scenes in Brazil and Japan was the presence of an already-established recording industry infrastructure. The Bertelsmann Music Group (BMG) had a corporate office in Berlin and a well-established distribution network through continental Europe. They also had an established North American presence with a particularly effective direct-marketing record club division. When the independent Noise International label formed, it was easily brought into BMG’s system, which thereby considerably aided the label and its bands. Instead of having to break into the new market independently, at least some version of established access was readily available. Power metal bands like Helloween, Running Wild, Rage, Accept, Warlock, and Gamma Ray established their style and

spread their influence to the metal subculture as a whole. Likewise, Kreator, Destruction, and Sodom were the leaders of the influential German thrash scene.

In general, a standardized pattern of developing German metal identity resulted. While some thematic characteristics established themselves and remained consistent throughout a career, particular trends emerged for bands just starting out. Once a band became more established, as an entity in-and-of itself, and became an accepted part of the metal subculture, a new set of practices emerged seeming to indicate the acquisition of subcultural capital.

Themes across the entire career

Throughout the media portrayals of German metal bands, their German identity was always emphasized. Typically, this was done in the introduction with a quick descriptor either noting the band's place of origin or the German metal style. Examples of this would include lines such as: "hailing from Germany," "Teutonic metal," "Kraut rock," and "the German band Accept." This occurred across all levels of coverage and degrees of success, from one lone article to series of articles spanning multiple years. Referencing any one German band with other German artists was also common. Earlier successes like the Scorpions or Accept became archetypal references in establishing the background for German metal precedence and inclusion into the media's scope of coverage.

As the archetype was being established, the musical forms being utilized by the German bands were typically referenced through German cultural depictees in the metal media. The most common of these references was the music of Wagner. Known for powerful, moody operas and marches, Wagner and his music are part of the classical music canon. Wagner's subsequent appropriation by Hitler as a symbol of Aryan national pride indirectly adds an aura of militancy, threat, and power to the music's signification. German power metal songwriting became seen as

identifiable in this regard. The complexity of German power metal riffs, the multiple time changes and song components, and the technical efficiency and precision of instrumental ability became the markers of the subgenre's style. Recordings were also noted for their sound quality and the studio recording's attention to detail resulting in a technically- and sonically-precise style.

The actual recordings of German metal bands accentuated this categorization. Links to militancy were aided through the general lyrical themes of songs. War, fighting, and rebellious strength were the most common song topics. The five-person lineup became the usual band structure with two guitar players sharing lead guitar duties. Musically, the interaction of these guitar players, their tradeoff of lead and rhythm duties within songs, and the frequency of longer, intricate instrumental solos became staples to the style. Whereas American or British metal artists typically emphasized single time signatures and repetitive chord-based songwriting, the Germans employed a more complex degree of musicality. For power metal, the vocal's higher range and operatic style balanced fast, staccato lyrics and sustained vibrato notes, which also displayed technical musical proficiency.

While American or British musical forms were contrasted in terms of songcraft, the overall appearance and performative style of German bands was directly derived from usual metal conventions. Fashion, stage performance, off-stage antics, and album art were formulaic. Many German bands used logos and mascots which symbolized of strength, power, and mysticism, a frequently-utilized tactic within metal.

Themes from early in the career

While relatively consistent in terms of fashion and performance, the degree to which American or British styles were referenced and mimicked was significantly higher in the German

bands' earlier incarnations. Interviews with bands frequently described their desire to appeal to international markets, particularly the United States, in hopes of increased sales and fame. Repeatedly, it was expressed that remaining in Germany or creating music with German lyrics would be limiting both in terms of success aspirations and subcultural exposure. The English language was seen as a prerequisite for rock music and songwriting. The limited number of German fans or potential places to perform was cited as a reason for making more "global" music. Partly as a result of this desire to expand fan base, American and British practices were embraced.

Early works most commonly followed formulaic conventions in terms of song lyrics and meaning. Songs concerning war and destruction, Satan and occultic power, rebellion, youth, and the unity of the metal community were common. The degree of sophistication or expression was generally limited, focusing more on repetition, story telling, and generalized anthem creation. Album titles like *True as Steel*, *Burning the Witches*, *Brain Damage*, *Hellbound*, *Death or Glory*, *Infernal Overkill*, *Execution Guaranteed*, *Restless and Wild*, and *Metal Heart* express this general quality. Emulating popular forms was also given as a reason for early music construction and style. Through wishing to duplicate the success of bands like Britain's Iron Maiden or Judas Priest, or the American speed metal scene, German bands readily acknowledged their mimicry of stylistic influences. This parallels Sepultura's use of Slayer as a model for their early career works.

On occasions, bands would mention their intentional attempts at formally adapting an American musical style or structure to appeal to American audiences. In these specific cases, two tactics were utilized. In the first, bands tried to eliminate the vocalist's German accent as much as possible. Here, it was thought that the remnants of cultural origin were prohibiting

crossover by not being accessible or understandable enough for American ears. Paralleling Loudness, the band Accept achieved a degree of success within the States but had reached a plateau. In an attempt to expand to the next tier of popularity, the original German vocalist was replaced with an American to utilize a more traditional metal sound and style. As with Loudness, this tactic failed miserably for Accept.

Songwriting and lyrical style was a second area for manipulation. Brightening the music by incorporating themes of love, sex, partying, and fun was seen as more appealing to American audiences. The first Accept album, with the new American vocalist, saw the band shift away from their past, power metal approach to a style resembling that of the LA Strip scene; this is illustrated by song titles like “X-T-C,” “Love Sensation,” and “Stand 4 What U R.” In another extreme example, prior to the fourth release, *Stronger Than Ever*, Grave Digger reinvented itself completely. “Grave” was dropped from the band’s moniker in hopes of getting away from the darker, more serious image, and songs were constructed with radio play in mind – brighter, shorter, and simpler. The band also deserted their traditional metal wear in favor of Hawaiian shirts. The bands’ previous album art featured skulls, a vampire, and spiked leather. On *Stronger*’s cover, the band inexplicably featured a metallic, cyborg-esque duck. Predictably, the record was a dismal failure.

A final repeated theme associated with early band media coverage concerned performers’ accents or their ability to communicate in English. Most often, this was presented in a comedic or ridiculing context, highlighting the difference between the non-native German and accomplished native English speakers. The novelty of differing types of speech or awkward constructions and the band’s atypical origin typified the source of humor or trivialization. *Hit Parader* expressed this theme more so than *Kerrang*, though it was present in both publications.

Themes from later in established careers

While many bands seemed to cater toward American expectations early in their careers, the thematic patterns derived from media coverage and musical material indicate a distinctly different pattern once a band's career progressed. Typically, increasing levels of success and prolonged exposure to the international musical marketing world found bands adapting and adjusting their works in more original and personalized forms. Additionally, the increase in success allowed for greater resources to be contributed to future musical creation. By having more status as an established band, greater time for composing and recording music allowed for a progression away from the mimicry seen earlier in careers to higher degrees of sophistication, lyrically and thematically. The result of this progression was a change in media perception and presentation from novelty to acceptance and praise.

Albums themselves became much more intricate and diverse as compared to earlier works. In part, this facilitated the development of the label "German power metal" and "German thrash" as the music became distinct from other, more traditional metal forms, most recognizably in lyrics. Instead of the former anthems and generalized metal topics of Satan and the occult, rebellion, and war, greater detail and expression was noticeable on the later works. Songs dealing with topics like political criticism, environmental protection, science and physics, psychological well-being, and social order became commonplace. Expanded creativity was also noted in the presence of concept albums. Linking all songs under a conceptual theme created a sense of artistry and further developed the music's sense of mood through blending tempos and rhythm patterns to compliment the lyrical storyline. The music media described this style as musical theater or rock opera. Again, as contrasted with the usual American styles, this was a significant departure from the norm.

The solidification of career also seems to have opened up opportunity for bands to be less conservative in terms of their national origin. Whereas before, when expressing German identity was tempered by concerns of international acceptance (or lack thereof), German metal bands, having developed a cache of subcultural capital, were relieved some of those worries. Bands like Sodom, Running Wild and Kreator used their native German for album credits and, on occasions, song titles and lyrics. The final Warlock album included one song written in German and on the subsequent Doro Pesch solo release, the lyrics to “Bis aufs Blut” were noticeably written in script – directly contrasting the set type used for all other songs – thereby accentuating the difference. Later media coverage occasionally included artists expressing opinions on East and West German relations, and the enthusiasm of being able to perform across the reunified Germany. Finally and on very limited occasions, songs like Warlock’s “East Meets West” (1987), and Helloween’s “Future World” (1988) explicitly or indirectly referred to the German political scenario.

A final noted theme regarding the later German power metal construction lies in the increased acceptance of the style by the American metal media in particular. While their German origin was still noted, bands were no longer mocked for language difficulties. Articles shied away from geographies and focused on the music, tour plans, and life of rock stardom. The established reputation of a band no longer seemed to provide any threat and was welcomed into traditional coverage. Reviews for German bands were usually full of praise and strong recommendations for fans to buy their assorted works. Finally, media would use bands like Helloween, Kreator, or Warlock as a standard of reference for both later German and non-German bands playing music similar to German power or German thrash metal.

Viewed in terms of authenticity, German metal bands tactically manipulated their performances to fit the subcultural norms. Unlike their Japanese cohorts, I argue that the Germans' whiteness allowed more direct access to the accepted appearance norms; their otherness solely stemmed from the display of language. By selectively employing the effective strategies of Anglo predecessors, German bands aimed to minimize their exoticism. A new band must be distinct, but cannot deviate too far away from accepted standards for fear of losing complete touch with the targeted audience. Early albums attempted to fit the expectations of international record buyers while staying novel through musical and lyrical styles.

When international bands intentionally changed their approach to appeal to mainstream American audiences, the result was usually complete failure. In essence, any previously-established credibility was destroyed by such actions. For a band like Celtic Frost, to dramatically shift from death metal originators to pop metal wannabees, all prior claims of authenticity were invalidated. The band was interpreted as quite literally posing versus being genuine. Both Loudness' and Accept's choice to replace singers with American counterparts accomplished the same thing: they sold out their audience to an inauthentic marketing ploy.

When a band stayed consistent to their original fanbase, their authenticity claims remained secure, thereby allowing for further freedom to explore and create based on established success. According to Negus (1999), the established fanbase, once secured, is more willing to accept and welcome greater deviancies from the norm, provided they are still negotiable. As previously mentioned, Sepultura's *Roots* demonstrates this. Upon reaching a level of success and security, they were more able to be more explicit in their cultural referencing whereas earlier career works required traditional construction. The German bands' move toward more elaborate album themes or writing songs in German can be seen as a parallel to this. Considered in terms

of authenticity, bands like Helloween were accepted and esteemed for their ability to meet metal standards of musical performance. Their role in the scene became more influential as fellow Germans and non-Germans began emulating their style in the same fashion as Helloween themselves had done with British NWOBHM bands originally. Colista and Leshner (1998) suggest a situation like this demonstrates a common pattern for cultural exchange in global music pathways and the negotiation between global and local identities. In terms of localness, the leadership role would also allow for new directions, including inventions like German language or concept albums. Viewed in terms of the ongoing development of metal, the emergence of the Scandinavian death metal scene, with its acknowledged appreciation of bands like Hellhammer, Sodom, and Destruction, serves as a direct descendant of the German metal scene's evolution.

“Hell Bent for Leather”: Rob Halford’s Sexual Subversion in the Music of Judas Priest

In his depiction of youth subcultures in the US, Canada, and Britain, Brake (1985) suggests “subcultural studies of youth never mention homosexuals, and this is hardly surprising given the masculinist emphasis of practically all subcultures... As far as popular culture is concerned they are invisible” (p. 152). Most of the academic works on metal continue this assumption. As an example, after Straw (1990) introduces his section on heavy metal culture with this Brake quote: “on the whole, youth cultures and subcultures tend to be some form of exploration of masculinity,” Straw then described the audience composition of metal as male dominated and “generally acknowledged and easily observable, though statistical confirmation of this is largely based on audiences for album oriented rock” (p. 104). Metalheads are assumed to be heterosexual, embracing the traditional orientation and attitude of the dominant whole.

Bashe (1985), in his book targeted for the metal fan, outwardly admits that “headbangers are notoriously homophobic... and generally regarding any act that does not go in for metal’s

mucho-macho posturing as beneath contempt” (p. 7). Blending rock’s usual sexualized stance and the negotiated standards for metal performance, the assumption of heterosexuality in metal becomes strengthened (Straw, 1990; Weinstein, 2000). Weinstein (2000) elaborated on this assumption by suggesting homophobia was at least in part “a reaction of resistance by masculine interests against a change in dominant values” wherein the change constituted the progress of gay rights movements “flaunting their ‘gay culture’” (p. 106). This is manifested through metal’s tendency to bash any music “embodying hints of ambisexuality” (Bashe, 1985, p. 7) such as disco or pop.

While conceptualized as heteronormative, metal can be seen to provide alternative readings from those of the dominancy. Walser’s (1993) portrayal of an association of gay metal fans suggests the possibility for resistant interpretations of the hyper-masculinist posturing in videos as being “erotic fantasies, while straight fans resist the homoerotic implications and insist on identifying with the power and freedom depicted” (p. 116). Walser also suggests that certain metal compositions contain homoerotic messages, requiring negotiation for the heterosexual listener. Accept, a German power metal band, is provided as an illustrative example. Songs like “Balls to the Wall” (1984) or “London Leatherboys” (1984) create anomalies for homophobic metal fans who, in turn, deny the overt message being portrayed for an alternate interpretation. The band itself augmented this read by acknowledging their lyrics were largely written by their female manager during this time (Hoffman, 2005). The result is a denial of homosexual males serving as a contributing body to the metal subculture.

In 1998, Rob Halford, formerly the frontman for metal icon, Judas Priest, publicly declared his lifelong homosexuality. While some circles of fans seemed to realize this before the actual declaration – Halford himself called it “the worst kept secret in rock and roll (Johnson,

1998)” – homophobic Priest fans were forced to recognize the potentially-denied fact that their idol was gay. With the catalogue of Priest records, highly-esteemed yet assumed as straight, the likelihood of a gay male producing counter-hegemonic music within a homophobic scene becomes evident. Halford himself supports this possibility:

“If you want to go through your Priest collection, you’ll be surprised to see how many innuendos, how many metaphors I used. Some obvious, some not so obvious. That was my way of getting my message out for those people who cared to explore that and those people who knew it from record to record could see that thing come forward” (“Feature,” 1998).

As Halford served as the main lyricist for the band, these intended messages were sent, yet passed over, by the heterosexual listening audience. My interest lies in discovering how Halford actively performed his homosexuality (through lyrics, album, and stage performance) and how the metal public ignored and reworked those messages to fit into the standardized heteronormative or homophobic mindset.

As previously mentioned, Judith Butler (1990) sees sexuality and gender as performative acts. In the case of male role expectations or male sexual/gender definition, one can consider gender as being far from absolute. The constructions are actually instances of perceptual performance. Recall, Butler’s argument that gender, then, exists when free-floating signifiers are given cultural meaning; the person displaying the now-meaningful signifiers becomes gendered and socialized as such. It is through the practiced performances of males as heterosexual and masculine in rock that the gender expectancies of rock get established to a point of natural binaries: male and straight versus gay or female. Otherness becomes seen as “(o)ne is one’s gender to the extent that one is not the other gender, a formulation that presupposes and enforces the restriction of gender within that binary pair” (Butler, 1990, p. 22). For the metal audience, Halford’s performances of homosexuality may be perceived as just the opposite in order to fit

within the standardized behaviors of the regulatory gender and sexuality frames. While he is “other,” he is not classified as other due to the bias of metal’s naturalized binary.

One prominent example comes from Halford’s outward appearance while fulfilling the role of metal icon. Dating back to the early 1980s, in order to establish a powerful image, Halford adopted motorcycle/S&M wear as a stage costume (Bashe, 1985). Tied to the machinery and a legacy of rebellious imagery, the studded leather garments left one with perceptions of biker gangs and masculine potency (Weinstein, 2000; Denski and Sholle, 1992). Halford, in tight leather pants held up by a handcuff belt, a studded leather vest, close-cropped hair, and motorcycle cap, embodied this image (see Figure 20). Ignored (or reinterpreted) by straight metal fans, leatherboys fitting this description also happened to be a gay subcultural fetish.

Levine (1998) portrays the late 70s gay scene as it changed the standards of gayness. In a redefinition of gay masculinity, the stronger a gay male’s masculine performance was, the more likely a perception of virility and masculine attractiveness was to result. Leather, as a butch signification, featured “black leather motorcycle cap, jacket, pants and boots, black or white t-shirt, studded black leather belt and wrist bands, chain, or handcuffs” (Levine, 1998, p. 60). Adaptations of this, emphasizing tightness of fit or absence of garments, highlighted sexual availability. Unlike heterosexual usage of the same objects, gay cultures were much more stylized “(keeping) their hair short ... and clothing tailored and matched” (p. 61). As well, a subgenre of the leather scene appropriated sadomasochistic tools such as whips, handcuffs, and riding crops as other sexualized signifiers (Levine, 1998). Halford’s stage image provides a perfect match to Levine’s descriptions with two specific points worth noting: Halford’s inclusion of a riding crop as a stage prop and his short hair contrasting metal’s (and rock’s) tendency

toward longer styles. As Halford declared upon coming out, “it’s all been gay to me, totally homoerotic as a gay man” (Alfrevgren, 1998). Still, the audience for this display was ignorant of or repressing this interpretation. Through defaulting back to the naturalized, comfortably heterosexualized reading of signifiers, a convenient read results.

Lyrics to Judas Priest songs provide more markers of anomaly reworked into naturalcy by homophobic or heteronormative metalheads. Halford suggests “Raw Deal,” a song from Priest’s third album *Sin after Sin* (1977), as the most expressively homosexual song he had written. “It was this story about a guy who goes into the Spike, which is a leather bar in Santa Monica, and sees all these guys ‘straining in the streams’ and having sex... very profound masculine statements about male sex” (Chirazi, 1998). The link to gay leather culture is further reinforced through the song’s setting while the middle verse seems to demonstrate fairly apparent messages:

The mirror on the wall was collecting and reflecting
All the heavy bodies ducking, stealing eager for some action
The scene screwed me up, I saw some contact
Then the big boys saw me and knew that I’d had too much, floating around.
“Raw Deal (1977)”

Body positioning and aggressive sexual roles portrayed in lyrics were relatively common on Priest albums. On average, two songs per album contained explicit sexual imagery and these songs were typically placed consecutively toward the end of the album. While, in most of these songs, no specific gender identifiers were presented, when identifiers were included, they were male. A prime example of such a song comes from the *Point of Entry* (1981) album:

You bring me round with your velvet hands, you’re gettin’ new life to me
You put me back in the promised land, just where I know I should be...
You’re given I’m gettin’, gettin’ satisfaction
You’re makin’ I’m takin’ I want some heavy action
You’re bendin’ and I’m mendin’, gettin’ back together
You’ve really got what it takes to make a bad man better.

“Troubleshooter”

The song immediately preceding “Troubleshooter,” “All the Way” provides a more veiled image yet directly addresses a male subject as the object of attention.

Now with a hand on your hips and a snarl on your lips, your eyes wear a look of danger.
There’s a lion in your heart that’s set to quick start to a glance from a stranger,
You give as good as you get...
You never do things by half, you’re a man with a reputation.
“All the Way”

Display, as indicated by “hand on hips” describes the practice of posing in butch scenes (Levine, 1988). Additionally, by placing the songs in consecutive sequence, one could carry over the direct male-address to the more graphic song immediately following.

While the performance of hypermasculinity was fairly consistent across all Judas Priest albums as each featured typical power metal songs portraying warfare, violence, and rebellion, some of Halford’s lyrics demonstrate occasions where masculine confidence seems subverted through longing for long-term affection. “Here Come the Tears” immediately follows the graphic “Raw Deal.” In this song, loneliness brings on sadness since it “looks like it’ll always be the same, no one here to comfort me,” and the fleeting relationships leave one “all alone, no one cares.” The act of crying contrasts the rough and rigid male persona usually performed within hegemonically masculine metal. *Hell Bent for Leather*’s (1978) tenth track, “Before the Dawn” returns to this theme in describing the morning after a sexual encounter.

Before the dawn I hear you whisper in your sleep ‘don’t let the morning take him’...
It’s been a lifetime since I found someone
Since I found someone who would stay
I’ve waited too long, and now you’re leaving
Oh please don’t take it all away
“Before the Dawn”

Again, masculinity performance and Halford’s sentiments seem contrasted. This is augmented by the song’s musical style, a ballad described by guitarist Glenn Tipton as “something you would

never have expected Priest to do, but it's such a great song and shows another side to the band" (Judas Priest, 1993). For a band with a reputation for power and aggression, the anomaly of a slow song, let alone a ballad with less-than-macho posturing, could have invited alternate reads.

A final example, in which Halford potentially subverts metal's heteronormativity, occurs when Halford writes about rebellion and resistance. As in most power metal pieces, anti-authority positioning becomes commonplace. Through deliberate phrasing, one can see specifically-targeted messages within Priest's music which indicate something beyond that of decentered, generalized rebellion. For example, the song immediately preceding "Raw Deal" is "Call for the Priest." As structured on the album, there is no break between the two; rather, it is a blended composition (the cd version lists them as the same track). The end of "Call" features an anthemic rallying cry which becomes the repeated refrain. The last repetition of this refrain feeds into a final verse:

When your back's to the wall come along one and all
 We shall fight all the slander that's penned
 It's us we shall choose, let the bigoted lose
 For our triumph's the means to their ends
 Yes I know what I want and I know where to get it
 And I'm going there right away
 This is one priest I don't have to fall on
 Down to my knees and pray
 "Call for the Priest."

There are two points of interest here. First, the choice of the words "slander" and "bigoted" could indicate a direct confrontation to dominant hegemony wherein "bigot" typically holds either racial or sexual loading. Second, by following the anthemic refrain by the action of going to the place where triumph is possible, i.e. the Spike taken from "Raw Deal's" first line, makes a pro-homosexual agenda seem all the more likely. Priest's biggest hit, "You've Got Another Thing Coming" (1982) has the break of: "in this world we're livin' in, we have our share of

sorrows. Answer now is don't give in, aim for a new tomorrow." It should be noted that with rebellion being so evident in all power metal, including Priest's work, placing a generalized message like "Another Thing Coming" into one specific lyrical interpretation is arguable. Hindsight fueled by Halford's own assertion of subversive gay agendas in his Priest lyrics, however, raises the possibility of this consideration.

With the seemingly-evident imagery of both Halford's appearance and lyrics, it seems somewhat hard-pressed to deny the presence of any homoeroticism or subversive agenda in Judas Priest music. In many cases, however, this denial is exactly what occurred. Combining Halford's own personal actions, the ambiguity of lyrical interpretation, and the assumptions of heteronormity as practiced within the metal subculture, multiple explanations help clarify how the homoerotic images were reworked by straight metal audiences in such a way as to fit into the naturalized heteronormative mindset.

Halford did not declare his sexual orientation during his time as a member of Judas Priest. He attributed this to his fear that the metal subculture might have responded with negativity that would ultimately hurt his bandmates. As he described in an interview, "it wasn't the time or place for lots of different reasons. I put myself at the bottom of the checklist" (Johnson, 1998). Considering the attitude of the entertainment world toward homosexuality at the time, this is not surprising. There were few other performers willing to subject themselves to sexual scrutiny, let alone in a hegemonically-masculine realm like heavy metal. It has been suggested that changing ideologies within entertainment coupled with Halford's own change of musical style, briefly to industrial music, proved the impetus for Halford's declaration (Walters, 1998). Being in a more welcoming, more sexually-diverse musical environment situated in an

era in which the gay lifestyle held considerably greater acceptance, Halford's choice to come out in 1998 presented fewer threats as it might have in the early-to-mid 1980s.

A second contributing explanation for Halford's resistance to coming out is related to the concept of the open closet. As initially suggested by Sedgwick (1990), the gay man or woman carries the understood reputation of gayness yet never publicly declares sexual orientation. Similar to Brett's (1994) description of Benjamin Britten or Gill's (1995) portrayal of the Pet Shop Boys, Halford's "worst kept secret" offered just enough refutation of the issue so that the straight public could accept Halford's status without needing countering strategies. His privilege of status in the metal world remained protected since the question of sexuality was never formally asked. This practice protected not only Halford, but also Judas Priest as a whole since all factors regarding the band (revenue, fan base, questions of orientation, etc.) would be subject to the personal backlash Halford personally might have been targeted for. Upon coming out, Halford admitted that he engaged in tactics to protect his sexual identity during the Priest days for just these reasons (Johnson, 1998).

Here, it seems as though the gay man's denial simply serves to reinforce the naturalization of heteronormative practice within metal. By allowing straight fans to avoid the consideration of homosexuality as existing in metal, the myopic assumption that masculine (or hypermasculine) portrayals equates to straightness becomes strengthened. Normative mindsets become taken for granted since no questions challenging those norms are ever produced. In Butler's terms, the signifiers become gendered, sexualized, and socialized. The threat of abuse (physical, mental, or economic) tied to coming out becomes a Foucaultian, regulatory means for keeping the naturalized, normative order in place. "If sex is repressed, that is, condemned to prohibition, nonexistence, and silence, then the mere fact that one speaking about it has the

appearance of a deliberate transgression” (Foucault, 1978, p. 6). The converse of this implies that to not speak is to reinforce those same hegemonic restrictions.

When this order is encouraged, then the practices within this order can continue, despite anomalies cropping up. While the data analyzed provided examples of explicit homoerotic images and messages, within a naturalized order, those messages could be decoded in very different ways. Since gender identifications were not commonly provided, a default female role could be ascribed onto the songs. Interestingly enough, this is what happened when the PMRC included “Eat Me Alive” on their “Filthy Fifteen” list of so-called immoral songs. Off the *Defenders of the Faith* (1984) album, “Eat Me Alive” is a graphic sex song notorious for two lines in particular: “I’m gonna force you at gunpoint to eat me alive” and “lunge to the maximum, spread eagled to the wall, you’re well equipped to take it all.” The S&M fantasy was considered in the metal world, as well as in the general public, as being heteronormative. Despite the relative blatancy of the phallic innuendo, a gay reading was not included. The “lunge” lyric was preceded by the following:

Bound to deliver as you give and I collect
Squealing impassioned as the rod of steel injects
“Eat Me Alive”

Here, body positioning (give and collect) describes the acceptance rather than the delivery of the “rod of steel” as providing pleasure. Despite being sung by a male, the homoerotic interpretation somehow still gets ignored as the lyrics are simply pulled away from the context of the song.

This, thereby, avoids a challenge of the established heteronormity.

Ignoring the context of albums as a whole also serves as a way of protecting homophobes or heteronormatives from anomaly. By not recognizing potential ties between consecutive songs like “Troubleshooter” and “All the Way,” the audience removes itself from the threat one might

encounter. As well, an audience might not link album titles to the songs contained therein. Considering the catalogue includes messages such as *Defenders of the Faith* (1984), *Screaming for Vengeance* (1982), *Hell Bent for Leather* (1978), and *Point of Entry* (1981), a context of homoeroticism could be argued. Extending this further, the vagueness of Halford's writing offers opportunity for discrepant reads. A lyric like "I don't talk about it but that's alright, table's turned now there's a revenge in sight" ("Screaming for Vengeance [1982]") can be interpreted in a number of ways. Though it still holds the potential for a gay reading, straight audiences are given room for ideologically-safer assumptions.

The context of 1980s metal also helps to explain straight readings of Priest. While Halford's appearance in butch leather style may have indicated the homosexual subculture, the quick appropriation of this style of dress by other publicized, heterosexually-defined metal bands confused the once-unilateral meaning of the signs. Studded leather became a usual marker for all metal performers through mimicry of the then-considered straight Halford. Bands like Motley Crüe blended the image with glam rock and satanic styles creating another offshoot of interpretation. The misogynistic and heterosexualized stories prominent in the metal media, coupled with the leather image, a singular gay reading was overtaken by possibilities of more homophobic-or heteronormatively-friendly deconstructions of leatherwear. Parallels to this can be drawn with metal's appropriation of androgynous or drag styles (Walser 1993; Denski & Sholle, 1992). According to Simpson (1994), "queerness is accessorized to the heterosexual male in the same way as femininity – employing its power but removing most of its threat" (p. 195). The prominence of straight performances supplemented the naturalized, heteronormative masculinity norms contributing to a dismissal of questions surrounding Halford's use of gay signifiers or his sexuality.

Priest's reputation as having power metal qualities could have diminished Halford's potential ambiguity to metal audiences at the time as well. Denski and Sholle (1992) suggest the appropriation of symbols of "badness" help to create a masculine homosocial mentality within metal. Since Halford's stage performances included "bad" signifiers (fist clenching and pounding gestures, scowls and sneers, etc.), his performance was seen as acceptable. The use of machinery, specifically Halford's use of a Harley Davidson motorcycle as stage prop, also contributed to this. Denski and Sholle also mention a "band first" (p. 50) mentality which corresponds to metal ideology; while individuality is valued, the collective band takes precedence. Weinstein (2000) also supports this notion by suggesting individuality defers to band membership. Since other band members did not display the same markers as Halford, or did so to a much lesser extent, the collective straightness of the band could be seen to overcome the individual anomaly Halford singularly presented. Finally, the style of Priest's music predominantly stayed within an up-tempo, heavily-rhythmic form, a form intimately tied to masculinity. By typecasting Priest into this normalized, heterosexually-masculine genre and trivializing ballads like "Before the Dawn" as being atypical for Priest, straight audiences detracted from the potential importance that might have been attributed to locations of homoerotic/gay rights inclusions.

A final explanation stems from the loss of power ascribed to homosexual references in the language of heavy metal. As suggested by Brake (1980), male subcultures naturalize heterosexuality as simply part of being masculine. Othering, be it through female or gay references, serves as a nominal insult. In a mild form of hyperbole, Klosterman (2001) describes: "Late 80s metal artists were the penultimate generation of musicians to use "gay" as a colloquial term; only rappers were still doing this by the mid '90s and almost no one does today"

(p. 68). Commonly seen in forum sections of metal publications, condemnation of certain bands was expressed by labeling them “faggots” or “queer” – despite the very same magazine’s usual presentation of copious amounts of information refuting this assertion. By making terms like “faggot” or “flamer” commonplace, the power of condemnation or link to actual sexuality was defocused in favor of a more general, less personally-damning negative critique. In part, this represented “an opinion on the authenticity of rock music” (Klosterman, 1998, p. 68). The rhetorical choice of using homosexuality as a slur ascribed power to the hegemonic norm of heterosexual masculinity while simultaneously reinforcing rock’s heteronormativity.

CHAPTER VI. “BACK FROM THE DEAD”

At the time of this writing in 2006, some metal artists from the 1980s have managed to rejuvenate their careers. For many, invoking nostalgia by marketing anniversaries and reunion tours has cultivated a small-yet-meaningful resurgence of album and ticket sales. In other cases, the lingering reputation of 80s metal performers as the foremost corrupters of youth has been inverted, resulting in performative acceptance as mainstream celebrities. The relative success of these endeavors partly stems from the performers’ willingness to cater to a smugly-ironic consumption of metal which views it as stereotypically mundane. In other instances, as popular personas, some metal artists have managed to rescript their legacies in such a way as to concurrently buttress their authenticity claims while distancing themselves from the more-dated or trite performative choices commonly practiced during metal’s heyday. The result of such rescripting alludes to past criticisms, thereby obliquely enacting nostalgia yet again. Ultimately, the past mutates itself into a selectively-edited and self-serving present in which the era and what it represented become conveniently compartmentalized into moments of comfort and quaintness.

“It Walks Again”: 80s Metal Revives from its Commercial Coma

By roughly 2002, some 80s metal artists found their careers undertaking a mild resurgence as the combination of reunion tours and musical retrospectives reminded the mainstream pop audience that metal still existed. Among the earliest and most successful bands to this trend, Kiss capitalized on MTV exposure by resurrecting its original lineup for a few songs during 1999’s *Unplugged* performance. The strong fan response prompted an original-lineup reunion tour and eventually a return to the full Kiss stage show, replete with make-up, pyrotechnics, and the Kiss characters. A rushed original-lineup studio album failed miserably, but the ticket sales remained consistently brisk. The fanbase had no need for new material but

preferred to relive the past in its nostalgic glory. By 2002, the band's extensive merchandising and touring found them among the top revenue-earning acts in the world.

Since many bands had long been dropped from their record labels or had undergone numerous lineup changes with little success, the costs of trying nostalgia as a commercial tactic were minimal. The amount of press generated by the reunions of formerly top-tier acts like Kiss or Black Sabbath offered hope to a string of lesser-achieving bands. A group of independent labels like Spitfire Records and Perris Records saw the prospect of selling a few thousand copies of new recordings or rerecorded versions of past hits worth the investment, thereby sidestepping the cost of acquiring the copyrights from the original masters. Once this hope was initiated, more and more bands followed suit, either viewing the moment as a final chance to cash in before the window of opportunity closed for good or as an ego-stroke, allowing the chance to trade in plebian lifestyles for a lesser-yet-still-celebratory version rockstardom one last time.

A second tactic contributing to the brief surge in metal sales saw labels reissuing previous releases that had either gone out of print or had stagnant catalogue sales. A small secondary market of collectors emerged in which some albums of limited popular but heightened subcultural standing began selling for unusually inflated prices. That fans were willing to pay upwards of \$150 for a single out-of-print Vinnie Vincent Invasion cd suggested that money was to be made; as a label like Chrysalis had the masters and the legal rights already secured, reissuing the disc amounted to a minimal expenditure, and a modest profit-margin was easily achieved. To encourage older fans to potentially repurchase a recording that they might already own, the albums were commonly remastered using the updated technology available. This was subsequently advertised as being greatly improved sonically and, again, afforded a minimal cost outlay to the companies themselves. To further prompt older fans into repurchasing past

recordings, adding additional tracks, be it old demos, alternate versions, or the b-sides from singles, offered the completionist fan a reason to repurchase the material as well. The result was an artificial newness grafted onto an otherwise dormant product.

Press coverage of reissues regenerated positive reviews, remembrances of legendary shows, and guest slots at major European metal festivals. For younger metal fans, the coverage introduced names that might otherwise had been overlooked, and a second generation of consumers resulted. In part, this was encouraged by longstanding members of the metal press citing 80s metal acts as originators and authentically genuine. Bands, obviously, supported this notion. Here, both the bands and the press manipulated the past into an outlet for accessing subcultural capital. Simultaneously, however, relegating all contemporary coverage in relation to the past made any newer recordings subject to comparison to their valorized “classics.” This often resulted in the latter release’s dismissal. As Chuck Klosterman (2002) describes his experience attending a Warrant reunion show:

“After his first song, Warrant’s Jani Lane promised the crowd he would sing “Cherry Pie” and “Heaven” and all the other songs he knew everyone had paid to hear, but he just asked that we sit through a half dozen of the new (and to be honest – horrible) songs he had recorded on the unsuccessful *Dog Eat Dog* record. And he didn’t ask this in a self-conscious, self deprecating way; he was almost begging. Basically, he agreed to deliver all the old songs he hated if we would politely listen to the new stuff he cared about. To me, that was cool. Maybe the 8th grade Chuck would have scoffed at his desperate earnesty, but the 24-year-old Chuck was sort of touched by that sincerity.... I was glad Jani Lane cared enough about his life to give me back 20 minutes of mine” (p. 271-2).

Klosterman considers this act of desperation “cool” as an artist would willingly avail himself to a crowd’s mercy to satisfy his own personal passions for his art. I see this example as not only illustrative of the predicament of 80s metal bands trying to fight nostalgic typecasting (and generally failing), but also a perfect illustration of the limitations of the reunion circuit.

Provided artistic intentions prevailed over financial ones, one's artistic growth was impossibly cut short by an audience base basically unwilling to accept anything beyond a rekindled 1988 greatest hits package. The sheer desperation to remain relevant read as true pathos, further fueling the naysayers who claimed metal was lamentable fad in the first place. The original market of teens had, by this time, aged into working adults. The steadier incomes of fulltime work allowed enough discretionary income for purchasing a \$10 reminder of the past only to be dismissively stored back on a shelf (once a Klosterman-esque twenty-minute reminiscence was satisfied). A resistant music industry did little to encourage these bands beyond relic-status, making the situation increasingly dire. Bands were left with little choice other than to embrace nostalgia with its limitations or to allow themselves to self-consciously mock their own pasts.

"Don't Dance With Danger": Celebrity and the Inversion of Metal Moral Panics

Warrant's Jani Lane did manage to garner an extra few minutes in the popular spotlight. Appearing on VH1's *Celebrity Fit Club*, Lane reintroduced himself to a viewing public as a bloated, bespectacled middle-aged man with a drinking problem nearly as severe as his waistline's growth. This was not the only VH1 show to feature 80s metal stars in less than flattering lights. A string of *Behind the Music* band biographies seemed to formulaically describe metal bands' rise and catastrophic fall. Vince Neil and Poison's CC Deville appeared on the celebrity has-been show *The Surreal Life*. *I Love the 80s* offered nostalgia framed in ironic smarminess whereby the era's faddish trends became fodder for deprecating jokes. Even something as potentially celebratory as Def Leppard's *Storytellers* (1999) performance came across as somewhat pathetic when Joe Elliot managed to forget the lyrics to "Rock of Ages." Inevitably, the recognition of the past offered access to the airwaves but seemed to continually

include some inevitable Spinal Tap-ish embarrassments like Quiet Riot performing in a bowling alley, Skid Row's Sebastian Bach laughing a bit too hard at his own cheesy jokes, or the ongoing battles over which of the two touring versions of Ratt or Saxon had rightful ownership of the band's name.

An interesting switch of roles found the formerly-problematic metal stars finding work in decidedly unmetal castings. Bach once embraced his bad-boy status with fabled onstage tirades and drunken escapades. The controversy that resulted from his wearing an "Aids kills fags dead" t-shirt not only demonstrated his cultural stupidity, but also earned him a number of detractors in the 80s. Between 2001 and 2006 however, Bach found himself performing on Broadway, having a recurring role on the family television series *The Gilmore Girls*, hosting a VH1 show on nostalgic metal, and being featured as the star vocalist for the *Supergroup* reality show.

Elsewhere, Alice Cooper hawked an array of products for such edgy organizations as Marriott Hotels, the Ladies Professional Golf Association, and Staples Office Supply Center. Cooper additionally was the owner of a successful family-oriented theme restaurant, Alice's Cooperstown. The lone metal artist to appear at the Senate Committee hearings on music labeling, Dee Snider, produced a horror film, had a popular syndicated radio show, and was featured in his own reality series, *Meet the Sniders* in which his career in Twisted Sister, with the band's legacy of PMRC-criticized, rebellious videos, was directly contrasted by Snider's role as upstanding family man and household provider. Likewise, the formerly-condemned Ozzy Osbourne and Gene Simmons also had their families portrayed in a similar reality series programs. The irony of metal madmen as regular parents offered the opportunity at seeing how tame these purported threats really were.

Motley Crüe's Tommy Lee offers another example of ironic inversion. The band's dabbling with shock and Satanism marked them as problematic in the mid 80s. Their well-documented travails with drugs, alcohol, and violence magnified their status of ill repute. Tommy Lee's infamous pornographic home movie was followed by arrests for assault and spousal abuse, thereby solidifying his standing as delinquent. By 2005, however, Lee had become the star of a NBC series, *Tommy Lee Goes to College*. As the title describes, Lee spends a short time at the University of Nebraska where he is given access to a variety of typical collegiate experiences. Over the course of this outing, Lee is shown failing at nearly every academic task he is allowed access to. This ultimately results in fulfilling its intended purpose: Lee's comes across as a fool (a disclaimer is placed in end credits which acknowledges the fictionalization). He leers at the young coeds, particularly his blond tutor, and proceeds to start a "fraternity" for hosting parties further supplementing his buffoon-image. Most damningly, the acclaimed metal drummer is portrayed as struggling to meet the minimal level of musicianship necessary for being a member of the university band.

Portraying a celebrity as a fool serves a couple of purposes. First, it simply reinforces the stigmatized position that 80s metal carries in the current cultural hierarchy. For the college grads watching Lee's show, one has a sense of superiority over this multimillionaire since he shows himself incapable of even the most basic of collegiate responsibilities. The selective editorial choice to highlight Lee's musical mistakes and excessive difficulty in playing as a member of the drum core reinforces the stereotype that metal musicians were unskilled. Lee's fleeting attention span, combined with his tendency to insert "dude" into most sentences, enhances the division between cultural capital and Lee's lack thereof.

A second functionality to Lee-as-fool speaks to the idea that even a supposedly deviant aspect of society, in this case a metal musician, can serve to reinforce normative standards. The cultural value of education is praised as are the hard work and skill levels displayed by those who successfully negotiate the rigorous demands of a university. Campus life is constructed according to usual stereotypes, thereby reinforcing the idea that college exists as a liminal stage where one is freed from the “real world” in favor of videogames, tailgating at football games, keg parties with coeds, and an occasional book to study. The cultural significance to such an institution becomes so great that a notorious deviant such as Tommy Lee succumbs to its powerful draw.

Characterizations like that of Snider, Simmons, and Lee result in an undermining of the past vilifications which metal had been subjected to in the 1980s. On the one hand, the problematic personas that were purported as threats to the youth are now safe enough to trust as prime-time television commodities. The provocateurs of the former moral panic now represent the mainstream, and the consumption of these messages, whether it is engaged as an ironic inversion or as a mechanism for establishing cultural capital divisions, serves to further pigeonhole 1980s metal into its conveniently understood public niche – an empty, disposable fad comprising gaudy excess with laughable rubes resulting in an impotent deviance that, in the end, worked to the benefit of the dominancy it was supposedly rebelling against.

Building Errors in the Machine: Metal and its Supposed Deviancy as a Hegemonic Tool

In *Discipline and Punish*, Michel Foucault (1975) describes how delinquency can serve as a mechanism for the regulation of the whole while also catering to the benefit of the dominant group. By creating a distinctive label through the discursive categorization of particular actions, a society gains the ability to not only isolate and regulate the behaviors of the few – the deviant

who openly engage in such particular behaviors – but also of the whole who, because of the manipulative effects of discursive training, choose to avail themselves of such actions. Whatever these actions might be, they themselves offer, as Foucault describes it, “enormous profits” (p. 279) as the dominancy can create markets surrounding not only the regulation of delinquency but also its exploitation. While Foucault goes on to describe prostitution as his illustrative example, I just as easily see the moral panic surrounding heavy metal music during the mid to late 1980s as a similarly illustrative scenario.

According to Foucault, a prerequisite for such an occurrence is the presence of disciplinary regime which “is aimed neither at expiation or repression” (p. 182) but at the ability to distinguish the individual and their acts in hierarchies which “trace the limit that will define difference in relation to all other differences” (p. 183). Within such a system, the dominancy can identify actions, as being defined differences, through selectively-chosen instances performed by selectively-limited numbers of people, who, by their limited numbers or limited political power, offer negligible chances of retaliation. The ability to isolate delinquency facilitates surveillance and ultimately, “diverts this self-absorbed delinquency to forms of illegality that are less dangerous: maintained by the pressure of controls on the fringe of society, reduced to precarious conditions of existence, (and) lacking links with the population that would be able to sustain it” (p. 278).

In *The History of Sexuality I*, Foucault (1978) highlights the discourse of sex as one instance wherein conflict serves as a necessary tool for establishing the surveillance mechanisms required to control actions. By getting a public to willingly accept surveillance, through a means of the rhetorical suggestion that adherence to rules is for one’s benefit rather than a form of social control, the power of discourse can play itself out. The choice of religious and political

pundits to foreground the defenselessness of children as potentially unaware consumers of metal worked exactly to this effect. Derived from a context of revisionist 1950s family values, the discourse of family values popularized during the Reagan era sought to individualize those that failed to meet the parenting standards of the dominancy. Though not near as severe a transgression as single parenthood or gay parenting was made to appear, the conservative voice's targeting of entertainment as a site for discursive control still problematized behaviors outside their cultural capital. How a child responded to a portrayal of sex, violence, or substance abuse wasn't the issue. Rather, it was the failings of the individual, be it the delinquent who created the offending portrayal in the first place or the delinquent parent that allowed the child be exposed, that was deemed the true transgression. A parent failed as a policing agent by allowing a child and sinfulness to come in contact. Media agents failed in their respective policing positions by allowing such filth to breach the airwaves or the music store or supermarket shelves. These failures were then cited as the justified rationale for a closer watch over parenting and the media by those presumably with the capabilities to prevent future missteps.

The resultant cottage industry of texts and clinics about the dangers of metal and ways to "rehabilitate" the metal-consuming child rose to prominence nearly as fast as metal itself. The relative simplicity of the arguments enhanced by selectively choosing the extremes of performances (i.e. W.A.S.P.'s "Animal [I Fuck Like a Beast]") established a rhetorically-skewed dichotomy of "proper" and "debased." Schools and churches became policing sites wherein one's child and by extension, one's parenting, was subject to surveillance and judgment. Those with the privileged status of access to governmental power (the Washington wives) valorized their own standards of decency and decorum while managing to simultaneously reinforce the gendered, nurturing role of motherhood. By naming the failures of others as an impetus, the

resultant claims for extended surveillance served as a power manipulation to those placed in positions to not only oversee the surveillance, but also to those in charge of expanding the scope of surveillance into the realms of the media, entertainment, and the production and consumption of entertainment products. The spread ultimately infiltrated the realm of the private home and the child's/teen's behaviors within this space.

The moral panic surrounding 1980s metal as deviant becomes historically all-the-more hegemonic when considering the rather innocuous effects that eventually resulted from the declared delinquency. The presumably dangerous Ozzy Osbourne and Motley Crüe are transformed into the safe and secure mainstream. Vince Neil leads a Chicken Dance in Cincinnati after appearing as a celebrity has-been on VH1's *The Surreal Life*. Tommy Lee becomes the lovable buffoon intermittently struggling with college life or hosting a reality show. Ozzy is the warped yet traditional father-figure of a nuclear family living a rock-inspired inversion of the everyday life. Both Dee Snider and Gene Simmons get cast in similar follow-ups with similar pro-family endorsements. To a point of the absurd, Simmons goes one farther on A&E's *Rock School*. Blatantly stealing the film *School of Rock*'s premise, Simmons can quite literally exude influence on youths with a position teaching music to posh, gifted British children.

Inverting the worries of yesterday with the celebrity of today positions the past as being quaintly naive. This, in essence, can then serve a couple of hegemonic purposes. First, the past becomes a rhetorical tool for comparison in which the evils of the present can be historically situated against a nostalgic yesteryear. In terms of arguments of surveillance, the media can be all the more vilified as its undue influence wreaks the havoc of Columbine school shootings and Norwegian church burnings. In terms of Foucault (1995), the functional mechanism of panoptic

discipline becomes more intrinsically established as “a design of subtle coercion for a society to come” (p. 209). The delinquent becomes more discursively evident fostering the continuance of a panoptic policing mindset. One needs to watch even closer for warning signs as the world is even more dangerous with its anonymous internet, its amoral media, and its under-producing middle and lower classes unable to balance time-crunches and proper parenting.

Second, the younger generations can now claim to have savvy superseding the so-called authority figures from twenty-years prior. Here, the cohort of early boomers who overreacted to “We’re Not Gonna Take It” come off as just as antiquated as the parents of the 1950s condemning Elvis or the 1960s parent demanding their boy get a haircut. Those late boomers to early Gen Xers in the contemporary position of authority can wield this knowledge as a means to further justify their being considered more valid or knowledgeable than their predecessors. In some cases, these same contemporary leaders were the supposedly-susceptible consumers of metal. This adds yet another reason for the ironic inclusion of 80s metal to mainstream popular culture. The threat is so historically eviscerated that it becomes laughable; a retrospective “I told you so” serves as a belated victory over one’s parents.

Looking back at metal during the 1980s, one does see the dominance reaping the “enormous profits” of metal’s delinquency. The revenue generated from millions of records and countless items of merchandise sold was contractually skewed to the record companies’ benefit. The dominance was able to contrive a dichotomy of the righteous versus the wicked in which the wicked actively embraced its subjugated position. That adult-aged metal artists sought to capitalize on a market derived from liminal teen wish fulfillment could in-and-of-itself be seen as a cynical act, and that the industry catered to this tendency by selectively signing and releasing successively more gimmicky examples of this delinquency adds to the cynicism. The chance of

a larger collective developing sufficient power to actually change the system was avoided by fragmenting the music into multiple, competing subgenres. This additionally allowed for a simplified dismissal of the individual by facilitating the trivialization of metal musicians as delinquents, second rate derivatives, or stereotypical buffoons unworthy of civilized standing.

Garage Days Re-revisited: A Synopsis

This project serves to explore the ways in which the performances of metal artists between 1984 and 1991 negotiated the demands of art and commerce while operating within tightly defined subcultural norms. My three primary research questions were: How did the subculture of heavy metal music between 1984 and 1991 emerge and what meanings can be derived from this ongoing process? How did the contextual circumstances surrounding heavy metal music during this period impact the performative choices exhibited by artists during this time? Finally, what lasting significance does this particular era of heavy metal merit today? I considered the themes derived from my textual analysis in terms of gender, sexuality, race, and age constructions, as well as the ongoing negotiations of the metal artist as a creative artist, a consumable commodity, a record label employee, a performing musician, a heavy-metaller, and a rock star.

I first sought to establish a historical foundation for metal and its marketing. Working within the infrastructure of the recording industry, heavy metal artists of the early 1980s were subject to an artist and repertoire system that initially dismissed metal as commercially-limited and, therefore, immaterial. Though some artists like AC/DC and Van Halen experienced significant commercial success, metal as a whole struggled. Still, some small metal scenes in England, New York, and Los Angeles managed to emerge. The British scene comprised a tightly-knit group of loyalists whose dedication to metal proved their subcultural merit. Reveling

in its outsider, underdog status, the British metal scene introduced metal's lasting rigidity in terms of defining its identity as distinctively separate from the mainstream-whole. The cohesive bond between the British bands and their local fans celebrated a sense of subcultural unity and pride. Proving large enough to generate a significant buzz, British metal artists were soon being covered in the British music press, being played on the radio, and being signed to recording contracts with small independent labels. Eventually, the most successful of these artists, Iron Maiden and Def Leppard, were signed to major label deals and were given the chance to tour abroad, thereby greatly increasing metal's exposure.

A small network of tape-trading metal fans also helped expose British metal to American audiences in the early 1980s. In some cases, frustrated American metal bands like Twisted Sister relocated to England with hopes of joining the comparatively-active British scene. Others like the youthful members of Anthrax and Overkill, bonded by their appreciation of underground metal, developed their own network for sharing new metal discoveries and starting their own bands. A New York scene soon emerged and quickly grew, largely through the influence of upstart label Megaforce Records. In Los Angeles, a parallel movement was taking place. Brian Slagel's fledgling Metal Blade label offered LA bands the chance to record and release material that the major labels continued to ignore. This proved important for two reasons. First, the subcultural unity of the metal circle remained in tact while its membership slowly expanded. Second, it provided a recognizable and trustworthy signifier for metal fans (and bands) to adopt; metal bands could bring their music directly to a metal label and fans could knowingly purchase their preferred style.

The resistance of the major labels toward metal artists was slow to overcome. It was only after a few metal artists like Quiet Riot and Def Leppard experienced unexpected commercial

success that the larger recording companies began signing and releasing metal records. The major labels, knowing little of the insider's metal scene, simply tried to clone previously successful acts in hopes of duplicating the increasingly significant album sales. This recording industry tactic would continue throughout metal's growth in the 1980s to its fall from prosperity in the early 1990s.

My project's second major task was to address how metal specifically targeted the liminal teenage male. By propagating a formulaic construction of metal, the major labels inadvertently helped define metal between 1984 and 1986. Since, at this time, the major labels essentially considered the metal audience as being comprised of solely teenage males, metal bands often chose to write and perform their music with this particular demographic in mind. Metal's ongoing evolution is strongly tied to this development, ultimately resulting in three lasting constructs. Metal became defined as hegemonically masculine and heteronormative. Metal began to emphasize performative extremes as a means to gain notoriety. And finally, metal reinforced its use of othering as a means to self-define.

Greatly influenced by bands like Led Zeppelin and Black Sabbath, the metal artists of the mid 1980s followed in the tradition of what Frith and McRobbie (1990) call "cock rock" (p. 374). The hegemonic masculinity embedded in cock rock was demonstrated by metal artists' performances through emphasizing heterosexual prowess, prodigious alcohol and drug use, rebellion against authority, and a fraternal unity amongst metal bands and their fans. As such, metal music addressed the desires and insecurities of a liminal teenage boy in such a way that his world-view was reinforced and celebrated. Artists like Motley Crüe, W.A.S.P. and Guns n Roses epitomized this phenomenon.

The emergence of MTV during the mid 1980s created a new outlet for teens to consume music acts. Metal bands took great advantage of the video-platform to perform their version of cock rock. Soon, extravagant fashions and stage shows became the norm as metal acts attempted to outdo one another's performances. By 1987, metal thrived on MTV and subsequently, metal's audience expanded beyond simply being subcultural; metal had achieved mass commercial success.

Platinum sales prompted the recording industry to finally take an active interest in metal. A flood of new metal acts were promoted and a multitude of bands vied for recognition in an increasingly-competitive market. Though sales were strong, the metal subculture began to undergo an identity crisis. During the late 1980s, many new bands being marketed as metal deviated from the formulaic norms. While metal retained strong ties to its cock rock origins, the introduction of new elements to metal music, including the synthesizer, the ballad, and crossover to other music genres like funk, rap, and pop, blurred the definitional boundaries between metal and other musical forms. The metal subculture, with its historical practice of othering, soon faced a series of social dramas wherein the negotiated understanding of what constituted "true metal" became increasingly indistinct.

My project's third major focus was to explore these dramas in terms of the ways the metal subculture utilized rhetoric of authenticity as a means for renegotiating and redefining metal when anomaly resulted. Subcultural debates commonly centered on one of three themes: whether or not performances represented independent musicianship and dedication to craft versus what was considered as pandering to inauthentic commerciality, whether performances presented sufficient degrees of hegemonic masculinity, and whether or not bands showed proper reverence to the metal subculture and its practiced values. Rock authenticity tenets such as

privileging musical virtuosity and the live performance were invoked as bands staked their respective claims toward being “true” metal artists. Metal’s marketing of the “guitar god” and the trend toward acoustic “unplugged” performances serve as examples of strategies that those artists in the metal subculture utilized for claiming authenticity during the late 1980s.

Another version of authenticity claim could be seen in the emergence of the thrash metal and death metal scenes. Informed by metal’s initial underground “outsider” construction, these scenes declared commercial mainstream metal as being corrupt. To the metal underground, populist bands like Bon Jovi and Poison devalued metal’s solidarity in favor of pleasing a newly gender-integrated audience, the record labels, and media outlets like MTV. By looking pretty and writing pop-oriented songs, mainstream metal bands were argued as being sellouts. Accordingly, thrash and death metal adopted performative aesthetics specifically designed to alienate those not wholly committed to the metal scene, thereby maintaining the subculture’s distinctive identity.

A fourth major focus of my project was describing how female artists, black artists, non-native English speaking artists, and gay artists worked within and contributed to how the metal subculture defined itself and its normative expectations. Metal, being historically performed by white American or British heterosexual males, faced anomaly whenever a metal performer did not fit that particular demographic. Though rare, a small number of such performers infiltrated metal’s homogeneity. When these instances occurred, a pattern of exscription typically resulted. In one usual version, the anomaly was highlighted, thereby categorizing the performer as an exoticized other. A second common tactic was to simply assimilate to the accepted normative standards while minimizing attention given to the anomalous status. Both scenarios worked to reinforce metal’s expectation of hegemonic masculinity and whiteness.

By the early 1990s, the combination of an oversaturated metal market and too many metal bands drifting too far away from metal's core tenets finally took its toll. The practice of using performative extremes as a gimmick had reached a point of parody. The top artists had become so popular that the personal contact between band and fan was long forgotten. Claims of authenticity rang hollow as bands jumped from one trend to another. A new rock genre, grunge, better embraced the very rebellious authenticity that metal had once expressed; metal's popularity fell off drastically. The glory days might have passed, yet the metal subculture and its influence carried on.

In the last major area of my project, I reconsider heavy metal from 1984-1991 in terms of its contemporary significance. In 2006, a number of 1980s metal artists are still actively performing as musicians. Others have utilized their past celebrity in gaining access to outer entertainment forums including radio, television, and film. Typically, many of the 80s metal artists reconstruct their contemporary performances in ways that either completely deny or proudly accentuate their past career achievements. Those obfuscating their metal past seek distance from the stigma 1980s metal critically and culturally carries today – a music genre centered on superficiality and lacking serious musical, intellectual, or cultural integrity. Those celebrating their metal past seek recognition as historical icons and the authentic originators of a still vibrant and evolving musical style.

Since the celebrity of some 80s metal artists like Tommy Lee and Dee Snider has facilitated entry into other contemporary media outlets, I view constructions like the television series *Tommy Lee Goes to College* and syndicated radio program *Dee Snider's House of Hair* as contributing to a historical resignification of 80s metal. In the mid 1980s, heavy metal music was commonly presented as a dangerous threat to its impressionable teenage audience members.

Now in 2006, the threat of 1980s metal reads as quaintly naive, wherein the same celebrities who posed the biggest concerns are now occupying positions of popular esteem. Ultimately, 80s metal has been refashioned into conveniently compartmentalized moments of comfort and nostalgic charm.

“On With the Show”: Limitations and Future Directions

Metal artists, specifically the works they created and their assorted tactics in producing and promoting those works, serve as the focus for this project. As framed in my analysis, I have privileged the artists as having considerable authorship throughout this process. The methodological choice of conducting a textual analysis on albums, videos, and promotional materials takes the data at face value and establishes an assumption that affords this authorship. In reality, this is mildly misleading as there are countless opportunities for people who are not explicitly members of a band to exhibit influence on these creations. I have argued throughout this work that the recording industry has directly influenced metal’s evolution. Ranging from artist and repertoire approaches, to contract provisions, to marketing and financial backing, to distribution’s reach, a record company could very well aid or undermine an artist’s particular intent.

As suggested in the scenarios of female, black, non-Anglo, or gay performers, the selective choices made within the recording industry directly influenced who, what, when and where bands were signed, recorded, and had their products produced. Likewise, those same choices influenced the definition of “other” – what wasn’t metal or metal enough. By relying on the artifacts resulting from such a system, I am only accessing the portion of the equation that managed to conform to these industry norms. Works such as Berger’s (1999) ethnography of the Cleveland area metal scene demonstrate that other practitioners do exist and their performative

tactics offer additional constructions of what metal between 1984 and 1991 might represent. Accounts such as that of Celtic Frost's Tom G. "Warrior"/Fischer's (2001) or Armored Saint's Joey Vera (*Metal Blade*, 2004) also suggest that even when a band had accessed this system, susceptibility to financial or administrative choices implicated by record labels had direct influence on artist creation.

A second notable presumption stemming from methodology is the influence of the media markets in which this material contextually appeared. Videos needed to meet the standards of programming directors and censorial boards. Radio stations would not play music that would alienate potential advertisers. Magazine editors would cover bands that generated the highest degree of sales or interactive support (i.e. fan polls) whether or not any new "news" was being generated by next month's publication deadline. Using metal print and video magazines as data sources offers insight only as to what made it into copy and not what was edited out. While I allude to the benefits of becoming a metal media favorite in terms of sales and popularity, an exploration into relative arbitrariness behind what constituted high rotation or unplayable is missing from my analysis.

A third presumption, the symbiotic relationship of artist and press altered coverage. Fearing backlash and future ostracization, a writer might choose to selectively report and omit salacious details (i.e. ignoring the drunken and stoned debauchery surrounding the supposedly anti-drug Moscow Music Festival). In the case of later Guns n Roses coverage, the band required final editorial rights over any interview requests, exacerbating this selectivity. Desiring positive coverage, potential advertisers requesting complimentary copy or favorable reviews would essentially resort to payola tactics to generate press exposure. Paying for a correspondent to accompany a band on tour generally could account for a larger story if not an

appearance on the cover. Likewise, offering autographed memorabilia for contests would garner a few extra paragraphs. Corporate synergy might selectively influence the degree of coverage or quite simply whether coverage is afforded at all (i.e. the Detroit band Seduce being inserted into LA Strip-documentary *Decline of Western Civilization II* – an IRS vehicle giving screen time to an IRS Metal artist). As suggested before, my textual analysis of the artifacts from 1983 to 1991 does not necessarily address the underlying factors contributing to metal media's relationship with the metal artist.

Another factor worth consideration concerns performer motivations. Now, with a perspective of twenty years hindsight, many metal artists have renounced some of their work or their performative tactics as mistakes, miscues, or simply cynical attempts at capitalizing on a given trend. My research has attempted to uncover the artistic intentions of artists, but I can only interpret what is publicly disclosed. The reinterpretation of Rob Halford is such an instance wherein his sexuality, upon public declaration, provided opportunity for new consideration. Rewriting a performer's history through reissued recordings, new liner notes or cover art, and historically-reflective interviews is an act of reversion (Lowenthal, 1985). When possible, I have included information from such materials but recognize that the performativity of the differing historical and contextual eras offers a point of potential discrepancy. As an example, Celtic Frost's Tom G. Warrior claims he prohibited Noise from reissuing the critically and commercially panned *Cold Lake* (1988) album. He also frequently disparages the recording as garbage. However, when released, he proclaimed the album as being their best effort and a triumphant success (Fischer, 2000). Motley Crüe's autobiography offers countless behind-the-scenes contradictions to what was printed in the 1980s metal magazines. These more recent

reversions still carry the qualities of being manipulative performances offering the same possibilities of cynicism or denial in future reversion attempts.

I represent the final factor in the equation that bears mention. While my long-running membership in the metal subculture serves to inform my analysis and ultimately, I feel, adding strength to it, I do recognize that this same familiarity with insider codes and subcultural commonsense does not necessarily apply to those outside the metal subculture. This works twofold. One, the routine exposure to what might constitute the unique to someone outside the fold fosters a different interpretive read to me. One simple example is mainstream metal fashion. Having seen so many big-haired men in spandex and makeup, the “shock” of gendered stage performativity does not automatically read as transvestitism or even moderately unusual. Rather, it is because, as a metalhead, I have embraced the learned strategies of interpreting these performances, accounting for the vast array of gender markers present in metal’s performativity rather than focusing on any one singular factor, what might equate as commonplace to me might be absurdly extraordinary to the outsider. As an example, my skewed perspective of hindsight does not see Poison’s *Look What the Cat Dragged In* front cover as being near as transgressive now as it initially represented then. I acknowledge my discovery of thematic tendencies, as derived from the texts, is partly the result of this tendency.

The corollary to this is that because of my practiced and personalized view, I could very well be subverting what others would see as important themes. This particularly concerns me regarding the extent to which my own sociocultural background influences my perspective. When writing on metal’s use of generational divide during the late 1980s, I recognize that my being a part of that target market affords me insight that someone from a differing generational cohort might not share. Contrarily, my limited first-hand exposure to the contemporary Austrian

metal scene indicates that my American perspective on non-Anglo metal artists addresses only a portion of the whole. Someone with more immediate access to the 1980s metal scenes of Japan, Brazil, or Germany (or their native language artifacts) could offer far greater depth than what my language and historical limitations afford me. My heterosexual masculinity inherently confines my interpretative scope when exploring issues of gender and sex. Like the Twisted Sister (1983) song declares, “I am, I’m me,” – a condition which reflects itself upon this project.

The most direct way to address my project’s limitations would be to gain direct access to the performers themselves. Through a series of interviews with all varieties of people involved in the creation of metal during the 1980s, be it metal artists, magazine editors, record company executives, band managers, journalists, etc., a better gauge of validity would result, in spite of the new cache of problematics this data collection introduces. The obvious challenge to this would be the pragmatics of gaining access which, in essence, is the reason I did not include interviews in this project’s methodology.

For some of my arguments on scene development and overall popularity, extending the analysis to include more direct representations of sales data, both regionally and internationally, would be worthwhile. I have used chart positions and popular references to album sales as my sources. *Billboard* charts, while offering some information, have routinely been suspect to their means of data collection. Soundscan began in 1991 replacing a somewhat haphazard reporting system leaving question marks as to actual sales figures (Negus, 1999). Dedicated exploration of this data would be useful as two particular areas could benefit. First, a relative comparison between independent and larger corporate record labels within metal could be made. On the surface, my choice to offer analysis of Sound Barrier reads as more significant than their sales total of 12,000 copies might indicate. However, a band comprised of black men selling 12,000

copies for a major label like MCA versus an independent label like Metal Blade might have a profound effect as to how the band was subsequently treated. The power of distribution as a factor for popularity might then be better addressed as well. Comparing sales for a label like Steamhammer, which failed to find American distribution, to one with secured distribution like Noise might help explain some variations of metal performance as well.

A second utility to analyzing sales data would offer a stronger basis for estimating relative popularity and degrees of success for metal bands in different locales and different subgenres. A death metal band like Obituary selling 150,000 copies means something completely different than a mainstream metal act like Love/Hate selling 200,000 copies. Where Obituary proved a monumental success, Love/Hate found itself dropped from the label. Looking more specifically at more exact figures would provide a richer sense of how and where subgenre expectations played a role in metal's ongoing evolution.

Regarding international metal artists, one significant step to furthering my exploration would be to have wider access and consideration of other metal sources. The international metal press was woefully underrepresented in my analysis. While I did have access to some British materials (mainly *Kerrang*), I had no materials from continental Europe or Japan. A similar study of materials from publications like *Aardschok*, *Metal Hammer*, *Rock Hard*, or *Burn!*, is in order. By looking solely at those bands successful enough to break into American or British notoriety, assumptions are being made regarding the breadth of metal music's representation as a whole. Certainly, metal was commercially centered in the States, but other manifestations of metal artists occurred worldwide and should be better accounted for. As had been described before, international bands were willing to cater toward particularly American tastes in hopes of breakthrough success. The likely presence of native bands intended for a native audience might

provide additional insight as to where a scene, similar to that of German power metal as described in this paper, came from or how it was constructed in the ways that it was.

By choosing to stop my analysis at 1991, I am forgoing fifteen years of metal artists' performances that are worth further consideration. In terms of scope, a project can only account for so much material. Extending the time frame through 2000 would allow for elaboration on the ongoing international presence metal has developed including significant scenes based in Norway, Italy, and Sweden, and smaller, yet equally original movements from former Soviet territories like Poland, the Czech Republic and Romania. Of particular interest is a shift from the Anglo-centric metal of the mid-to-late 80s in favor of a much more locally-focused style incorporating traditional folk music with native language lyrics. A second direction worth exploration concerns the use of technology and authenticity claims. Programs like Pro-Tools allows for considerable manipulation of sound recordings thereby making the studio virtuosity previously privileged in metal a less necessary skill for those artists wishing to make albums. One can fix nearly anything via the computer or one can layer multiple single performances in ways multitracking simply couldn't technically allow. The rise of symphonic black metal bands like Dimmu Borgir and Therion offers instances of direct challenge to live versus studio authenticity arguments.

A final future direction meriting attention is the ongoing marketing of metal. The prior tactical gimmicks of previous metal performers has recurred in artists like Marilyn Manson (shock and blasphemy), Cradle of Filth (misogyny and blasphemy), and Lividity (extreme gore and misogyny) as has the exoticism of geographical novelty with artists like Puya (Puerto Rican), Rudra (Singapore), Orphaned Land (Israel), and Nightrage (Greece). The ongoing role of women in metal seems to continue along familiar paths with frontwomen like Nightwish's

Tarja Turunen, Lacuna Coil's Christina Scabbia, and Arch Enemy's Angela Gossow. The interrelationship between riot grrl and metal offers other musician-based comparisons with bands like Kittle and Drain STH. While metal retains its prevailing whiteness, the added international component to metal has seen additional ethnicities arise most notably Sepultura's Derrick Greene and Sevendust's Lajon Witherspoon. The use of genre crossover has been pushed further using such hybrid styles as Finntroll's blend of humppa polka and death metal and Cruachan's amalgamation of Celtic folk with metal aesthetics. A vast array of gothic, electronic, and metal blends have also emerged. A final area worth considering is the trend for independent metal labels to issue tribute records. Here, a blend of past and present metal performers cover songs from past bands, thereby serving to build these past artists as authentically worthy of such tribute while marking the generational progression from one era to another.

WORKS CITED

- Allen, H. (2004). Interview with Vernon Reid. In Crazy Horse, K. (Ed.). *Rip It Up: The Black Experience in Rock 'n' Roll*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 129-144.
- Alfvegren, S. (1998). Breaking the law: Rob Halford outside the metal machine. *LA Weekly*, (April 10), 38.
- Andrews, R. (1987a). Poison: Wild in the streets. *Hit Parader*, 276(Sept.), 30-31.
- Andrews, R. (1987b). The new metal explosion. *Hit Parader*, 271(April), 38-41
- Andrews, R. (1987c). Vinnie Vincent Invasion: Set to take off. *Hit Parader*, 285(June), 54-55.
- Andrews, R. (1988). Warlock: Too wild to tame. *Hit Parader*, 283(Apr), 38-39.
- Andrews, R. (1990a). Lita Ford: Queen of the road. *Hit Parader*, 312(Sept.), 58-59.
- Andrews, R. (1990b). Pick hit: Harlow. *Hit Parader*, 314(Nov.), 20.
- Arkoff, V. (1989). Meet Lita Ford: Superstar. *Circus*, (August 31), 62.
- Arnett, J. (1991). Heavy metal music and reckless behavior among adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 20(6), 573-592.
- Arnett, J. (1992). The soundtrack of recklessness: musical preferences and reckless behavior among adolescents. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 7(3), 313-331.
- Arnett, J. (1996). *Metal Heads: Heavy Metal Music and Adolescent Alienation*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Auslander, P. (1999). *Liveness: Performance in a Mediatized Culture*. London: Routledge.
- Badderley, G. (1999). *Lucifer Rising: Sin, Devil Worship, and Rock 'n' Roll*. London: Plexus.
- Baktabak. (1985). *Twisted Sister Limited Edition Interview Picture Disc*. BAK 2088. London: Baktabak.
- Bashe, P. (1985). *Heavy Metal Thunder*. Garden City, New York: Doubleday.

- Barton, G. (1980). Has the Leppard Changed Its Spots? *Sounds*, 11(March 1), 20.
- Bayton, M. (1997). Women and the Electric Guitar. In Whitely (ed.) *Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender*. New York: Routledge, pp. 37-49.
- Beebee, S. (1997). *Headbanger's Ball: Chaos A.D.: Rock Music in the Nineties*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Benjamin, W. (1937). The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction. In *Illuminations*. (1969). New York: Schocken, pp. 217-252.
- Berger, H. (1999). *Metal, Rock, and Jazz: Perception and the Phenomenology of Musical Experience*. Hanover, NH: University of New Hampshire Press.
- Berger, P. & Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality*. New York: Doubleday.
- Bordo, S. (1999). *The Male Body*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.
- Bourdieu, P. (1993). *The Field of Cultural Production*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Brake, M. (1980). *The Sociology of Youth Culture and Youth Subcultures: Sex and Drugs and Rock'n'Roll*. London, England: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Brett, P. (1994). Musicality, essentialism, and the closet. In Brett, P., Thomas, G. & Wood, E. (Eds.). *Queering the Pitch: The New Gay and Lesbian Musicology*. London: Routledge, pp. 9-26.
- Bukatman, S. (1994). X-Bodies (the torment of the mutant superhero). In Sappington, R. & Stallings, T. (Eds.), *Uncontrollable Bodies: Testimonies of Identity and Culture*. Seattle: Bay Press, pp. 93-129.
- Bukszpan, D. (2003). *The Encyclopedia of Heavy Metal*. New York: Barnes & Noble Books.
- Butler, J. (1990). *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York:

Routledge.

Butler, T. (1990). Lita Ford: Doin' it right. *Hit Parader*, 304(Jan.), 66-67.

Crespo, C. (1988). "Celebrity Rate a Record: MSG." *Hit Parader*, 284(May), 68.

Chirazi, S. (1998, April 19). Q&A with Rob Halford. *San Francisco Chronicle*, p. 44.

Christie, I. (2003). *Sound of the Beast: The Complete Headbanging History of Heavy Metal*.

New York: Harper Entertainment.

Clark, S. (1988). The greatest show on earth. *Hit Parader*, 291(Dec.), 13-15.

Coates, N. (1997). (R)evolution Now?. In Whitely (ed.) *Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender*. New York: Routledge, pp. 50-64.

Colista, C. & Leshner, G. (1998). Traveling music: following the path of music through the global market. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 15 (1998), 181-194.

Connell, R. (1994). *Masculinities*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press

Cooper, A. & Gaines, S. (1976). *Me, Alice: The Autobiography of Alice Cooper*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons.

Cox, B. (1989). Vixen: Lookin' good, playin' good. *Hit Parader*, 295(Apr.), 54-55.

Crazy Horse, K. (2004). Black Rock Glossary. In Crazy Horse, K. (Ed.). *Rip It Up: The Black Experience in Rock 'n' Roll*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 203-216.

Crespo, C. (1988). Celebrity rate-a-record: McAuley Schenker Group. *Hit Parader*, 284(May), 68.

DeCurtis, A., Henke, J., & George-Warren, H. (Eds.). (1992). *The Rolling Stone Album Guide*. New York: Random House.

Denske, S. & Sholle, D. (1992). Metal men and glamour boys. In Craig, S. (Ed.). *Men, Masculinity and Media*. London: Sage Publications, pp. 42-60.

- Donnelly, P. (1981). Toward a definition of sport subcultures. In Hart, M & Birrell, S. (Eds.), *Sport in the Sociocultural Process*. Dubuque, IA: William C. Brown, pp. 565-588.
- Donnelly, P. & Young, K. (1988). The construction and confirmation of identity in sport subcultures. *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 5, 223-240.
- Dubin, A. (Director). (1992). *Metallica: A Year and a Half in the Life of...* [Videotape]. United States: Elektra Video.
- Dworkin, A. (1981). *Pornography: Men Possessing Women*. London: The Women's Press.
- Dyer, R. (1999). *White*. New York: Routledge.
- Elliot, P. & Hotten, J. (1993). *The Best of Metal: The Essential CD Guide*. London: Carlton Books.
- Erikson, E. (1959). Identity and the Life Cycle. *Psychological Issues*, 1(1), 1-171.
- Erin, J.P. & Freel, D. (Directors). (1987). *Cliff 'Em All* [Videotape]. United States: Elektra/Asylum.
- Falludi, S. (1991). *Backlash*. New York: Doubleday.
- Farr, J. (1994). *Moguls and Madmen: The Pursuit of Power in Popular Music*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- Feature of the Week*. (1998). MTV.com. Retrieved June, 26, 2000 from www.mtv.com/news/gallery/j/halfordfeature3.html.
- Fenster, M. & Swiss, T. (1999). Business. In Horner, B. & Swiss, T. (Eds.) *Key Terms in Popular Music and Culture*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, pp. 225-238.
- Fine, G. & Kleinman, S. (1978). Rethinking subcultures: an interactional analysis. *American Journal of Sociology*, 85(1), 1-20.
- Fischer, T. (2000). *Are You Morbid?: Into the Pandemonium of Celtic Frost*. London:

Sanctuary.

Foucault, M. (1977). Space, Knowledge and Power. In Rabinow, P. (Ed.). (1984). *The Foucault Reader*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 239-256.

Foucault, M. (1990). *The History of Sexuality: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage. (Original work published 1978)

Foucault, M. (1995). *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books. (Original work published 1975)

Friedlander, P. (1996). *Rock and Roll: A Social History*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Frith, S. (1981). *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock 'n' Roll*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp.181-272.

Frith, S. (1986). *Performing Rites: On the Value of Popular Music*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Frith, S. (1988). Video Pop: Picking Up the Pieces. In Frith, S. (Ed.). *Facing the Music*. New York: Pantheon, pp. 88-130.

Frith, S. & McRobbie, A. (1990). Rock and sexuality. In Frith, S. & Goodwin, A. (Eds.) *On Record: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 372-376.

Gaines, D. (1991). *Teenage Wasteland: Suburbia's Dead End Kids*. New York: Harper Perennial.

Gallotta, P. (1987). Bringing Poison to the masses. *Circus*, (March 31), 72-75.

Gallotta, P. (1987). Poison's fast food service. *Circus*, (June 30), 24-27.

Gallotta, P. (1987). Poison's make-up case. *Circus*, (May 31), 22.

Gallotta, P. (1987). Poison's peace-loving audience. *Circus*, (March 31), 22.

Gallotta, P. (1987). The Poison epidemic enters phase II. *Circus*, (November 30), 72-77.

- Gallotta, P. (1988). Poison answer their critics over "Swallow This One". *Circus*, (April 30), 34-40.
- Gallotta, P. (1988). Poison: "Sticks and stones...". *Circus*, (November 30), 92.
- Gallotta, P. (1990). Lita Ford: Best female vocalist for fifth time! *Circus*, (February 28), 72-75.
- Garofalo, R. (1997). *Rockin' Out: Popular Music in the USA*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Gill, J. (1995). *Queer Noises: Male and Female Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century Music*. London: Cassell.
- Godwin, J. (1985). *The Devil's Disciples: The Truth About Rock*. Chino, CA: Chick Publications.
- Goldstein, T. (1987). Photo journal. *Circus*, (May 31), 84.
- Gore, T. (1987). *Raising PG Kids in a R-Rated World*. Nashville, TN: Abington Press.
- Gross, R. (1990). Heavy-metal music, a new subculture in American society. *Journal of Popular Culture*, 24(1), 199-130.
- Hangin' out with the women of metal. (1989). *Hit Parader*, 301(Oct.), 42-43.
- Harris, K. (1999). 'Roots'?: the relationship between the global and the local within the Extreme Metal scene. *Popular Music*, 19(1), pp. 13-30.
- Hebdige, D. (1979). *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*. London: Methuen & Co.
- Hoffman, G. (2005). Accept - True Metal Hearts: A 25-Year History of Germany's Very Own Metal Gods. Retrieved Sept. 26, 2006, from <http://www.acceptarchive.com/html/ACCEPT-History.pdf>.
- Hoye, J. (Ed.). (2001). *MTV Uncensored*. New York: Pocket Books.
- Hunter, P. (1988). Faster Pussycat: Shock treatment. *Hit Parader*, 280(Jan.), 66-67.
- Hunter, S. (2004). *Hell Bent For Leather: Confessions of a Heavy Metal Addict*.

New York: Harper Collins

Impaler Interview. (2004). Metal-Rules.com. Retrieved July 30, 2005, from

<http://www.metal-rules.com/interviews/impaler.htm>.

Ingham, C. (2002). *The Book of Metal*. New York: Thunder's Mouth Press.

Irigaray, L. (1985). *The Sex Which is Not One*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Jarboe, J. (1988). Mail. *Hit Parader*, 289(Oct.), 24.

Jeffries, N. (Ed.) (1993). *The Kerrang! Direktory of Heavy Metal*. London: Virgin.

Johnson, K. (1998, May 10). Rob Halford bursts out of the closet. *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, p. C4.

Judas Priest (1993). Liner notes for *Metal Works 73-93*. New York: Columbia Records.

Kalikow, L. & Rosenberg, A. (Directors). (1991). *How to Break Into Heavy Metal Without Getting Screwed* [Videotape]. United States: VPI/Harmony/BMG Video.

Kaplan, E.A. (1989). *Rocking Around the Clock*. New York: Routledge.

Kay, N. (1979). Liner notes to *Metal for Muthas*. London: EMI.

Keefer, C. (Director). (1990). *Hard n Heavy: Thrash Metal Special Issue* [Videotape]. United States: Directors International Video.

Klein, A. (1993). *Little Big Men: Bodybuilding, Subculture, and Gender Construction*. Albany, NY: SUNY Press.

Klosterman, C. (2002). Epilogue. In Klosterman, C. (2001). *Fargo Rock City*. New York: Touchstone, pp. 265-272.

Klosterman, C. (2001). *Fargo Rock City*. New York: Touchstone.

Konow, D. (2002). *Bang Your Head: The Rise and Fall of Heavy Metal*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

- Larson, B. (1987). *Larson's Book of Rock*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.
- Lee, T., Mars, M. Six, N. Neil, V., & Strauss, N. (2002). *The Dirt: Confessions of the World's Most Notorious Rock Band*. New York: Regan Books.
- Leighton, A. (1990). Vixen: On the edge. *Hit Parader*, 311(Aug.), 54-55.
- Levine, M. (1998). *Gay macho: the life and death of the homosexual clone*. New York: New York University Press.
- Levitan, C. (1989). Persistence pays off for Vixen's Jan Kuehnemund. *Circus*, (August 31), 72.
- Ling, D. (2003). Twisted Sister. Reprinted from *Classic Rock*, 50.
- <http://www.daveling.co.uk/doctwisted.htm> .
- Lipsitz, G. (1998). *The Possessive Investment in Whiteness*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.
- Lipsitz, G. (1998). *Dangerous Crossroads: Popular Music, Postmodernism, and the Poetics of Place*. London: Verso.
- Liventen, S. (1985). Sound Barrier breaking new ground. *Hit Parader*, 246(3), 62.
- Lott, E. (1993). *Love and Theft: Blackface Minstrelsy and the American Working Class*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lowenthal, D. (1985). *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Malarkey, S. (Ed.) (1995). *MTV Unplugged*. New York: Pocket Books.
- Marsh, D. & Swenson, J. (Eds.). (1983). *The New Rolling Stone Record Guide*. New York: Random House.
- Martin, C. (1995). The Naturalized Gender Order of Rock and Roll. *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, 19(1), 53-74.

- Martin, L. & Seagrave, K. (1988). *Anti-rock: The Opposition to Rock 'n' Roll*. Hamden, CT: Archon Books.
- Martyn, L. (1984). *Masters of Metal*. Port Chester, NY: Cherry Lane Books.
- McClary, S. (1994). Same as it Ever Was: Youth Culture and Music. In Ross, A. & Rose, T. (Eds.). *Microphone Fiends: Youth Music & Culture*. London: Routledge, pp. 29-40.
- McClary, S. (1991). *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender and Sexuality*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
- McDaniel, K. (1987). Poison: Partying to platinum. *Hit Parader*, 278(Nov.), 66-67.
- McIver, J. (2001). *Extreme Metal*. London: Omnibus Press.
- McCormick, M. (1990). Lita Ford romps with 'Stiletto.' *Circus*, (September 30), 36-37.
- Metal Blade Records: 20th Anniversary Party Live* (DVD). (2004). United States: Metal Blade.
- Millar, R. (1984). The Shape of Stings to Come?. *Sounds*, 14 (June 14), 10-11.
- Modi. (Director). (1990). *Metalhead: Volume I* [Videotape]. United States: Goodtimes.
- Modi. (Director). (1990). *Metalhead: Volume III* [Videotape]. United States: Goodtimes.
- Moynihan, M. & Söderlind, D. (1998). *Lords of Chaos: The Bloody Rise of the Satanic Metal Underground*. Venice, CA: Feral House.
- Mulvey, L. (1975). Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema. *Screen*, 16(3), 6-18.
- Mudrian, A. (2004). *Choosing Death: The Improbable History of Death Metal & Grindcore*. Los Angeles: Feral House.
- Negus, K. (1999). *Music Genres and Corporate Cultures*. New York: Routledge.
- Negus, K. (1996). *Popular Music in Theory*. Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press.
- Negus, K. (1992). *Producing Pop: Culture and Conflict in the Popular Music Industry*. London: Edward Arnold.

- Nuzum, E. (2001). *Parental Advisory: Music Censorship in America*. New York: Harper Books.
- Peters, D. & Peters, S. (1984). *Why Knock Rock?* Minneapolis: Bethany House Publishers.
- Phillipsen, G. (1987). The prospect for cultural communication. In Kincaid, D. (Ed.), *Communication Theory from Eastern and Western Perspectives*. New York: Academic Press, pp. 245-254.
- Picasso, N. & Carr, D. (Directors). (1991). *Hard n Heavy: Grindcore Special Issue* [Videotape]. United States: Directors International Video.
- Poison Rules. (1988). Mail. *Hit Parader*, 285(June), 24.
- Popoff, M. (1997). *The Collector's Guide to Heavy Metal*. Toronto: Collector's Guide Publishing.
- "Quotes of the year." (1989). *Circus*, (January 31), 63.
- Raschke, C. (1990). *Painted Black*. San Francisco: Harper & Row.
- Raso, A. (1988). Poison: Glam rockers cop best new band honors. *Circus*, (February 29), 76-81.
- Reiner, R. (Director). (1984). *This is Spinal Tap*. United States: MGM.
- Reynolds, R. (1992). *Superheroes: A Modern Mythology*. Knoxville: Univ. of Tennessee Press.
- Reynolds, S & Press, J. (1995). *The Sex Revolts: Gender Rebellion and Rock 'n' Roll*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Robinson, D. (1994). *No Less a Man*. Bowling Green, OH: Popular Press.
- Roe, K. (1995). Adolescents' use of socially disvalued media: towards a theory of media delinquency. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 24(5), 617-631.
- Savage, J. (1988). The Enemy Within: Sex, Rock, and Identity. In Frith, S. (Ed.). *Facing the Music*. New York: Pantheon, pp. 131-172.

- Schippers, M. (2002). *Rockin' Out of the Box*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Schwartz, J. (1984). Def Leppard. In Obrecht, J. (Ed.). *Masters of Heavy Metal*. New York: Quill, pp. 188-191.
- Secher, A. (1987). Grim Reaper: To hell and back. *Hit Parader*, 278(Nov.), 66.
- Secher, A. (1987). Guns n Roses: Bad to the bone. *Hit Parader*, 279(Dec.), 66-67.
- Secher, A. (1987). Poison: Big time bound. *Hit Parader*, 268(Jan.), 44-45.
- Secher, A. (1987). Poison: Talkin' dirty. *Hit Parader*, 275(Aug.), 60.
- Secher, A. (1989). Vixen: Foxy ladies. *Hit Parader*, 299(Aug.), 60-61.
- Secher, A. (1990). Lita Ford: The queen of noise returns. *Hit Parader*, 311(Aug.), 46-49.
- Secher, A. (1990). Vixen: Up n coming. *Hit Parader*, 315(Dec.), 68-69.
- Sedgwick, E. (1990). *Epistemology of the Closet*. Berkley, CA: University of California Press.
- Sherman, B. & Dominick, J. (1986). Violence and sex in music videos: TV and rock 'n' roll. *Journal of Communication*, 36(1), 73-93.
- Simmons, G. (2001). *Kiss and Make-up*. New York: Three Rivers Press.
- Simpson, M. (1994). *Male Impersonators: Men Performing Masculinity*. New York: Routledge.
- Singer, S., Levine, M., & Jou, S. (1993). Heavy metal music preference, delinquent friends, social control, and delinquency. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency*, 30(3), 317-329.
- Smith, C. (Director.). (1986). *Trick or Treat* [Motion picture]. United States: DeLaurentis Entertainment Group.
- Snider, D. & Bashe, P. (1987). *Dee Snider's Teenage Survival Guide*. New York: Doubleday.
- S.O.D. Bio. (2005). Nuclear Blast America, Retrieved June 1, 2006, from <http://www.nuclearblastusa.com/bands/sod.html>.

- Soocher, S. (1999). *They Fought the Law: Rock Music Goes to Court*. New York: Schirmer.
- Spheris, P. (Director). (1987). *Decline of Western Civilization II: The Metal Years* [Motion picture]. United States: IRS.
- Stark, M. (2002). *Black Sabbath: An Oral History*. New York: Harper Books.
- Steele, V. (1996). *Fetish: Fashion, Sex and Power*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- St Lawerance, J & Joyner, D (1991). The effects of sexually violent rock music on males' acceptance of violence against women. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 15(1), 49-63.
- Stone, A. (1988a). Poison: Out for kicks. *Hit Parader*, 287(Aug.), 60.
- Stone, A. (1988b). Poison-ing America, part two: The plot unfolds. *Circus*, (January 31), 82-85.
- Storey, J. (1996). *Cultural Studies and the Study of Popular Culture*. Athens, GA: Univ. of Georgia Press, pp. 93-113.
- Straw, W. (1990). Characterizing rock music culture: the case of heavy metal. In Frith, S. & Goodwin, A. (Eds.) *On Record: Rock, Pop, and the Written Word*. New York: Pantheon Books, pp. 104-110.
- Summers, J. (1988). Out to Lunch: Doro Pesch. *Hit Parader*, 287(Aug.), 12.
- T, I. (1994). *The Ice Opinion*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Thompson, H. (1990). Lita Ford: Set to explode. *Hit Parader*, 305(Feb.), 30-31.
- Thrash Rules. (1988). Mail. *Hit Parader*, 291(Dec.), 20.
- Timeline. (2005). DefLeppardFrequency.com. Retrieved July 30, 2005 from <http://www.defleppardfrequency.com/TimelineOnThroughtheNight.html>.
- Turner, V. (1982). *From Ritual to Performance*. New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.

- Ucko, P. (1969). Penis Sheaths: A Comparative Study. *Proceedings of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, 1969, 24A-67
- Underwood, T. & Miller, C. (1988). *Bare Bones: Conversations on Terror with Stephen King*. New York: Warner Books.
- Vincent, R. (1989). Clio's consciousness raised? Portrayal of women in rock videos re-examined. *Journalism Quarterly*, 66(1), 155-160
- Vincent, S. (2003). *Dressing the Elite: Clothes in Early Modern England*. Oxford, UK: Berg Publishers.
- Waksman, S. (1999). *Instruments of Desire: The Electric Guitar and the Shaping of Musical Experience*. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.
- Wald, G. (1998). Just a girl? Rock music, feminism, and the cultural construction of female youth. *Signs*, 23(3), 585-610.
- Wall, M. (1991). *Guns n' Roses: The Most Dangerous Band in the World*. New York: Hyperion.
- Wall, M. (1998). *Run to the Hills: The Official Biography of Iron Maiden*. London: Sanctuary.
- Walley, D. (1998). *Teenage Nervous Breakdown: Music and Politics in the Post-Elvis Age*. New York: Insight Books.
- Walser, R. (1993). *Running with the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music*. Hannover, NH: University Press of New England.
- Walters, B. (1998). Hell bent for feathers. *Spin*, 14(June), 70.
- Waters, J. (1990). Liner notes for *Never Neverland*. New York: Roadrunner.
- Weinstein, D. (1991). *Heavy Metal: A Cultural Sociology*. New York: Lexington Books.
- Weinstein, D. (2000). *Heavy Metal: The Music and its Culture*. DaCapo Press.
- Whiteley, S. (2000). *Women and Popular Music: Sexuality, Identity, and Subjectivity*.

New York: Routledge.

Wicke, P. (1990). *Rock Music: Culture Aesthetics, and Sociology*. (Trans. R. Fogg).

Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Wieder, J. (1987). Poison: Wink & a smile. *Hit Parader*, 270(Mar.), 54-55.

Willis, J. (2004). Interview with Slash (Saul Hudson). In Crazy Horse, K. (Ed.). *Rip It Up: The Black Experience in Rock 'n' Roll*. New York: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 195-202.

Winfield, B. & Davidson, S. (1999). *Bleep!: Censoring Rock and Rap Music*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Winters, H. (1990). Princess Pang: Survival of the fittest. *Hit Parader*, 308(Mar.), 10.

MUSIC SOURCES CITED

Lee Aaron. (1991). *Some Girls Do*. Attic.

Lee Aaron. (1982). *Lee Aaron Project*. Roadrunner.

Lee Aaron. (1989). *Bodyrock*. Attic.

Lee Aaron. (1985). *Call of the Wild*. Roadrunner.

Lee Aaron. (1984). *Metal Queen*. Roadrunner.

Lee Aaron. (1987). *S/T*. Ten.

Accept. (1982). *Restless and Wild*. CBS.

Accept. (1984). *Balls to the Wall*. CBS.

Accept. (1985). *Metal Heart*. CBS.

Accept. (1986). *Russian Roulette*. CBS.

Accept. (1989). *Eat the Heat*. Epic.

AC/DC. (1982). *For Those About to Rock*. Atlantic.

- AC/DC. (1981). *Dirty Deeds Done Dirt Cheap*. Atlantic.
- AC/DC. (1980). *Back in Black*. Atlantic.
- AC/DC. (1979). *Highway to Hell*. Atlantic.
- AC/DC. (1977). *Let There Be Rock*. Atlantic.
- AC/DC. (1978). *Powerage*. Atlantic.
- AC/DC. (1978). *If You Want Blood....* Atlantic.
- Aerosmith. (1989). *Pump*. Geffen.
- Aerosmith. (1987). *Permanent Vacation*. Geffen.
- Aerosmith. (1985). *Done With Mirrors*. Geffen.
- Alcatrazz. (1983). *No Parole for Rock and Roll*. Grand Slamm.
- Alice in Chains. (1990). *Facelift*. CBS.
- Annihilator. (1990). *Never, Neverland*. Roadracer.
- Annihilator. (1989). *Alice In Hell*. Roadracer.
- Anthrax. (1991). *Attack of the Killer Bees*. Island.
- Anthrax. (1990). *Persistence of Time*. Island.
- Anthrax. (1988). *State of Euphoria*. Island.
- Anthrax. (1988). *I'm the Man*. Island.
- Anthrax. (1987). *Among the Living*. Island.
- Anthrax. (1985). *Spreading the Disease*. Island.
- Anthrax. (1985). *Armed and Dangerous*. Megaforce.
- Anthrax. (1984). *Fistful of Metal*. Megaforce.
- Artch. (1988). *Another Return to Church Hill*. Metal Blade.
- Artch. (1991). *For the Sake of Mankind*. Metal Blade.

- Artillery. (1990). *By Inheritance*. Roadrunner.
- Atheist. (1990). *Piece of Time*. Combat.
- Atheist. (1991). *Unquestionable Presence*. Combat.
- Atrophy. (1989). *Socialized Hate*. Roadrunner.
- Atrophy. (1990). *Violent By Nature*. Roadrunner.
- Autograph. (1985). *That's the Stuff*. RCA.
- Autograph. (1987). *Loud and Clear*. RCA.
- Autograph. (1984). *Sign in Please*. RCA.
- Beastie Boys. (1986). *Licensed to Ill*. Def American.
- Bitch. (1989). *A Rose By Any Other Name*. Metal Blade.
- Bitch. (1987). *The Bitch is Back*. Metal Blade.
- Bitch. (1983). *Damnation Alley/Be My Slave*. Metal Blade.
- Bitter End. (1990). *Harsh Realities*. Metal Blade.
- Black Crowes. (1990). *Shake Your Moneymaker*. American.
- Black n' Blue. (1984). *S/T*. Geffen.
- Black Sabbath. (1971). *Paranoid*. Warner Brothers.
- Body Count. (1992). *S/T*. Sire.
- Jon Bon Jovi. (1990). *Blaze of Glory*. Polygram.
- Bon Jovi. (1988). *New Jersey*. Mercury.
- Bon Jovi. (1985). *Slippery When Wet*. Mercury.
- Bon Jovi. (1985). *7800 Fahrenheit*. Mercury.
- Bon Jovi. (1984). *S/T*. Mercury.
- Pat Boone. (1997). *In a Metal Mood: No More Mr. Nice Guy*. Hip-O.

- Britny Fox. (1988). *S/T*. CBS.
- Celtic Frost. (1987). *Into the Pandemonium*. Noise.
- Celtic Frost. (1988). *Cold Lake*. Noise.
- Cerebral Fix. (1991). *Bastards*. Roadrunner.
- Cinderella. (1990). *Heartbreak Station*. Mercury.
- Cinderella. (1988). *Long Cold Winter*. Mercury.
- Cinderella. (1986). *Night Songs*. Mercury.
- Eric Clapton. (1974). *461 Ocean Boulevard*. Polydor.
- Contraband. (1991). *S/T*. MCA.
- Alice Cooper. (1981). *Special Forces*. Warner Brothers.
- Credence Clearwater Revival. (1969). *Willy and the Poor Boys*. Fantasy.
- Cryptic Slaughter. (1990). *Speak Your Peace*. Metal Blade.
- Cryptic Slaughter. (1988). *Stream of Consciousness*. Metal Blade.
- Cryptic Slaughter. (1987). *Money Talks*. Metal Blade.
- Cryptic Slaughter. (1986). *Convicted*. Metal Blade.
- The Cult. (1989). *Sonic Temple*. Beggars Banquet.
- The Cult. (1987). *Electric*. Beggars Banquet.
- Cycle Sluts From Hell. (1991). *S/T*. Sony.
- Cyclone Temple. (1991). *I Hate Therefore I Am*. Combat.
- Cyclone Temple. (1993). *Building Errors in the Machine*. Progressive.
- D.A.D.. (1989). *No Fuel Left for the Pilgrims*. Warner Brothers.
- Damien. (1987). *Every Dog Has Its Day*. Select.
- Damien. (1989). *Stop This War*. Select.

- Dangerous Toys. (1988). *S/T*. CBS.
- Defiance. (1990). *Void Terra Firma*. Roadrunner.
- Def Leppard. (1983). *Pyromania*. Polygram.
- Def Leppard. (1981). *High n Dry*. Polygram.
- Def Leppard. (1980). *On Through the Night*. Polygram.
- Def Leppard. (1979). *Getcha Rocks Off*. Bludgeon Riffola.
- Destruction. (1985). *Infernal Overkill*. Steamhammer.
- Diamond Head. (1980). *Lightning to the Nations*. DHM.
- Digger. (1986). *Stronger Than Ever*. Noise.
- Dio. (1985). *Sacred Heart*. Warner Brothers.
- Dio. (1984). *The Last in Line*. Warner Brothers.
- Dio. (1983). *Holy Diver*. Warner Brothers.
- Dogs D'amour. (1989). *Graveyard of Empty Bottles*. China.
- Dokken. (1988). *Beast from the East*. Elektra.
- Dokken. (1987). *Back for the Attack*. Elektra.
- Doro. (1990). *S/T*. Mercury.
- Doro. (1989). *Force Majure*. Mercury.
- D'Priest. (1990). *Playa Del Rock*. Noise.
- Europe. (1986). *The Final Countdown*. Epic.
- Exodus. (1992). *Force of Habit*. Capitol.
- Exodus. (1990). *Impact is Imminent*. Capitol.
- Exodus. (1989). *Fabulous Disaster*. Combat.
- Exodus. (1987). *Pleasures of the Flesh*. Combat.

- Exodus. (1985). *Bonded By Blood*. Combat.
- Extreme. (1990). *Pornograffiti*. A&M.
- Extreme. (1989). *S/T*. A&M.
- EZO. (1989). *Fire Fire*. Geffen.
- EZO. (1987). *S/T*. Geffen.
- Faith No More. (1992). *Angel Dust*. Slash.
- Faith No More. (1989). *The Real Thing*. Slash.
- Faith No More. (1987). *Introduce Yourself*. Slash.
- Faith No More. (1985). *We Care A Lot*. Slash.
- Faith or Fear. (1989). *Punishment Area*. Combat.
- Faster Pussycat. (1987). *S/T*. Elektra.
- Femme Fatale. (1988). *S/T*. MCA.
- Lita Ford. (1991). *Dangerous Curves*. RCA.
- Lita Ford. (1990). *Stiletto*. RCA.
- Lita Ford. (1988). *Lita*. RCA/Dreamland.
- Lita Ford. (1984). *Dancin' on the Edge*. Mercury.
- Lita Ford. (1983). *Out for Blood*. Mercury.
- Ace Frehley. (1987). *Frehley's Comet*. Megaforce.
- Girlschool. (1992). *S/T*. Progressive.
- Girlschool. (1988). *Take a Bite*. Enigma.
- Girlschool. (1983). *Play Dirty*. Bronze.
- Gothic Slam. (1989). *Just a Face in the Crowd*. Roadrunner.
- Gothic Slam. (1988). *Killer Instinct*. Torrid.

- Grave Digger. (1986). *War Games*. Noise.
- Grave Digger. (1985). *Witch Hunter*. Noise.
- Grave Digger. (1984). *Heavy Metal Breakdown*. Noise.
- The Great Kat. (1990). *Beethoven on Speed*. Roadrunner.
- The Great Kat. (1987). *Worship Me or Die*. Roadrunner.
- Great White. (1988). *Recovery Live*. Enigma.
- Great White. (1987). *Once Bitten*. Capitol.
- Great White. (1986). *Shot in the Dark*. Capitol.
- Great White. (1984). *S/T*. EMI.
- Grim Reaper. (1987). *Rock You to Hell*. BMG.
- Guns n Roses. (1991). *Use Your Illusion II*. Geffen.
- Guns n Roses. (1991). *Use Your Illusion I*. Geffen.
- Guns n Roses. (1988). *GnR Lies*. Geffen.
- Guns n Roses. (1987). *Appetite for Destruction*. Geffen.
- Guns n Roses. (1986). *Live Like a Suicide*. Uzi Suicide/Geffen.
- Heart. (1985). *S/T*. Capitol.
- Helloween. (1988). *Keeper of the Seven Keys II*. BMG/Noise.
- Ice T. (1991). *O.G. Original Gangster*. Sire.
- Iron Maiden. (1990). *No Prayer for the Dying*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1988). *Seventh Son of a Seventh Son*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1986). *Somewhere in Time*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1985). *Live After Death*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1984). *Powerslave*. Capitol.

- Iron Maiden. (1983). *Piece of Mind*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1982). *The Number of the Beast*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1981). *Killers*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1981). *Maiden Japan*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1980). "Sanctuary." EMI.
- Iron Maiden. (1980). *S/T*. Capitol.
- Iron Maiden. (1979). *Soundhouse Tapes*. Iron Maiden.
- Michael Jackson. (1992). *Dangerous*. Epic.
- Michael Jackson. (1987). *Bad*. Epic.
- Michael Jackson. (1982). *Thriller*. Epic.
- Jane's Addiction. (1990). *Ritual de lo Habitual*. Warner Brothers.
- Jane's Addiction. (1988). *Nothing's Shocking*. Warner Brothers.
- Jane's Addiction. (1987). *S/T*. Triple X
- Steve Jones. (1989). *Fire and Gasoline*. Gold Mountain.
- Steve Jones. (1987). *Mercy*. Gold Mountain.
- Judas Priest. (1993). *Metal Works 73-93*. Sony.
- Judas Priest. (1990). *Painkiller*. CBS
- Judas Priest. (1988). *Ram It Down*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1987). *Priest Live*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1986). *Turbo*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1984). *Defenders of the Faith*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1982). *Screaming for Vengeance*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1981). *Point of Entry*. CBS.

- Judas Priest. (1980). *British Steel*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1979). *Unleashed in the East*. (CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1978). *Killing Machine (Hell Bent for Leather)*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1978). *Stained Class*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1977). *Sin After Sin*. CBS.
- Judas Priest. (1976). *Sad Wings of Destiny*. Gull.
- Judas Priest. (1974). *Rocka Rolla*. Gull.
- Keel. (1987). *S/T*. MCA.
- Keel. (1986). *The Final Frontier*. MCA.
- Keel. (1985). *The Right to Rock*. A&M.
- Killer Dwarfs. (1992). *Method to the Madness*. Epic.
- Killer Dwarfs. (1990). *Dirty Weapons*. Epic.
- Killer Dwarfs. (1988). *Big Deal*. Epic.
- Killer Dwarfs. (1986). *Stand Tall*. Grudge.
- Kingdom Come. (1989). *In Your Face*. Polygram.
- Kingdom Come. (1988). *S/T*. Polygram.
- King's X. (1990). *Faith Hope Love*. Megaforce.
- Sam Kinison. (1988). *Have You Seen Me Lately?*. Warner Brothers.
- Kiss. (1985). *Asylum*. Mercury.
- Kiss. (1984). *Animalize*. Mercury.
- Kiss. (1983). *Lick It Up*. Casablanca.
- Kiss. (1977). *Alive II*. Casablanca.
- Kiss. (1975). *Alive*. Casablanca.

- Kix. (1988). *Blow My Fuse*. Atlantic.
- Kreator. (1990). *Coma of Souls*. Noise.
- Kreator. (1986). *Pleasure to Kill*. Noise.
- Krokus. (1983). *Headhunter*. MCA.
- Krokus. (1984). *The Blitz*. MCA.
- Krokus. (1986). *Change of Address*. MCA.
- LA Guns. (1991). *Hollywood Vampires*. Polydor.
- LA Guns. (1989). *Cocked and Loaded*. Polygram.
- LA Guns. (1987). *S/T*. Vertigo.
- Living Colour. (1991). *Biscuits*. Sony.
- Living Colour. (1990). *Time's Up*. Sony.
- Living Colour. (1988). *Vivid*. Sony.
- Lizzy Borden. (1986). *Menace to Society*. Metal Blade.
- Lizzy Borden. (1986). *The Murderess Metal Road Show*. Metal Blade.
- Lizzy Borden. (1985). *Love You to Pieces*. Metal Blade.
- Loudness. (1991). *On the Prowl*. Atlantic.
- Loudness. (1989). *Soldier of Fortune*. Atlantic.
- Loudness. (1988). *Hurricane Eyes*. Atlantic.
- Loudness. (1987). *Lightning Strikes*. Atlantic.
- Loudness. (1985). *Thunder in the East*. Atlantic.
- Loudness. (1984). *Disillusion: English version*. Music for Nations.
- Love/Hate. (1992). *Wasted in America*. Sony.
- Love/Hate. (1990). *Blackout in the Red Room*. Sony.

Tony MacAlpine. (1987). *Maximum Security*. Mercury.

Tony MacAlpine. (1985). *Edge of Insanity*. Shrapnel.

Manowar. (1985). *Sign of the Hammer*. 10.

Manowar. (1987). *Fighting the World*. Atlantic.

Megadeth. (1992). *Countdown to Destruction*. Capitol.

Megadeth. (1990). *Rust in Peace*. Capitol.

Megadeth. (1987). *So Far, So Good, So What*. Capitol.

Megadeth. (1986). *Peace Sells But Who's Buying*. Capitol.

Megadeth. (1985). *Killing is my Business....* Combat.

Mercyful Fate. (1984). *Don't Break the Oath*. Roadracer.

Mercyful Fate. (1983). *Melissa*. Roadracer.

Metal Church. (1991). *The Human Factor*. Sony

Metal Church. (1989). *Blessing in Disguise*. Elektra.

Metal Church. (1986). *The Dark*. Elektra.

Metal Church. (1984). *S/T*. Ground Zero/Elektra.

Metal Massacre XI. (1991). Metal Blade.

Metal Massacre X. (1990). Metal Blade.

Metal Massacre IX. (1988). Metal Blade.

Metal Massacre VIII. (1986). Metal Blade.

Metal Massacre VII. (1986). Metal Blade.

Metal Massacre VI. (1985). Metal Blade.

Metal Massacre V. (1984). Metal Blade.

Metal Massacre IV. (1983). Metal Blade.

- Metal Massacre III.* (1983). Metal Blade.
- Metal Massacre II.* (1983). Metal Blade.
- Metal Massacre.* (1982). Metal Blade.
- Metallica. (1991). *S/T*. Elektra.
- Metallica. (1988). *...And Justice for All*. Elektra.
- Metallica. (1987). *Garage Days Rerevisited*. Elektra.
- Metallica. (1986). *Master of Puppets*. Elektra.
- Metallica. (1984). *Ride the Lightning*. Elektra.
- Metallica. (1983). *Kill 'Em All*. Megaforce.
- Metallica. (1982). *No Life til Leather*. Metallica.
- M.O.D. (1987). *USA for M.O.D.* Megaforce.
- Motley Crüe. (1989). *Dr. Feelgood*. Elektra.
- Motley Crüe. (1987). *Girls, Girls, Girls*. Elektra.
- Motley Crüe. (1985). *Theater of Pain*. Elektra.
- Motley Crüe. (1984). "Helter Skelter." Elektra.
- Motley Crüe. (1983). *Shout at the Devil*. Elektra.
- Motley Crüe. (1982). *Too Fast For Love*. Elektra.
- Motley Crüe. (1981). *Too Fast For Love*. Leathür.
- Motörhead. (1987). *Rock and Roll*. GWR.
- Motörhead. (1986). *Orgasmatron*. GWR.
- Motörhead. (1984). *No Remorse*. Roadrunner.
- Motörhead. (1983). *Another Perfect Day*. Bronze.
- Motörhead. (1982). *Iron Fist*. Bronze.

Motörhead. (1981). *No Sleep Til Hammersmith*. Bronze.

Motörhead. (1980). *Ace of Spades*. Bronze.

Motörhead. (1979). *Bomber*. Bronze.

Motörhead. (1979). *Overkill*. Bronze.

Motörhead. (1977). *S/T*. Bronze.

Nelson. (1990). *After the Rain*. DGC.

Aldo Nova. (1991). *Blood on the Bricks*. Jambco.

Nuclear Assault. (1991). *Out of Order*. IRS.

Nuclear Assault. (1989). *Handle With Care*. In Effect.

Nuclear Assault. (1988). *Survive*. IRS.

Nuclear Assault. (1986). *Game Over*. Combat.

Obituary. (1989). *Slowly We Rot*. Roadrunner.

Obituary. (1997). *Back From the Dead*. Roadrunner.

Obsession. (1987). *Methods of Madness*. Enigma.

Ozzy Osbourne. (1991). *No More Tears*. Sony.

Ozzy Osbourne. (1990). *Just Say Ozzy*. CBS.

Ozzy Osbourne. (1988). *No Rest For the Wicked*. CBS.

Ozzy Osbourne. (1986). *The Ultimate Sin*. Epic.

Ozzy Osbourne. (1987). *Tribute*. Epic.

Ozzy Osbourne. (1983). *Bark at the Moon*. Epic.

Ozzy Osbourne. (1981). *Diary of a Madman*. Jet.

Ozzy Osbourne. (1980). *Blizzard of Ozz*. Jet.

Overkill. (1988). *Under the Influence*. Atlantic.

- Pantera. (1990). *Cowboys from Hell*. Atlantic.
- Poison. (1991). *Flesh and Blood*. Capitol.
- Poison. (1988). *Open Up and Say Ahh!*. Capitol.
- Poison. (1986). *Look What the Cat Dragged In*. Enigma.
- Powermad. (1989). *Absolute Power*. Warner Brothers.
- Precious Metal. (1990). *S/T*. Capitol.
- Princess Pang. (1989). *S/T*. Capitol.
- Private Life. (1988). *Shadows*. Warner Brothers.
- Private Life. (1990). *S/T*. Warner Brothers.
- Pro-Pain. (1992). *Foul Taste of Freedom*. Energy.
- Queensryche. (1990). *Empire*. EMI.
- Queensryche. (1988). *Operation Mindcrime*. EMI.
- Queensryche. (1986). *Rage for Order*. EMI.
- Queensryche. (1984). *The Warning*. EMI.
- Queensryche. (1983). *S/T*. EMI.
- Quiet Riot. (1988). *QR*. Epic.
- Quiet Riot. (1986). *QR III*. Epic.
- Quiet Riot. (1984). *Condition Critical*. Pasha/Epic..
- Quiet Riot. (1983). *Metal Health*. Pasha/Epic.
- Racer X. (1986). *Second Heat*. Shrapnel.
- Racer X. (1985). *Street Lethal*. Shrapnel.
- Rage. (1990). *Reflections of a Shadow*. Noise.
- Rage. (1987). *Execution Guaranteed*. Noise

- Rage. (1988). *Perfect Man*. Noise.
- Rage. (1989). *Secrets in a Weird World*. Noise.
- Ratt. (1985). *Invasion of your Privacy*. Atlantic.
- Ratt. (1984). *Out of the Cellar*. Atlantic.
- Ratt. (1983). *S/T*. Time Coast Communications.
- Raven. (1986). *The Pack Is Back*. Atlantic.
- Red Hot Chili Peppers. (1991). *Blood Sugar Sex Magik*. Warner Brothers.
- Red Hot Chili Peppers. (1989). *Mother's Milk*. EMI.
- Reverend. (1989). *S/T*. Caroline.
- David Lee Roth. (1988). *Skyscraper*. Warner Brothers.
- David Lee Roth. (1986). *Eat Em and Smile*. Warner Brothers.
- David Lee Roth. (1985). *Crazy From the Heat*. Warner Brothers.
- Rough Cutt. (1986). *Wants You*. Warner Brothers.
- Rough Cutt. (1985). *S/T*. Warner Brothers.
- Rumble Militia. (1991). *Stop Violence and Madness*. Century Media.
- Run DMC. (1986). *Raising Hell*. Profile.
- Running Wild. (1989). *Death or Glory*. Noise.
- S.A.D.O.. (1988). *Dirty Fantasy*. Noise.
- Sacred Reich. (1987). *Ignorance*. Metal Blade.
- Saraya. (1991). *When the Blackbird Sings*. Polygram.
- Saraya. (1989). *S/T*. Polygram.
- Joe Satriani. (1988). *Surfing With the Alien*. Relativity.
- Savatage. (1986). *Fight For the Rock*. Atlantic.

- Saxon. (1990). *Solid Ball of Rock*. Charisma.
- Saxon. (1988). *Destiny*. Enigma.
- Saxon. (1986). *Rock the Nations*. Capitol.
- Saxon. (1985). *Innocence is No Excuse*. Capitol.
- Saxon. (1984). *Crusader*. Carrerre.
- Saxon. (1983). *Power & the Glory*. Carrerre.
- Saxon. (1982). *The Eagle Has Landed*. Carrerre.
- Saxon. (1981). *Denim & Leather*. Carrerre.
- Saxon. (1980). *Strong Arm of the Law*. Carrerre.
- Saxon. (1980). *Wheels of Steel*. Carrerre.
- Saxon. (1979). *Denim & Leather*. Carrerre.
- Scarlet Red. (1989). *Don't Dance With Danger*. Pure Metal.
- Scorpions. (1990). *Crazy World*. Mercury.
- Scorpions. (1988). *Savage Amusement*. Mercury.
- Scorpions. (1985). *World Wide Live*. Mercury.
- Scorpions. (1984). *Love at First Sting*. Mercury.
- Scorpions. (1982). *Blackout*. Mercury.
- Seduce. (1988). *Too Much Ain't Enough*. IRS Metal.
- Sepultura. (1995). *Roots*. Roadrunner.
- Sepultura. (1993). *Chaos A.D.* Roadrunner.
- Sepultura. (1991). *Arise*. Roadrunner.
- Sepultura. (1989). *Beneath the Remains*. Roadrunner.
- Skid Row. (1991). *Slave to the Grind*. Atlantic.

- Skid Row. (1989). *S/T*. Atlantic.
- Slaughter House. (1991). *Face Reality*. Metal Blade.
- Slaughter House. (1990). *S/T*. Metal Blade.
- Slave Raider. (1989). *What Do You Know About Rock 'n' Roll*. Jive.
- Slave Raider. (1986). *Take the World By Storm*. Vision.
- Slayer. (1990). *Seasons in the Abyss*. Def American.
- Slayer. (1988). *South of Heaven*. Def American.
- Slayer. (1986). *Reign in Blood*. Def American.
- Slayer. (1985). *Hell Awaits*. Metal Blade.
- Slayer. (1984). *Live Undead*. Metal Blade.
- Slayer. (1984). *Haunting the Chapel*. Metal Blade.
- Slayer. (1983). *Show No Mercy*. Metal Blade.
- Sleeze Beez. (1990). *Screwed Blued and Tattooed*. Atlantic.
- S.O.D.. (1985). *Speak English or Die*. Megaforce.
- Sound Barrier. (1986). *Speed of Light*. Metal Blade.
- Sound Barrier. (1983). *Total Control*. MCA.
- Sound Barrier. (1984). *Born to Rock*. MCA.
- Stairway to Heaven/Highway to Hell*. (1989). Make a Difference Foundation/Polygram.
- Steeler. (1983). *S/T*. Shrapnel.
- Stryper. (1985). *Soldiers Under Command*. Hollywood.
- Suicidal Tendencies. (1990). *Lights, Camera, Revolution*. Epic.
- Suicidal Tendencies. (1988). *How Will I Laugh Tomorrow....* Epic.
- Tesla. (1990). *Five Man Acoustical Jam*. Geffen.

- Testament. (1990). *Souls of Black*. Atlantic.
- Testament. (1989). *Practice What You Preach*. Atlantic.
- Testament. (1988). *The New Order* (1988)
- Testament. (1987). *The Legacy*. Megaforce.
- Tigertailz. (1987). *Young and Crazy*. Music For Nations.
- TSOL. (1990). *Strange Love*. Enigma.
- TT Quick. (1984). *S/T*. Megaforce.
- TT Quick. (1986). *Metal of Honour*. Megaforce.
- Twisted Sister. (1987). *Love is for Suckers*. Atlantic.
- Twisted Sister. (1985). *Come Out and Play*. Atlantic.
- Twisted Sister. (1984). *Stay Hungry*. Atlantic.
- Twisted Sister. (1983). *You Can't Stop Rock and Roll*. Atlantic.
- Twisted Sister. (1982). *Under the Blade*. Secret.
- Twisted Sister. (1982). *Ruff Cuts*. Secret.
- Ugly Kid Joe. (1991). *As Ugly As They Wanna Be*. Stardog.
- U.S. Metal II*. (1982). Shrapnel.
- U.S. Metal*. (1981). Shrapnel.
- Vendetta. (1988). *Brain Damage*. Noise.
- Venom. (1985). *Possessed*. Neat.
- Venom. (1984). *At War With Satan*. Neat.
- Venom. (1982). *Black Metal*. Neat.
- Venom. (1981). *Welcome to Hell*. Neat.
- Vinnie Vincent Invasion. (1988). *All Systems Go*. Chrysalis.

- Vinnie Vincent Invasion. (1986). *S/T*. Chrysalis.
- Viking. (1989). *Man of Straw*. Metal Blade.
- Viking. (1987). *Do or Die*. Metal Blade.
- Vio-lence. (1990). *Oppressing the Masses*. Atlantic.
- Vio-lence. (1991). *Torture Tactics*. Caroline.
- Vio-lence. (1988). *Eternal Nightmares*. Mechanic.
- Vixen. (1990). *Rev it Up*. EMI.
- Vixen. (1988). *S/T*. EMI.
- Warlock. (1987). *Triumph and Agony*. Phonogram.
- Warlock. (1986). *True as Steel*. Phonogram.
- Warlock. (1985). *Hellbound*. Polydor.
- Warlock. (1984). *Burning the Witches*. Mausoleum.
- Warrant. (1990). *Cherry Pie*. CBS.
- Warrant. (1989). *Dirty Rotten Filthy Stinking Rich*. CBS.
- Warrior. (1985). *Fighting For the Earth*. MCA.
- Warrior Soul. (1990). *Last Decade Dead Century*. Geffen.
- Warrior Soul. (1991). *Drugs, God, and the New Republic*. Geffen.
- Warrior Soul. (1992). *Salutations From the Ghetto Nation*. Geffen.
- Was Not Was. (1983) *Born to Laugh at Tornados*. Geffen.
- W.A.S.P.. (1989). *The Headless Children*. Capitol.
- W.A.S.P.. (1987). *Live in the Raw*. Capitol.
- W.A.S.P.. (1986). *Inside the Electric Circus*. Capitol.
- W.A.S.P.. (1990). *Animal Live*. Music for Nations.

- W.A.S.P. (1985). *The Last Command*. Capitol.
- W.A.S.P.. (1984). *S/T*. Capitol.
- W.A.S.P.. (1984). “Animal (I Fuck Like a Beast.” Music For Nations.
- Watchtower. (1989). *Control and Resistance*. Noise.
- White Lion. (1989). *Big Game*. Atlantic.
- White Lion. (1987). *Pride*. Atlantic.
- White Zombie. (1992). *La Sexorsista – Devil Music Vol. 1*. Geffen.
- Whitesnake. (1989). *Slip of the Tongue*. Geffen.
- Whitesnake. (1987). *S/T*. Geffen.
- Whitesnake. (1984). *Slide It In*. Geffen.
- Xentrix. (1990). *For Whose Advantage?*. Roadrunner.
- Y&T. (1985). *Down For the Count*. A&M.
- Y&T. (1985). *Open Fire*. A&M.
- Y&T. (1984). *In Rock We Trust*. A&M.
- Dweezil Zappa – My Guitar Wants to Kill Your Mama (1988)
- Znowwhite. (1986). *Act of God*. Roadrunner.
- Znowwhite. (1985). *Kick ‘Em When They’re Down*. Enigma.
- Znowwhite. (1984). *All Hail To Thee*. Enigma.

APPENDIX A. METAL ALBUM CHRONOLOGY

Albums from 1983

1. AC/DC – Flick of the Switch
2. Alcatrazz – No Parole for Rock and Roll
3. Angel City – Watch the Red
4. Anvil – Forged in Fire
5. Axe – Nemesis
6. Baron Rojo – Metalmorphosis
7. Bitch – Damnation Alley/Be My Slave
8. Black Sabbath – Born Again
9. Blue Oyster Cult – Revolution By Night
10. Bon Jovi – S/T
11. Coney Hatch – Outa Hand
12. Alice Cooper – Dada
13. Def Leppard – Pyromania
14. Dio – Holy Diver
15. Exciter – Heavy Metal Maniacs
16. Fastway – S/T
17. Fate – S/T
18. Lita Ford – Out for Blood
19. Girlschool – Play Dirty
20. Great White – S/T
21. Hanoi Rocks – Self Destruction Blues
22. Hanoi Rocks – Oriental Beat
23. Hawaii – One Nation Underground
24. Heaven – Where Angels Fear to Tread
25. Heavy Load – Stronger Than Evil
26. Heavy Pettin’ – S/T
27. Helix – No Rest for the Wicked
28. Highway Chile – Storybook Heroes
29. Iron Maiden – Piece of Mind
30. Jaguar – Power Games
31. Killer Dwarfs – S/T
32. Kiss – Lick It Up
33. Kix – Cool Kids
34. Krokus – Headhunter
35. Loudness – Law of Devil’s Land
36. Manowar – Into Glory Ride
37. Mercyful Fate – Melissa
38. Metallica – Kill ‘Em All
39. Motley Crüe – Shout at the Devil
40. Motörhead – Another Perfect Day
41. Michael Schenker Group – Built to Destroy
42. Night Ranger – Midnight Madness
43. Ozzy Osbourne – Bark at the Moon

44. Pantera – Metal Magic
45. Robert Plant – The Principle of Moments
46. Pretty Maids – S/T
47. Queensryche – S/T
48. Quiet Riot – Metal Health
49. Rainbow – Bent Out of Shape
50. Ratt – S/T
51. Raven – All For One
52. Raven – Break the Chain
53. Riot – Born in America
54. Rock Goddess – S/T
55. Savage – Loose ‘n Lethal
56. Savatage – Sirens
57. Saxon – Power & the Glory
58. Shy – Once Bitten, Twice Shy
59. Sinner – Fast Decision
60. Slayer – Show No Mercy
61. Sound Barrier – Total Control
62. Steeler – S/T
63. Talas – Live Speed on Ice
64. Tank – This Means War
65. Twisted Sister – You Can’t Stop Rock and Roll
66. 220 Volt – S/T
67. UFO – Making Contact
68. Van Halen – 1984
69. Vanadium – Race With the Devil
70. Vandenberg – Heading For a Storm
71. Virgin Steele – II Guardians of the Flame
72. Warlord – Deliver Us
73. Waysted – Vices
74. Wild Dogs – S/T
75. Wildfire – Brute Force and ignorance
76. Witchfinder General – Friends of Hell
77. Witchfynde – Cloak and Dagger
78. Xcursion – Ready to Roll
79. Y&T – Mean Streak
80. Zebra – S/T
81. various – Metal Massacre III
82. various – Metal Massacre II

Albums from 1984

1. Lee Aaron – Metal Queen
2. Accept – Balls to the Wall
3. Angel City – Two Minute Warning
4. Anthrax – Fistful of Metal

5. Armored Saint – March of the Saint
6. Autograph – Sign in Please
7. Bathory – S/T
8. Battleaxe – Power from the Universe
9. Black n' Blue – S/T
10. Bon Jovi – S/T
11. Bronz – Taken By Storm
12. Celtic Frost – Morbid Tales
13. The Cult – Dreamtime
14. Deep Purple – Perfect Strangers
15. Destruction – Sentence of Death
16. Dio – The Last in Line
17. Dokken – Tooth and Nail
18. Exciter – Violence and Force
19. Fastway – All Fired Up
20. Fates Warning – Night on Brocken
21. Lita Ford – Dancin' on the Edge
22. Giuffria – S/T
23. Grave Digger – Heavy Metal Breakdown
24. Great White – Shot in the Dark
25. Grim Reaper – See You in Hell
26. Sammy Hagar – VOA
27. Hanoi Rocks – Two Steps from the Move
28. Hanoi Rocks – Back to Mystery City
29. Hawaii – Loud Wild and Heavy
30. Helix – Walkin' the Razor's Edge
31. Helstar – Burning Star
32. Highway Chile – For the Wild and Lonely
33. Holocaust – No Man's Land
34. Icon – S/T
35. Iron Maiden – Powerslave
36. Jag Panzer – Ample Destruction
37. Jaguar – This Time
38. Judas Priest – Defenders of the Faith
39. Kick Axe – Vices
40. Killer – Stronger Than Ever
41. King Kobra – Ready to Strike
42. Kiss – Animalize
43. Krokus – The Blitz
44. Laaz Rockit – Cities Gonna Burn
45. Leatherwolf – S/T
46. Lion's Pride – S/T
47. Loudness – Disillusion: English version
48. Yngwie Malmsteen – Rising Force
49. Mama's Boys – S/T
50. Manowar – Hail to England

51. Mass – War Law
52. Mercyful Fate – Don't Break the Oath
53. Metal Church – S/T
54. Metallica – Ride the Lightning
55. Kim Mitchell – Akimbo Alogo
56. Motley Crüe – Shout at the Devil
57. Motörhead – No Remorse
58. Night Ranger – 7 Wishes
59. Ted Nugent – Penetrator
60. Obsession – Marshall Law
61. Oz – Fire in the Brain
62. Oz – III Warning
63. Pandemonium – Heavy Metal Soldiers
64. Pantera – Projects in the Jungle
65. Piledriver – Metal Inquisition
66. Pretty Maids – Red, Hot, and Heavy
67. Queensryche – The Warning
68. Quiet Riot – Condition Critical
69. Ratt – Out of the Cellar
70. Rock Goddess – Hell Hath No Fury
71. Running Wild – Gates of Purgatory
72. Rush – Grace Under Pressure
73. S.A.D.O. – Shout!
74. Samson – Don't Get Mad – Get Even
75. SanTERS – Guitar Alley
76. Saxon – Crusader
77. Scorpions – Love at First Sting
78. Sinner – Danger Zone
79. Slayer – Live Undead
80. Slayer – Haunting the Chapel
81. Sodom – In the Sign of Evil
82. Sound Barrier - Born to Rock
83. St. Vitus – S/T
84. Stone Fury – Burns Like a Star
85. Tank – Honour & Blood
86. TKO – in Your Face
87. TNT – Knights of the New Thunder
88. Tokyo Blade – Midnight Rendezvous
89. Tokyo Blade – Night of the Blade
90. Torch – Elektrikiss
91. Trash – Watch Out
92. Trouble – Psalm 69
93. TT Quick – S/T
94. Twisted Sister – Stay Hungry
95. 220 Volt – Power Games
96. Vanadium – Game Over

97. Vengeance – S/T
98. Venom- At War With Satan
99. Virgin Steele – Burn the Sun
100. Voivod – War and Pain
101. Warfare – Pre Filth
102. Warlock – Burning the Witches
103. Warlord – Canons of Destruction Have Begun
104. WASP – S/T
105. Waysted – S/T
106. White Wolf – Standing Alone
107. Whitesnake – Slide It In
108. Wild Dogs – Man’s Best Friend
109. Wildfire – Summer Lightning
110. Witchcross – Fit for Fight
111. Witchfynde – Lords of Sin
112. Witchkiller – Day of the Saxons
113. Wolf – Edge of the World
114. Wrathchild – Stakk Attakk
115. Xcursion – Ready to Roll
116. Y&T – In Rock We Trust
117. Zebra – No Tellin’ Lies
118. Znowwhite – All Hail To Thee
119. various – Metal Massacre V

Albums from 1985

1. Lee Aaron – Call of the Wild
2. Accept – Metal Heart
3. AC/DC – Fly on the Wall
4. Aerosmith – Done With Mirrors
5. Agent Steel – Mad Locust Rising
6. Agent Steel – Skeptics Apocalypse
7. Alaska – The Pack
8. Alcatrazz – Disturbing the Peace
9. Angel Witch – Screamin’ n’ Bleedin’
10. Anthem – S/T
11. Anthrax – Spreading the Disease
12. Anthrax – Armed and Dangerous
13. Armored Saint – Delirious Nomad
14. Attacker – Battle at Helm’s Deep
15. Autograph – That’s the Stuff
16. Axewitch – Visions of the Past
17. Baron Rojo – Volumen Brutal
18. Bathory – The Return
19. Black n’ Blue – Without Love
20. Bloodlust – Guilty as Sin
21. Bon Jovi – 7800 Fahrenheit

22. Celtic Frost – To Mega Therion
23. Cities – Annihilation Absolute
24. Coney Hatch – Friction
25. The Cult – Love
26. Demon – Heart of Our Time
27. Destruction – Infernal Overkill
28. Dio – Sacred Heart
29. Dokken – Under Lock and Key
30. Exciter – Long Live the Loud
31. Exodus – Bonded By Blood
32. Faith No More – We Care A Lot
33. Faithful Breath – SKOL
34. Fastway – Waiting For the Roar
35. Fates Warning – The Spectre Within
36. Fist – Danger Zone
37. Grave Digger – Witch Hunter
38. Grim Reaper – Fear No Evil
39. Hallows Eve – Tales of Terror
40. Hanoi Rocks – All Those Wasted Years
41. Hanoi Rocks – Two Steps from the Move (1984)
42. Heart – S/T
43. Heaven – Knockin’ On Heaven’s Door
44. Heavy Pettin’ – Rock Ain’t Dead
45. Helix – Long Way to Heaven
46. Helloween – Walls of Jericho/Helloween EP
47. Highway Chile – Rockarama
48. Icon – Night of the Crime
49. Impaler – Rise of the Mutants
50. Iron Angel – Hellish Crossfire
51. Iron Maiden – Live After Death
52. Keel – the Right to Rock
53. Kick Axe – Welcome to the Club
54. Kiss – Asylum
55. Kix – Midnite Dynamite
56. Kreator – Endless Pain
57. Laaz Rockit – No Stranger to Danger
58. Liege Lord – Freedom’s Rise
59. Lizzy Borden – Love You to Pieces
60. Loudness – Thunder in the East
61. Tony Mac Alpine – Edge of Insanity
62. Malice – In the Beginning
63. Yngwie Malmsteen – Marching Out
64. Mama’s Boys – Power and Passion
65. Manowar – Sign of the Hammer
66. Megadeth – Killing is my Business....
67. Motley Crüe – Theater of Pain

68. Nasty Savage – S/T
69. Omen – Battle Cry
70. Omen – Warning of Danger
71. Omen – The Curse
72. Overkill – Taking Over
73. Pandemonium – Hole in the Sky
74. Robert Plant – Shaken 'n Stirred
75. Q5 – Steel the Light
76. Racer X – Street Lethal
77. Ratt – Invasion of your Privacy
78. Raven – Stay Hard
79. Rogue Male – First Visit
80. David Lee Roth – Crazy From the Heat
81. Rough Cutt – S/T
82. Running Wild – Branded and Exiled
83. Rush – Power Windows
84. Sacrifice – Torment in Fire
85. Savage – Hyperactive
86. Savatage – The Dungeons Are Calling
87. Savatage – Power of the Night
88. Saxon – Innocence is No Excuse
89. Scorpions – World Wide Live
90. Shy – Brave the Storm
91. Slayer – Hell Awaits
92. SOD – Speak English or Die
93. St. Vitus – Hallow's Victim
94. Steel Vengeance – Call Off the Dogs
95. Stryper – Soldiers Under Command
96. Trash – Burnin' Rock
97. Trouble – The Skull
98. Twisted Sister – Come Out and Play
99. 220 Volt – Mind Over Muscle
100. Tygers of Pan Tang – The Wreck-Age
101. Vandenberg – Alibi
102. Venom – Possessed
103. Vicious Rumors – Soldiers of the Night
104. Virgin Steele – Noble Savage
105. Warfare – Metal Anarchy
106. Warlock – Hellbound
107. Warrant – The Enforcer
108. Warrior – Fighting For the Earth
109. WASP – The Last Command
110. Watchtower – Energetic Disassembly
111. Waysted – The Good, the Bad, and the Waysted
112. White Lion – Fight to Survive
113. Y&T – Down For the Count

- 114. Y&T Open Fire
- 115. Znowwhite – Kick ‘Em When They’re Down
- 116. Various – Metal Massacre VII
- 117. Various – Metal Massacre VI

Albums from 1986

- 1. Accept – Russian Roulette
- 2. AC/DC – Who Made Who
- 3. Agent Steel – Unstoppable Force
- 4. Alcatrazz – Dangerous Games
- 5. Angel City – The Howling
- 6. Anthem – Tighrope
- 7. Balaam & the Angel – The Greatest Story Ever Told
- 8. Black n’ Blue – Nasty Nasty
- 9. Black Sabbath – Seventh Star
- 10. Blue Oyster Cult – Club Ninja
- 11. Bloodgood – S/T
- 12. Bon Jovi – Slippery When Wet
- 13. Candlemass – Epicus Domicus Metallicus
- 14. Castle Blak – Babes in Toyland
- 15. Cinderella – Night Songs
- 16. Alice Cooper – Constrictor
- 17. Corrosion of Conformity – Animosity
- 18. Cryptic Slaughter – Convicted
- 19. D.A.D. – Call of the Wild
- 20. Dark Angel – Darkness Descends
- 21. Destruction – Eternal Devastation
- 22. Diamond Head – Behold the Beginning
- 23. Diamond Rexx – Land of the Damned
- 24. Digger – Stronger Than Ever
- 25. Dio – Intermission
- 26. Dr. Mastermind – S/T
- 27. Drivin’ n’ Cryin – Scarred But Smarter
- 28. Europe – The Final Countdown
- 29. Exhorder – The Law
- 30. Fate – A Matter of Attitude
- 31. Fates Warning – Awaken the Guardian
- 32. Flotsam and Jetsam – Doomsday for the Deceiver
- 33. Giuffria – Silk and Steel
- 34. Grave Digger – War Games
- 35. Great White – Shot in the Dark
- 36. Helstar – Remnants of War
- 37. Holy Terror – Terror and Submission
- 38. Hurricane – Take What You Want
- 39. Impaler – If We Had Brains, We’d Be Dangerous

40. Iron Angel – Winds of War
41. Iron Maiden – Somewhere in Time
42. It Bites – The Big Lad in the Windmill
43. Judas Priest – Turbo
44. Keel – The Final Frontier
45. Kick Axe – Rock the World
46. Killer Dwarfs – Stand Tall
47. King Diamond – Fatal Portrait
48. King Kobra – Thrill of a Lifetime
49. Kreator – Pleasure To Kill
50. Krokus – Change of Address
51. Krokus – Alive and Screamin’
52. Legs Diamond - Land of the Gun
53. Lixx – S/T
54. Lizzy Borden – Menace to Society
55. Lizzy Borden – The Murderess Metal Road Show
56. MacAlpine, Sarzo, Aldridge, Rock – Project: Driver
57. Yngwie Malmsteen – Trilogy
58. Manila Road – The Deluge
59. Mass – New Birth
60. Megadeth – Peace Sells But Who’s Buying
61. Metal Church – The Dark
62. Metallica – Master of Puppets
63. Kim Mitchell – Shakin' Like a Human Being
64. Motörhead – Orgasmatron
65. Nuclear Assault – Game Over
66. Ted Nugent – Little Miss Dangerous
67. Obsession – Scarred for Life
68. Ozzy Osbourne – The Ultimate Sin
69. Piledriver – Stay Ugly
70. Poison – Look What the Cat Dragged In
71. Iggy Pop – Blah, Blah, Blah
72. Possessed – Beyond the Gates
73. Q5 – When the Mirror Cracks
74. Queensryche – Rage for Order
75. Quiet Riot – QR III
76. Racer X – Second Heat
77. Ratt – Dancing Undercover
78. Raven – The Pack Is Back
79. Raven – Mad
80. David Lee Roth – Eat Em and Smile
81. Rough Cutt – Wants You
82. Joe Satriani – Not of the Earth
83. Savatage – Fight For the Rock
84. Saxon – Rock the Nations
85. Sentinel Beast – Depths of Death

86. Sepultura – Morbid Visions
87. Slayer – Reign in Blood
88. Sodom – Obsessed By Cruelty
89. Sound Barrier – Speed of Light
90. St. Vitus – Born Too Late
91. Steel Vengeance – Second Offense
92. Steeler – Strike Back
93. Stone Fury – Let Them Talk
94. Stryper – Yellow and Black Attack
95. Stryper – To Hell With the Devil
96. Sword – Metalized
97. Tankard – Zombie Attack
98. Tesla – Mechanical Resonance
99. TKO – Below the Belt
100. Tokyo Blade – Blackhearts and Jaded Spaded
101. Torme – Back to Babylon
102. TSOL – Revenge
103. TT Quick – Metal of Honour
104. UFO – Misdemeanor
105. Van Halen – 5150
106. Vinnie Vincent Invasion – S/T
107. Voivod – RROOOAARRR
108. War Machine – Unknown Soldier
109. Warfare – Metal Fuckin’ Mayhem
110. Warlock – True as Steel
111. Warlord – Thy Kingdom Come
112. WASP – Inside the Electric Circus
113. White Wolf – Endangered Species
114. Dweezil Zappa – Havin’ a Bad Day
115. Zebra – 3.V
116. Zeno – S/T
117. Znowwhite – Act of God
118. soundtrack – Iron Eagle
119. soundtrack – Trick or Treat
120. various – Metal Massacre VIII
121. various – Metal Massacre VII

Albums from 1987

1. Lee Aaron – S/T
2. Aerosmith – Permanent Vacation
3. Anthrax – Among the Living
4. Anvil – Strength of Steel
5. Apocrypha – The Forgotten Scroll
6. Armored Saint – Raising Fear
7. Autograph – Loud and Clear

8. Axehammer – Lord of the Realm
9. Bathory – Sign of the Black Mark
10. Bitch – The Bitch is Back
11. Black Sabbath – Eternal Idol
12. Blood Feast – Kill For Pleasure
13. Bloodgood – Detonation
14. Celtic Frost – Into the Pandemonium
15. Chastain – The 7th of Never
16. Alice Cooper – Raise Your Fist and Yell
17. Corrosion of Conformity – Technocracy
18. Cryptic Slaughter – Money Talks
19. The Cult – Electric
20. D.A.D. – D.A.D. Draws a Circle
21. Damien – Every Dog Has Its Day
22. Death – Screaming Bloody Gore
23. Death Angel – The Ultra Violence
24. Deep Purple – House of Blue Light
25. Def Leppard – Hysteria
26. Demon – Breakout
27. Diamond – S/T
28. Dio – Dream Evil
29. Dokken – Back for the Attack
30. Eric Steel – Infectious
31. Exciter – Unveiling the Wicked
32. Exodus – Pleasures of the Flesh
33. EZO – S/T
34. Faith No More – Introduce Yourself
35. Faster Pussycat – S/T
36. Ace Frehley – Frehley's Comet
37. Great Kat – Worship Me or Die
38. Great White – Recovery Live
39. Great White – Once Bitten
40. Grim Reaper – Rock You to Hell
41. Guns & Roses – Appetite for Destruction
42. Hades – Resisting Success
43. Sammy Hagar – I Never Said Goodbye
44. Heathen – Victims of Deception
45. Helix – Wild in the Streets
46. Hellion – Postcards From the Asylum
47. Hellion – Screams in the Night
48. Helloween – Keeper of the Seven Keys I
49. Impellitteri – S/T
50. Jane's Addiction – S/T
51. Steve Jones – Mercy
52. Keel – S/T
53. King Diamond – Abigail

54. Kiss – Crazy Nights
55. Laaz Rockit – Know Your Enemy
56. LA Guns – S/T
57. Leatherwolf - S/T
58. Liege Lord – Master Control
59. Lizzy Borden – Visual Lies
60. Lizzy Borden – Terror Rising
61. Loudness – Lightning Strikes
62. Tony MacAlpine – Maximum Security
63. Malice – License to Kill
64. Mama's Boys – Growing Up the Hard Way
65. Manowar – Fighting the World
66. Masi – Fire in the Rain
67. McAuley Schenker Group – Perfect Timing
68. Megadeth – So Far, So Good, So What
69. Mercyful Fate – The Beginning
70. Metallica – Garage Days Rerevisited
71. Ministry – The Mind's a Terrible Thing to Taste
72. M.O.D. - USA for MOD
73. Montrose – Mean
74. Motley Crüe – Girls, Girls, Girls
75. Motörhead – Rock and Roll
76. Nasty Savage – Indulgence
77. Necros – Tangled Up
78. Night Ranger – Big Life
79. No Mercy – S/T
80. John Norum – Total Control
81. Obsession – Methods of Madness
82. Omen – Nightmares
83. Ozzy Osbourne – Tribute
84. Pantera – Power Metal
85. Plasmatics – Maggots
86. Pretty Maids – Future World
87. Prong – Force Fed
88. Prong – Primitive Origins
89. Rage – Execution Guaranteed
90. Raven – Life's a Bitch
91. Kane Roberts – S/T
92. Rock City Angels – S/T
93. Royal Court of China
94. Rush – Hold Your Fire
95. Sacred Child – S/T
96. Sacred Reich – Ignorance
97. Sacrifice – Forward to Termination
98. Sanctuary – Refuge Denied
99. Savatage – Hall of the Mountain King

100. Sepultura – Schizophrenia
101. Shogun – 31 Days
102. Shok Paris – Steel and Starlight
103. Shy – Excess All Areas
104. Sodom – Persecution Mania
105. Suicidal Tendencies – Join the Army
106. Testament – The Legacy
107. Tigertailz – Young and Crazy
108. TNT – Tell No Tales
109. Trouble – Run to the Light
110. TSOL – Hit and Run
111. Twisted Sister – Love is for Suckers
112. Tygers of Pan Tang – Burning in the Shade
113. Tyrant – Too Late to Pray
114. Tyton – Mind Over Metal
115. U.D.O. – Animal House
116. Vengeance – Take It or Leave It
117. Venom – Calm Before the Storm
118. Victory – Hungry Hearts
119. Victory – Don't Get Mad, Get Even
120. Viking – Do or Die
121. Voivod – Killing Technology
122. Warlock – Triumph and Agony
123. WASP – Live in the Raw
124. Waysted – Save Your Prayers
125. White Lion – Pride
126. Whitesnake – S/T
127. Wild Dogs – Reign of Terror
128. World War II – S/T
129. Wrath – Nothing to Fear
130. Y&T – Contagious
131. Soundtrack – Dudes
132. Soundtrack – Less Than Zero
133. Various – Best of Metal Blade I
134. Various – Metal Massacre VIII

Albums from 1988

1. AC/DC – Blow Up Your Video
2. Anthrax – State of Euphoria
3. Anthrax – I'm the Man
4. Anvil – Pound for Pound
5. Apocrypha – The Eyes of Time
6. Armored Saint – Saints Will Conquer
7. Artch – Another Return to Church Hill
8. Barren Cross – Rock for the King

9. Barren Cross – Atomic Arena
10. Bathory – Blood, Fire, Death
11. Betsy – S/T
12. Black n' Blue – In Heat
13. Blue Oyster Cult – Imaginos
14. Bon Jovi – New Jersey
15. Britny Fox – S/T
16. Bulletboys – S/T
17. Cacophony – Go Off!
18. Candlemass – Nightfall
19. Celtic Frost – Cold Lake
20. Chastain – The Voice of the Cult
21. David T. Chastain – Within the Heat
22. China – S/T
23. Cinderella – Long Cold Winter
24. Circus of Power – S/T
25. Crimson Glory – Transcendence
26. Cryptic Slaughter – Stream of Consciousness
27. Dangerous Toys – S/T
28. Danzig – S/T
29. Death – Leprosy
30. Death Angel – Frolic Through the Park
31. Deep Purple – Nobody's Perfect
32. Destruction – Release From Agony
33. Dirty Looks – Cool From the Wire
34. D'Molls – S/T
35. The Dogs D'amour – Graveyard of Empty Bottles
36. The Dogs D'amour – In The Dynamite Jet Saloon
37. Dokken – Beast from the East
38. Drive – Characters in Time
39. Drivin'n' Cryin – Whisper Tames the Lion
40. Europe – Out of this World
41. Exciter – S/T
42. Fates Warning – No Exit
43. Femme Fatale – S/T
44. Flotsam and Jetsam – No Place For Disgrace
45. Forbidden – Forbidden Evil
46. Lita Ford – Lita
47. Ace Frehley – Second Sighting
48. Frehley's Comet – Live +1
49. Girlschool – Take a Bite
50. Gothic Slam – Killer Instinct
51. Great White – Recovery Live
52. Guns & Roses – GnR Lies
53. Hades – If At First You Don' Succeed...
54. Hallows Eve – Monument

55. Helloween – Keeper of the Seven Keys II
56. Heretic – Breaking Point
57. House of Lords – S/T
58. Hurricane – Over the Edge
59. Impellitteri – Stand in Line
60. Iron Maiden – Seventh Son of a Seventh Son
61. It Bites – Once Around the World
62. Jane's Addiction – Nothing's Shocking
63. Jetboy – Feel the Shake
64. Judas Priest – Ram It Down
65. Killer Dwarfs – Big Deal
66. King Diamond – Them
67. King Kobra – III
68. Kingdom Come – S/T
69. Kings of the Sun – S/T
70. King's X – Out of the Silent Planet
71. Kiss – Smashes, Thrashes, & Hits
72. Kix – Blow My Fuse
73. Kreator – Terrible Certainty
74. Krokus – Heart Attack
75. Legal Weapon – Life Sentence to Love
76. Liege Lord – Burn to my Touch
77. Lillian Axe – S/T
78. Living Colour – Vivid
79. Loudness – Hurricane Eyes
80. Mallet-head – S/T
81. Yngwie Malmsteen – Odyssey
82. Manowar – Kings of Metal
83. Masters of Reality – S/T
84. Andy McCoy – Too Much Ain't Enough
85. Meliah Rage – Kill to Survive
86. Mercyful Fate – Return of the Vampire
87. Metallica – And Justice for All
88. Ministry – The Land of Rape and Honey
89. Motörhead – No Sleep at All
90. Nasty Savage – Abstract Reality
91. Night Ranger – Man in Motion
92. Nuclear Assault – Handle With Care
93. Ted Nugent – If You Can't Lick 'Em.. Lick 'Em
94. Nuclear Assault – The Survive
95. Ozzy Osbourne – No Rest For the Wicked
96. Overkill – Under the Influence
97. Jimmy Page – Outrider
98. Robert Plant – Now and Zen
99. Poison – Open Up and Say Ahh!
100. Iggy Pop – Instinct

- 101.Powermad – The Madness Begins
- 102.Private Life – Shadows
- 103.Quiet Riot – QR
- 104.Queensryche – Operation Mindcrime
- 105.Rage – Perfect Man
- 106.Ratt – Reach for the Sky
- 107.Raven – Nothing Exceeds Like Excess
- 108.Rigor Mortis – S/T
- 109.Riot – Thundersteel
- 110.Rock City Angels – Young Man’s Blues
- 111.David Lee Roth – Skyscraper
- 112.Roughhouse – S/T
- 113.Roxx Gang – Things You’ve Never Done Before
- 114.Running Wild – Port Royal
- 115.Sabbat – History of a Time to Come
- 116.Sacred Reich – Surf Nicaragua
- 117.S.A.D.O. – Dirty Fantasy
- 118.Sadus – Illusions
- 119.Joe Satriani – Dreaming #11
- 120.Joe Satriani – Surfing With the Alien
- 121.Saxon – Destiny
- 122.Scanner – Hypertrace
- 123.Scorpions – Savage Amusement
- 124.Seduce – Too Much Ain’t Enough
- 125.Slave Raider – What Do You Know About Rock’n’Roll (88)
- 126.Slave Raider – Take the World By Storm
- 127.Slayer – South of Heaven
- 128.Smashed Gladys – Social Intercourse
- 129.Soundgarden – Ultramega OK
- 130.St. Vitus – Mournful Cries
- 131.Steel Vengeance – Prisoners
- 132.Stone – S/T
- 133.Stryper – In God We Trust
- 134.Suicidal Tendencies – How Will I Laugh Tomorrow...
- 135.Sword – Sweet Dreams
- 136.Tankard – The Morning After
- 137.Tattoo – Blood Red
- 138.Testament – The New Order
- 139.Token Entry – Jaybird
- 140.U.D.O. – Mean Machine
- 141.UFO – Ain’t Misbehavin’
- 142.Steve Vai – Flexable
- 143.Van Halen – OU812
- 144.Vendetta – Brain Damage
- 145.Vendetta – Go and Live... Stay and Die
- 146.Vengeance – Take It or Leave It

- 147. Victory – That's Live
- 148. Vinnie Vincent Invasion – All Systems Go
- 149. Vio-lence – Eternal Nightmares
- 150. Vixen – S/T
- 151. Wasted Youth – Black Daze
- 152. Wehrmacht – Beirmacht
- 153. Whitecross – Hammer and Nail
- 154. Wrath – Fit of Anger
- 155. Wrathchild – The Bizz Suxx
- 156. Dweezil Zappa – My Guitar Wants to Kill Your Mama
- 157. Zed Yago – From Over Yonder
- 158. Zodiac Mindwarp – Tattooed Beat Messiah
- 159. Soundtrack – Decline of Western Civilization II
- 160. Soundtrack – Johnny Be Good
- 161. Various – Metal Massacre IX

Albums from 1989

- 1. Lee Aaron – Bodyrock
- 2. Accept – Eat the Heat
- 3. Aerosmith – Pump
- 4. The Almighty – Blood, Fire, and Love
- 5. American Angel – S/T
- 6. Angel City – Beyond Salvation
- 7. Annihilator – Alice in Hell
- 8. Anvil – Past and Present Live
- 9. Atrophy – Socialized Hate
- 10. Awful Truth – S/T
- 11. Babylon A.D. – S/T
- 12. Bad Brains – Quickness
- 13. Bad English – S/T
- 14. Badlands – S/T
- 15. Balaam & the Angel – Days of Madness
- 16. Bang Tango – Psycho Cafe
- 17. Bang Tango – Live Injection
- 18. Barren Cross – State of Control
- 19. Beau Nasty – Dirty, But Well Dressed
- 20. Betsy – S/T
- 21. The Big F – S/T
- 22. Bitch – A Rose By Any Other Name
- 23. Black Sabbath – Headless Cross
- 24. Blood Feast – Chopping Block Blues
- 25. Blue Murder – S/T
- 26. Bonham – The Disregard of Timekeeping
- 27. Britny Fox – Boyz in Heat
- 28. Jon Butcher – Pictures From the Front

29. Carcass – Symphonies of Sickness
30. Cats in Boots – Kicked ‘n Klawed
31. Alice Cooper – Trash
32. The Cult – Sonic Temple
33. D.A.D. – No Fuel Left for the Pilgrims
34. Damien – Stop This War
35. Danger Danger – S/T
36. Defiance – Product of Society
37. Destruction – Live Without Sense
38. Dogs D’Amour – Graveyard of Empty Bottles
39. Dogs D’amour – Errol Flynn
40. Dogs D’amour – King of the Thieves
41. Doro – Force Majure
42. Drivin’n’Cryin – Mystery Road
43. Enuff Z’nuff – S/T
44. Exodus – Fabulous Disaster
45. Extreme – S/T
46. EZO – Fire Fire
47. Faith No More – The Real Thing
48. Faith or Fear – Punishment Area
49. Faster Pussycat – Wake Me When It’s Over
50. Fastway – On Target
51. Fates Warning – Perfect Symphony
52. Fiona – Heart Like a Gun
53. Fire Merchants – S/T
54. Forbidden – Raw Evil: Live at the Dynamo
55. Forced Entry – Uncertain Future
56. Ace Frehley – Trouble Walkin’
57. Gang Green – Older...
58. Gothic Slam – Just a Face in the Crowd
59. Great White – Twice Shy
60. Guardian – First Watch
61. Gun – Taking on the World
62. The Hangmen – S/T
63. Havana Black – Indian Warrior
64. Heist – High Heel Heaven
65. Helloween – I Want Out Live
66. Helstar – Nosferatu
67. Icon – Right Between the Eyes
68. It Bites – Eat Me in St. Louis
69. Jailhouse – Alive in a Mad World
70. Jet Red – S/T
71. Steve Jones – Fire and Gasoline
72. Junkyard – S/T
73. Tim Karr – Rubbin’ Me the Right Way
74. Keel – Larger Than Live

75. Kill for Thrills – Commercial Suicide
76. King Diamond – Conspiracy
77. Kingdom Come – In Your Face
78. King's X – Gretchen Goes To Nebraska
79. Kiss – Hot in the Shade
80. Kreator – Extreme Aggression
81. Laaz Rokit – Annihilation Principle
82. LA Guns – Cocked and Loaded
83. Last Crack - Sinister Funkhouse #1
84. Leatherwolf – Street Ready
85. Lillian Axe - Love and War
86. Lion – Trouble in Angel City
87. The London Quireboys – A Bit of What You Fancy
88. Lord Tracy – Deaf Gods of Babylon
89. Loudness – Soldier of Fortune
90. Malicious Intent – Shades of Black
91. Mammoth – S/T
92. Guy Mann-Dude – Slight of Hand
93. Marchello – Destiny
94. Mass – Voices in the Night
95. McAuley Schenker Group – Save Yourself
96. Mekong Delta – S/T
97. Meliah Rage – Live Kill
98. Metal Church – Blessing in Disguise
99. Kim Mitchell – Rockland
100. Michael Monroe – Not Fakin' It
101. Mordred – Fool's Game
102. Mortal Sin – Face of Despair
103. Motley Crüe – Dr. Feelgood
104. Mr. Big – S/T
105. Nasty Savage – Penetration Point
106. Nevada Beach – S/T
107. Nine Inch Nails – Pretty Hate Machine
108. Nirvana – Bleach
109. Nitro – OFR
110. Nuclear Assault – Handle With Care
111. Obituary – Slowly We Rot
112. Onslaught – In Search of Sanity
113. Overkill – The Years of Decay
114. Axel Rudi Pell – Wild Obsession
115. Phantom Blue – S/T
116. Powermad – Absolute Power
117. Pretty Boy Floyd – Leather Boys with Electric Toys
118. Princess Pang – S/T
119. Rage – Secrets in a Weird World
120. Rage of Angels – S/T

- 121.Raging Slab – S/T
- 122.Reverend – S/T
- 123.Royal Court of China – Geared & Primed
- 124.Running Wild – Death or Glory
- 125.Rush – A Show of Hands
- 126.Rush – Presto
- 127.Sacred Warrior – Master’s Command
- 128.Sacred Warrior – Rebellion
- 129.Sacrilege – Turn Back Throttle
- 130.S.A.D.O. – Sensitive
- 131.Saraya – S/T
- 132.Joe Satriani – Flying in a Blue Dream
- 133.Savatage – Gutter Ballet
- 134.Scanner – Terminal Earth
- 135.Scarlet Red – Don’t Dance With Danger
- 136.Scorpions – Best of Rockers and Ballads
- 137.Sea Hags – S/T
- 138.Sepultura – Beneath the Remains
- 139.Shah – Beware
- 140.Shark Island – Law of the Order
- 141.Shark Island – Bastille Day
- 142.Shok Paris – Concrete Killers
- 143.Shotgun Messiah – S/T
- 144.Shout – In Your Face
- 145.Shy – Welcome to the Madhouse
- 146.Signal – Loud & Clear
- 147.Skid Row – S/T
- 148.Slave Raider – What Do You Know About Rock n Roll
- 149.Sodom – Agent Orange
- 150.Soundgarden – Louder Than Love
- 151.Steve Stevens – Atomic Playboys
- 152.Stratovarius – Fright Night
- 153.Suicidal Tendencies – Deja Vu
- 154.Tangier – Four Winds
- 155.Tank – S/T
- 156.Tankard – Hair of the Dog
- 157.Tattooed Love Boys – Bleeding Hearts & Needle Marks
- 158.Tesla – The Great Radio Controversy
- 159.Testament – Practice What You Preach
- 160.TNT – Intuition
- 161.Tora Tora – Surprise Attack
- 162.TSOL – Dance With Me
- 163.220 Volt – Eye to Eye
- 164.Vain – No Respect
- 165.Vamp – The Rich Don’t Rock
- 166.Venom – Prime Evil

- 167. Victory – Culture Killed the Native
- 168. Viking – Man of Straw
- 169. Voivod – Nothingface
- 170. Warrant – Dirty Rotten Filthy Stinking Rich
- 171. WASP – The Headless Children
- 172. Watchtower – Control and Resistance
- 173. White Lion – Big Game
- 174. White Zombie – Make Them Die Slowly
- 175. Whitesnake – Slip of the Tongue
- 176. Winger – S/T (1988)
- 177. Wolfsbane – Live Fast, Die Fast
- 178. Wolvz – Down & Dirty
- 179. Wrathchild America – Climbin’ the Walls
- 180. X-Sinner – Get It
- 181. XYZ – XYZ
- 182. Zed Yago – Pilgrimage
- 183. Soundtrack – Leatherface
- 184. Soundtrack – Shocker
- 185. Various – Make a Difference Foundation
- 186. Various – Ultimate Revenge 2

Albums from 1990

- 1. AC/DC – The Razor’s Edge
- 2. Alice in Chains – Facelift
- 3. Anacrusis – Suffering Hour
- 4. Angel Witch – Live
- 5. Angelica – Walkin’ in Faith
- 6. Annihilator – Never, Neverland
- 7. Anthem – No Smoke without Fire
- 8. Anthrax – Persistence of Time
- 9. Apocrypha – Area 54
- 10. Arsenal – Armored Choir
- 11. Artillery – By Inheritance
- 12. Atheist – Piece of Time
- 13. Atom Seed – Get in Line
- 14. Atrophy – Violent By Nature
- 15. Bang Gang – Love Sells
- 16. Bathory – Hammerheart
- 17. Baton Rouge – Lights Out on the Playground
- 18. Believer – Sanity
- 19. Biohazard – S/T
- 20. Bitter End – Harsh Realities
- 21. Black Crowes – Shake Your Moneymaker
- 22. Black Sabbath – TYR
- 23. Blue Tears – S/T

24. Jon Bon Jovi – Blaze of Glory
25. Celtic Frost – Vanity/Nemesis
26. Child's Play – Rat Race
27. CIA – In the Red
28. Cinderella – Heartbreak Station
29. Circus of Power – Vices
30. Cold Sweat – Break Out
31. Company of Wolves – S/T
32. Cronos – Dancing in the Fire
33. Cryptic Slaughter – Speak Your Peace
34. Cry Wolf – Crunch
35. Damn Yankees – S/T
36. Danzig – Danzig II: Lucifuge
37. Death – Spiritual Healing
38. Death Angel – Fall From Grace
39. Death Angel – Act III
40. Deep Purple – Slaves and Masters
41. Defiance – Void Terra Firma
42. Deicide – S/T
43. Destruction – Cracked Brain
44. Bruce Dickinson – Tattooed Millionaire
45. Dillenger – Horses & Hawgs (1991)
46. Dio – Lock Up the Wolves
47. Dirty Blonde – Passion
48. Dirty Looks – Turn of the Screw
49. Dirty White Boy – Bad Reputation
50. D'Molls – Warped
51. Dogs D'amour – Straight
52. Don Dokken – Up from the Ashes
53. Doro – S/T
54. D'Priest – Playa Del Rock
55. Drivin'n'Cryin – Fly Me Courageous
56. Electric Angels – S/T
57. Electric Boys – Funk-O-Metal Carpet Ride
58. Every Mother's Nightmare – S/T
59. Exodus – Impact is Imminent
60. Extreme – Pornograffitti
61. Eyes – S/T
62. Faith No More – Live at Brixton Academy
63. Fastway – Bad Bad Girls
64. Firehouse – S/T
65. Flotsam and Jetsam – When the Storm Comes Down
66. Forbidden – Twisted into Form
67. Lita Ford – Stiletto
68. Funhouse – Generation Generator
69. Gamma Ray – Heading for Tomorrow

70. Great Kat – Beethoven on Speed
71. GWAR – Scumdogs of the Universe
72. Gypsy Rose – Prey
73. Harlow – S/T
74. Heaven's Edge – S/T
75. Helix – Back for Another Taste
76. Helmet – Strap It On
77. Herricane Alice – Tear the House Down
78. Holy Soldier – S/T
79. House of Lords – Sahara
80. Hurricane – Slave to the Thrill
81. Iron Maiden – No Prayer for the Dying
82. Jane's Addiction – Ritual de lo Habitual
83. Jet Circus – Step On It
84. Jetboy – Damned Nation
85. Johnny Crash – Neighborhood Threat
86. Eric Johnson – Ah Via Musicom
87. Judas Priest – Painkiller
88. Katmandu – S/T
89. Kill for Thrills – Dynamite for Nightmareland
90. Killer Dwarfs – Dirty Weapons
91. Killjoy – Compelled By Fear
92. King Diamond – The Eye
93. Kings of the Sun – Full Frontal Attack
94. King's X – Faith Hope Love
95. Kreator – Coma of Souls
96. Legs Diamond – Town Bad Girl
97. Little Caesar – S/T
98. Living Colour – Time's Up
99. Lizzy Borden – Master of Disguise
100. Lock Up – Something Bitchin' This Way Comes
101. Love/Hate – Blackout in the Red Room
102. Lynch Mob – Wicked Sensation
103. MacAlpine – Eyes of the World
104. Malice – Crazy In the Night
105. Yngwie Malmsteen – Eclipse
106. Malteze – Count Your Blessings
107. Manitoba's Wild Kingdom – And You?
108. Alex Masi – Vertical Invader
109. Megadeth – Rust in Peace
110. Meliah Rage – Solitary Solitude
111. Motörhead – The Birthday Party
112. Napalm Death – Harmony Corruption
113. Necros – Live or Else
114. Nevada Beach – Zero Day
115. Night Ranger – Live in Japan

- 116.Nocturnus – The Key
- 117.No Sweat – S/T
- 118.Obituary – Cause of Death
- 119.Ozzy Osbourne – Just Say Ozzy
- 120.Pantera – Cowboys from Hell
- 121.Paradise Lost – Lost Paradise
- 122.Robert Plant – Manic Nirvana
- 123.Chris Poland – Return to Metalopolis
- 124.Iggy Pop – Brick By Brick
- 125.Precious Metal – S/T
- 126.Pretty Maids – Lethal Heroes
- 127.Private Life – S/T
- 128.Prong – Beg to Differ
- 129.Queensryche – Empire
- 130.Rage – Reflections of a Shadow
- 131.Ratt – Detonator
- 132.Reverend – World Won't Miss You
- 133.Rhino Bucket – S/T
- 134.Riot – The Privilege of Power
- 135.Running Wild – Blazon Stone
- 136.Sacred Reich – The American Way
- 137.Sacred Warrior – Wicked Generation
- 138.Sacrifice – Soldiers of Misfortune
- 139.Sadus – Swallowed in Black
- 140.Salty Dog – Every Dog Has Its Day
- 141.Samson – Refugee
- 142.Sanctuary – Into the Mirror Black
- 143.Saxon – Solid Ball of Rock
- 144.Scanner – Terminal Earth
- 145.Scatterbrain – Here Comes Trouble
- 146.Scorpions – Crazy World
- 147.Shy England – Misspent Youth
- 148.Slaughter – Stick it Live
- 149.Slaughter – Stick it to Ya
- 150.Slaughter House – S/T
- 151.Slayer – Seasons in the Abyss
- 152.Sleeze Beez – Screwed, Blued, and Tattooed
- 153.Sodom – Better Off Dead
- 154.Sons of Angels – S/T
- 155.Spread Eagle – S/T
- 156.Stryper – Against the Law
- 157.Suicidal Tendencies – Lights, Camera, Revolution
- 158.Sweet FA – Stick to Your Guns
- 159.Tattoo – Out Loud
- 160.Tesla – Five Man Acoustical Jam
- 161.Testament – Souls of Black

- 162. Thunder – Backstreet Symphony
- 163. Tigertailz – Berzerk
- 164. Toranga – God's Gift
- 165. Trixter – S/T
- 166. Trouble – S/T
- 167. Trouble Tribe – S/T
- 168. TSOL – Strange Love
- 169. 24-7 Spyz – Gumbo Millennium
- 170. U.D.O. – Faceless World
- 171. Steve Vai – Passion and Warfare
- 172. Valentine – S/T
- 173. Vengeance Rising – Once Dead
- 174. Vicious Rumors – S/T
- 175. Vio-lence – Oppressing the Masses
- 176. Vixen – Rev it Up
- 177. Warrant – Cherry Pie
- 178. Warrior Soul – Last Decade Dead Century
- 179. WASP – Animal Live
- 180. Winger – In the Heart of the Young
- 181. Wrath – Insane Society
- 182. WW III – S/T
- 183. Xentrix – For Whose Advantage?
- 184. Y&T – 10
- 185. Zinatra – The Great Escape
- 186. Various – Metal Massacre X

Albums from 1991

- 1. Lee Aaron – Some Girls Do
- 2. The Almighty – Soul Destruction
- 3. Anacrusis – Manic Impression
- 4. Angelica – Rock, Stock, and Barrel
- 5. Anthrax – Attack of the Killer Bees
- 6. Anvil – Worth the Weight
- 7. Armed Forces – Take on the Nation
- 8. Armored Saint – Symbol of Salvation
- 9. Artch – For the Sake of Mankind
- 10. Asphalt Ballet – S/T
- 11. Asphyx – The Rack
- 12. At the Gates – The Red Sky is Ours
- 13. Atheist – Unquestionable Presence
- 14. Badlands – Voodoo Highway
- 15. Bang Tango – Dancin' on Coals
- 16. Bathory – Twilight of the Gods
- 17. Baton Rouge – Shake Your Soul
- 18. Ken Baumgartner – Bomber

19. Big House – S/T
20. Blitzspear – Saves
21. Bride – Kinetic Faith
22. Brighton Rock – Love Machine
23. Britny Fox – Bite Down Hard
24. Bulletboys – Freakshow
25. Cathedral – Forest of Equilibrium
26. Cerebral Fix – Bastards
27. David T. Chastain – Elegant Seduction
28. Contraband – S/T
29. Alice Cooper – Hey Stoopid
30. Corrosion of Conformity – Blind
31. Crimson Glory – Strange and Beautiful
32. The Cult – Ceremony
33. Cycle Sluts From Hell – S/T
34. Cyclone Temple – I Hate Therefore I Am
35. Danger Danger – Screw It
36. Dangerous Toys – Hellacious Acres
37. Dark Angel – Time Does Not Heal
38. Death – Human
39. Despair – Decay of Humanity
40. Despair – Beyond All Reason
41. Diamond REXX – Golden Gates
42. Dirty Looks – Bootlegs
43. Dogs D’amour – Dog Hits and Bootlegs
44. Edge of Sanity – Nothing But Death Remains
45. Enuff Z’nuff – Strength
46. Europe – Prisoners in Paradise
47. Fates Warning – Parallels
48. Lita Ford – Dangerous Curves
49. Four Horseman – Nobody Said It Was Easy
50. Galactic Cowboys – S/T
51. Eric Gales – S/T
52. Gamma Ray – Sigh No More
53. Craig Goldy’s Ritual – Hidden in Plain Sight
54. Grave – Into the Grave
55. Great White – Hooked
56. Guns & Roses – Use Your Illusion II
57. Guns & Roses – Use Your Illusion I
58. Stuart Hamm – The Urge
59. Haunted Garage – Possession Park
60. Havana Black – Exiles in Mainstream
61. Hellion – The Black Book
62. Helloween – The Best, the Rest, the Rare
63. Helloween – Pink Bubbles Go Ape
64. Iced Earth – S/T

65. I Love You – S/T
66. Ignorance – The Confident Rat
67. Immolation – Dawn of Possession
68. Impaler – Wake up Screaming
69. Infectious Grooves – Plague that Makes Your Booty Move
70. Intruder – Psycho Savant
71. Johnny Law – S/T
72. Junkyard – Sixes, Sevens, and Nines
73. Kik Tracee – No Rules
74. Kinetic Dissent – I Will Fight No More Forever
75. King Diamond – In Concert 1987 Abigail
76. Kingdom Come – Hands of Time
77. Kix – Hot Wire
78. Krokus – Stampede
79. LA Guns – Holiday Fourplay
80. LA Guns – Hollywood Vampires
81. Last Crack – Burning Time
82. Law & Order – Rites of Passage
83. Lawnmower Deth - Ooh Crikey, It's ...
84. Little Angels – Young Gods
85. Living Colour – Biscuits
86. The Lost – S/T
87. Loudness – Loudest Loudness
88. Loudness – On the Prowl
89. Yngwie Malmsteen – Fire and Ice
90. Manowar – The Triumph of Steel
91. McQueen Street – S/T
92. Metal Church – The Human Factor
93. Metallica – S/T
94. Mind Funk – S/T
95. Mordred – In This Life
96. Motley Crüe – Decade of Decadence
97. Motörhead – 1916
98. Mr. Big – Lean Into It
99. Mr. Bungle – S/T
100. Nirvana – Nevermind
101. Nitro – Nitro II: H.W.D.W.S.
102. Noisy Mama – Everybody Has One
103. Aldo Nova – Blood on the Bricks
104. Nuclear Assault – Out of Order
105. The Obsessed – Lunar Womb
106. Ozzy Osbourne – No More Tears
107. Outlaw Blood – S/T
108. Overkill – Horrorscope
109. Oz – Roll the Dice
110. Panic – Epidemic

- 111.Paradise Lost – Gothic
- 112.Pearl Jam – Ten
- 113.Axel Rudi Pell – Nasty Reputation
- 114.Pleasure Bombs – Days of Heaven
- 115.Steve Plunkett – My Attitude
- 116.Poison – Flesh and Blood
- 117.Poltergeist – Behind My Mask
- 118.Powersurge – S/T
- 119.Praying Mantis – Live at Last
- 120.Primus – Sailing the Seas of Cheese
- 121.Prong – Prove You Wrong
- 122.Rage – Extended Power
- 123.Raven – Architect of Fear
- 124.Reverend – Play God
- 125.Rights of the Accused – Kick-Happy Thrill Hungry, Reckless & Willing
- 126.Kane Roberts – Saints & Sinners
- 127.David Lee Roth – A Little Ain't Enough
- 128.Rumble Militia – Stop Violence and Madness
- 129.Rush – Roll the Bones
- 130.Sabbat – The Morning After
- 131.Sacred Warrior – Obsession
- 132.Saigon Kick – S/T
- 133.Saraya – When the Blackbird Sings
- 134.Savatage – Streets: A Rock Opera
- 135.Scarecrow – S/T
- 136.The Scream – Let it Scream
- 137.Sepultura – Arise
- 138.Shadow King – S/T
- 139.Shotgun Messiah – Second Coming
- 140.Skid Row – Slave to the Grind
- 141.Skrapp Mettle – Sensitive
- 142.Skyclad – Wayward Sons of Mother Earth
- 143.Slaughter House – Face Reality
- 144.Slayer – Decade of Aggression
- 145.Slik Toxic – Smooth & Deadly EP
- 146.Smashing Pumpkins – Gish
- 147.Smashing Pumpkins – Lull
- 148.Soundgarden – Badmotorfinger
- 149.Southgang – Tainted Angel
- 150.Chrissy Steele – Magnet to Steele
- 151.Steelheart – S/T
- 152.Stryper – Can't Stop the Rock 81-91
- 153.Sweet FA – Temptation
- 154.Tangier – Stranded
- 155.Tankard – Chemical Invasion
- 156.Tattoo Rodeo – Rode Hard, Put Away Wet

157. Temple of the Dog – S/T
158. Tesla – Psychotic Supper
159. Tiamat – The Astral Sleep
160. TNT – S/T
161. Trixter – Undercovers
162. Tuff – What Comes Around Goes Around
163. 24-7 Spyz – This is... 24-7 Spyz
164. Tyketto – Don't Come Easy
165. Type O Negative – Slow Deep and Hard
166. U.D.O. – Time Bomb
167. Ugly Kid Joe – As Ugly As They Wanna Be
168. Unleashed – Where No Life Dwells
169. Van Halen – For Unlawful Carnal Knowledge
170. Venom – Temples of Ice
171. Vengeance Rising – Destruction Comes
172. Victory – Temples of Gold
173. Vicious Rumors – Welcome to the Ball
174. Vio-lence – Torture Tactics
175. Voivod – Angel Rat
176. Warpigs – Stay Cool
177. Warrior Soul – Drugs, God, and the New Republic
178. White Lion – Mane Attraction
179. White Trash – S/T
180. Whitecross – In the Kingdom
181. Wolfsbane – Down Fall the Good Guys
182. Mark Wood – Voodoo Violince
183. Wrathchild America – 3-D
184. Xentrix – Dilute to Taste
185. XYZ – Hungry
186. Y&Y – Yesterday and Today Live
187. Dweezil Zappa – Confessions
188. Zaza – Party with the Big Boys
189. Soundtrack – Bill & Ted's Bogus Journey
190. Soundtrack – Freddy's Dead
191. Soundtrack – Point Break
192. Various – Deeper Into the Vault
193. Various – Metal Massacre XI

APPENDIX B. LISTENING SUGGESTIONS

Over the course of providing feedback on the various drafts of this dissertation, my advisor expressed how reading about metal made him want to listen to metal. In his words, “having a soundtrack to go along with the diss would be really cool.” The print medium in which this dissertation is being produced certainly inhibits this request. In lieu of an actual sound recording, I have compiled what I hope to be the next best thing. Below, you will find a listing of two compact discs worth of songs that would serve as the companion pieces for adding that musical dimension. In the age of music downloads, hopefully the reader who is so moved can easily acquire the tracks and rock out while reading. Should you choose to do so, remember to turn the volume up considerably. After all, if it’s too loud, you’re too old.

Disc I: Chapters 1-3:

1. W.A.S.P. – “Blind in Texas” taken from *The Last Command*
2. W.A.S.P. – “I Wanna Be Somebody” taken from *S/T*
3. Saxon – “Denim and Leather” taken from *Denim and Leather*
4. Def Leppard – “Hello America” taken from *On Through the Night*
5. Quiet Riot – “Party All Night” taken from *Condition Critical*
6. Metallica – “Hit the Lights” taken from *Kill ‘Em All*
7. Black & Blue – “Hold On to 18” taken from *S/T*
8. Motley Crüe – “Smokin’ in the Boys Room” taken from *Theater of Pain*
9. Sacred Reich – “Administrative Decisions” taken from *Ignorance*
10. Skid Row – “Get the Fuck Out” taken from *Slave to the Grind*
11. Artch – “Power to the Man” taken from *Another Return to Church Hill*
12. Anthrax – “Efilnikufesin (N.F.L.)” taken from *Among the Living*
13. Autograph – “Loud and Clear” taken from *Loud and Clear*
14. Manowar – “All Men Play on Ten” taken from *Sign of the Hammer*
15. Stryper – “To Hell With the Devil” taken from *To Hell With the Devil*
16. Grim Reaper – “Rock You to Hell” taken from *Rock You to Hell*

17. Suicidal Tendencies – “Send Me Your Money” taken from *Lights Camera Revolution*
18. Bitter End – “Just Say Yes” taken from *Harsh Realities*
19. Ozzy Osbourne – “Thank God for the Bomb” taken from *The Ultimate Sin*
20. Exodus – “Corruption” taken from *Fabulous Disaster*
21. S.O.D. – “The Ballad of Jimi Hendrix” taken from *Speak English or Die*

Disc II: Chapters 4-6:

1. Motley Crüe – “Home Sweet Home” taken from *Theater of Pain*
2. Stryper – “Honestly” taken from *To Hell With the Devil*
3. Love/Hate – “Don’t Fuck With Me” taken from *Wasted in America*
4. Europe – “The Final Countdown” taken from *The Final Countdown*
5. Yngwie J. Malmsteen’s Rising Force – “Overture 1383” taken from *Marching Out*
6. Great White – “Babe I’m Gonna Leave You” taken from *Anaheim 1993*
7. Motley Crüe – “God Bless the Children of the Beast” taken from *Shout at the Devil*
8. Motley Crüe – “Helter Skelter” taken from *Shout at the Devil*
9. Motley Crüe – “All in the Name of...” taken from *Girls, Girls, Girls*
10. Poison – “Talk Dirty to Me” taken from *Look What the Cat Dragged In*
11. Obituary – “Words of Evil” taken from *Slowly We Rot*
12. Anthrax and Public Enemy – “Bring the Noise” taken from *Attack of the Killer B’s*
13. Femme Fatale – “My Baby’s Gun” taken from *S/T*
14. Living Colour – “Elvis is Dead” taken from *Time’s Up*
15. Body Count – “There Goes the Neighborhood” taken from *S/T*
16. Body Count – “Cop Killer” taken from *S/T*
17. Guns n Roses – “One in a Million” taken from *GnR Lies*
18. Loudness – “Crazy Nights” taken from *Thunder in the East*
19. Accept – “London Leatherboys” taken from *Balls to the Wall*
20. Judas Priest – “Eat Me Alive” taken from *British Steel*

APPENDIX C. FIGURES



Fig. 1. The “Blind in Texas” photo (1989).



Fig. 2. Reunion in the workshop (1989).

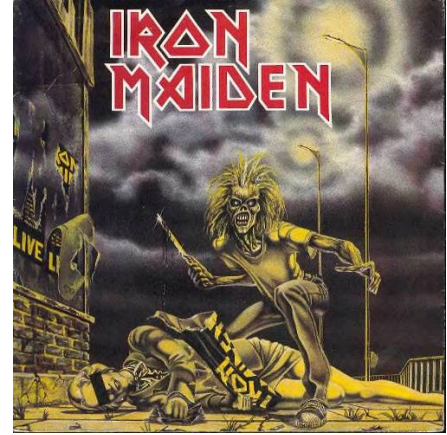


Fig. 3. Cover art for Iron Maiden “Sanctuary” single (1981).



Fig. 4. Sleeve art from Twisted Sister *You Can't Stop Rock n Roll* (1983).



Fig. 5. Slayer's War Eagle logo.



Fig. 6. Cover art for Anthrax *Fistful of Metal* (1984).

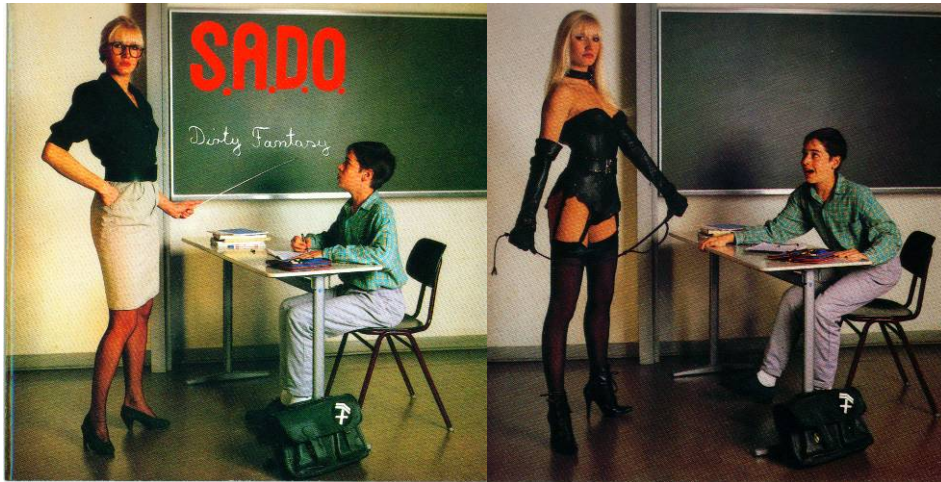


Fig. 7. Front and back covers from S.A.D.O. *Dirty Fantasy* (1988).



Fig. 8. Front cover and band photo from Tigertailz *Young and Crazy* (1987).



Fig. 9. Sleeve art from Tigertailz *Young and Crazy* (1987).

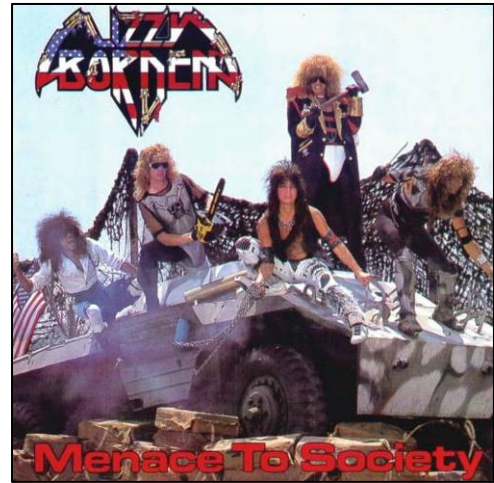


Fig. 10. Cover art from Lizzy Borden *Menace to Society* (1987).



Fig. 11. Blackie Lawless as pictured on the sleeve of W.A.S.P. *Live in the Raw* (1997).



Fig. 12. Cover art from Venom *Welcome to Hell* (1981).



Fig. 13. Cover art to Powermad *Absolute Power* (1988).



Fig. 14. Cover art from Atrophy
Socialized Hate (1987).



Fig. 15. Motley Crüe Gangster poster (1986).

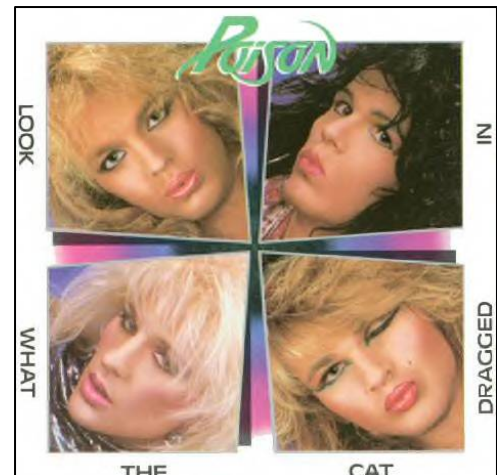


Fig. 16. Cover art from Poison
Look What the Cat Dragged In
(1986).



Fig. 17. Back cover art from Znowwhite *Act of God* (1986).



Fig. 18. Inner sleeve picture of Lorraine Lewis from *Femme Fatale S/T* (1988). This photo was also used as a publicity shot.



Fig. 19. Cover art to Lita Ford *Out for Blood* (1983).



Fig. 20. Picture from inside cover of Lita Ford *Stiletto* (1991).



Fig. 21. Inner sleeve from Judas Priest *Screaming for Vengeance* (1982). Rob Halford is in the center.