"LIPSTICK AND LEATHER": RECONTEXTUALIZATIONS OF GLAM METAL'S STYLE AND SIGNIFICATION

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Abstract

Drawing from the methodologies of critical discourse and semiotic analysis, this study situates the recent return of glam metal style to reality television shows and commercial advertising in broader social practices by considering what attributes of contemporary culture might complement provisional identification with an extinguished subcultural style. Analysis of 1980s music videos identified three key devices, including: recruitment into a negatively defined community; social institutional critique; and carnivalesque reversals of power. In contrast, narratives portrayed in contemporary iterations of glam metal focused on family values, hope, and change. While 1980s videos revealed that the glam metal subcultural style relied upon the shared rejection of values to define group identity, contemporary iterations of the glam metal style emphasize the commonly held values of mature neoliberalism and do not assume group identification. Rather, the style is presented for viewers whose identities are presumed to be mobile and versatile.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Heavy metal assumes a distinctive style evident in the adornments, gestural components, as well as in the sound and visual repertoires performed by its artists and their followers. It includes several subgenres, each with its own subculture, stylistic formations and performance personas. Glam metal constitutes a subculture that is aesthetically distinctive when it comes to its sound, visual presentations, and style. This subgenre of heavy metal gained mainstream presence with the popularity of bands such as Warrant, Twisted Sister, Mötley Crüe, Scorpions, W.A.S.P., and Poison in the mid- to late 1980s, although the sound associated with it was cultivated in small-scale live performances in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The distinct style associated with glam metal was widely visible. During the 1980s, it was common to see it on the stage, on the television set, on magazine covers, and many glam metal followers donned it in their everyday lives. This glam metal look blurred and exaggerated gender markers and included bright makeup, big and long hair, spandex, leather and scarves. The Parents' Music Resource Centre (PMRC) campaign for a content ratings system to be applied to popular music targeted the glam metal aesthetic expressed in lyrics, on album covers, in music videos, and on t-shirts as sexually explicit, violent, and morally suspect. This campaign's attention to glam metal is just one example that suggests that the glam metal style may have disrupted normative expectations of self-presentation in the 1980s. The popularity of glam metal music and its style was not trending for long. While mainstream visibility of the style quickly waned in the early 1990s, the 1980s-style heavy metal has recently gained a renewed cultural presence,

prompting metal scholars to speculate about its revival (Griffin, 2014; Klypchak, 2011; Kahn-Harris, 2007, p. 1-2).

This study seeks to understand the subcultural style of glam metal in order to examine the recent return of glam metal. The questions that guided this study are: through which cultural forms has glam metal reappeared?; in what ways did the establishment of the glam metal style challenge popular values?; how has the present-day glam metal style changed from its particular form of presence in the 1980s?; and, in what ways does glam metal allow us to better understand contemporary modes of identification in re-emerging subcultures? In addressing these questions, this study was poised to situate the return of glam metal style in broader social practices by considering what attributes of contemporary culture might complement, or provide support for, provisional identification with an extinguished subcultural style.

Existing literature on the revival and re-emergence of glam metal music is limited. Kahn-Harris (2007) notes that "as the twenty-first century has progressed… There has been an increased re-evaluation and renaissance of 1980s-style heavy metal. Pop metal bands such as Mötley Crüe and Poison have reconvened… Metal has come to be thought of much more affectionately and nostalgically…" (p. 1-2). Although observers have acknowledged that a revival has occurred, existing literature has not explored the specific character of its return. This revival of glam metal is seen in several different forms. Kahn-Harris points to a nostalgic performance circuit of glam metal acts. Recent and upcoming tours to North America include bands such as Twisted Sister, Van Halen, Mötley Crüe, KISS, Ratt, Def Leppard and Skid Row. As this study will elaborate and analyze, glam metal tunes and the glam metal style have returned to also help sell hamburgers, vehicles, insurance and even high fibre snacks through television advertisements. Further, glam

metal rockers and their families appear in several reality television shows and entertain viewers with the daily routines that they carry out in the ostensibly intimate settings of their homes.

The return of glam metal could be explained with direct reference to the followers of the subculture in the 1980s. The young audiences of popular music videos and participants in the subcultures in the 1980s, who are now into mature adulthood, may have both the nostalgic desire to consume (Griffin, 2014) and the resources to support the production (Nealon, 2012) of new cultural commodities relating to the cultural tastes of their youth. This possible explanation, however, would be limited in its potential to address the style's appeal to broader and much younger audiences (Nealon, 2012). More significantly, this explanation would rely upon the assumption that processes of identification have remained stable over the past three decades. The concept of identity has been central to scholarship on subculture (Wood, 2003; Weinstein, 2000; Epstein, 1998; Hebdige, 1979). Therefore, attention to the mechanisms of identification in the 1980s and in the present assisted in the examination of the return of glam metal and broader social practice.

If the glam metal style of the 1980s articulated a group identity partially anchored by localized scenes, the return of the glam metal style in new dematerialized spheres provides an opportunity to understand better contemporary modes of identification. Stuart Hall (1996) observed identity to be a "strategic and positional" (p. 3) concept denoting, on the one hand, its fractured and unsettled character and, on the other hand, its dependence upon a recognition of shared ideals, conditions, or characteristics that rely upon the construction of symbolic boundaries that simultaneously produce a symbolic region located outside of the group. Since the glam metal style's return is evident not only

in performance circuits but in reality television programs and its mobilization in a range

of commercial advertisements, it appears that the adoption of style today may be more

transitory than it was in the 1980s. It may also be dependent upon consumers' possession

of the flexible cultural knowledge required to 'try on' momentarily different stylistic

veneers. Therefore, to clarify the scope of the orienting research questions posed above,

the study of the shift in signification of the glam metal style may inform understandings

of social practice by considering the extent to which the adoption of style was and is tied

to the symbolic construction of group identity.

As elaboration of the analyses that constitute this study will show, a

recontextualizing shift in the style and signification of glam metal is evident after the

contemporary cultural products that highlight glam metal figures or music are compared

with 1980s presentations of glam metal style in music videos. I identified three key

devices that structured the discourse of the glam metal style of the 1980s: an emotionally-

charged recruitment into a negatively defined community; social institutional critique

aimed at education, health, and the family; and carnivalesque reversals of power. Notably,

the values of the glam metal subculture in the 1980s were only presented negatively in the

videos that I analyzed, but preferred values for the subculture were not offered. Therefore,

the elements of style for the subculture appeared to be located in the things that

participants agreed to reject. Given that the videos vividly rejected prominent social

institutions, I argue that the devices present in the videos established the glam metal style

of the 1980s as subversive and that they challenged the dominant values and forms of

social organization of the time. In contrast, contemporary cultural forms examined in this

study neither assume that viewers are members of a subcultural group and nor do they

draw upon the kinds of recruitment devices that were activated in the 1980s music videos

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that I analyzed. The cultural products that I examined instead emphasized the commonalities and common-sense of their presumed viewers by giving particular attention to the social practices of everyday life, such as the private consumption of healthy lifestyles and good management of familial relationships. These were consistent with, rather than oppositional to, commonly held values of a mature neoliberal present. Therefore, I argue that group identity is not a concern for the recontextualized appearances of the glam metal style examined in this thesis. Rather, in these contexts, the style is presented for viewers whose identities are presumed to be mobile and versatile.

Methodology

In order to examine how glam metal's signification and style has shifted since in the 1980s, this thesis employs an inductive and exploratory critical discourse analysis of selected music videos as well as selected reality television show episodes and a television commercial. Hall (2013) argues that discourse is a system of representation that constructs topics not only in language but in social practices. He states that "it attempts to overcome the traditional distinction between what one says (language) and what one does (practice)" (p. 29). Hall's elaboration of Foucault's understanding of discourse shows that for Foucault, "Discourse… defines and produces the objects of our knowledge. It governs the way that a topic can be meaningfully talked about and reasoned about. It also influences how ideas are put in to practice and used to regulate the conduct of others" (p. 29). Further, he insists that discourse does not refer to isolated or aberrant statements, objects, or practices, rather, it is discourse that hold objects together. Hall states that when "discursive events refer to the same object, share the same style and… support a strategy… a common institutional, administrative or political drift and pattern, then they

are said by Foucault to belong to the same discursive formation" (p. 29). For example, the concept of neoliberalism denotes a cluster of commonly accepted assumptions, ways of knowing, and patterns of logic and conduct that are currently prevalent. As I will discuss shortly, preliminary exploration of representative cultural materials featuring the glam metal style suggest that neoliberalism may be a discursive formation of relevance to understanding the particular ways in which the glam metal style has returned.

In a more systematic way, Chiapello & Fairclough (2002) elaborate on the function and process of critical discourse analysis (referred to by them as CDA) and discuss it as a "necessary perspective in social research and analysis" as it centers "the concept of social practice [which] allows an oscillation between the perspective of social structure and the perspective of social action and agency" (p. 193). They note that "CDA is based upon a view of semiosis as an irreducible element of all material social processes. Social life is seen as interconnected networks of social practices of diverse sorts (economic, political, cultural, family, etc.)" (p. 193). For Chiapello and Fairclough, the term 'social practice' indicates "a relatively stabilized form of social activity" (p. 193). They provide examples such as television news and family meals as social practices to explain how these practices are connected to general patterns of social conduct and belief. Further, they observe that "every practice is an articulation of diverse social elements in a relatively stable configuration, always including discourse" (p. 193).

Chiapello and Fairclough argue that every practice includes elements such as "activities, subjects and their social relations, instruments, objects, time and place, forms of consciousness, values, discourse (or semiosis)" (p. 193). Further, they observe that if every practice includes these elements, then the elements are "dialectically related" insofar as they are "different elements but not discrete, fully separate, elements" (p. 193).

They state this to be the case because "there is a sense in which each 'internalizes' the others without being reducible to them" (p. 193). As a result, they remark that "social relations, social identities, cultural values and consciousness are in part semiotic [because] they have distinct properties…" (p. 193). These social relations, social identities, cultural values and consciousness are semiotic due to their ability to make and produce meaning across cultures and societies in which they are prominent.

The materials analyzed in this study include selected music videos as well as selected reality television show episodes and a television commercial. When analyzing these materials, it was my intention to be privy to their semiotic elements insofar as they make and produce meanings, signs and symbols. I chose to use discourse analysis for this study instead of other forms of qualitative methods such as observation, interviewing or photo elicitation because it is the structure of codes that exist outside of the level of the individual that was the focus of my inquiry. Discourse analysis is a useful methodology as it brings about understandings of the internal structures of interactions, images, lyrics, and other theatrical aspects of glam metal style (Mills, 2004, p. 141), while enabling a better understanding of how such internal structures connect to a larger network of social patterns. To elaborate, structures represent and situate individuals within language and the social fabric, making the individual relationally recognizable. In other words, individuals are aligned with generalizing identities insofar as they represent or make themselves visible as a member of a social group. Therefore, employing a discourse analysis for this study allowed me to determine the stylistic features that illustrate glam metal as well as help to set the stage to evaluate contemporary expressions of identity and values.

In what follows, I will elaborate the concepts and paradigms that informed this study. These concepts provide theoretical supports for tracking and analyzing the shift in

glam metal style over time. They were chosen for their relevance to the subject matter of the study and the complementary fit between them and the methodology of critical discourse analysis. These concepts include: homology, recontextualization, postmodernism, post-postmodernism and neoliberalism. Homology and recontextualization are concepts situated within the field of cultural studies; homology informed subcultural scholarship in the 1970s and 1980s, while recontextualization informs current scholarship on participatory culture and fandoms. Postmodernism and post-postmodernism inform the aesthetic shifts that have occurred over the past three decades of relevance to this study. My exploratory examinations of primary source materials exhibiting the glam metal style from both the 1980s as well as more recently have suggested that the concept of neoliberalism can help to draw the relationships between the shift in glam metal style and broader social practices, as encouraged in critical discourse analysis.

Homology

Hebdige (1979) argues that style is the site where the meaning of subculture is worked out. The objects and gestures of significance to a subcultural group simultaneously mark their differences from dominant culture (pp. 2-3). Hebdige explains that, while subcultural style may appear to be disordered, there is a homologous relationship between gestures or an object and the group's concerns, as well as a relationship between its style and broader social practices of everyday life in dominant culture (pp. 114-115). To the extent that homology is concerned with the structural resonances that make up a whole within a culture or subculture, homological analysis allows a deeper understanding of the meaning of style. Willis (1978) states that, homological analysis "is concerned with how

far, in their structure and content, particular items parallel and reflect the structure, style, typical concerns, attitudes and feelings of the social group" (p. 191). Hebdige (1979) describes it as "the symbolic fit between the values and lifestyles of a group, its subjective experience and the musical forms it uses to express or reinforce its focal concerns…" (p. 113). Thus, style does not merely reference the superficial adornment of discrete bodies. Acknowledging that style and dispositional modes of living are mutually implicated, the stylization of glam metal must resonate with, and communicate about, the cultural conditions in which it emerges and becomes crystallized.

In order to more comprehensively consider the argument that Hebdige makes that style is a structural homology in relation to the glam metal style and its revival, it is crucial to acknowledge that representations of popular music culture are more than just entertainment. Music is more than just entertainment because, as popular music scholars insist, it can contribute to the shaping of identity and can help individuals negotiate a sense of social reality. In order to expand upon this idea, it is important to first understand how popular music is understood by scholars and thus represented in the media. Garofalo (1996) notes that "The invention of new mass communication technologies – records, radio film, and eventually, television – inserted yet another distinction into the cultural lexicon, namely the concept of mass culture" (p. 3). This is important as it sets the stage for understanding the complexity of venues from which mediated representations are disseminated.

Macnamara (2006) also understands the complexity of representation and notes that "media representations – some call them re-presentations – refer to more than the physical presentation of information to readers, viewers and listeners… media representations refer to the 'media's construction of reality... the relationship between the

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ideological and the real'" (p. 11). Also, "representation refers to the process by which signs and symbols are made to convey certain meanings" (Newbold et al., 2002, p. 260). This argument assists in the understanding of style as a structural homology because representations link shared cultural assumptions with subjective experiences. Practices of representation are mediated and they do not merely reflect given circumstances but instead construct and negotiate shared perceptions of reality. As a result, practices of representation contribute to larger social change.

Since Newbold et al. (2002) state that representation "…refers to the signs and symbols that claim to stand for, or re-present, some aspect of 'reality', such as objects, people, groups, places, events, social norms, cultural identities and so on" (p. 260), the stylistic elements that subcultural fan groups combine and adopt enable analysis of their respective structural homologies. Such homologous relationships are not static, therefore, a historical awareness of representational shifts offers opportunities for more nuanced considerations. New interrelationships and meanings arise between objects, people and places, and the contexts in which they are represented change.

Macnamara (2006) insists that practices or representations are normative: "...Marxists, feminists and social researchers argue and present considerable evidence that media content is never 'just entertainment', that is never politically or ideologically 'innocent'; rather mass media send 'messages' to viewers about the way things are, can be or should be" (p. 13). Therefore, drawing from Hall's observation that "identity is 'always constructed within, not outside representation'…" (Hall, 1990, p. 222 as cited by Macnamara, 2006, p. 11), Macnamara notes that the critical forces of representation are tied to the ongoing shaping and production of identity. Drawing from Butler's understanding of representation, Macnamara observes that "…there are two meanings or

uses of the term 'representation' – one denoting an operative or functional process, the other suggesting a normative function" (p. 11). To elaborate:

> Representation... serves as the operative term within a political process to extend visibility and legitimacy... on the other hand, representation is the normative function of a language which is said either to reveal or to distort what is assumed to be true (p. 11).

Therefore, representation functions on a level that is above the individual to the extent that it situates an individual within language and the social fabric, making the individual relationally recognizable. While the locating function of representation makes individuals visible as members of a social group, it also has the effect of aligning individuals with identities that are generalizing and perhaps essentializing. Due to this, representation in popular media can be considered a discursive practice in it of itself as Gauntlett (2002) argues that popular media is a primary channel for the dissemination of the prevailing discourses (p. 98).

Understanding some literature around representations in popular music has provided insight as to how popular music culture and its representations are more than just entertainment for individuals and groups. The influences of popular music culture can also contribute to the shaping of identity and can help groups negotiate a shared sense of social reality, thus assisting in the discussion around style as a homology. If popular music culture does more than entertain but intervenes into the production of identity, the strong claims that Hebdige makes concerning the signifying power of subcultural style to block dominant systems of representation (p. 90) has more salience. Despite Hebdige's understanding of style's subversive possibilities, he acknowledges that popular media tended to present to social groups "a 'picture' of their own lives" (p. 85) and that subcultural style does not stand outside of representational practices. While subcultural

style has the potential to disrupt this picture, "[s]ubcultures are, at least in part, representations of these representations, and elements taken from the 'picture'…are bound to find some echo in the signifying practices of the various subcultures" (p. 86). However, given that Hebdige's observations of style as a homology respond to the specific historical contexts of its development, this study will address both the potential and the limitations of its claims for understanding 1980s glam metal style and the return of glam metal in the present.

Recontextualization

The term recontextualization has been chosen for this study in order to understand glam metal's revival because it considers how meanings and processes that were once established have been introduced in a new context. While Hebdige's (1979) discussion of subcultural style as a structural homology acknowledges that meanings reside in tension and are subject to change since the meaning of style is always "in dispute" (p. 3), recontextualizations initiate change in the meaning and communicative purpose of a text, sign or discourse through the alteration of the parameters of the social field relevant to the social phenomena under consideration. As the understanding and meaning of texts and signs depends on the contexts in which they are placed, recontextualization implies the extraction of those signs or texts from their original contexts and/or meanings. Therefore, recontextualization occurs through a shift in perspective or through the retraction or expansion of the social context under consideration (Jenkins, 2013, p. 162-163). Semino, Deignan & Littlemore (2012) also state that recontextualization has also been used in critical discourse analysis "in order to capture the strategies and processes involved in representing and adapting events, knowledge or components of social practices in

different contexts" (p. 42).

The discussion surrounding recontextualization in heavy metal was first discovered for this research upon review of Klypchak's (2011) article, which brings to light the contextual history of heavy metal's longstanding traditions. He states that a moral panic of heavy metal was in fact quite prevalent in heavy metal's formative stages and its traditions incited "…those who found the imagery or lyrical content of metal to be obscene, blasphemous, or threatening to youthful members of metal's audience to protestation, proposed prohibition, and attempts at political action" (p. 38). Klypchak argues that at the forefront of this moral panic were three acts – Alice Cooper, Black Sabbath and KISS – and three musicians – Alice Cooper, Ozzy Osbourne and Gene Simmons (p. 38). He finds it interesting that thirty years later, these targets of parental scorn are now ubiquitous in mainstream popular culture and have participated in family-oriented MTV (Music Television) series, arguably completely recontextualizing their lifestyle and thus, the music (p. 39). Klypchak attributes this recontextualization to "the diversification of rock music as an industry and the advent of diverse publicity outlets have changed the ways in which metal moral panics have proceeded and the responses both within and outside the metal community have transpired" (p. 40). Further, he argues "that the initial moral panic surrounding Cooper, Osbourne, and Simmons occurred in an era of far more centralized music and media practices, greater potential connection to mainstream awareness could result" (p. 40). Arguably, Klypchak's discussion is limited in the sense that it focuses on shifts in industry and distribution practices as the means for recontextualization. As a result, possible changes in the relationship between identity and the consumption of music and style are not considered in his article. Thus, the use of the notion of recontextualization allows this study to provide a point of departure from Kahn-

Harris's (2007) argument that there has been a re-evaluation and renaissance of the 1980s-style of heavy metal as well as from Klypchak's argument that heavy metal has been recontextualized in the contemporary versions of some of its subgenres.

To apply Klypchak's observations about the recontextualization of heavy metal to the glam metal revival, the contemporary presentation of glam metal in television advertisements and reality television programs featuring glam metal social figures, music, or style suggests that the signification of the glam metal style has been recontextualized. Thus, this study will consider recontextualization as a departure from homology. In so doing, this research will question how the signification of glam metal has shifted. The study of the glam metal style in the 1980s and its contemporary revived style stands to give insight into how the meaning of style is historically fluid and open to recontextualization.

Postmodernism

Frith (1996) states that postmodernism "is taken to describe a 'crisis' of signification systems: how can we now tell the difference between the 'real' and the 'simulated'? The postmodern problem is the threat to our sense of place" (p. 295). Further, he notes that "what is underplayed in such discussions is the problem of process – not the positioning of the subject as such, but our experience of the movement between positions" (p. 295). As a result, he argues that music is an important area of study because it raises the question: "what happens to our assumptions about postmodern identity when we examine a form in which sound is more important than sight, and time more important than space, when the 'text' is a performance, a movement, a flux; when nothing is 'represented'?" (p. 295). Therefore, Frith argues that the relationship between music and postmodernism

deserves to be further researched.

Theories proposing a postmodern turn were first developed by theorists such as Lyotard and Baudrillard in the 1970s (Best & Kellner, 1997, p. 5-6). These theorists speculated about the end of modernity due to a "break" in history that was "caused by developments in the economy, technology, culture, and society, rather than by mass struggle and revolutionary upheaval as advocated in the 1960s" (Best & Kellner, 1997, p. 6), and that made existing narratives of explanation, such as those of progress, liberalism, and Marxism both redundant and ideologically suspicious. Best and Kellner situate the emergence of postmodern critiques in the wake of the failed emancipatory hopes of the 1968 radical uprisings in Europe and in the United States and associate postmodern thought with a sense of defeat and the weakening of social movements (p. 7-8). Best and Kellner note, however, that in the 1970s and 1980s scholars observed postmodern cultural practices that seemed to mobilize in new ways against perceived oppression. For example, Giroux (1991) notes that "by insisting on the multiplicity of social positions, postmodernism has seriously challenged the political closure of modernity and in doing so has made room for those groups generally defined as excluded others" (p. 56). In a move away from established social movements, individuals increasingly emphasized "differences, excluded voices, and new subjects of revolt" either through engagement in identity politics or oppositional subcultures (Best & Kellner, 1997, p. 9).

These observations of postmodern tendencies in the two decades following the radical 1960s can provide support for an analysis of 1980s glam metal style in terms of its subversive potential, despite its commercial appearance and appeal. For instance, Chambers (1986) observes that 1980s mass culture increasingly blurred with high culture and other forms, so that the distinction between art and commerce was no longer clear (p.

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190). According to Chambers, this blurring rendered previously privileged cultural codes profane:

> This confusion and breaking of codes, this disrespect for previous authorities, boundaries and rules, also exposes what was previously subordinate and hidden. Different histories become available, their languages drawn into a contemporary eclecticism – producing unexpected encounters in the record grooves, on the dance floor, in fashion, in front of the television, in the city, and in everyday life (p. 193).

Further, taking account of postmodern tendencies can help to bridge stylistic elements with broader social practices in the 1980s. Chambers notes that the "debate over modernism/postmodernism is ultimately the sign... of a debate over the changed politics of knowledge, authority and power in the present world" (p. 216), but, due to the historical character of its subject matter, this study will consider these political changes in terms of the development of neoliberalism which will be discussed later.

For these reasons, consideration of postmodern tendencies will add to the evaluation of Hebdige's claims about style as homology. A possible objection to the blending of observations about postmodernism and Hebdige's use of homology may arise from his explicit commitment to Marxism, which is embedded in his analyses. While postmodern speculations are post-Marxist and at times anti-Marxist, these perspectives work well together because they both emphasize sharp juxtapositions, parody, and subversion. Further, both perspectives do so by drawing from modernist avant-gardes as key reference points for analysis.[1]

To elaborate on the emphasis of parody in postmodern speculations, Hutcheon (1986) notes that "…it is precisely parody – that seemingly introverted formalism – that

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[1] Hebdige's refrain throughout his book *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* is that style is a form of "Refusal"; this is an implicit reference to Breton's surrealism, but Hebdige also draws heavily from Dadaism and other modernist practices to elaborate the collage character of subcultural style (for instance, see Hebdige, 1979, p. 105-112).

paradoxically brings about a direct confrontation with the problem of the relation of the aesthetic to a world of significance external to itself, to a discursive of socially defined meaning systems (past and present) – in other words, to ideology and history" (p. 179-180). Hutcheon (2002) also notes that parody, "often called ironic quotation, pastiche, appropriation, or intertextuality" is "central to postmodernism" (p. 88). She argues that "postmodern parody is both deconstructively critical and constructively creative, paradoxically making us aware of both the limits and the powers of representation – in any medium" (p. 94). This is important for the purposes of this study because of the conversation surrounding music and representation of homology, as well as the argument that Hutcheon makes that "parody is unavoidable for postmodernism" (p. 94). Hutcheon states this to be the case because of Levine's (1987) reasons for assertion that parody is unavoidable because

> Every word, every image, is leased and mortgaged. We know that a picture is but a space in which a variety of images, none of them original, blend and clash. A picture is a tissue of quotations drawn from the innumerable centers of culture… The viewer is the tablet on which all the quotations that make up a painting are inscribed without any of them being lost (p. 92).

In other words, postmodern parody allows the deconstruction and critical awareness of how images may contradict each other due to their powers of representation.

While theoretical observations about postmodernism and homology may help to understand glam metal style in the 1980s, I anticipate that these conceptual tools will be limited in their efficacy to shed light on the return of the glam metal style, which appears to have a different relationship to social identity in the present. Instead, the shift from 1980s glam metal style to its present recontextualization seems to resonate with recent theoretical speculations about the end of postmodernity and it is these speculations that require consideration.

Post-postmodernism

Whereas Frederic Jameson (1984) observed the collapse of spheres such as economy and state into the aesthetic production of culture, David Harvey (1990) insisted that postwar Fordism had slowly ushered in not so much a system of mass production as it had given "a total way of life" (p. 135) that is marked by a new aesthetic and a commodification of culture. Scholars such as Jeffrey Nealon, Alan Kirby, and Timotheus Vermeulen and Robin van den Akker each in different ways suggest that the concept of postmodernity cannot describe new conditions taking shape in the twenty-first century that have implications for conceptions of identity and style. Therefore, these scholars attempt to conceptualize an, as of yet, unsettled emergent cultural paradigm. Nealon (2012) suggests that we are immersed in a more intensified mode of production and consumption that he refers to as "post-postmodernism" (p. 51-52). For him, identity and authenticity are now rooted in choice and self-branding rather than in groups and localities (p. 63). Kirby's (2009) announcement of a new "cultural force field and systematic norm" (p. 2) called "digimodernity" is paradoxical since he claims that digimodernity does not exist. His point, however, is that the notion of digimodernity does not describe a new phase of history but helps to articulate recent social shifts in modernity associated with the "pseudo-politics" of Web 2.0 culture (p. 104), the belief in the open, democratic, and universally accessible virtual public sphere on the Internet. Faith in Web 2.0 politics fosters the suspension of identity (p. 106) and "a narrative form so open and haphazard in detail that it resembles the subjectively endless flux of life and unfolds as if it were (reality television)" (p. 160). Vermeulen and Akken (2010) posit the concept of "metamodernism" to capture a new narrative that responds to collective feelings of doubt,

a mood of reflection, and an incitement to move forward. They argue that the latter is articulated in the (sincere) buzzword "change", which is currently favoured by politicians and CEOs, and U.S. President Barack Obama's 2008 popularly referenced "Yes, we can change" speech (p. 2). This "new narrative of longing [is] structured by and conditioned on a belief" (p. 5) in our capacity to realize an alternative future and marks the arrival of a pragmatic idealism that reacts with hope to three pervasive threats: the credit crunch, decentralization, and climate change (p. 5). Of particular interest is their emphasis on the social force of the word "change" and their insistence that a metamodern idealism relies upon a paradoxical conception of spatiality, or "a territory without boundaries, a position without parameters" (p. 12).

These theoretical speculations, which I will provisionally refer to using Nealon's terminology of post-postmodernism, have implications for the study of glam metal style's return, and the study of glam metal's return may offer insight into the recent cultural shifts they observe. Nealon argues that post-postmodernism is important to consider compared to postmodernism "if rampant commodification functions as a more or less neutral beginning premise for… analysis of popular culture" (p. 63). In consideration of glam metal, rampant commodification may have contributed to the revival of the music and style. Nealon's argument supports this by forwarding that "in embracing and recycling the rock music of the past, the current generation is simultaneously refusing the larger engine of the culture industries, the constantly updated tyranny of the culture industry's obsolescence machine" (p. 63). But, in what other ways has the end of postmodernity come about?

Both Nealon and Kirby point to the effects of the digitization of music and its consumption through MP3s, iPod shuffle, and iTunes on identity and culture. While

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Hebdige's formulations of style and subculture will be relevant to my analysis of 1980s glam metal phenomena, eclectic niche consumption challenges the relevance of both of these concepts for the present context of glam metal's restricted renaissance. While the scholars who proclaim the end of postmodernity do not address these concerns directly, Kirby suggests that it has become difficult to speak meaningfully about popular culture in the present. He argues that

> …film, music, and television decreasingly justify the label of 'mass' or 'popular' culture. Such a category is becoming a thing of the past; the texts I have been exploring were made for and are enjoyed by niches, nor do they have any wider resonance or influence – they're ghettoized. What's mistaken today for 'popular culture' is in fact a narrowly focused children's entertainment plus 'noise'… (p. 135).

While this quotation reveals Kirby's overtly dismissive evaluation of current entertainment forms, it also points to the abrupt change in the structure of cultural production and consumption and hints at a new relationship between cultural consumers and cultural products. I will consider how this new relationship may be less spatially and socially located and less committed than it was in the 1980s. In what ways might this new relationship rely upon consumers' flexible, niche cultural knowledge that has been shaped within a mature neoliberal ethos?

Neoliberalism

Neoliberalism becomes a key consideration when it comes to the shift in the relationship between identity and style because it provides insight into the broader social practices that have accompanied the shift from public to private. Like many subcultures, glam metal in the 1980s seemed to present the appearance of identities in its surrounding subcultures

that were tied to values and norms of individuals within the group.[2] The development of neoliberalism (as the economic counterpart to postmodernity and to post-postmodernity in neoliberalism's most mature form), may help to explain this shift. Considered to be now rooted in our subjectivities, neoliberalism began to change in the late 1970s according to Giroux (2008). He states that since this time, "we have witnessed… a new and more ruthless form of market fundamentalism that has been labeled neoliberalism" (p. 589). On the whole, "as a political economic-cultural project, neoliberalism functions as a regulative force, political rationale, and mode of governmentality" (Giroux, 2008, p. 549). Neoliberalism "…undermines the critical function of any viable democracy by undercutting the ability of individuals to engage in the continuous translation between public and private considerations and private interests by collapsing the public into the realm of the private" (Giroux, 2004, p. 494). Also, "within neo-liberalism's market-driven discourse, corporate power marks the space of a new kind of public pedagogy, and one in which the production, dissemination, and circulation of ideas emerge from the educational force of the larger culture" (p. 497). In this sense, Giroux states that public pedagogy "…refers to a powerful ensemble of ideological and institutional forces whose aim is to produce competitive, self interested individuals vying for their own material and ideological gain" (p. 497). This goes to show how new values, norms and identities were beginning to evolve at this time as a result of public pedagogy.

Giroux's (2004) discussion of public pedagogy can also help to explain the impact

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[2] Despite the tendency in a historical comparison of this scope to generalize common attributes of subcultural identity and values, I acknowledge Wood's (2003) findings in "The Straightedge Youth Sub-Culture: Observations on the Complexity of Sub-Cultural Identity", that "…sub-cultural identity also is a highly fluid, contingent, and contradictory phenomenon that is constructed and experienced idiosyncratically by the very same members" (pp.33-34). In contrast to the frequent reinforcement of commonalities within a subcultural identity, Wood demonstrates that there are many "internal dynamics and complexities" that make up a subcultural identity (see Wood, 2003, p. 34 & 39-50).

of neoliberalism on group identities because it observes that "pedagogy illuminates the relationship between power, knowledge, and ideology, while self-consciously, if not self-critically, recognizing the role it plays in a deliberate attempt to influence how and what knowledge and identities are produced within particular sets of social relations" (p. 500). The shift from public to private considerations had a large impact on the identity formation of individuals. Thus, when it came to the development of neoliberal understanding, pedagogy had a huge impact on reshaping morals, norms and values. Giroux notes that "as a moral practice, pedagogy recognizes that what cultural workers, artists, activists, media workers, and others teach cannot be abstracted from what it means to invest in public life, presuppose some notion of the future, or locate oneself in public discourse" (p. 500). As individuals are immersed in many spheres of everyday life, that were undergoing neoliberal transformation, Giroux uses the metaphor of teaching to explain how they are produced to be neoliberal subjects. As a result of this learning to be a neoliberal subject, he argues that

> Pedagogy… becomes performative in that it is not merely about deconstructing texts, but is also about situating politics itself within a broader set of relations that address what it might mean to create modes of individual and social agency which enable rather than shut down democratic values, practices, and social relations (p. 500).

Further, he also discusses how powerful this public pedagogy of neoliberalism was when it first began. He argues that it is "…a powerful ensemble of ideological and institutional forces whose aim is to produce competitive, self-interested individuals vying for their own material and ideological gain" (p. 497). Over time, it forged what Giroux refers to as corporate public pedagogy culture because of how it "…largely cancels out or devalues gender, class-specific, and racial injustices of the existing social order by absorbing the democratic inquiries and impulses and practices of civil society within narrow economic

relations" (p. 497). This is problematic for the development of group identities because of how it has "…become an all-encompassing cultural horizon for producing market identities, values, and mega-corporate conglomerates, and for atomizing social practices" (p. 497). Moreover, "this had a significant impact not only on the construction and preservation of group identity, but on the development of new values, norms and individual identities" (p. 497). Therefore, the construction of group identity during this decade has much to do with the political ideology of corporate public pedagogy, which was the key producer of market identities, values and so forth.

Callinicos' (1989) account of changes in the structure of the labour and commodification from Fordism to post-Fordism may also provide some insight into the development of new values, norms, and identities that Giroux suggests has occurred under neoliberalism as a result of public pedagogy. Callinicos observes that Fordism's emphasis on standardization of production meant that consumption was oriented towards standardized and mass goods. Fordism began to collapse under economic crises in the late 1960s and 1970s and new, consumption-led patterns of organization gradually took the place of Fordist production. Callinicos argues that under post-Fordism, niche markets that were focused on design replaced markets organized around mass-produced commodities, "commodities are no longer bought simply for the use-value they have but also for the lifestyle connoted by their design" (p. 134). This is an effect of a shift in the structure of labour that increasingly favours "flexible manufacturing systems" over the old assembly line model, which could not easily adapt to create multiple designs (p. 135). These shifts are significant to questions of identity because the role of an individual's labour has become more highly specialized than it was under Fordism. Now, "a smaller, multi-skilled core workforce capable, through quality circles and the like, of participating

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actively in the labour-process" works above a "'peripheral' workforce [of] low-paid, temporary, often part –time, drawn from oppressed groups…, shading off into the underclass sustained by a pared-down welfare state" (p. 135). More significantly, the slow rise of post-Fordism, the structure of production under neoliberalism impacts identity because, under its flexible niche production process, individuals have become accustomed to consuming the designs of commodities more than their functions. In other words, individuals increasingly consume objects and services as the signs of a lifestyle or identity as much as, or more than, they consume them for their use.

Neoliberalism also becomes a key consideration when it comes to understanding how style can be recontextualized. As suggested earlier, the recontextualized return of the glam metal style in new spheres provides an opportunity to evaluate contemporary expressions of identity and values. As we can see with the discussion surrounding the shift from public to private, norms and values change as well as the development of identities, this shift of political ideology is suggestive in it of itself as a recontextualization. Boltanski and Chiapello have considered the impacts of mature neoliberal conditions on individual subjectivities, noting that status is increasingly conferred unto to individuals who are adaptable, flexible, and intellectually mobile (Bishop, 2012, p. 215). If the capacity to move between different productive arrangements in the workplace has become a defining characteristic of a successful individual under mature neoliberalism, and if consumption is more than ever marked by lifestyle branding, then it may follow that the return of glam metal social figures and style are implicated in these changes. My analysis of recent advertising and reality television programs will attempt to identify and describe the relationship between the consumption of glam metal in these new spheres and neoliberal pressures on identity.

"Look what the Cat Dragged in": Reflecting on Reflexivity

To bring to light my personal commitments throughout this process, reflexivity is important to consider for this research, even though the methodologies I have used do not require the direct study of human subjects. As this research seeks to understand the re-emergence of glam metal music, the recontextualization of the style's signification and the identity of its fans, as well as less committed consumers, how human subjects are being represented in this research (even if indirectly) is still an important consideration. To social science researchers, reflexivity is the key to contributing to knowledge and understanding not only the social world, but themselves (Pillow, 2003, p. 178). Reflexivity is more than a set of guidelines; it consists of continuous reflection and questioning. Being reflexive allows social researchers to "...both reflect about how their research intervention might affect the research participants before any actual research is conducted and consider how they would respond as a researcher in the sorts of situations that they can at this stage only envisage" (p. 277). Ultimately, reflexivity seems to inform the concerns and questions that social researchers have, especially when the subject matter is particularly relevant to the researcher, which is the case for this study.

I often have been asked the question: what is it about glam metal that made you want to write about it? Growing up, my musical interests generally aligned with what was popular, which, in the late 1990s and 2000s was progressive rock, alternative rock and grunge. Having never attended a heavy metal concert, I attended my first one as a result of the persuasion of my friends who were heavy metal fans. After years of hiatus, Iron Maiden began to tour again in North America in 2008 and, according to my friends, I could not miss it for the world. "It's a once in a lifetime opportunity," they said. I listened

to as much of Iron Maiden as I could before the concert to make myself familiar with the music. By the time the concert was over, I was completely hooked. Slowly, I began listening to other genres such as thrash metal, black metal and death metal, and it was not long before I considered myself a heavy metal fan. As a sociologist-in-training and a female heavy metal fan, there was something that I immediately began to find interesting about the fashion and style within various genres of heavy metal. I noticed that generally, female heavy metal fans cut their T-shirts to show their back, shoulders and/or cleavage, wore corsets and fishnet stockings, and were known to have elaborate haircuts and hairstyles as well as extravagant makeup designs and tattoos. I was also conforming to the feminine style that exists within heavy metal myself. Despite heavy metal's vast array of subgenres,[3] I noticed that the style for women was generally the same within the scenes that I was frequenting. There were some differences, such as the colours of the clothing, makeup and hair, which were generally much brighter in thrash metal. But, the ripped T-shirts, cleavage, leather and fishnets were still the same.

In order to begin to discover why this style was so popular among all genres of heavy metal music with female fan bases, I embarked upon research enabling me to look at how women navigated their femininity within the heavy metal subculture. For this research, entitled *Powerslaves? Navigating Femininity in Heavy Metal* (Kummer, 2016), I wanted to look in to women's existence in this male-dominated subculture and to discover whether or not they felt that they were in fact feminine by dressing, acting and existing in the way that they did, or if they felt that they were subjecting to the male-domination that surrounded the subculture.

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[3] For a more detailed and comprehensive understanding of the various subgenres and their histories within heavy metal, see Anthropologist Sam Dunn's eleven part television series *Metal Evolution*.

Ultimately, this work answered some of my questions, but there were still many aspects to this feminine style within heavy metal that I felt could be much better understood addressing the more historical aspects of the music. The only genre that arguably challenges gender boundaries in heavy metal so vividly is the style and music of glam metal. Glam metal's over-the-top, gender bending aesthetics have caused many fans of heavier forms of music such as black metal, death metal, thrash metal and folk metal to be very critical of it. Although heavy metal fan reception of glam metal has not always been a positive one, it has been revived since its inception in the mid- 1980s, and aspects of the glam metal style are still prominent within heavy metal sites and spaces today. However, glam metal style in it of itself did not seem to exist in any other forms outside of nostalgic desire to consume the music. This desire to consume has caused bands such as Mötley Crüe and Poison to reconvene and reform their original line-ups to wide acclaim (Kahn-Harris, 2007, p. 2). But, it has also brought about a new presentation of the music and its musicians in reality television.

Another interesting point about glam metal and other genres of heavy metal that I noticed is that they began to tour more frequently than the popular and contemporary heavy metal bands. In the past several years, I had the opportunity to attend many glam metal and rock concerts including: Van Halen, Mötley Crüe, Ratt, Skid Row, Bret Michaels' Band, Great White and KISS. Of course, other 'classic' heavy metal acts outside of the label of glam metal have also toured, including, but not limited to, Black Sabbath, Alice Cooper, Iron Maiden, AC/DC and Judas Priest. As a fan of various genres of heavy metal in the latter half of the 2000s, especially thrash metal bands, I was confused about the switch in performance selection from mainstream and contemporary (or at least, mainstream and still active) heavy metal bands – such as Exodus, Municipal

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Waste, Gojira, Warbringer and so on to 'classic' heavy metal bands such as the glam

metal discussed throughout this thesis (as well as the ones mentioned just above).

Certainly, this case might only be the most valid in consideration of my geographical

location of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. But, even in surrounding major cities, I was not

enticed by the announcement of such concert events. When I started attending the

concerts of classic metal acts, I figured it would be because it was a once in a lifetime

opportunity. Despite many fans not being there for concerts during these bands' most

popular years, the performances seemed to be very welcomed within the heavy metal

community by the younger generation of fans. But, as Sam Dunn in *Metal Evolution*

outlines, there are also festivals that celebrate the music which "...has helped many glam

metal bands keep their music alive for audiences across America" (Dunn, McFayden &

Chapman, 2011).

Thus, as I must admit, I was not a part of the 1980s glam metal scene and

therefore cannot experientially understand the social and cultural history of the music and

its subculture. As Munslow (2006) argues "[m]uch social and cultural history now being

written assumes that the historian's personal beliefs and commitments cannot be

suspended, but that this does not diminish the value of our historical understanding" (p.

26). As a fan of heavy metal music, I also recognize that I cannot fully suspend my

beliefs about the music and the subculture. However, I am able to understand and

critically address aspects of the music in ways that other heavy metal fans might not

consider. In consuming the evidence of the past, I also must recognize that I am

producing meanings about it (Muslow, 2006, p. 27). As a result, being reflexive in this

research allowed me to begin to understand glam metal and its signification in the 1980s

by comparing it to its recontextualized form today.

Despite glam metal being more widely accepted into mainstream television culture, heavy metal music still faces extreme scrutiny when it comes to its images and lyrics. The controversy surrounding Alberta New Democratic Party (NDP) MLA Deborah Drever comes to light as an example of how historical discourse still defines meanings in the delivery of text today. As outlined by Wood (2015, May 16), Deborah Drever was elected in the Calgary-Bow riding in the May 5 provincial election (para. 2). After her election, Drever became the subject of media controversy because images of her on social media platforms, including pictures where "...she posed making a reverse peace sign in front of a T-shirt promoting marijuana while in another someone is giving the finger to the Canadian flag" (para. 12). Reactions to the image of her posing with the local Calgary heavy metal band Gatekrashör completely resonates with the observation that there is still a certain discourse that surrounds heavy metal bands and women that is alive and well. Wood (2015, May 16) describes this image as Drever being "...sprawled against a fence while a man appears poised to assault her with a bottle. Four men stand behind the fence, with one appearing to restrain her arm" (para. 3). At the outset, the image looks distasteful and it illustrates violence towards women, something that is not commonly seen in heavy metal imagery today. Also, when read literally, these images can be offensive. But, when they are considered in the contexts of the devices that this thesis has revealed, the photos are more socially ambiguous than anything because they could be interpreted in a variety of different ways. For example, in the image on the Gatekrashör album cover, Drever seems to be accepting of what is happening around her. She neither looks afraid, nor shocked at the bottle being pointed toward her or the other band members holding up her arm or grabbing her hair. Thus, much like in the denotative descriptions of the music videos and reality television shows, there has to be more going

on than meets the eye. Perhaps this image can be considered as a critique or parody of hidden aspects of dominant culture.

"Lay it Down": Chapter Breakdown & Conclusion

To establish the cultural forms in which glam metal has reappeared, I must first situate glam metal and its historical context. In chapter two, I discuss the literature surrounding heavy metal and popular culture studies to situate the importance of the glam metal style. Next, by looking at glam metal music videos from the 1980s, I analyze the style to understand the significations of the subculture during the apex of its popularity in the 1980s. Drawing upon Hebdige's (1979) argument that style is a homology, this chapter provides a necessary starting point for understanding how the style has shifted in its recent revival.

In chapter three, I explore contemporary reality television show in order to examine glam metal's recontextualizations and understand the particular form of presence that the style has taken in its recent return. I address what ways the style departs from its presence in the 1980s and locate the return of the glam metal style in social practices.

It has been my hope that by placing the historical in conversation with the contemporary that we might explore how our understandings of each are informed by the other and, further, how each can provide important insights with respect to the contemporary expressions of identity and values in the metal culture writ large. Using the academic literature in many places throughout this project as points of departure (Kaplan, 1987; Kahn-Harris, 2007; Klypchak, 2011), this work responds to a gap in the academic literature. By the same token, it was also my hope that this project would bring about a better overall understanding and appreciation of the meaning and social significance of

style surrounding identity, practices and experiences within subculture and in broader

social practices.

Chapter II

Cultural Contours of Style

In order to examine the present revival of the glam metal style, which will allow us to understand how its significations have shifted over time, the task of this chapter is to gain a more thorough understanding of the signification of style during the apex of its popularity in the 1980s. Glam metal was known to have a prominent and distinct style and subculture during the height of its success in the mid- to late 1980. Walser (1993) described it as "...swaggering males, leaping and strutting about the stage, clad in spandex, scarves, leather and other visually noisy clothing, punctuating their performances with phallic thrusts of guitars and microphone sounds" (Walser, 1993, p. 153). The elements of glam metal style, such as clothing, gestures, and language, were out of place with general social expectations. It is likely that these elements could not be seamlessly integrated into institutional spheres, such as work, school, church, or formal family dinners without raising at least mild social disapproval. Many members of the glam metal subculture nevertheless adopted a muted form of this presentation of style in everyday life in the 1980s.

Hebdige's seminal work suggests that subcultural style stands in opposition to dominant culture. Though neither Hebdige nor subcultural scholars thought that his theoretical framework applied to heavy metal subcultures, his theory surrounding style as a structural homology provides insight into the subculture of 1980s glam metal. In this chapter I argue that there are three devices presented within glam metal music videos: emotionally-charged recruitment into a negatively defined community; social institutional critique aimed at education, health, and family; and carnivalesque reversals of power. These devices establish the glam metal style as subversive and possibly as challenging the

popular values of the time. Understanding these devices will provide context for the form of presence of glam metal in the 1980s so we can better understand how the style has changed in its reappearance in the present.

To recall, Hebdige (1979) argues that the objects and gestures of significance to a subcultural group simultaneously mark their differences from dominant culture (pp. 2-3). He explained that, while subcultural style may appear to be disordered, there is a homologous relationship between a gesture or an object and the group's concerns, as well as a relationship between its style and broader social practices of everyday life in dominant culture (pp. 114-115). In relation to glam metal and its movement into the mainstream, the fact that it was targeted for its violations to social norms is significant for the insight it provides into its relationship with common culture. As glam metal music became subject to the Parent's Music Resource Center (PMRC) campaign for a content ratings system in the 1980s, which targeted the glam aesthetic expressed in lyrics, on album covers, in music videos, and on t-shirts as sexually explicit, violent, and morally suspect, the PMRC lobbied for formal mechanisms to block youth access to glam metal influence, insisting that it posed harmful influences on young people. These efforts suggest that some observers, particularly those in positions of authority, viewed the glam metal style as socially oppositional and, therefore, they indirectly support the use of Hebdige's theoretical framework. But, two possible objections arise from scholarly literature.

First, much of the scholarly literature assessing glam metal emphasizes its hyper-sexualized imagery and, despite its acknowledgement of the feminization of masculinity in glam metal, the style is interpreted in ways that assume its reinforcement of heteronormative gender stereotypes and hierarchy that presents women as

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accommodating heteronormative masculine desire. In this way, the literature poses a challenge to the subversive potential of the glam metal style. Yet, when the style is studied more closely, Hebdige's claim that subcultural style marks difference between the sub- and dominant culture can respond to this possible objection. The paradox presented by, on the one hand, the feminization of masculinity, and, on the other hand, the hyper-sexualized gendering within heteronormativity, can be explained by insider-outsider group distinctions.

Second, while glam metal, as a subordinated metal subgenre, has received relatively little scholarly attention when compared with other metal genres, much of the scholarship that does address glam metal does so in order to show how its mainstream popularity attained in the 1980s opened greater opportunities for less commercialized (and supposedly more "authentic") genres of heavy metal. The attention to the rising popularity and commercial success of glam metal in the 1980s could be taken to suggest that glam metal was successfully incorporated into the dominant culture, and, therefore, it was consistent with, rather than critical of, dominant cultural values. The significance of commercial success and popularity also turns on the question of insider-outsider distinctions. These possible objections are implicit to the literature reviewed in this chapter and they are addressed in the concluding section.

To further investigate Hebdige's ideas in the context of 1980s glam metal, I examine the signification of glam metal style through the analysis of five selected music videos: "Smokin' in the Boys Room" by Mötley Crüe (Koda & Lutz, 1985, side B), "We're not Gonna Take it" by Twisted Sister (Snider, 1984, side B track 6), "Lipstick and Leather" by Y&T (LaBarge & Leib, 1984, side B), "Bang Your Head (Metal Health)" by Quiet Riot (Cavazo, DuBrow & Banali, 1983, side A) and "I Want Action" by Poison

(Dall, DeVille, Michaels & Rockett, 1984, track 2). Videos were chosen based on their

popularity and the frequency of their appearance during the 1980s. Critical discourse and

semiotic analyses of these representative videos revealed three main rhetorical devices

whose force are consistent with Hebdige's insistence that the elements of subcultural style

mark differences from dominant culture while producing the contours of subcultural

group belonging. As noted already, these three devices are: emotionally-charged

recruitment into a negatively defined community; social institutional critique aimed at

education, health, and family; and carnivalesque reversals of power. These devices deploy

sharp critiques of the values that they project onto dominant culture but they do not posit

preferred values for members of the subculture. Before elaborating the devices revealed

in the analysis of selected videos, I will review the existing scholarship pertaining to glam

metal style and its contradictions. This review will address: the emergence of glam metal

from heavy metal; transformations within glam metal; the PMRC and social disapproval

of glam metal; the gender ambiguities of the glam metal look; and components of identity

and subcultures.

"Kickstart my Heart": Heavy Metal and its 'Apex of Popularity'

Heavy metal was especially successful was in the 1980s when glam metal was in its

prime. Garofalo (1996) states that "after an initial surge in the early 1970s, it appeared as

if heavy metal might be a short-lived phenomenon" (p. 397). On the one hand, there were

many fans re-evaluating the music due to feminist dismissals of the overtly misogynist

messages (p. 397). On the other hand, there were a few bands, such as KISS, that

continued to have gold and platinum record releases (p. 397). Walser (1993) had also

suggested that the popularity of heavy metal music was fading before its transformation

in the 1980s at which time it became the dominant genre of American music (p. 11). Thus, despite the initial lack of success of heavy metal, the fading of the subculture in the 1970s and early 1980s was certainly not the end of its growth.

In the early days of heavy metal, there were several key bands whose successes contributed to the growth of the genre as a whole. Walser (1993) discusses the rise of bands such as Van Halen as well as other bands that had "overran" America from England such as Iron Maiden, Def Leppard and Saxon. He argues that "…the new wave of metal featured shorter, catchier songs, more sophisticated production techniques, and higher technical standards. All of these characteristics helped pave the way toward greater popular success" (p. 12). In fact, the subgenre of heavy metal has been so successful, that there are several different ways to define and understand it.

Heavy metal studies literature illustrates the different ways to define and understand the subgenre of glam metal. The first understanding of the subgenre arises from the discussion surrounding its name. According to Weinstein (2000), glam metal – or, as she calls it, 'lite metal' – is a categorized as its own subgenre apart from other genres of metal because of its melodic element (p. 45). She states that the term lite metal "…indicates the removal of the thick bottom sound of traditional heavy metal. Lite metal has also been referred to as 'melodic metal' and 'pop metal'" (p. 45). Sollee (2011) labels this genre of heavy metal in accordance to its characterizations and uses two terms, 'glam metal' and 'hair metal' to refer to the genre. She states that she uses the two terms interchangeably because "…hair metal refers to the coiffures of the musicians and is as entrenched in imagery as the word glam is, thereby serving the same denotative purpose" (p. 52). Berger (1999) differentiates glam rock from glam metal. First, he states that the word "glam" is actually an abbreviated form of "glamour metal", and is not to be

confused with 1970s "glam rock" (p. 311). He then defines glam metal as "a genre of 1980s commercial hard rock that combines elements of heavy metal and pop and whose performers employ elaborate makeup, costumes, and stage antics. For some, the term is almost synonymous with 'pop metal'" (p. 311-312). Thus, whether the music referred to as lite metal, hair metal or glam metal, generally, the meanings are the same, and these labels tend to subordinate glam metal to heavy metal.

With the various labels of glam metal in mind, the 1980s then became to be known as the decade in which distinctions between other various categories of heavy metal music became defined (Garofalo, 1996, p. 402). Garofalo (1996) outlines these various subgenres within heavy metal and states that:

> Traditional or classic heavy metal was used to describe the original sound of widely distorted guitar, heavy bass and drums, and raw, unadorned vocals; lite pop or pop metal emphasized sweeter vocals, even harmony; glam metal was defined by a particular look; thrash and speed metal featured faster tempos that were derived from punk; death metal, which was a subcategory of speed/trash, focused on the issue of death; black metal focused on Satanic themes; and white metal was its Christian counterpart (p. 402).

Even though there were many various subgenres and subcultures that were beginning to be recognized for heavy metal music fans, both Garofalo (1996) and Walser (1993) argue that there were really only two camps that were formed in this decade. Garofalo (1996) states that these two different camps claimed "their rightful place in a lineage that led back to the grand old groups of the genre. Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, and Deep Purple. At one end of the spectrum was lite metal and at the other were the groups lumped together as speed/thrash metal" (p. 402). Similarly, Walser (1993) agrees that the two camps were created due to "a lineage dating back to the late 1960s founders: Led Zeppelin, Black Sabbath, and Deep Purple" (p. 14). Additionally though, Walser (1993) elaborates the controversy between the two camps that formed in the 1980s:

On the one hand, there was the metal of the broad new audience forged during the mid-1980s by bands like Mötley Crüe and Bon Jovi. This was the heavy metal on the sales charts, with radio play, the metal seen on MTV and at huge arena concerts. On the other hand, a different camp disparaged the newfound popularity of what they call lite metal or the music of "posers". These fans and bands attempted to sustain the marginal status metal enjoyed during the 1970s; they shunned the broad popularity that they saw as necessarily linked to musical vapidity and subcultural dispersion (p. 14).

Although glam metal was not necessarily considered "authentic" in the mid-1980s, Walser (1993) further notes that "the 1980s was the decade of heavy metal's emergence as a massively popular musical style, as it burgeoned in both commercial success and stylistic variety" (p. 3). It was at this time that the heavy metal fans became more gender-balanced and middle-class, and even the age range of its fans changed from young preteens to also include young adults (Walser, 1933, p. 3). Kahn-Harris (2007) supports this argument by stating that "it was in the 1980s that heavy metal reached the apex of popularity" (p. 2). Although this was not necessarily singularly a result of the presence of glam metal or pop metal bands and artists, by the end of the 80s, "heavy metal had accounted for as much as 40 percent of all sound recordings sold in the United States, and Rolling Stone announced that heavy metal now constituted 'the mainstream of rock and roll'" (Walser, 1993, p. 3). At this time, there were many various styles and genres within heavy metal that diversified the music, and "the term 'heavy metal' itself became an open site of contestation, as fans, musicians, and historians struggled with the prestige – and notoriety – of a genre name that seemed no longer able to contain disparate musical styles and agendas" (Walser, 1993, p. 3).

Walser (1993) observes that the next wave of metal after the New Wave of British Heavy Metal (NWBHM) was in fact glam metal itself, which "came out of Los Angeles around 1983-84" (p. 12). He argues that it was bands like Mötley Crüe and Ratt that

"spearheaded a revival of 'glam' metal androgyny" alongside other L.A. bands such as Quiet Riot, Dokken, and W.A.S.P." (p. 12). But it was not just within L.A. that the glam metal music, style and culture were taking off. Walser (1993) states that the extravagance of these bands also brought them attention on an international scale, thus naming Southern California as "the center of heavy metal music for the 1980s, and bands from other parts of the country, among them Poison and Guns N' Roses, flocked to Los Angeles in hopes of getting signed to a major label contract" (p. 12). The record sales of this music only further demonstrate its popularity as time went on. According to Walser (1993), "in 1983, heavy metal records accounted for only 8 percent of all recordings sold in the United States; one year later, that share had increased phenomenally, to 20 percent" (p. 12) He also states that the bands who "rode the crest of this new success" included both glam metal and NWBHM bands such as Dokken, Iron Maiden, Mötley Crüe, Ratt, Twisted Sister, and Scorpions (p. 12). Thus, in consideration of glam metal as a visually distinctive subgenre that paved much of the way for heavy metal's contemporary success with regards to media and style, the subgenre of the music does deserve more exploration. There are many unique aspects of heavy metal music, including its sound, performance aspects, style and subculture, and gender presentations.

Although the prevalence and visibility of the glam metal style nearly disappeared in the 1990s, in recent years, it has staged a return to new cultural and economic arenas. Walser (1993) notes that "throughout the 1980s, the influence of heavy metal on other kinds of popular music was pervasive and substantial" (p. 15). Many pop artists used heavy metal solos by guitar legends such as Eddie Van Halen and music legends Aerosmith, and "as the 1980s went on, heavy metal guitar sounds became well enough known to be used in all sorts of contexts, to evoke danger, intensity, and excitement" (p.

15). Thus, the 1980s was a key time in the development of representation and development of rock and heavy metal in popular music.

"Mama Weer all Crazee now": (Trans)formations of Glam Metal

Arguably, glam metal's popularity was a result of the increased media attention that glam metal music saw in the mid- 1980s. Of course though, heavy metal music was not always successful and there were still challenges that the genre of music faced even after it became more popular and mainstream.

Weinstein (2000) argues that there were three periods that ultimately set the stage for heavy metal in mainstream media. She notes

> The first, lasting until about 1979, is distinguished by metal's marginalization by record companies and its exclusion by the rest of the rock industry. The second period, beginning around 1980 and ending around 1983, is marked by the formation of autonomous heavy metal organizations and by a stronger acceptance of metal by mainstream record companies. In the third era, starting around 1984 and not yet over, metal entered the mainstream (p. 149).

To elaborate, the first period that Weinstein refers to was its exclusion to radio as discussed by Garofalo (1996), who states that, although there were some radio stations that began to program heavy metal music in the late 70s, it did not last long and was cut back in the early 80s due to ratings wars with other radio formats (p. 400). Radio was not the only format reluctant to air heavy metal music either. Even in television, "MTV was reluctant to air heavy metal during its first phase of operation, preferring instead the cutting edge antinarratives of British newpop" (p 400).

The second period that Weinstein (2000) and Garofalo (1996) refer to is the period in which heavy metal music became more widely accepted in television. Walser (1993) states that it was in December of 1986 that "MTV significantly increased the amount of heavy metal it programmed, initiating a special program called "Headbangers'

Ball" and putting more metal videos into their regular rotation" (p. 13). Garofalo (1996) goes on to note that the growth of metal is attributed to the exposure MTV provided. In fact, "Headbangers' Ball became MTV's most popular show, with 1.3 million viewers each week" (Walser, 1993, p. 13). This second period that set the stage for wider acceptance of heavy metal music consisted of MTV programming heavy metal with a vengeance (Goodwin, 1992, p. 135 as cited by Garofalo, 1996, p. 400). The spectacular heavy metal stage shows made it a natural for live television, giving the music a venue to exploit its visual dimensions virtually unchanged (Walser, 1993, p. 13). But, it was not music from both of the camps of heavy metal that was most popular for the television format. The more prominent groups to be aired on MTV were Los Angeles based glam metal bands, such as Mötley Crüe, Quiet Riot, Dokken, Twisted Sister, and Scorpions (Garofalo, 1996, p. 400). The favouring of these bands enabled them to gain greater access to radio and ultimately allowed glam metal music to expand into arena and stadium-sized venues (Garofalo, 1996, p. 402).

As the popularity of glam metal in radio and television format continued, the audience base also began to change rapidly. As argued by Garofalo (1996), "[i]t was lite metal that initially transformed the metal audience from subculture to mass and altered its gender balance as well" (p. 402). Walser (1993) expands on this by noting that, around 1985, Billboard magazine reported, "metal music is no longer the exclusive domain of male teenagers. The metal audience has become older (college-aged), younger (pre-teen), and more female" (pp. 12-13). Most importantly to the discussion surrounding subculture in glam metal, Garofalo (1996) argues that it was in fact light metal album releases that signalled the transition in the audience. These included Def Leppard's *Pyromania* (1983), Bon Jovi's, *Slippery When Wet* (1986), Quiet Riot's *Metal Health* and Van Halen's *1984*

(p. 402; Walser, 1993, p. 12).

Walser (1993) posits a few more reasons why heavy metal and hard rock were so successful. He asserts that the support of heavy metal was attributed to the trend in the economy of American popular music as well as a shift in the subcultural support of heavy metal music (p. 12). He argues that it was Bon Jovi's *Slippery When Wet* which

> ...fused the intensity and heaviness of metal with the romantic sincerity of pop and the "authenticity" of rock, helping to create a huge new gender-balanced audience for heavy metal. Bon Jovi's success not only reshaped metal's musical discourse and sparked limitations and extensions, but it also gained metal substantial radio airplay for the first time (p. 13).

After the success of bands such as Bon Jovi, the next wave of heavy metal began to arrive from Los Angeles (Garofalo, 1996, p. 400). The music was not the only thing that was transformed during this wave; the fashion associated with the subculture also began to change drastically. As Garr (1992) notes, "in the metal scene, the boys looked more like the girls, with the big poofy hair and the makeup and the plucked eyebrows" (p. 415). The success of the Los Angeles bands was attributed to their hit singles as well as to the opening concerts for bands such as KISS in the early 1980s (Garofalo, 1996, p. 400). Some popular albums and songs of this time noted by Garofalo (1996) include Mötley Crüe's *Shout at the Devil* album, which was a Top 20 hit, Ratt's Top Ten hit *Out of the Cellar* in 1984, and Quiet Riot's two hit singles from the *Metal Health* album, "Cum on Feel the Noize" in 1983 and "Bang Your Head (Metal Health)" in 1984 (p. 400). With this in mind, Walser (1993) offers another argument: it was not necessarily the success of Bon Jovi that dispelled the notion that Top 40 and hard rock do not mix, but this reconsideration could have also been due to the emergence of Los Angeles bands, especially Mötley Crüe (p. 13).

As discussed, it appeared as though glam metal was made for MTV. In

consideration of the literature surrounding representations within popular music, it is interesting that the music has not returned to MTV in its recent revival, but, it has returned to MTV in a way that is not just about music anymore. Currently, MTV seems to emphasize lifestyles constructed and presented through reality televisions shows. As the look, or style, of glam metal is now primarily tied to performances and performance venues, it is noteworthy that glam metal figures have changed to be presented on television in reality television shows alongside the other contemporary media spheres. There may have been specific concerns and conditions that the look responded to in the 1980s when it proliferated. In order to understand these conditions, is important consider how it was characterized by its moral opponents then.

"Every Rose has its Thorn": Censuring Glam Metal

Glam metal musicians' involvement in the struggle over PMRC's proposed ratings scheme provides insight into the ways that glam metal was cast and understood as counter-cultural. This understanding gives a comparative point of departure for subsequent examination of its recontextualization in its recent revival. It allows the understanding of how this glam metal style was constructed as disruptive, and furthermore, what censorship debates revealed about the style, and its interruption to the dominant culture gives insight into what was at stake, what kinds of public fears there were, as well as into the struggle over cultural norms and interpretations of the values inherent to heavy metal.

Intent upon the implementation of a ratings system for lyrical content of popular music, the PMRC provides an anchoring point in the 1980s for a comparative analysis with the contemporary status of glam metal style. The PMRC cast the heavy metal genre

as a predator to teen sensibility. In particular, glam metal was directly impacted by the

PMRC when a PMRC founder, Tipper Gore, was publicly challenged by Twisted Sister's

Dee Snider. Snider was an articulate rhetorical opponent in a sustained debate over values

and censorship. This key historical struggle provides a strong point of departure for

considering the recontextualization of metal and particularly its key figures.

Garofalo (1996) provides a comprehensive understanding of the PMRC's goals in

his book. He states:

> The PMRC was founded in early 1985 by a group of prominent women in
> Washington, D.C. Founding members included, in addition to Tipper Gore, Sally
> Nevius whose husband had chaired the city council, Pam Howar, and Susan Baker
> whose husband, James Baker, was then secretary of the Treasury. Indeed, of the
> twenty original members, seventeen were married to influential Washington
> politicians. They were immediately dubbed "the Washington wives" by press in
> recognition of their access to political clout" (p. 424).

The primary concerns of the PMRC according Gray (1989) were generally "about the

growing trend in music toward lyrics that are sexually explicit, excessively violent, or

glorify the use of drugs and alcohol" (as cited by Garofalo, 1996, p. 425). In order to

censor music that was categorized as such, the founders of the PMRC "decided to exploit

their personal connections to 'educate and inform parents about this alarming trend as

well as to ask the industry to exercise self-restraint.'" (p. 425). Also, they maintained that

in doing so, they were "in favor of voluntary measures, not censorship, and that it was not

opposed to all forms of popular music." (p. 425). Through an alliance between the

national Parent/Teacher Association (PTA) and the Contras and the Heritage Foundation,

the PMRC gained "…instant access to the PTA's base of 5.6 million members, [and] then

set about trying to convince the music industry to publish the lyrics to all new releases

and institute a rating system similar to the one used for movies" (Garofalo, 1996, p. 425).

In response to this demand of the PMRC, the Recording Industry Association of America

(RIAA) offered to compromise and issue all record labels to issue a generic warning, "PARENTAL ADVISORY/EXPLICIT LYRICS," on the necessary albums in August 1985 (Garofalo, 1996, p. 425). Stan Gortikov, then president of the RIAA, acknowledged the legitimacy of the PMRC's concerns, but he cited legal and logistical problems as the reason for the compromise (Garofalo, 1996, p. 425).

There were "five major themes" that the PMRC outlined that were concerning to them. Garofalo (1996) outlines these concerns, including: (1) abuse of drugs and alcohol; (2) suicide; (3) graphic violence; (4) fascination with the occult; and (5) a sexuality that is graphic and explicit (p. 423). The PMRC argued that these five themes "occurred consistently in some rock music and especially in heavy metal" (p. 423). The group also wanted to add rap music to the list of music to be watched, yet they strongly maintained at the time that heavy metal was "the most disturbing element in contemporary music," claiming that "much of it dwells on themes that glorify rape, sado-macohism, violence, and suicide" (pp. 423-424). However, "heavy metal lyrics dealing with these topics are uncommon. For example, examination of eighty-eight [heavy metal] song lyrics reprinted by Hit Parader reveals relatively little concern with violence, drug use, or suicide" (Walser, 1993, p. 139 as cited by Garofalo, 1996, p. 428). This illustrates an example of the degree of tension that was building between the music industry, music artists and the PMRC. As this continued to be the case, the PMRC felt that they needed to do something to create a stronger argument.

In order for the PMRC to gain more support, they began to draw attention to the "…unsavory lifestyles of certain heavy metal groups like Mötley Crüe, using lead singer Vince Neil's conviction in a drunk driving accident that took the life of another musician as an example" (Garofalo, 1996, p. 428). There were other personal attacks from the

PMRC regarding the lives of musicians and, as Garofalo (1996) notes, "while Neil certainly projected the image of a profoundly irresponsible person, such behavior is hardly limited to heavy metal artists, and the vast majority of incidents surrounding heavy metal artists were far less dramatic" (p. 428). In so doing, the PMRC were seemingly "drawing a line between themselves and youth" by making it "clear that other forms of music – even other forms of popular music – would not be subjected to the same scrutiny" (p. 428). One genre of music that was largely untouched by the PMRC was country music, even though the genre has often dealt with themes of sex, violence, and alcohol in its images and lyrics (p. 428).

"Looks that Kill": Glam Metal's Style and Gender Representations

Glam metal's style, or look, has frequently been described as illustrating sexuality, extravagance and display, which Berger (1999) states are keynotes for the glam metal look (p. 38). Schippers (2002) also discusses the glam metal look, stating that fans and musicians "wore visible makeup like eyeliner, eye shadow, lipstick and mascara; and an array of spandex, scarves, and high-heeled boots" (p. 21). Glam metal is also well known for "[t]he overt sex and opposition to mainstream middle-class rules opened space in rock music for 'gender-bending' through style, and in fact has been one of the few mass cultural spaces where men have been able to take a walk on the wild side" (Schippers, 2002, p. 20). Despite glam metal's inherently feminine attire, men and women glam metal fans had their own ways of adopting the style. Berger (1999) notes the more feminine styles of dress that men were likely to be seen wearing, including "tight-fitting, faded but not ripped jeans, spandex pants, silk button-downs, or T-shirts; hair could range in length from the shoulder to the mid-back, and hair weaves were not unheard of" (p. 38). He also

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discusses women glam metal fan fashions and states that

> ...women's fashions were both more varied and more complex: in the summer, skin-tight jean shorts or black miniskirts; in the winter, skin-tight jeans or spandex pants. T-shirts were acceptable in this scene, but tight, summer halters, short-sleeved shorts, and elaborately laced blouses were also common for tops. Black leather jackets and handcuffs through belt loops provided a tougher image for some of these women, while tight and lacy black dresses in the style of singer Stevie Nicks were still popular, even though that performer hadn't been in the limelight recently. High heels, long permed hair with mousse-coated bangs, and ticket layers of makeup were common (p. 38).

Most importantly, Berger (1999) states that this style, especially for the women, was put on for shows or concerts actively, which marked the wearer as a part of the local scene (p. 38). Thus, it seems that glam metal fans in the broader society in the 1980s were commonly seen dressing in such fashion, it was just more apparent and extravagant for the glam metal shows.

The style surrounding glam metal therefore gave a place for women to become a part of the heavy metal scene. Not only were the lyrical and instrumental aspects of glam metal music more along the lines of the popular music of the time, they were advertised and maintained as more feminine because of the style of this heavy metal subgenre. As Garofalo (1996) argues, "throughout its first generation, heavy metal was the exclusive province of young, white, males. There were no female heavy metal musicians to speak of unless the genre's boundaries are extended far enough to include the Wilson sisters from Heart" (p. 399). Although glam metal did not have many, if any, well-known women musicians, the style was more feminine, and the audience had a strong contingent of women. In his interview for *Metal Evolution*, Gary Holt, thrash metal band Exodus' guitarist, reflects on this by saying: "[w]e viewed like the hair bands as our nemesis. We were the dirty Motörheaders and they were the sissy nancy boys. But, secretly we went to their shows all the time 'cause that's where all the chicks were" (Dunn, McFayden &

Chapman, 2011). Heavy metal scholar Deena Weinstein also notes in her interview for *Metal Evolution*, "[t]he women liked hair metal because the men were behaving as they do. They wear lots of makeup, they spend time doing their hair. The girls weren't particularly interested in guitar solos" (Dunn, McFayden & Chapman, 2011). This observation leads into another discussion point with regards to the 1980s glam metal subculture, that of groupies.

Although groupies do not solely exist in glam metal scenes, they are an important consideration for the masculine presentations of the heavy metal subgenre. The groupie lifestyle accompanied with the glam metal presentations of elaborate feminine and hyper-sexualized fashions invited more women to become a part of the subculture as not only groupies, but also as fans. In the 1980s glam metal subculture, it was regarded as common knowledge that "women who appeared in 'feminine' garb were usually regarded as groupies who were there to service the band sexually" (Garofalo, 1996, p. 399). Schippers (2002) suggests that the term groupie is derived from rock discourse and observes that it is this discourse that "constructs the identity label *groupie* as one who is sexually accessible to rock musicians, or someone with whom rock musicians have sex" (p. 26). Women groupies did not necessarily need knowledge of heavy metal, but most of them were fans of glam metal music due to its more feminine presentations. Schippers (2002) also notes that women "in fact are very active and sometimes ingenious pursuers of the musicians" (p. 26). Therefore, the 1980s glam metal subculture saw an increase of many women in the subculture, even if some were groupies, which began to change the construction of fans in the general subculture of heavy metal.

"Somebody Save Me": Music, Identity and Subculture

To better understand the heavy metal subculture and the importance and role that it plays in how an individual identifies with the music, the style and subculture deserves further exploration. Heavy metal studies literature has commonly referred to heavy metal as a very unique subculture that is comprised of many confident, loyal and individual members. Walser (1993) argues that this 'stylistic identity' of heavy metal began "in the late 1960s as a "harder" sort of hard rock, and a relatively small but fiercely loyal subculture formed around it during the 1970s" (p. 3). The subculture had to be fierce and loyal as heavy metal bands received almost no airplay and, in order to be successful, bands were forced to tour heavily in order to support their album releases (p. 3).

The political position of heavy metal is also important to consider because the subculture has been described as "...a group generally lacking in social, physical, and economic power, but one besieged by cultural messages promoting such forms of power, insisting on them as the vital attributes of an obligatory masculinity" (Walser, 1993, p. 154). As the audiences at these shows were generally white, young, male and working class (p. 3), heavy metal subculture is also a representation of the music. It has been noted that many genres of music also have subcultures surrounding them and are considered to be vehicles for the expression of group values and more importantly, personal identity (Roe, 1985, p. 361). Heavy metal has a very distinct subculture that appears to be based upon this expression of group values and identity. As Epstein (1998) suggests, heavy metal "…needs to be seen as a way for those caught up in dead-end lives to blot everything out, to escape in a world of pure noise and aggression, and in turn to sublimate their rage and frustrations through head banging and air guitar" (p. 92). These elements of

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heavy metal set it apart from many other genres of music.

Although the ways individuals dress and the lyrics within heavy metal are diverse compared to what is considered conventional or normative in society, the interactions within the subculture do not differ greatly from one group to another. Just like any other subculture, heavy metal is a place for individuals to belong and share common ground with others, as discussed by Roe (1985). The close-knit subculture of heavy metal stems from the acceptance from all of the members in the group. This strong interconnectedness within the group develops because there are no formal, official or strict entry requirements, which is where the initial appeal lies with individuals who consider becoming a part of the subculture (Epstein, 1998, p. 102). Epstein notes that, since heavy metal was not considered mainstream, as there was no space for it on Top 40 radio stations or MTV, individuals could feel a sense of uniqueness as heavy metal fans, making the identification of themselves as a member of the subculture more meaningful and worthwhile (p. 102). Another reason given for the strong bonds and inclusive nature of heavy metal is that fans, the music and the culture itself have historically been misunderstood and marginalized (Hickam & Wallach, 2011, p. 260). In heavy metal, fans come together to celebrate their cohesiveness as a group.

As strong bonds and inclusive natures within subcultures are common within many subcultures, the heavy metal subculture does not differ greatly from other subcultures in this regard. Individuals within subcultures often appear to have similar values and beliefs, which draw them together as a group. However, individuals also have individual and subjective life experiences that they use to (re)present their own style. Wood (2003) discusses this in terms of the straightedge youth subculture and references Hebdige's discussion of this topic to understand individual stylistic representations. He

notes that "Hebdige (1979) illustrates how shared class-based experiences allowed the British punk sub-culture to hang together, yet he also suggests that individual punks may encode the idiosyncrasies of their subjective life experiences into their own variations on punk style" (p. 37). Thus, it is common for members within a group to differ from one another because "an individual's identity as a member of a sub-culture is at least partially impacted by pre-existing norms, values, beliefs, artefacts, spaces, rituals, and people who communicate what the sub-culture is all about as well as what it means to be a member" (Wood, 2003, p. 37-38). As Wood (2003) observes, "According to Fine & Kleinman (1979, p. 6), sub-culture is a globally bounded entity within which '[e]ach member's perspective on the shared knowledge of the subculture will necessarily be different from that of any other member'" (p. 37). As a result, "each prospective member, therefore, will differently internalize and differently emphasize the common norms and values that define the general parameters of the sub-culture" (p. 37). Further, "each prospective member, however, necessarily possesses a unique biography, and thus prospective members will not internalize or identify with pre-existing culture in exactly the same way, nor will they necessarily construct identical or even similar sub-culture identities" (p. 38). These observations link with the negative construction of glam metal subculture insofar as its style was mobilized against aspects of common every day practice, but did not offer clear and descriptive sets of values and practices as a substitute. This will be elaborated in discussion of the social institutional critique that is highlighted in the music videos analyzed for this study, which show that glam metal identification seemed to work through the rejection of authority, conformity and adherence to the norm, even though members of the subculture may not actually agree on the same values that the videos portray. Instead, they come together as a collective identity in response to the values and

social practices that they reject or critique.

Frith (1996) adds to the conversation about identity and subculture by arguing that music may be shaped by the people who first make it and use it, and, as an experience, it has a life of its own (p. 294). For Frith, music is constructed by the direct experiences it offers the body as well as time and sociability which enable individuals to place themselves in imaginative cultural narratives (p. 209). In further examining the aesthetics of popular music, he notes

> … I want to reverse the usual academic and critical argument: the issue is not how a particular piece of music or a performance reflects the people, but how it produces them, how it creates and constructs an experience – a music experience, an aesthetic experience – that we can only make sense of by taking on both a subjective and a collective identity (p. 294).

Similar to Wood (2003), Frith states that "identity is mobile, a process not a thing, a becoming not a being" and "our experience of music – of music making and music listening – is best understood as an experience of this self-in-process" (p. 294). He furthers this argument by remarking that "Music, like identity, is both performance and story, describes the social in the individual and the individual in the social, the mind in the body and the body in the mind" (p. 294). All in all, he argues that "Music seems to be key to identity because it offers, so intensely, a sense of both self and others, of the subjective in the collective" (p. 295). Frith's negotiation of the subjective in the collective in music adds to the conversation about subcultural identity formation because it is consistent with the observation that "each prospective member… possesses a unique biography" (Wood, 2003, p. 28). He further suggests that it is

> …not that social groups agree on values which are then expressed in their cultural activities (the assumption of the homology models) but that they only get to know themselves as groups (as a particular organization of individual and social interests, of sameness and difference) through cultural activity, through aesthetic judgment. Making music isn't a way of expressing ideas; it is a way of living them

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(p. 296).

With this in mind, it is clear that for individuals participating in music subcultures, music is much more than just an aesthetic experience or a cultural activity. It is a means for identification within oneself and within a subculture.

Underlining the notion that music is both a subjective and a collective experience, Frith (1996) argues that "because of its qualities of abstractness, music is, by nature, an individualizing form. We absorb songs into our own lives and rhythm into our own bodies, they have a looseness of reference that makes them immediately accessible" (p. 306). However,

> At the same time, and equally significantly, music is obviously collective. We hear things as music because their sounds obey a more or less familiar cultural logic, and for most music listeners (who are not themselves music makers) this logic is out of our control. There is a mystery to our musical tastes (p. 306).

If music allows individuals to experience it subjectively as well as collectively, it is interesting that the glam metal style has possibly changed from one that stands in relation to group values, beliefs and norms to one that has more transitory relations with dispersed individuals, neither bound by beliefs and norms nor by time and space.

"Nobody's Fool": Denotative and Connotative Meanings

Before the challenges to the subversive potential of the glam metal style as presented by the literature can be examined with respect to Hebdige's claim that subcultural style marks difference between the sub- and dominant culture, some notes regarding methodological approach need to be given. Chandler's (2007) discussion of denotative and connotative meanings in semiotics primarily guides the analysis of the 1980s glam metal music videos as presented in this thesis. He notes that the denotative meaning is the understanding of a sign on the surface, indicating that it outlines the broader consensus

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that is "agreed upon by members of the same culture" (p. 139). A denotative meaning is a "definitional, literal, obvious or common-sense meaning of a sign" (p. 137). In order to better understand these music videos, Chandler would argue that the connotative meaning must be explored. This meaning refers to "the socio-cultural and 'personal' associations (ideological, emotional, etc.) of the sign" (p. 138). He also states that connotative meanings are context dependent, meaning that they are more open to interpretation than denotative meanings (p. 138).

At the connotative level, my analysis revealed three devices within 1980s glam metal music videos: recruitment, institutional critique, and carnivalesque reversals of power. These three devices are interdependent in the videos I studied, but the latter two supported the first device, in that recruitment depends upon a lack of identification with the target institutions and their figures of authority, who are parodied and made transparent and vulnerable through comic reversals. These devices are key to understanding the glam metal subcultural style of the 1980s. They are, in Hebdige's terms, the elements of the style. Throughout this analysis, Mötley Crüe's "Smokin' in the Boys Room" will be primarily relied upon to describe these devices, as it exhibits all three devices in vivid form. Also, this video ultimately provides insight into the style of glam metal and the message to which participants of the subculture responded.

"Smokin' in the Boys Room": A Denotative Reading of the Boys' Room

> *Smokin' in the boys room*
> *Smokin' in the boys room*
> *Teacher don't you fill me up with your rules*
> *Everybody knows that smokin' ain't allowed in school*
>
> – "Smokin' in the Boys Room" (Koda & Lutz, 1985, side B)

The video's opening scene shows the young protagonist Jimmy, who is clearly late for

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school, running with a pile of disorganized papers. As he trips on the pavement, he drops the papers on the ground. As he gathers the dispersed pages, he notices a snarling doberman pincher with a pentagram dog tag around its neck. The dog approaches, snatches one of the pages, turns and runs off with it. Despite losing his homework, Jimmy continues on to attend his class and to inform his teacher that a dog ran off with his homework. Listening in on their conversation, Jimmy's classmates all laugh, and the teacher sends him to the principal's office. As the door to the principal's office slams behind Jimmy, a large, intimidating, empty room is shown with nothing in it except bookshelves, a chair, a desk and the American flag. The camera swiftly zooms in on the principal standing in front of his desk. He asks why Jimmy is back to see him again. Jimmy pleads his case to the principal and insists, "But a dog really did run off with it!" Unimpressed with Jimmy's explanation, the principal responds by saying, "You're just never able to see our side of things, are you?" Distressed, Jimmy runs to the boys' washroom, looks in the mirror and says "Your side of it? I wish somebody could see my side of it!"

The music tunes in as Vince Neil, Mötley Crüe's lead singer, appears in a portal through a mirror. The band pulls Jimmy through and begins showing him 'the other side' of the school. Industrial, grey and dark, on 'the other side,' Jimmy's teacher is shown with a leaver that says 'conform' on it, and she pulls it for the students to do so. Behind her, there is poster in the background with the principal's picture that states "Your Principal is Watching You". To show how the principal is watching, he is depicted seated with a ventriloquist dummy in a surveillance room equipped with multiple security monitors that enable him to watch the students and their every move. After noticing Mötley Crüe playing music on the security cameras, the principal enters the boys' room

where the band was playing and, to his surprise, they are missing. While the principal presumably continues to look for Mötley Crüe, the band brings Jimmy to the gymnasium at the school where they begin to play their music to a room full of robotically dancing students wearing white jumper suits at the senior prom. As the concert continues, the students begin to throw their white jumpsuits in the air, revealing that they are wearing leather vests underneath. No longer wearing jumpsuits, all of the students begin to rock out to the music. The principal, with his ventriloquist dummy, is finally able to track down Mötley Crüe in the gymnasium. Shocked at what was happening within his school, the principal angrily stands at the door to the gymnasium pointing and yelling, but he is unable to stop the concert. The principal watches as Mötley Crüe knocks over a wall behind their stage setup with a black and white target on it. As the band runs through the hole in the wall, all the students follow.

Jimmy is then thrown back to the boys' room at the school through the mirror from where he came. The principal comes in to the boys' washroom to apologize to him in the form of an 'A' marked paper. Without hesitation, Jimmy rips up the paper and throws it in the principal's face. The last verse of the song plays as Jimmy walks out of the boys' room. He turns to the principal and says "Now maybe you'll see my side of things!" The video finishes off with Nikki Sixx, bassist of Mötley Crüe, reaching through the mirror and grabbing the principal's hair piece off his head, much to the principal's surprise.

On the whole, there is an overarching theme of resistance and power that is portrayed in this video. Jimmy, a student who has been forced to adhere to certain rules that his school and the Board of Education sets out, has a desire to be deviant and have the authoritative figures in his school see his side of things. This overarching theme

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would have been enough to cause the PMRC to target Mötley Crüe and glam metal music. However, there is much more going on in this video than meets the eye. It is within the connotative associations in the music videos that Mötley Crüe, and other glam metal bands, recruited their viewers, critiqued institutions and illustrated carnivalesque reversals of power.

"Turn Up the Radio": Recruitment in the Boys' Room

> *I got the boys to make the noise*
> *Won't ever let up*
> *Hope it annoys you*
> *Join the pack*
> *Fill the crack*
> *Well now you're here*
> *There's no way back*
>
> – "Bang Your Head (Metal Health)" (Cavazo, DuBrow & Banali, 1983, side A)

To make sense of the claim that recruitment is one of the key elements of the glam metal style as communicated in Mötley Crüe's video as a paradigmatic example of the videos analyzed for this study, the problem of modality, "interpersonal function" or "affinity" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 158), between its message and its audience, must be addressed. To begin, it ought to be asked: To whom is the narrative message in "Smokin' in the Boys' Room" addressed? Jimmy the protagonist stands in for the video's ideal viewer for whom its narrative will not simply be entertaining but will resonate more meaningfully. The ideal viewer is someone who will presumably identify with Jimmy as the narrative's protagonist and someone for whom institutional tasks and routines seem arbitrary and out of place with experience.

Mieke Bal (1997) observes that a character's qualities become recognizable through: the repetitious presentation of particular characteristics, the accumulation of

characteristics that mutually cohere, the apparent relationships between the character and others (as well as the character's self-relation), and transformations (p. 125). The narrative establishes early that Jimmy tries to do what is expected of him, but the audience is given the impression that his efforts seem to go unrecognized or do not match up to the demands of others (in this case, teachers). As viewers, we see that he is late for school, we see him give a sigh that seems to say 'not again' when he drops his papers on the ground. If that first impression was not clear, it is reinforced when Jimmy is met with the principal's steely greeting of "Back again, huh, Jimmy?" With this sequence of events, Jimmy's perceived failure to meet demands placed upon a good institutional subject of the school is presented in repetition, but the tone of his mutual relations is also indicated. Even though he tells the truth when he reports to the teacher and to the principal that a dog took his homework, he is twice misunderstood and punished because he is perceived to be acting out in defiance. Therefore, for meaningful identification to occur, the ideal viewer would be someone who at school, home, or the workplace feels as Jimmy presumably does, like a bit of an outsider whose actions are often misunderstood and provoke expressions of social disapproval.

In Algirdas Greimas' structural semiotics, the protagonist or hero is not only the subject (the character whose actions are central to the development of the narrative) but also the receiver (Chandler, 2007, p. 119). The receiver is sought for by someone or is perhaps designated by fate to fulfill an action for which he or she is not yet prepared. While Jimmy knows that he is misunderstood and he is disgruntled, at the outset he still seems to acknowledge the school's authority and he sees it as a more or less legitimate, if imperfect, institution. In this way, his self-perception at the beginning of the video is at least partially aligned with the negative evaluations of the teacher and principal. When he

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retreats to the boys' room after his punishment in the principal's office, a portal opens in the mirror. The members of Mötley Crüe are on 'the other side' and they pull Jimmy through to 'the other side'. 'The other side' is spatial metaphor that is neither a part of the interior nor a part of the exterior of the school. It is a liminal space in which Jimmy's transformation can occur.

Although not necessarily a physical space, 'the other side' has similar qualities to the boys' room or a public washroom in general, which is both part of the institution in which it is located but is usually an unsupervised space that juxtaposes public and private spaces within it. Formally, it is a place where the institutional roles, but not rules, can be breached. Nevertheless, given that it remains out of view and is usually unsupervised, the public washroom is often a place where rules are broken, such as the no smoking rule. In this case, Jimmy does not smoke but is taken from a physical liminal space (the washroom) to a virtual liminal space ('the other side'), which is an ideational space. From there, things can be seen differently or more accurately. In this sense, the video's narrative uses the social institutional breach of the no smoking rule as a metaphor for ideological critique made through a different kind of vision that presents things differently from how they are commonly perceived. Space facilitates this alternative vision.

According to Bal,

Spaces function in a story in different ways. On the one hand, they are 'only' a frame, a place of action...The space can also remain entirely in the background. In many cases, however, space is 'thematized: it becomes an object of presentation itself, for its own sake….The fact that 'this is happening here' is just as important as 'the way it is here,' which allows these events to happen (p. 136).

In this context, the space of 'the other side' could be inferred to represent the relative social location of those situated in the subculture of glam metal, who may perceive

themselves as outsiders to dominant culture. This is a matter that will be elaborated later in the discussion of institutional critique. With respect to the movement from the boys' room to other side, Bal's considerations of space are illustrative of its potential significance. She argues,

> Strategically, the movement of characters can constitute a transition from one space to another. Often, one space will be the other's opposite. A person is travelling, for instance, from a negative to positive space. The space need not be the goal of that move. The latter may be a quite different aim, with space representing an important or an unimportant interim between departure and arrival, difficult or easy to traverse (p. 137).

In this case, the move from one space to the other is not the goal but it makes possible the transformation that occurs in the protagonist's character, enabling him to join the subculture and to confront the principal's authority in the closing of the video.

This space of 'the other side' then serves the narrative function of the focalizer, the point or place from where significant things that are not necessarily evident to all characters can be seen. "Focalization is the relationship between the 'vision,' the agent that sees, and that which is seen. Thus relationship is a component of the story part…" (Bal, p. 146). Rather than seeing things as they appear to be in tacit social agreement, from 'the other side', Jimmy can see things as they 'really are'. How things 'really are' from 'the other side' will be discussed in the section on institutional critique, but the present task is to understand Jimmy's semiotic narrative function as both subject and receiver and how this function operates in recruitment. What Jimmy receives is the view from 'the other side', a view of school that others do not have. As Bal notes, "If the focalizer coincides with the character, that character will have an advantage over the other characters" (p. 146). When Jimmy joins the members of Mötley Crüe in the space of 'the other side', he undergoes a transformation that is supported by this new perspective (the

effect of this transformation on his relationship to school authorities will be discussed in the section on carnivalesque reversals of power).

The band Mötley Crüe operates in this visual narrative as what Greimas would call the sender (Chandler, 2007, p. 119). The band is presented as extra-worldly, as its members seem to be omniscient, to operate outside of or above normative spaces, social interactions, and activities. In the video, the band does not cross into ordinary social space and operates only in two other-worldly conditions: voyeuristically in the space of 'the other side' and in the activity of stage performance. The band also appears to have always been there waiting for Jimmy to be prepared to receive the transformative message of the view from 'the other side' that it will provide. According to Greimas, the sender brings to the subject an object, a message, or an ability that is necessary for the subject's future action. By bringing Jimmy into this extra-institutional space, the band has granted him access to a new perspective that enables him to perceive what others cannot. The paper-stealing dog adorned with a pentagram in the opening shot, has facilitated the meeting between Jimmy as receiver and Mötley Crüe as sender. By stealing Jimmy's homework and ensuring that Jimmy would be sent to the principal's office, be punished, and visit the boys' room to recompose himself, the dog has served not as an opponent to Jimmy, as would seem to be the case. Rather, drawing from Greimas' grammar of narrative, the dog has acted as a helper by precipitating a chain of events that will support the exchange between the sender and receiver (Chandler, 2007, p. 119) that is central to the narrative's action and resolution.

In order to follow the significance of Jimmy's transformation and to support the claim that recruitment is an element of style in this video, it is necessary to consider its force for viewer identification with the subculture. It is important, however, to

acknowledge and respond in advance to potential objections to drawing connections between the video's fictive narrative and the meaningful identification of viewers in the real world. In addition to critical discourse analysis, I have been using structural semiotics and structural narrative theory to show the connotative implications of "Smokin' in the Boys' Room." An implicit presumption of structural analyses is that "there exists a homology, a correspondence between the (linguistic) structure of the sentence and that of the whole text composed of various sentences" (Bal, 1997, p. 175), with visual material such as videos also interpreted as homologous with (linguistic) structure. Bal notes that this approach has been critiqued as reductive and generalizing. For some critics, structural approaches that assume correspondence between "what people do and what actors do" in narratives are indifferent to the distinction between what occurs in stories and reality (p. 176). Where narratives are absurd or fantastic, such as when Jimmy is pulled through the washroom mirror to an extra-worldly place, critics are more likely to object to the drawing of correspondences with everyday life. To this criticism, Bal argues that "readers, intentionally or not, search for a logical line in such a text. They spend a great amount of energy in this search, and, if necessary, they introduce such a line themselves. Emotional involvement, aesthetic pleasure, suspense, and humour depend on it" (p. 176). Further, she insists that "if no homology were to exist at all, no correspondence however abstract, then people would not be able to understand narratives" (p. 176). Therefore, although some aspects of the video's narrative are absurd or abstract, some correspondence between the narrative and the ordinary lives of viewers can be assumed.

I will focus here on how the narrative structure of the video attempts to achieve identification with receptive viewers to invite recruitment into the subculture. Drawing again from discourse analysis and the problem of modality, I suggest that, over the course

of the narrative, Jimmy and the ideal viewer interchangeably occupy the same subject

position so that, while Jimmy is the initial receiver (in semiotics) or addressee (in critical

discourse analysis), the ideal viewer is frequently positioned as the receiver or addressee

in his place. In the treatment of modality, critical discourse analysis extends beyond the

force of "'model auxiliary verbs' ('must', 'may', 'can', 'should', and so forth)"

(Fairclough, 1992, p. 159) to drawing upon Hodge and Kress' social semiotic attention to

temporal tenses and so on towards a "diffuse range of ways of manifesting various

degrees of affinity: hedges such as 'sort of', 'a bit', 'or something', intonational patterns,

speaking hesitantly, and so forth" (Fairclough, 1992, p. 159). The latter emphasis on

affinity is key to the present study because it points to the way that communication

expresses affinity either towards propositions or towards those with whom they interact

(p. 159). For instance, following Hodge and Kress, Fairclough observes that questions

that are structured with the expectation of a positive response (either a negative question

or a positive statement with a "negative tag question"), "are asked to demonstrate this

affinity and solidarity rather than to get information. So expressing high affinity may have

little to do with one's commitment to a proposition, but a lot to do with a desire to show

solidarity" (p. 160). I suggest that the videos analyzed in this research demonstrate in

their modality high affinity with both the 'propositions' contained in them and the ideal

viewers to whom they are directed. Since these are primarily visual narratives, this

modality is achieved in non-linguistic ways, and at times words, images, and spatial

relations are combined to produce it.

Consider, for instance, that when Mötley Crüe lead singer Vince Neil partially

emerges from the boys' room mirror, he addresses Jimmy directly and expresses affinity

with him by posing a question that anticipates solidarity: "Ever had one of those days…",

while gesturing to Jimmy for him to come along through the mirror's portal. By the end of the opening invitational lines, Jimmy is already on 'the other side', and Neil directly addresses the viewer (whose perspective remains situated in the washroom). He says, "I found a way out of it. Let me tell you about it". This expresses affinity with the viewer, while extending an invitation to cross through to 'the other side' as Jimmy has done. When the visual perspective switches to 'the other side', it is assumed that the viewer has accepted the invitation and can now receive the message and focalizing vision of the narrative.

From a semiotic consideration of the visual production, this substitution of the viewer for Jimmy as the addressee is signified through the composition of filmic shots. Two things indicate this: First, the spatial relations evident in the respective shots show the substitution by presenting a left to right decentered spatial relation in the shots depicting Neil's invitation to Jimmy (Neil on the right, faces Jimmy and entreats him to cross over) and Neil's invitation to the viewer (centered close-up of Neil directly facing the camera). Drawing from Kress and van Leeuwen, Chandler (2007) writes, "The horizontal and vertical axes are not neutral dimensions of pictorial representation. Since writing and reading in European cultures proceed primarily along a horizontal axis from left to right…, the 'default' for reading a picture within such reading/writing cultures (unless attention is diverted by some salient features) is likely to be generally in the same direction" (Chandler, 2007, pp. 111-112). To consider further the significance of the horizontal axis, Chandler points out that, according to Kress and van Leeuwen, the left connotes "the Given" or already known and that the right connotes "the New". "'For something to be New means that it is presented as something which is not yet known, or perhaps not yet agreed upon by the viewer, hence as something to which the viewer must

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pay special attention' – something more surprising, problematic, or contestable" (p. 112). As viewers pay attention to Jimmy's next move, they soon occupy his position, as the invitation is made directly to the audience. "For something to be presented as Centre means that it is presented as the nucleus of the information on which the other elements are in some sense subservient…" (Kress and van Leeuwen quoted in Chandler, 2007, p. 113). Therefore, the viewer no longer watches the action between subjects on the periphery but is spoken to directly and has become implicated in the narrative. The spatial relation of the centre, deployed in close up shots, is used several times to address the viewer at the closing of the video as well.

This strategy relates to the second thing that indicates that a substitution of the viewer for Jimmy has occurred: editing codes in film narratives. These codes are sometimes referred to as "invisible editing" because, as viewers, we have learned them so that we "cease to be conscious of their existence. Once we know the code, decoding it is almost automatic and the code retreats to invisibility" (Chandler, 2007, p. 166). What is known as point-of-view (POV) shots, which give the audience a visual perspective of a character by positioning the camera in the place of a character, are used in this video in the substituting shift from Jimmy to the spectator and make a distinction between the viewer's perspective as an observer of Jimmy's transformation and the viewer's own supposed transformation after ostensibly accepting the recruiting invitation to cross to 'the other side'. The viewer does not have access to the perspective available on 'the other side' until after being issued the direct invitation described above, which is provided through intermittent POV shots that represent the viewer as a complement or double of Jimmy as the addressee of the message. Another component of the recruitment process follows soon afterwards and reinforces the recruitment process in the combination of the

imagery and lyrics when Neil introduces the other members of the band, "My buddies

Sixx, Mick and Tom".

The final consideration that needs to be made is that the strategies outlined above

support the unique mode of address, or relationship between the video and the viewer, in

the signs that are produced. Following Charles Pierce's work, Chandler (2007) notes that

semiotic codes seek to communicate with an ideal or intended addressee that is achieved

through the positioning of subjects (pp. 186-187). He explains that "Ideology turns

individuals into subjects. Subjects are not actual people but exist only in relation to

interpretive practices and are constructed through the use of signs… The individual can

occupy multiple subject positions, some of them contradictory, and 'identity' can be seen

as the interaction of subject-positions" (p. 187). As noted above, the video is constructed

so that Jimmy's subject position is fluid and allows for the viewer to substitute for him or

to follow his moves, from the outsider position, to 'the other side' of unique vision and

knowledge, and back out to the world transformed as a member of the subculture. Yet,

identification and recruitment will only be successful to the extent of the viewer's

recognition of Jimmy's predicament. For this reason, it is important to note the difference

between message and code (Chandler, 2007, p. 188). According to Chandler, codes take

multiple forms, the most obvious one would be genre. Codes provide meaning through

their structures. Chandler argues,

> The familiarity of the codes in realist texts (especially photographic and filmic
> texts) leads us to routinely 'suspend our disbelief' in the form (even if not
> necessarily in the manifest content). Recognition of the familiar (in the guise of
> the natural) repeatedly confirms our conventional ways of seeing and thus
> reinforces our sense of self while at the same time invisibly contributing to its
> *construction*" (pp. 188-189).

Viewers are usually culturally socialized to absorb codes, due to their invisibility and

apparent realism, but viewers may be resistant to messages, since diverse audiences will interpret the message in multiple ways (p. 188) and will not evenly recognize themselves in Jimmy's situation. Therefore, depending upon the viewer's response to its mode of address, "Smokin' in the Boys' Room" could be enjoyed as an entertaining music video or a script of identification that serves to recruit a new participant to the glam metal subculture.

The slippage in the positioning of the subject from protagonist to viewer as possible subject to recruitment appears in a more complex and obvious form in Twisted Sister's extended video for "We're not Gonna Take it". After its young unnamed protagonist is scolded by his father, who asks, "Who are you? Where do you come from? […] What are you gonna do with your life?", he responds with, "I wanna rock!" and hits the strings of his guitar, blasting his father out of the second story window of the family home. As the song's drumbeat begins, the protagonist twirls around until he transforms directly into front man Dee Snider's persona as Twisted Sister. He appears in a centered shot that facilitates his direct hail of the viewer. He looks straight into the camera and points at the spectator, proclaiming that "we're not gonna take it". The viewer is implicated in the 'we', who are not going to take it anymore. As Twisted Sister, the protagonist is transformed and is now freed to confront the father's abusive authority through force and parody. When he approaches his brothers in the dining room, entreating them to join him, they transform into the remaining Twisted Sister band members.

There are also other illustrations of recruitment in the gestural movements of Twisted Sister in their video, which, following Hebdige, provide another way for the group to highlight their concerns while facilitating the direct hail of the viewer. In the video, these gestures include fist shaking, pointing and arm flexing and are primarily

presented by Snider as the front man of the band. Invitational gestures are also present in Quiet Riot's "Bang Your Head (Metal Health)" video. As is the case with Snider making the majority of the expressions in the Twisted Sister video, the lead singer of Quiet Riot, Kevin DuBrow, makes these expressions most often in this video. This primarily occurs during the chorus of the song, which already outlines particular connotations of recruitment. DuBrow's angry facial expression emphasizes a point that Quiet Riot seems to be making as he sings "The bad boys are gonna set you right, Rock on rock on rock on". Similarly to the Mötley Crüe and Twisted Sister videos, how Quiet Riot, as a band, illustrates itself as a vanguard is also obvious as the video for "Bang Your Head" paints a vision of the world that a psychiatric patient might see. Heavy metal fans are locked up because they understand that the social reality is different than they way that they think it should be. But, Quiet Riot seems to give a voice to these fans by illustrating that it is okay to break free of social constraints. They illustrate that individuals are all equally misunderstood within a broader culture, but that if individuals choose to listen to metal, it can help them break free from this misunderstanding. This is seen at the end of the video when the patients from the mental institution begin breaking free from this hospital. They rip off their straightjackets and trample the nurses who try to stop them on their way out the door. Most importantly, they are breaking free in a group, which is what heavy metal is: a group sharing similar refusals of certain values and beliefs. This idea that one can break free as a part of a group is also presented in the lyrics of this song, which is recruitment oriented. As outlined at the beginning of this section "Join the pack, Fill the crack" seems to serve as an anthem for the recruitment of members into the scene.

There are also emotionally charged appeals that help viewers identify and be recruited into the community with the symbolic promise of belonging in the "Bang Your

Head (Metal Health)" video such as the use of disembodied yellow gloved hands. In the beginning of the video, the gloved hands are seen pulling the straightjacket and the mask off of the patient in the metal institution. Later in the video, yellow is seen again in the straightjackets of the other patients in the metal institution. In different ways, the yellow gloved hands are symbolic of heavy metal itself. They show that metal will free individuals from conformity because of their difference. They also show that the heavy metal community can free individuals of isolation because it is a supportive community, because as the other patients were able to free each other from their straightjackets.

The lyrics in "Bang Your Head (Metal Health)" also illustrate what it means to become a part of the community. Aside from the lyrics outlined at the beginning of this section, "Hope it annoys you, Join the pack, Fill the crack", there are many other lines in this song that demonstrate emotional affinity. For example, "Metal health'll cure your crazy, Metal health'll cure your mad, Metal health is what we all need, It's what you have to have". Also, "Well I'm frustrated, Outdated I really want to be over-rated, I'm a finder and I'm a keeper, I'm not a loser and I ain't no weaper". And finally, "Well now you're here, There's no way back". These lyrics all represent not only recruitment, as discussed, but emotionally charged recruitment. They are targeting specific resonances that make up the heavy metal community and they are illustrated in the video by showing what metal health will do for someone if they become a part of the community. The community will free them and they will find like-minded others who understand each other.

The "I Want Action" and "Lipstick and Leather" videos attempt to recruit viewers through sexualized imagery and instructional scripts. Both videos indirectly critique family values of monogamy and reserved sexuality by emphasizing a party culture that calls to viewers in gendered ways. For men, the narratives promise a community in which

they would be surrounded with sexy, attractive women. For women, these videos are primarily instructional to the extent that they demonstrate the appropriate codes of dress, gesture, and movement, but they also present the promise of attention and approval if the performance of the code is successful. This is done in different ways in each video. In Y&T's "Lipstick and Leather" video, this is accomplished primarily by way of illustrating women getting dressed and applying make-up and accessories as they pose for the camera, play with their hair and lick their lips suggestively. In Poison's "I Want Action" video, the preamble before the song begins shows the band eating at a diner when a very attractive girl comes up to the lead singer, Bret Michaels. She states that she is not a groupie and that she's never done this before, but then she proceeds to whisper into Michaels' ear: "So, what do you want?". There are many more sexually suggestive illustrations in this video, from a woman dancing on stage with the band in a pink bikini to Michaels, facing the camera to directly invite the viewer, while making a 'come here' motion with his index finger as he sings "You've got the love I need tonight". In one of the performance scenes, the stage the band is playing on includes a level with the drums on top and underneath the drums, an image of a woman's waist and legs is presented, complete with fishnet stockings and high heel shoes. Band members slide down the drum level on the stage where the image is, and they also thrust it. Further, a group in the video plays strip poker at a hotel room party, during which only the women at the table seem to have losing hands. Everyone seems to be invited to this party, even an older looking, larger man stops by the party and he is invited inside to join.

The two videos not only provide scripts of dress, they both give the same fashion imperatives. Both videos highlight the colour combination of red and black differently. In "I Want Action", lips with red lipstick on a black background sing the first few lines of

the song "I want action tonight, satisfaction all night". In "Lipstick and Leather", girls put on black leather, fishnets and red lipstick showing that they are getting ready for something while they lick their lips and play with their hair suggestively. Even the name of the song suggests this narrative, with red lipstick and black leather used in the video(s) most commonly. Moreover, women's attire is also inspected and approved at the door of what appears to be a backstage party in the "I Want Action" video. These narratives of dress also are presented as interesting recruiting techniques that are similar to Twisted Sister's gestural illustrations of pointing and making strong fists. This imagery could recruit both women and men to the subculture, but the invitations are issued with different expectations and promises. Women are invited to join because if they do, they are sexy, powerful and they have the opportunity to attend parties with other women like them. Similarly, men are invited to become a part of this subculture because they have the opportunity to party with and get to know attractive women. Also, the pointing and making strong facial expressions and/or fists (such as in the Twisted Sister video) could be considered another recruitment technique to recruit men because the men in the video are portraying themselves as strong and as their own decision makers. Deena Weinstein furthers this discussion in her interview for *Metal Evolution* by stating "If you look at a seventeen year old guy, what is [*sic*] his interests in life? Being a real man, yeah, and getting some. So, if you had to choose which way you're gonna go, hair metal got you some" (Dunn, McFayden & Chapman, 2011). Thus, values oppositional to monogamy as well as family values in general are illustrated in these videos via a party culture where groupies and sex are accepted and free sexuality is encouraged.

These two videos sexualize the glam metal scene and show the negative relationship between the subcultural style and broader social practices of everyday life in

dominant culture. Given the social expectations of dominant culture, women might not be as willing to risk social disapproval by dressing and acting in the ways that they are instructed to in the videos: crop tops, tight jeans, fishnet stockings and red lipstick. But, in glam metal culture, these particular stylistic items reflect the structure and style of the group and therefore depict it as normative to the subculture.

Recruitment devices in glam metal music videos express and reinforce focal concerns that exist within the subculture against their presentation of dominant culture, but the recruitment techniques cannot stand alone and successfully achieve identification with viewers. Recruitment techniques are tied to the critiques of social institutions that appear in these music videos; the critiques of social institutions provide content for the emotional identification with the subculture.

"We're not Gonna Take it": Social Institutional Critiques

> *We've got the right to choose and*
> *There ain't no way we'll lose it*
> *This is our life, this is our song*
> *We'll fight the powers that be just*
> *Don't pick our destiny 'cause*
> *You don't know us, you don't belong*

– "We're not Gonna Take it" (Snider, 1984, side B track 6)

The second claim that critiques of social institutions provide an element of style within glam metal music videos is presented since the institutional critiques that the videos make seem to mark the participants (as well as the prospective participants) of the glam metal as separate from dominant culture. This is demonstrated in the music videos not only in how the participants are presented as struggling to fit in, but how the videos critique social institutions. Critiques of family, school, and medical institutions provide a basis for the appearance of a coherent subculture by suggesting that one of the key things that its

members share is their outsider status demonstrated in their inability or active

unwillingness to fit into those institutions. In order to better understand this struggle, the

question of how subjects exist within this struggle needs to be addressed.

Althusser examined the relationship between institutionalized practices, formal

institutions, and the constitution of subjectivity in subjects who he argued would then

come to believe that the effects of ideology and control are natural to themselves. As

noted earlier, it is ideology that turns individuals into subjects (Chandler, 2007, p. 187).

To elaborate on the idea of subject positions and link it to this device of social

institutional critique, Althusser's *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses* (1970)

discusses ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) and suggests that every individual operates

under them. These ISAs for Althusser are "...realities which present themselves to the

immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions" (para. 73) and can

include family, religion, culture, political and legal institutions, among others. Within the

glam metal music videos, there are clear specialized institutions that are being critiqued.

In "Smokin' in the Boys Room", the education system is critiqued; in "We're not Gonna

Take it", the institution of the family is critiqued; in "Bang Your Head (Metal Health), the

healthcare system is critiqued; and, in "I Want Action", there is a critique of love and

marriage that stands in opposition to the culturally privileged discourse of monogamy.

Even in Y&T's "Lipstick and Leather" video, a character within the video exercises his

power against authority in order to gain entrance to a party.

How the participants subject themselves to these ideological state apparatuses is

also an inquiry for Althusser, as well as this study as it links with the previous discussion

of how individuals are constructed as subjects by the use of signs. He uses the concept of

interpellation, or hailing, to address this inquiry by noting that "...all ideology hails or

interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects, by the functioning of the category

of the subject" (para. 176). Further:

> ...ideology 'acts' or 'functions' in such a way that it 'recruits' subjects among the
> individuals (it recruits them all), or 'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it
> transforms them all) by that very precise operation which I have called
> interpellation or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most
> common place everyday police (or other) hailing: 'Hey, you there!' (para. 178).

As a result, Althusser believed that ideology was active and that its effects were separate

from human essence, potential or nature. Individuals practically represent the world

insofar as they have been hailed into particular subject positions. Hailing is not so much

based on what ideologies one might believe, but upon the situation that they are in at the

time of the hail. Thus, as explored in the Mötley Crüe video, the space of 'the other side'

could be inferred to represent the relative social location of those situated in the

subculture of glam metal, who may perceive themselves as outsiders to dominant culture.

Alongside this, it is also important to note that investment in a subject position can

take different forms. A positive response to a hail may or may not involve the everyday

adoption of the fashion codes, as an example. Ultimately though, the acknowledgment of

a hail, either through positive or negative identification is what Althusser would consider

to be successful interpellation. Therefore, using Althusser's notions, even someone who

does not identify with the glam metal subculture after watching one of these videos has

been successfully interpellated. In this sense, recruitment in glam metal videos is

successful even when some viewers reject or oppose the message, because an insider-

outsider line has been drawn between those who reject the hail and those who invest in

the subject position it offers.

As it has already been determined that glam metal fans are recruited by particular

modes of address in the music videos, the positions that the participants or viewers might

be in are an important consideration for determining how these modes interpellate

subjects into operating under ideological state apparatuses – or, rather, against them.

Chandler (2007) notes that individuals have access to various textual codes for

understanding a text, and those who share the code are members of the same 'interpretive

community' (p. 194). He further notes that "Familiarity with particular codes is related to

social position, in terms of such factors as class, ethnicity, nationality, education,

occupation, political affiliation, age, gender and sexuality" (p. 194). However, in North

America in the 1980s the class consciousness of youth was likely much lower than it was

in the historical contexts in which the concept of interpellation was proposed (Wrenn,

2014, p. 508). In the 1980s, there was more awareness of race, gender, and sexuality than

class. Youth disillusionment with institutions and institutionalized values may have been

indirectly influenced more by the assumptions of identity politics, which arose in the

1980s (Bernstein, 2005). The videos studied seem to code (intentionally or not) their

protagonists as middle class, white, and often as young men, which has been understood

to be a neutral, unmarked identity. Those who identified with the glam metal style could

mark themselves with clothing, make-up, and comportment to announce their difference

and then turn in toward a collective subcultural identity. Paradoxically, since a subcultural

identity is marked as different from other identities, a feeling of belonging to such a

collective group can be perceived as confirmation of one's individuality.[4]

As individuals may be recruited into the glam metal scene, in part, because they

consider themselves to be outsiders to dominant culture, this familiarity with particular

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[4] Althusser was concerned about what type of class struggles were going on as a result of ideological state apparatuses interpellating subjects. Thus, while Althusser is talking about class, his ideas are more connected to the context in which it was written. Discussions surrounding identity politics might link better to this idea, specifically identity politics as discussed by Wrenn (2014) and Bernstein (2005), the former of which links identity politics with neoliberalism.

codes links to how glam metal fans are either already, or would become, critical of ideological state apparatuses, or social institutions. Due to their social positioning, Chandler (2007) suggests that those who fully share the text's code accept and reproduce the preferred reading take on a dominant, or hegemonic reading. If the reader only partially shares the text's code and broadly accepts the preferred reading, they are said to have a negotiated reading. Their interpretation enables them to resist and modify the reading to reflect their own interests. Finally, there is an oppositional reading, which places the reader in direct opposition to the dominant code. Although oppositional readers understand the preferred reading, they do not share the text's code and therefore, they reject the reading (p. 194).

Interestingly, in the case of subcultures that are homologous, the readings can have an opposite effect to how they are intended. For example, in the case of glam metal, the fans would be considered to be the dominant or hegemonic readers. By being recruited insofar as they accept and reproduce the reading of the music videos as critical of institutions, glam metal fans are marking themselves as different, thus presenting how these social institutional critiques are an element of style. As mentioned, on the outset of the "Smokin' in the Boys Room" video, Jimmy, knowing that he is misunderstood and he is disgruntled, might be an example of an individual who would take on a negotiated reading as he still seems to acknowledge the school's authority and he sees it as a more or less legitimate institution until he sees it from 'the other side'. On the other hand, members of the PMRC, as an example, would be likely to take on the oppositional reading as they did not share the codes presented in glam metal and therefore they rejected it. These examples show how Althusser's concept of interpellation works so that subjects can accept or deny the specific content of a hail.

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Social institutions are illustrated in the music videos as not only symbols of the dominant culture, but something towards which members of the subculture or viewers who accept the dominant readings generally can come together in rejection or critique of the rules, norms and values that these institutions enforce. This institutional critique was illustrated in the music videos in a few ways that are worth highlighting. First, the "Smokin' in the Boys Room" video presents itself as an exemplary case when considering how institutions are being critiqued in these music videos. When Jimmy is sent to the principal's office for not having his homework because a dog ran off with it, there is a strong emphasis on the dominating appearance of the principal's office. The principal's office is presented as a large room with nothing in it except bookshelves, a chair, a desk and the American flag. The camera zooms in on the principal standing in front of his desk. He appears imposing and fully prepared to lecture Jimmy about being in his office once again and not being able to see "their" side of things. In this office, the bookshelves have no books on them, which implies that the learning happening within the school is empty. It is one way in which the video highlights what could be considered as an institutional critique of education by drawing attention to the mere motions of conformity being taught as opposed to the knowledge of books and ideas. Thus, in just the first few seconds of the video, the stage is set to critique the empty lie of education and the intimidating demeanour of teachers and principals.

As the video continues and Jimmy enters 'the other side' with the help of Mötley Crüe, there several more different images that continue to illustrate a critique of educational institutions. First, it is clear that 'the other side' is profane in comparison to the sacred washroom space which is sterile, white and bright. This illustrates the blurring of previously privileged cultural codes as discussed by Chambers (1986). 'The other side'

is dark and industrial looking with spray painted graffiti on many of the walls. Next, students with machines hooked up to their heads are shown as the teacher pulls the leaver that says 'conform' on it, illustrating, once again, the empty lie of education. Behind the teacher pulling the leaver there is a poster with a picture of the principal that states 'Your Principal is Watching You'. Then, the principal is seen sitting with his ventriloquist dummy in a room full of real-time security feeds. He sees Mötley Crüe playing their music at the senior prom and he is immediately angry and shocked because this should not be allowed. Students are supposed to learn conformity in school, not listen to rock and roll, especially if it reveals how things really are. Finally, when the music stops near the end and Jimmy is thrown back through the mirror into the clean, sterile washroom, the principal arrives and apologizes to him by returning a paper marked with an 'A'. Jimmy rips up the paper and throws it in the principal's face. It is at this point that Jimmy's transformation is seen as a successful one because he confronts the authority of the principal head on. The last verse of the song plays, as Jimmy says "Now maybe they'll see my side of things".

Institutional critique is also present in Quiet Riot's "Bang Your Head (Metal Health)", Poison's "I Want Action" and Y&T's "Lipstick and Leather". In "Bang Your Head (Metal Health)", the critique is of the healthcare system as a mentally ill man is seen trying to escape from a straightjacket in a padded room in a mental hospital, as discussed. He is successful, with the help of disembodied hands that appear to represent the music as the means to metal health, and his identity as the lead singer of Quiet Riot is revealed. Near the end of the video, more patients in the mental institution are seen escaping from their rooms in straightjackets. Nurses run at the patients trying to capture them, but they are unsuccessful and are all knocked to the ground. The last image in the

video focuses on the metal mask that the lead singer of Quiet Riot, Kevin DuBrow, was wearing when he was in a straightjacket in the metal hospital. The mask is on fire and left to burn out in front of the hospital. Like the yellow gloves, the significance of the mask is uncertain, as the performance scenes in the video show several members of the audience each wearing the same mask. The mask may not have a stable meaning throughout. As the video's narrative progresses, the mask might not represent the institution's control but rather the difference in the inmate's thinking that has been diagnosed and, therefore, has justified his imprisonment in this psychiatric institution. If this interpretation is correct, then the mask (or difference in thought) can be accepted in the subculture, even if is not accepted in dominant culture. Therefore, what is considered to be mental illness in dominant culture becomes "metal health" in the subculture.

On the whole, the social institutional critiques examined in these music videos shed light on how individuals might take on dominant or oppositional readings of the videos. As Althusser's notion of interpellation does allow discussion about how a subject can accept or refuse positive identification in response to a hail, his notion of interpellation allows for flexibility in understanding how individuals can be critical in their identifications as particular kinds of subject. Therefore, interpellation is constantly active in determining subject formations. Within this lies the reading position of an individual. In this case, glam metal fans and other viewers who identify strongly with the protagonist's situation are likely to take on dominant readings, accepting the critiques made within the videos.

"Nothin' but a Good Time": Carnivalesque Reversals of Power

> *'Cuz I never knew an angel could be so wild*
> *I never felt love till I tried your style*

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– "Lipstick and Leather" (LaBarge & Leib, 1984, side B)

As Hutcheon (1986) notes that there is an emphasis of parody in postmodern speculations, Bakhtin's notion of carnival provides a way to understand this parody as it relates to glam metal music videos and why they may have been subject to PMRC scrutiny. After analyzing "the music videos, it became clear that the narratives were grounded in the devices of recruitment and social institutional critique. However, it was also clear that these devices were accompanied by carnivalesque reversals of power which highlighted the success of the social institutional critiques. In her book, *Rocking around the clock: Music television, postmodernism and consumer culture*, E. Ann Kaplan (1987) explores the specific kinds of ideologies that can be found on MTV and whether the word "ideology" even has any meaning in a postmodern era (p. 54). In doing so, she distinguishes between five types of videos that are produced on MTV: romantic, socially conscious, nihilist, classical and post-modernist (p. 55). In her analysis of the video "Smokin' in the Boys Room" (pp. 68-71), Kaplan focuses specifically on its carnivalesque character and its disruption of relative power relations. Our analyses have this in common, but I extend this by showing that the carnivalesque operations in the video are only one of three discursive devices active not only in this video but in key videos of the glam metal subculture. Further, my analysis suggests that the carnivalesque supports the main device of recruitment.

Gardiner (1992) states that "'[c]arnival' is Bakhtin's term for a bewildering constellation of rituals, games, symbols and various carnal excesses which together constitute on alternative 'social space' of freedom, abundance and equality" (p. 45). Sobchak (1996) expands upon this by stating that "the carnivalesque is the atmosphere of

satire and parody. It aims at social change by uncovering the truth about the emperor's new clothes: the difference between king and peasant is arbitrary, relative and merely an accepted convention" (p. 180). In the case of the majority of 1980s glam metal music videos addressed in this chapter, a common observation gleaned from analysis is that critiques of social institutions tend to be supported by comic representations of authority figures stripped of their power. Bakhtin's carnival spirit is highlighted here as it "shows traces of the utopian ideal of a democratic society that lies that the heart of the urge to ridicule authority, even when literally no change of unseating such authority exists" (Sobchak, 1996, p. 180). As a result, the glam metal aesthetic portrays a dystopic view of dominant society and its values, and this portrayal shows a clear reasoning as to why the PMRC would have been skeptical of youth having access to the music.

Carnivalesque reversals of power are signalled in the music videos either through a shift in costume or a shift in the relationship between active and passive characters. In "Smokin' in the Boys Room", several costume shifts occurred to indicate relations and reversals of power. Kaplan also brings attention to clothing in her analysis of the carnivalesque in this video by noting that "…Mötley Crüe draw upon traditions of the medieval and renaissance clown, as well as upon more recent conventions of the transvestite" (p. 71). The principal of Jimmy's school offers a prime example of significant costume shifts. At the beginning of the video, the principal is shown wearing a grey suit with a white button-up shirt and a white bow tie. After Jimmy enters 'the other side', the principal's costume has changed, and he is shown wearing a green military outfit complete with badges on the left side of his jacket. The principal's ventriloquist dummy also is presented wearing a military-style outfit. Kaplan interprets this attire as reminiscent of a Nazi uniform. Aside from the outfit of the ventriloquist dummy, the

presence of the doll itself might be an example of the carnivalesque as well. The narrative may be suggesting that the dummy is the real ventriloquist actor, while the principal is his dummy, and speaks for him indicating that there is no real power behind the authority figure of the principal, but only a puppet.

There are more examples of costume shifts in this video aside from the observations about Jimmy's principal. Jimmy's teacher's clothing is also seen to change from a white button-up shirt and tie to a military outfit, although her jacket does not have badges. The students' attire also changes, as discussed, from white jumpsuits to "heavy metal style" leather and denim when Mötley Crüe begins playing their music on stage at the senior prom. Although the principal's and the teacher's style changes from one side to the other and the student's attire changes during Jimmy's time over at 'the other side', Jimmy's clothing does not change. As a result, this carnivalesque reversal of power is presented insofar as the video is ridiculing authority by way of dress. This is in line with Hebdige's understanding of style as a structural homology as it portrays glam metal as ridiculing dominant society and values and also presents the glam metal aesthetic as different. The principal is especially presented as an authoritative figure with the military badges that his has on his chest as opposed to the teacher who does not have these badges. When the principal's toupee is pulled off of his head at the end of the video by Nikki Sixx, Mötley Crüe's founder and bassist, a carnivalesque reversal of power is seen again because the band is obviously making a mockery of the principal's veneers. The fact that the principal does not react other than by wiggling his ears shows that he acknowledges that his power has been stripped from him and that he has lost face when he is seen in a different way that is no longer powerful.

Similar costume shifts occur in Quiet Riot's video for "Bang Your Head (Metal

Health)". The metal mask that the inmate wears in his padded cell will later be seen on the faces of members of the Quiet Riot audience, which seems to indicate a carnivalesque appropriation of the mask to signal the embrace of difference. In this case, the video re-signifies items of clothing associated with the institution of health to indicate a power shift.

Aside from carnivalesque reversals of power as presented by changes in costume or dress, there were other comical reversals of power between characters in the other videos. Twisted Sister provides an illustrative example of such a reversal. During the Congressional PMRC hearings, lead singer Dee Snider noted that the "We're not Gonna Take it" video was intended as a comical application of the popular 1960s cartoon, "The Road Runner Show", where the father in the video is Wyllie coyote (Stewart, 2012). This comical illustration of the road runner highlights the intergenerational power struggle that youth in the 1980s would have faced. From the outset, the mother cowers, but smiles, in the face of the father's anger, trying to portray the perfect family and the perfect household. But, as the video continues, power and abuse within the space of the home is repeatedly illustrated, which gives the impression that the kids and the mother are routinely placed in a position that challenges the otherwise perfect looking home and signs of the perfectly functioning family. As the boy and his brothers turn into Twisted Sister because they want to rock, there are several instances in which the previously imposing father is comically injured. These injuries include being pulled down the stairs backwards by Snider, flying out of the bedroom window and hitting the ground, and having his face repeatedly slammed by the back of the door as the members Twisted Sister march through the perfect looking 1980s style suburban home – which features the props of a good home, such as fine china and floral wallpaper. As the father is injured, the

mother continues at first to cower and attempts to maintain a cheerful helpfulness toward the father when he gets hurt, and one time she even has a first aid kit handy. But, eventually, she becomes active in the carnivalesque reversals of power by spraying her husband with water, once with a bucket of water and once with a hose, alluding to the fact that he is "hot headed" and he needs to calm down.

In addition to providing support to the other narrative devices of recruitment and social institutional critique, carnivalesque reversals of power in glam metal music videos fit with the concept of homology because the style presented in the videos that appears to be disordered does in fact present a homologous relationship between gestures, objects, the group's concerns and the relationship between this style and broader social practices of everyday life. Common carnivalesque gestures, such as the father's comical injuries in the Twisted Sister video and the removal of the principal's hair piece at the end of the Mötley Crüe video, complete the institutional critiques of school, family and health insofar as their key figures of authority are ridiculed through a postmodern parody. Also, objects that are used to highlight the institutional critique are used in a humorous way, such as the "conform" lever in the Mötley Crüe video, which the teacher pulls to make her students conform to the rules in the classroom. Thus, these videos link with style as a structural homology as the videos comically highlight the group's concerns with the social practices of everyday life.

"Rip and Tear": Understanding the Contours of Glam Metal Style

Connotative readings of these five music videos, informed by critical discourse analysis and semiotics, ultimately highlighted three major rhetorical devices of recruitment, social institutional critique and carnivalesque reversals of power in the context of glam metal,

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which provide insight into elements of the subculture as well as the forms used to express and reinforce the group's concerns. These themes allow a deeper understanding of the structural homology of the glam metal style. Analysis of the videos demonstrated that they share critiques of key social institutions tasked with the socialization and correction of subjects. These include the institutions of school, family, and health. The narratives attempt the recruitment of ideal viewers through invitations to identification, but the content of these invitations is the rejection of the norms and values of key social institutions, which are usually presented as deceptive or disingenuous. The most notable aspect of this process is that the values of the subculture are only presented negatively in the critiques of institutions and in the carnivalesque reversals of power, but no preferred values for the subculture are given. Therefore, the elements of style for the subculture are located in the things that participants agree to reject, not in the things that they agree to accept, which leaves room for individual members to interpret the positive content of the subculture in different ways.

Since there seems to be a lack of imperative norms communicated in these videos, the analyses are consistent with Wood's (2003) observations that members internalize the norms of a subculture in different ways. Such differences are perhaps facilitated by the emphasis of negative, rather than positive, content in subcultural styles. The analyses provide observations that are also consistent with Hebdige's (1979) emphasis on subcultural styles as subversive and oppositional to dominant culture. At the beginning of the chapter, I noted two objections that could be made to the claim that the 1980s glam metal style was subversive but suggested that both of these objections could be addressed with attention to Hebdige's claim that subcultural style marks difference between the sub- and dominant cultures.

First, the literature on glam metal focuses on its reinforcement of heteronormative gender stereotypes and presents women as accommodating heteronormative masculine desire, which would suggest that the style supports dominant gender assumptions despite the blurring of gendered codes in the clothing. When distinctions between insider and outsider positions are considered, the social effects are different. To the outside (or dominant) culture, glam metal styles look like drag and they blur masculine and feminine codes. In this, they undercut assumed categories of gender and sexuality that underpin dominant cultural expectations and social institutions, producing distance between subcultural and common communication. However, within the subculture the lines between masculine and feminine performances are strictly demarcated and appear to comply with gender norms and hierarchies.

Second, while glam metal is a subordinated subgenre of metal, scholars have commented upon the relationship between its mainstream popularity and new opportunities for other less commercialized genres of metal. The commercial success of glam metal could be taken to suggest that glam metal was successfully incorporated into the dominant culture, and, therefore, cannot be considered oppositional. Again, insider-outsider distinctions must be considered. Many different audiences listened to glam metal music and bought the albums, but this more general acceptance of glam metal hits should not be conflated with the adoption of the style and readiness to identify with its subculture. The analysis of different reading positions provided earlier in this chapter help to show the distinction between negotiated acceptance of the music and identification with the subculture.

Ultimately, there were more than just struggles over censorship attempts and moral discrediting for the heavy metal genre of glam metal as the decade came to its end.

Walser (1993) argues that the expansion of the heavy metal scene in the 1980s was unfortunately accompanied by much internal fragmentation (p. 13). He states that genres proliferated, and magazine writers and record marketers began referring to many various types of heavy metal including "thrash metal, commercial metal, lite metal, power metal, American metal, black (satanic) metal, white (Christian) metal, death metal, speed metal, glam metal – each of which bears a particular relationship to that older, vaguer, more prestigious term 'heavy metal'" (p. 13). As the success of glam metal began to wane in the late 1980s to early 1990s, there were many other up and coming music genres that took over the MTV spotlight.

Recently, there have been some noticeable changes in the performance of glam metal, which may support its successful comeback in the present-day. Many glam metal bands have "toned down" their stage shows and become more "family friendly" amidst a renewed nostalgic performance circuit. For example, Mötley Crüe no longer does a "Titty Cam" during their live performances. This camera searched through the crowd during the concert and zoomed in on girls who may or may not lift up their shirts to be broadcasted on the big screen at the arena. Such changes may indicate a new found understanding of what is acceptable performance etiquette. Further, glam metal musicians are now presented on television as loving and caring fathers, which suggests that many of them found new ways to make ends meet when the popularity of glam metal rapidly decreased in the 1990s. Their struggles to succeed, both in the 1980s and in the present day, are celebrated, giving the fans a reason to continue to follow and relate to their favourite musicians because they have grown alongside of them. But, this does not account for newer audiences for the cultural products that feature glam metal style and figures who were prominent in the 1980s subculture. In the following chapter, I will address whether

glam metal has undergone a recontextualization given the shape and context of its revival.

Chapter III

Re-emergence and Recontextualization

While Kahn-Harris (2007) has observed a twenty-first century renaissance of glam metal bands and musicians through a renewed nostalgic performance circuit (p. 1), the recent return of these musicians to television seems to take a very different form than that of their initial appearance in the music videos of the 1980s, as analyzed in the previous chapter. Glam metal musicians whose actions were once challenged by the PMRC now have a new and more settled presence in contemporary forms of visual media. These figures are transmitted into our living rooms on new reality television shows that depict them in recognizable everyday scenarios often structured in part by the institutionalization of family life rather than by the fantastic character of performance. Glam metal tunes have also reappeared in television advertisements that assist in the commercial branding of anything and everything, including cars, hamburgers, soft drinks and computer software.

This chapter analyzes the particular form of presence that the contemporary glam metal style has taken in its recent return. It seeks to understand what ways the style departs from its presence in the 1980s and to situate the return of the glam metal style in the social context of mature neoliberalism. In consideration of reality television in comparison to 1980s music videos, this chapter will examine if the glam metal style has undergone recontextualization. As noted in the introductory chapter, the concept of recontextualization refers to changes in the meanings of a social text that occur when it has been removed from its original context. In his study of fandoms, Jenkins (2013) observed the significance of shifts in perspective that occur when fans relocate characters in new social circumstances to social critique.

Klypchak (2011) argues that reality television and radio shows are the primary entertainment venues in which heavy metal artists have reappeared and enabled the recontextualization of heavy metal music. In order to explore the ways in which the glam metal style has been recontextualized, I will examine advertising and reality television shows that feature glam metal figures and music. Although there are many television commercials, the Fiber One cookie commercial featuring the Scorpions' track "Rock You like a Hurricane" as a key aspect of its narrative can be relied upon to describe and analyze the recontextualization of 1980s glam metal. Also, despite the many reality TV series that focus on the family and their members, day-to-day activities and values, the reality TV show *Ex-Wives of Rock* presents itself as an exemplary case and will also be analyzed. The Fiber One cookie commercial shows how the appearance of glam metal in the present day draws viewer attention not from collective identification with an imagined or real subculture that defines itself against the norms of conforming culture but from momentary and uncommitted identifications with relatable choices that affirm rather than critique dominant norms. The analysis of *Ex-Wives of Rock* reveals how the show can draw upon glam metal figures and style to produce images of flexible new beginnings that resonate with neoliberal discourses and an affirmative focus on the institution of family that the majority of these reality TV shows seem to (re)present with glam metal figures.

Throughout the *Ex-Wives of Rock* series, the ex-wives consistently discuss change in their lives: from moving homes and taking on new career opportunities to rekindling old romantic relationships and beginning new ones. As with the Fiber One commercial, the simultaneous emphasis on new beginnings and family values in *Ex-Wives of Rock* suggests that recontextualization of the glam metal style has mobilized it in support of values collectively rejected in the 1980s representations of glam metal. Further, audience

identification with the characters on these reality television shows is dependent upon

flexible individual identity that responds to their seemingly real mundane dilemmas rather

than on an 'authentic' and subcultural group identity defined in opposition to social

expectations. Before elaborating upon the analysis of these cases, I will review some of

the scholarship surrounding discussions about present-day fans of 1980s heavy metal and

the re-emergence of the music and style.

"I Remember You": Exploring the Shifting Significations of Glam Metal

Klypchak's (2011) assertion that heavy metal musicians have been recontextualized in the

present-day has been an instrumental point of departure for the questions guiding this

research. I noted earlier that Klypchak's discussion is limited, as it focuses on three

particular acts with specific attention to performance circuits. However, on the whole, it

is beneficial because it raises questions about recontextualizations in heavy metal more

generally. Klypchak's (2007) PhD dissertation is also relevant to present considerations,

as it explores the performed identities of heavy metal musicians who were popular from

1984 to 1991. He describes the re-emergence and repackaging of these musicians on

MTV in the present-day by stating:

> 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 Mötley 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 (p. 12).

Anthropologist Sam Dunn questions this embrace of glam metal bands and

musicians in the glam metal episode of the eleven part series *Metal Evolution*. In an

interview with former Geffen Records representative John Kalodner, Dunn asks: "Why

do you think these guys have translated so well to reality television?" (Dunn, McFayden & Chapman, 2011). Kalodner's response is simply: "Well they're stars, so they're going to translate in most medias. Like with Bret Michaels, he's always gonna be a star, no matter what he does" (Dunn, McFayden & Chapman, 2011). Further, as Mark Cronin, the Producer of *Bret Michaels' Rock of Love* notes:

> ...the main thing that has driven glam metal stars into television and reality television is kind of a timing issue. Television and music videos made Poison, made Mötley Crüe, and so, because of that, you see these guys saying 'Yeah, I'll do television'. They became rock stars for a reason, they went into this for the adulation, for the crowds... I really feel like they need to go on television to show people that they're still here" (Dunn, McFayden & Chapman, 2011).

By being on reality TV shows about their personal lives and their families, and even hosting shows of their own, glam metal musicians certainly do show their continued presence. But, celebrity status and comfort with the medium of television neither provide an explanation for the recent return of glam metal figures and music, nor do they indicate how signification of the glam metal subculture may have shifted over the past three decades to accommodate the new contexts of their appearance. Heavy metal scholars have speculated about the revivals of nostalgic stage performances in general, and Kahn-Harris (2007) notes that "metal has come to be thought of much more affectionately and nostalgically… Even Ozzy Osbourne, the subject of ferocious attacks from the Christian right in the 1980s, has been reinvented as a loveable clown in the highly successful MTV programme *The Osbournes*" (Kahn-Harris, 2007, pp. 1-2). Skid Row frontman Sebastian Bach cites *The Osbournes* as the introduction of heavy metal musicians to television and notes:

> I think all this celebrity rock and roll thing started with Ozzy with the show, *The Osbournes*. That was the first time a heavy metal musician was outside of metal, in the public eye, doing something... I like making albums, that's what I do and all this other stuff happens when people stop buying CDs, you know (Dunn,

McFayden & Chapman, 2011).

Although Ozzy Osbourne is not necessarily considered a glam metal musician, as Bach observes, his introduction to the reality television world on *The Osbournes* began to pave the way for more musicians to be spotlighted on television series. Bach also suggests that metal musicians' participation in these celebrity lifestyle television shows is an activity that stands apart from the production and performance of music for active fans who still purchase CDs. Implicitly, Bach's comments could be taken to suggest that the relationship between those musicians who have turned into television celebrities and their subcultural bases is fractured.

Despite the suggestion that the relationship between the musicians and their subcultural bases is potentially fractured, scholars have explored the participants of the 1980s heavy metal subculture in the present day to better understand their relationship to the music today. Howe & Friedman (2014) argue that "while heavy metal music reached the peak of popularity in the 1980s, people who grew up on that music often still listen to it..." (p. 609). For the majority of the participants in Howe & Freidman's study, it was revealed that the most common "best" experiences for all of the groups – which included groupies, fans and musicians who regularly played their music at clubs – was "meeting friends they still have today, meeting boyfriends/girlfriends and going to concerts" (p. 623). Alternatively, "about 30% of each group also mentioned free sexuality as one of the best things" as well as "all groups repeatedly mentioned that the 1980s metal scene was very unique and that they felt this was a special time in history. They were witness to greatness as so many bands from their local clubs became famous" (p. 623). These findings seem be consistent with my findings in chapter two and provide a notable addition to what was analyzed in the music videos.

Further, as Howe & Freidman (2014) state, "today, these middle-aged metalheads are middle class, gainfully employed, relatively well educated, and look back fondly on the wild times they lived in the 1980s" (p. 626). They ultimately compare their research findings to those of other researchers who consider how heavy metal subcultures from the 1980s contributed to risky behaviours in youth and conclude that subcultures, like the heavy metal subculture in the 1980s, actually had a positive effect on its participants in comparison to its "non-metal cohorts". They state that "...fringe style cultures can attract troubled youth who may engage in risky behaviours, but that they also may serve a protective function as a source of kinship and connection for youth seeking to solidify their identity development" (p. 626). If the heavy metal subculture created a surrogate form of kinship that offered a supportive environment in which to explore one's identity, a fan's relationship to the present-day presentations of glam metal must also be significant to glam metal's reappearance in its new, yet somehow still familiar, forms. More significantly, however, the recontextualization of glam metal for new and broader audiences that do not participate in glam metal fandoms but welcome the music or style in uncommitted ways may inform understandings of new presentations of glam metal that may give insight into the unexpected shift in glam metal appearances from MTV to product advertisements.

The new presence of glam metal music and musicians to provide content for an influx of reality TV series that focus on the family seems to suggest that audiences are relating differently toward the glam metal style than they did in the 1980s. However, if the study of 1980s music videos suggested the glam metal subculture of the 1980s relied upon group identification and negative norms, beliefs and values in ways that confirmed Hebdige's (1979) formulations of style and subculture, then what would an analysis of

selected recent cultural products reveal about the present context of glam metal's

restricted renaissance? The abrupt change in the structure of cultural production and

consumption hints at a new relationship between cultural consumers and cultural

products. In order to explore this, Chandler's (2007) discussion of the distinction between

denotative and connotative meanings and key concepts in discourse analysis will once

again be used to gain a better understanding of the primary messages that are being

portrayed in TV advertisements and reality TV series.

"Round and Round": (Re)presentations of Relatable Choices in Television Commercials

Glam metal has also returned to television in commercial advertisements to endorse

and/or advertise a wide range of products. These commercials either feature glam metal

musicians or their popular tunes from the 1980s. In searching for these commercials, I

found the Scorpions' "Rock You like a Hurricane" to be the most popular, with a vast

array of companies using the song to sell their products, including Microsoft, Coors

Light, Allstate Insurance, Fiber One and TGI Fridays. There were also many glam metal

tunes used to sell various fast food brands with tunes such as Poison's "Nothin' But A

Good Time" featured in a Hardee's commercial, Twisted Sister's "We're not Gonna Take

it" featured in an American bank called TCF commercial, Warrant's "Cherry Pie" in an

Arby's commercial and the band members of KISS featured in a Dunkin' Donuts

commercial. Glam metal tunes have been used to sell vehicles, with Mötley Crüe's

"Kickstart My Heart" featured in a Dodge commercial[5] and Van Halen's "You Really

Got Me" in a Nissan commercial. Other products have also been highlighted using glam

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[5] Dodge was also a primary sponsor in Mötley Crüe's "All Bad Things Must Come To An End" 2014-2015 world tour.

metal tunes such as Twisted Sister's "I Wanna Rock" in a commercial advertising an

American bank WaMu, as well as Quiet Riot's "Cum on Feel the Noize" in a commercial

for a children's toy called GoldieBox. Finally, glam metal musicians even appear in

commercials, with, for instance, the band Dokken promoting Norton Antivirus software

and KISS promoting both Pepsi and Dr. Pepper.

In the Fiber One cookie commercial featuring popular Scorpions' "Rock You like

a Hurricane" (Fiber One, 2014), a young stock boy emerges from a grocery store back

room pushing a cart. The boy and his cart draw the positive attention of several,

presumably middle-aged, women who stare intently in his direction. At first, the stock

boy appears to be somewhat confused, but his disposition becomes more hopeful and then

confident as he continues walking. The next lady responds to the boy's approach with so

much astonishment that she lets go of her grocery cart, brushes her hair away from her

face and around her ear for a closer look, and lightly gasps. The stock boy smiles at her.

With growing confidence, he continues down the aisle, winking at the ladies who are

looking at him. The next lady he encounters drops a carton of eggs as a look of shock is

painted across her face. As the stock boy continues walking, he strokes his hair

illustrating the growth of his ego since he emerged from the back room. The Fiber One

cookies are then shown in the cart and the Scorpions' lyrics chime in: "Here I am, Rock

you like a hurricane". It is at this point that the camera's perspective shifts, showing the

audience a new point-of-view (POV) of the characters in the commercial. The grocery

boy is still seductively looking at the ladies on either side of him, which have now been

revealed to be interested in what is in the cart, not in the stock boy. When one lady takes a

box of cookies from his cart, the boy's smile instantly fades, as he then realizes that it was

the cookies that the women desired the entire time.

In order to contrast the appearance of glam metal in this television commercial with the glam metal style identified in the previous chapter, it will be helpful to compare the modes of address in the Fiber One advertisement and the Mötley Crüe video. In contrast with how Jimmy from the "Smokin' in the Boys Room" music video is seen as the protagonist in his story in which the ideal viewer can relate, the stock boy in this commercial also may be depicted as such, but only initially. To recall, Jimmy is seen as an outsider at school since he is misunderstood by his teacher and the principal. In this advertisement, the stock boy is not misunderstood, but he mistakes himself as the object of attention of the women shopping in the grocery store. This is illustrated in the observable building of his ego each time a woman presumably directs her gaze towards him. Given that this contrast in the positioning of the protagonist invites acknowledgement of an observable shift towards a neoliberal discourse, which was introduced in the opening chapter, it will be helpful to unpack the implications of neoliberal assumptions before proceeding.

Nealon's (2012) suggestion that identity and authenticity are now rooted in choice and self-branding (p. 63) allows us to explore this advertisement by considering the relationship between the product, its social context or social practice, and the glam metal signification of the song. With cereal and snack bars among the "Fiber One" brand's most popular products, the product is one that promises to deliver a satisfying and low-calorie snack, which would typically be marketed to individuals who subscribe to the idea that a high-fibre diet can assist them with achieving a fit and healthy lifestyle, but this commercial is able to present the Fiber One cookie as a smart, responsible choice without having to instruct viewers directly and without having to work at specific scripts of identification that target ideal viewers. Rather than calling upon the unique or excluded

status of a preferred viewer, this commercial addresses a consumer on the basis of the 'common-sense' neoliberal assumption that individuals should be engaged in their own, private management of their health via a healthy lifestyle. Neoliberal discourses, according to Giroux (2004), are driven by the power of corporations and they show how ideas circulate to form thoughts that educate the larger culture (p. 497). The imperative toward responsible decisions ultimately impacts the identity formation of individuals suggesting that they are managing their choices on an individual level. So, while the 1980s glam metal videos negatively critiqued institutions of health and offered no positive solutions except for belonging to the subculture, this Fibre One commercial makes no reference to institutions of health but draws from the normative assumption that each individual desires healthy consumption choices.

In contrast with the settings and spatial arrangements in the Mötley Crüe music video, this Fiber One commercial uses vastly different spatial operations. This also informs us on how it functions within neoliberal discourse. In the grocery store, everything is evident on the surface and there is no other space from which to observe events, as there was on 'the other side' in the boys' room video. As the grocery store is therefore presented as a place where people have the opportunity to make smart and healthy diet decisions, the packaging, name brand labels and logos ostensibly give viewers all of the information they need to know to make, what they consider to be, their own individual choices for what to purchase. The advertisement seems to address viewers as potential consumers of products and women in particular but not necessarily exclusively.

Within neoliberal discourse, there is not necessarily one particular type of consumer that is more likely to identify with and consume a particular food product.

Despite illustrating a particular type of consumer in this commercial on the outset (such as women), this advertisement actually simultaneously addresses multiple identities that might be associated with a variety of different consumer niches, especially given that the product is simultaneously high in fibre and a decadent cookie. This capacity for multiple address also extends to the implications for identification associated with the use of the song, "Rock You like a Hurricane," including: 1980s glam metal fans, non-glam metal fans of this same age group as well as young people. The stock boy exhibits a self-conscious awkwardness that is familiar to most young men, rather than the outsider status that Jimmy from "Smokin' in the Boys' Room" occupies. The women represent all women who would choose a dessert that is also high in fibre content. These women, portrayed as though in their late thirties to late forties, could have been glam metal fans, but were at least passive consumers, of glam metal music in the 1980s due to the popular Scorpions' song playing in the background. This commercial can address multiple viewers, but the address is not a subcultural one of recruitment. Instead, it shows how particular products can fit various types of consumers and multiple identities. It is the practice of consumption rather than the promise of glam metal subcultural belonging that holds identification together in this commercial narrative.

Thus, the scripts of identification that served to recruit new participants to the glam metal subculture in the 1980s music videos are not active in this commercial. In the music videos, the protagonists are presented as subjects and receivers that bring about change. Music videos told stories in which most viewers could relate if not fully identify. In this commercial, however, there are multiple protagonists presented, but the identification that the advertisement seems to seek remains specific to the context of grocery shopping and consumer identity, which relies less upon the authentic claims of

subcultural belonging and more upon trying different products. As noted in the discussion

of neoliberalism in the introductory chapter, individuals increasingly consume products

and services as the signs of a lifestyle as much as they consume them for their use. Rather

than calling into question cultural norms, as the 1980s videos often did, the Fiber One

narrative seems consistent with neoliberal norms. Viewers are not being called upon to

relate to the individuals depicted in the commercial (like the women, as an example).

Instead, they are called upon to relate to the "healthy" but desirable choices these women

make as consumers of a particular lifestyle.

Television commercials offer only one opening into the proposed

recontextualization of the glam metal style. Reality television shows have also been

increasingly prevalent in the present-day. The analysis that follows will review an

example of a reality television series.

"I Wanna Be Somebody": Finding the "Real" in Reality TV

As glam metal musicians are now recognized as celebrities independently of the

popularity of the music, there are many reality television shows that have been produced

in the last decade that feature glam metal musicians and/or their families. Some of the

more popular reality television shows include: *Growing up Twisted*, *Gene Simmons:*

Family Jewels, *Rock My RV with Bret Michaels*, *Rock of Love with Bret Michaels*, and

Bret Michaels: Life as I Know It. There are also a few other less well-known series,

including: *Gone Country*, *Remaking Vince Neil*, *Rock the Cradle*, *Tommy Lee Goes to*

College, and *Supergroup*. Aside from reality television series that solely focus on the

glam metal musicians themselves, Vince Neil, Dee Snider and Bret Michaels have also

appeared on other reality television series episodes that have a host of celebrity guests

including *Celebrity Ghost Stories*, *Celebrity House Hunting*, *Celebrity Close Calls*, *Celebrity Wife Swap*, *Celebrity Apprentice*, and even celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay's *Kitchen Nightmares*. Vince Neil has even been a part of reality television series season of *The Surreal Life* and *Skating with the Stars*. Despite the wide array of various television shows that feature glam metal musicians, the themes that they exhibit are few: family, musical career comebacks, and finding love.

While the shows that are about families or comebacks also seem to be centered around more wholesome values, Bret Michaels is featured in his search for romantic commitment on the show *Rock of Love*, which adopts a production structure similar to that of the ABC Network's increasingly popular and long running reality show, *The Bachelor*, as twenty-five eligible bachelorettes compete for Michaels' heart. As Griffin (2014) notes "...*Rock of Love* recapitulates the male domination and female subordination endemic to 1980s heavy metal" (p. 73). Further, he observes that *Rock of Love* "...paint[s] disparate portraits of how heavy metal music circulated during the 1980s and how gender relations are bound to that framework" (p. 73). In doing so, Griffin focuses on perceived continuities between 1980s glam metal style and current reality television appearances. That is, he assumes that Michaels' participation in *Rock of Love* serves to highlight the male domination and female subordination that was present in the 1980s music videos. Griffin does not, however, address how these contemporary representations and narratives depart from the subcultural style of 1980s glam metal. As suggested by analyses of the videos presented in the previous chapter, the meaning of gender relations in the glam metal subculture cannot be understood without reference to subcultural insider-outsider distinctions, yet these distinctions appear to have been flattened in the re-emergence of glam metal.

Whereas *Rock of Love* may appear on the surface to depict style consistent with the glam subculture in the 1980s, it does not seem to share the complex device of recruitment that was delivered in the music videos analyzed in chapter two. Further, the social-institutional critiques and symbolic reversals power that were evident in 1980s glam metal music videos are not present in this show's narrative that seeks conclusion with Michaels finding an enduring love. While *Rock of Love* primarily depicts the struggles between the "twenty-five babes" who compete for Michaels' attention, the show is framed as a socially restorative opportunity for Michaels to remedy his inability to maintain a romantic relationship. Michaels sets the show's premise by observing that, after spending much of the past twenty years on tour and hooking up with women all over the world, "Rock 'n' roll was the reason for, and destruction of, all of my relationships".[6]

More recently, shows such *as Ex-Wives of Rock* and *Shannon & Sophie* have told stories about the lives of glam metal musicians' family members. Narrated by Shannon Tweed (current wife of KISS bassist Gene Simmons), *Ex-Wives of Rock* is a recently cancelled reality TV show featuring Athena Lee (ex-wife of Scorpions drummer James Kottak), Bobbie Brown (ex-wife of Warrant lead singer Jani Lane), Susan 'Blue' Ashley (Warrant bassist Jerry Dixon) and Sharise Neil (ex-wife of Mötley Crüe lead singer Vince Neil). *Shannon & Sophie* only had one season, but it highlighted the mother-daughter relationship of Shannon Tweed and her daughter with Gene Simmons, Sophie Simmons-Tweed. The pair went on vacations together, talked about relationships, exercised, held charity functions, and Shannon even helped her daughter within the entertainment business as she looked to grow her career in singing. Gene Simmons was present in many

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[6] "Don't Threaten Me With A Good Time", *Rock of Love*, accessed from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oh_coHLkpxg

episodes, showing how much of a supportive father and loving husband he is now that his band, KISS, is not frequently touring. Therefore, with the exception of *Rock of Love*, reality television series featuring glam metal figures are primarily premised on musicians and their families, or on musicians and their attempts to launch solo careers and/or return to the stage.

While researching reality TV series for this thesis, I discovered some online news that I found somewhat shocking. On February 26, 2015, Lithium Magazine posted an article titled "Fans Cry Out for the Renewal of Ex Wives of Rock". It was not the fact that the show was cancelled that shocked me – reality TV series featuring stories about glam metal musicians and their families have typically only lasted a season or two – but the fact that fans were embarking "...on a renewal campaign as they organize online petitions and bombard the [Slice TV] network with emails, phone calls, and comments on their Facebook and Twitter pages" (Lithium, para. 2) surprised me. The reason for this campaign according to Lithium is that the ex-wives are "A relatable group of women". They argue:

> Ex-wives instead has a down to earth quality that REAL women can identify with. The life hurdles they encounter are the hurdles we all face in life – love and loss, health problems, financial issues, family matters, miscommunications, and general ups and downs. It's what makes viewers feel that they actually know these women, and as though they're part of the family as they welcome them into their living rooms each week via their television sets. And the fact that they're [the ex-wives] so accessible via social media, encouraging fan interaction while modestly exposing their strengths and weaknesses, is a testament to the fact that they're not on a star trip. It also explains why fans feel drawn to them (para. 4).

Lithium continues to provide quotations from interviews with the cast members about the show noting that they are flattered and humbled to have such dedicated fans that care about them and the directions that they take in their lives, hoping that they can lead to 'happily ever afters'. From working towards their continued sobriety to building

businesses to raising their children to maintaining their friendships, the ex-wives were

certainly women that audiences could relate to in comparison with the "...glamorized,

dramatized, and unattainable lifestyles of the rich and snooty..." (para. 4) on *The Real*

Housewives series. Thus, the narrative in *Ex-Wives of Rock* is addressed to viewers who

might face similar obstacles and choices in life. The cast members are seen as

protagonists with which most viewers will relate. Unfortunately for the fans of the reality

TV series, as I write this chapter several months later, there has still been no update on a

season four air date.

Ultimately, the relatable events that are depicted in the *Ex-Wives of Rock* produce

a narrative about family values, hope and change. In order to consider how this narrative

is an element of style in this contemporary iteration of glam metal, the following analysis

will explore it in contrast to the devices present in the 1980s music videos to inform how

the glam metal style could be considered recontextualized for current audiences.

Before this narrative can be further explored, the ways in which the characters are

depicted as relatable must be addressed because this allows us to understand the place of

the narrative in accordance with the neoliberal condition. The uproar noted by Lithium

Magazine caused by the cancellation of *Ex-Wives of Rock* alongside the problem of

modality allows us to further explore the idea that glam metal has been recontextualized.

Neoliberal discourse as discussed by Nealon (2012) would suggest that consumers of

television are more likely to gravitate towards programming that they can relate to. At the

same time, however, as Kirby (2009) inquires, how much of this feeling of relation to

these reality television shows is really real? He notes: "The real is, at best, a social

construct, a convention agreed in a certain way to a certain culture at a certain time,

varying historically with no version able to claim a privileged status" (p. 139). Kirby

(2009) also argues that, "In truth, apparently real TV, such as docusoaps and reality TV, has to be considered 'real' to a decisive extent to be worth spending time on" (p. 141). One of the ways that the appearance of the real is achieved is through the creation of relatable characters, or protagonists, alongside relatable dilemmas and choices. What Kirby describes with respect to the apparently real – an emergent aesthetic in television, film and literature – resonates with what is methodologically at stake in discourse analysis in the problem of modality, or the production of affinity between the text and audience (Fairclough, 1992, p. 158). Further, Kirby asserts that "The reality in question is narrowly material: these are genuine events experienced by genuine people; these are actual emotions felt by actual people. It's a shallow, trivial reality, the zero degree of the real: the mere absence of obvious lying; hence the importance of 'appearance' within the aesthetic, of visible seeming" (p. 141). If the reality we see on reality television shows produces identification with characters for viewers through the depictions of their life predicaments, then in what ways does identification through modality in these shows depart from that of the music videos analyzed in chapter two? This question can be addressed by exploring both content and form.

To explore the content with an example, I will focus on the narrative of family values presented in *Ex-Wives of Rock*. Although all four of the ex-wives portray various family-related predicaments in their day-to-day lives, one storyline that allows many viewers to relate is Athena Lee's. Sister to Mötley Crüe drummer Tommy Lee, ex-wife to current Scorpions drummer James Kottak, recovered alcoholic, cancer survivor and drummer in Los Angeles based heavy metal band Femme Fatale, Athena has three children with her ex-husband. Their children – Tobi, Miles and Matthew – are well into their late teens and early twenties. It is expressed throughout the series that Athena is

struggling to maintain her health as a recovered alcoholic and cancer survivor, while

fighting for custody of her youngest son because of her concern with James' parenting

techniques and his active struggle with alcoholism. A vivid example of the ongoing fight

over custody is given early in the second season[7] when Tobi brings an article published in

popular culture magazine TMZ to the attention of her mother and friend Bobbie. As she

makes her way downstairs in her mother's Los Angeles townhouse, she proclaims:

"Mom, I found something!" Forecasting her mother's mood, she states: "You're not

gonna be happy...". Upbeat and joking as usual, Athena responds by saying: "Woo! I love

not being happy". As she glances at Tobi's computer screen, she reads the title of the

article with shock and anger in her voice: "My ex-wife is a drunk unfit mother!" Tobi

continues to read the article out loud: "Scorpions' drummer James Kottak claims his ex-

wife is an alcoholic who isn't fit to raise their 15-year-old son. Kottak filed legal

documents this month asking a judge to change a ruling that gave his ex Athena Lee

primary custody of your [*sic*] teenage son". Despite illustrating James' bashing of his ex-

wife to a popular magazine and his failure to arrive in court to discuss the custody

arrangement of their son, the series shows many examples of James trying to make things

up to Athena and to convince her that he still loves and cares for her. Later in this

episode, James even delivers flowers to Athena's apartment with a card attached that

says: "Let's meet without lawyers. James". Athena responds while facing the camera: "I

think it's pretty ballsy if you're gonna send me flowers after you just stood me up at the

lawyer's office. Pretty typical for James."

In contrast to Jimmy from "Smokin' in the Boys Room", yet similar to the stock

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[7] "Shout at the Devil", *Ex-Wives of Rock*, accessed from http://www.slice.ca/ex-wives-of-rock/video/episode/shout-at-the-devil/video.html?v=64066115922

boy from the Fiber One cookie commercial, Athena is illustrated as a relatable character with common dilemmas. Many viewers can easily relate to the struggle to manage difficult relationships in general and can relate to these heightened familial crises even if they have not directly experienced them. However, in contrast to the narratives of both Jimmy and the stock boy, the illustration of relatable characters in reality television storylines depicts an aesthetic of the apparently real (Kirby, 2009, p. 139). These situations are real and genuine, but they have to be portrayed in such a way that viewers' emotions can be heightened, allowing viewers to assess their witnessing of these dilemmas as worthy of their time. One of the ways in which this is done is by way of form rather than content. For instance, the use of centered close-up shots during side interviews with the characters is a common and effective technique in the production of reality television.[8] This has a different effect than the POV shots used in the music videos and discussed in chapter two, as these shots do not position the camera in place of the character. Instead, they have a similar function of modality, because they encourage the audience to relate to the speaker. The intimate relatedness is achieved in the illusion that the character is speaking directly to, or confiding in, the viewer. An example of this is mentioned just above, when Athena faces the camera while recalling James' actions as "ballsy" by sending her flowers after selling her out to a popular culture magazine. Characters break the fourth wall in doing this and, as Kress and van Leewan have argued, visual images that are centered and produced as close-ups in this way send a privileged message and implicate the viewer directly (Chandler, 2007, p. 113). Centered close-ups invite the viewers in and create the illusion that the viewers are a part of the characters' lives. As a result, viewers are invited to pay specific attention because they feel like they

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[8] Also, see the discussion of Neil's invitation to viewers in chapter two.

know the characters who reveal their feelings on a personal level. These centered close-up

shots further create the aesthetic of the apparently real by allowing the neoliberal

discourse to be sold to individual subjects as real and a true vision of the world as it

produces slippage between the respective positioning of the protagonist and viewers,

whose own mundane dilemmas are not necessarily far removed from those of the

characters.

The vision of the world in reality television series such as the *Ex-Wives of Rock*

supports an identity formation that is more detached from locations and social groups

than it was previously. Recall that Nealon (2012) observed that identity is now associated

with choice and self-branding, while Kirby (2009) emphasized the way in which subjects

suspend their identities rather than crystallize identities that serve as a basis for belonging

to a subcultural group. As Kirby (2009) suggests, current entertainment forms such as

reality television take on "a narrative form so open and haphazard in detail that it

resembles the subjectively endless flux of life and unfolds as if it were (reality

television)" (p. 160). This presents a stark contrast to Hebdige's homology and the

authentic subculture seen in the music videos. Viewers are placed in the position as being

a part of the action within the show while they are watching it, but it is only during the

length of the show that they have the opportunity to involve themselves at this level. As a

result, flexible identities can be interchanged, while music consumption on iPod shuffle is

presented as an appropriate metaphor for identity in this new post-postmodern era

(Nealon, 2012). That is, despite the viewer's relationship to glam metal music in the

1980s, viewers can shuffle their identities and occupy multiple subject positions as they

watch these shows and consume recontextualized glam metal figures, style, or music.

While fans of the music in the 1980s may be reminiscing about the music and the

lifestyle, viewers who were not fans are enabled to temporarily 'try on' a new identity in

the dispersed and brief identification that relatable choices and characters present to them.

The aesthetic of the apparently real, which gives viewers the opportunity to

identify with characters on television in new ways, has contributed to the changing

signification of glam metal in contemporary popular culture. Instead of providing a

medium for a subculture to which members were recruited on what they agreed they

should reject to define their situated and cohesive group identity against an outsider

culture, contemporary viewers are recruited only momentarily because they can relate to

characters on a personal level, allowing a broader range of viewers to an opportunity to

identify with the individualized problems of the show's characters.

"No One Like You": Family Values vs. Social Institutional Critiques

As already noted, the narrative of family values in *Ex-Wives of Rock* is one that is

highlighted throughout the series. I will now consider how this narrative is illustrated as

well as how it compares to the devices presented in the 1980s music videos. The series

not only highlights what has happened to some glam metal musicians since their time in

the spotlight has dimmed, but its primary focus is on the life predicaments of their

families. From very early on in the television series, one of Shannon Tweed's

commentaries is:

> Once upon a time the ex-wives used to party like, well, like rock stars. Yep, they
> pretty much did everything their parents warned them not to do. So, you can
> imagine how interesting things are now that they are parents themselves.[9]

This quotation shows how there has been a complete shift in the concrete experience and

relational positioning of the wives. With this in mind, whether the present-day glam metal

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[9] "Mama Said", *Ex-Wives of Rock*, accessed from http://www.slice.ca/ex-wives-of-rock/video/episode/mama-said/video.html?v=64293955750

style has changed from its particular form of presence in the 1980s can now be further explored.

To recall, throughout the analysis of the music videos, it became clear that a primary recruitment strategy allowed viewers to mark themselves as separate from dominant culture. The glam metal subculture was coherent in terms of what they agreed to reject, but not necessarily in the things they agreed to accept. In these reality television shows, it seems as though the complete opposite is the case. Social institutions of family, education and attaining healthy and fulfilled lifestyles are not critiqued in the series. Instead, they are shown as important to attaining a good and fulfilled life. This is illustrated on a variety of occasions, including when Bobbie reflects upon how proud she is that her daughter is graduating from university as she never got the chance to attend post-secondary school and also, from time-to-time, when the ex-wives discuss various health-related struggles that they encounter. However, the most obvious difference between this reality television series and the music videos is its focus on family values as compared to illustrating critiques about marriage and the family unit.

To further address this, how Athena and her ex-husband James continue to try to work on their relationship for the sake of their teenage children comes to light. As discussed, despite James' efforts to sell-out his ex-wife to a popular magazine, he later becomes heartbroken and apologetic and tries to make amends. The pair eventually agrees to attend counselling together in hopes they will determine ways to communicate better. Ultimately, Athena advises her friends on the show, as well as the viewers in centered close-up shots, that she is doing so in order to keep a relationship with her youngest sons because James has primary custody of them. Despite being frustrated on many occasions with James' parenting techniques, alcoholism and adultery, Athena

eventually agrees to move back in with him so she can have her children all under one roof again. As she notes: "The boys still live with James. You know, although I'm not excited about living with James, I'll do anything to have my kids back... anything."[10] Shannon Tweed further comments on this in her narration by stating: "Of all the bad choices Athena's faced in life, and there have been several, this one pretty much sounded like the worst."[11] Unfortunately, this change in living situation was not without drama and risk for the family as James' drinking continued.

Confiding in her friend Sharise, Athena expresses her concerns about James since she has started living with him again and confesses that he started drinking again.[12] While being interviewed in a centered close-up shot, Athena tells the camera (and thus shares with the viewer): "This time I walked in and he had just gotten out of a car driving my son drunk. This time, there's no going back". As she continues to tell Sharise her story, she says with distress: "The first thing he said was he's a changed man. I just go, 'This is not like, ever gonna fucking change. Ever'". This story continues at the beginning of the next episode, which opens with Shannon Tweed stating:

> But if you're like me, then all you wanted for Athena was a happy Hollywood ending. I'm sure it's what she wanted for herself. Sadly however, this isn't the movies. This is Athena's real life where hope isn't good enough. For Athena, the only thing that matters is giving your word and backing it up with action. And James Kottak did not do that.[13]

At this point, Athena addresses the camera, insisting that she is not only concerned about the safety of her family, but for herself as a recovered alcoholic. She asserts with urgency:

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[10] "Welcome (Back) to the Jungle", *Ex-Wives of Rock*, accessed from http://www.slice.ca/ex-wives-of-rock/video/episode/welcome-back-to-the-jungle/video.html?v=322532931719
[11] "Simple Kind of Life", *Ex-Wives of Rock*, accessed from http://www.slice.ca/ex-wives-of-rock/video/episode/simple-kind-of-life/video.html?v=362506307764
[12] "So Far, So Good, So What?", *Ex-Wives of Rock*, accessed from http://www.slice.ca/ex-wives-of-rock/video/episode/so-far-so-good-so-what/video.html?v=362507331539
[13] "Simple Kind of Life", *Ex-Wives of Rock*

"I can't wait anymore, I have to go now. I feel my life depends on it". Later, she is seen moving out of the house that she recently began to call home again with her children and ex-husband, noting that she is ready to date again, to "date someone cool".

The focus on family values is presented within this storyline as it suggests that we, the viewers, would have wanted Athena to have a happy Hollywood ending. Of course, this happy Hollywood ending would have been for James to stop drinking and become the husband and father that Athena always wished for him to be for the sake of her children as well as her own personal health, well-being and sobriety. The ideal viewer would become proud of Athena when she says that she wants to date again; not because Athena is deviating from her family and the values within her family unit, but because she is standing up for herself and illustrating that she is strong enough to move past this.

Another discussion between the ex-wives in the season three finale of the show[14] provides an illustrative example of the show's focus on family values has the ex-wives reminiscing about their weddings and marriages as they make their way to Tobi's wedding. Bobbie asks the ex-wives if they were to go back in time, would they still marry their "guys". They all agree that they would because they all got their children from their marriages. Blue and Jerry Dixon had one son together, Bobbie and Jani Lane have one daughter and of course, Athena and James have their three children. Blue even notes that she would be willing to go through "The good, bad and the ugly, I wouldn't change any of it. We created an amazing child together and we're better as friends and we're great parents together". All agree on this except Sharise who notes that her "...perspective is a little different than theirs because they still have their children and [she doesn't]...", referring to her daughter with Vince Neil who passed from cancer when she was just a

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[14] "Simple Kind of Life", *Ex-Wives of Rock*

toddler. Further, the ex-wives talk about how they adore the union of marriage. Sharise notes: "I am thrilled to go to a wedding, I find them super joyous, I cry every time at the hope of something so beautiful you know, lasting forever" and Bobbie notes: "I love the union, I love... the commitment. I think it's just a beautiful thing". Thus, despite the trials and tribulations within the show, there is ultimately a narrative of strong family values and a sense of cohesiveness in the family unit that is illustrated.

In addition to this narrative of family values, further reflections of the ex-wives' 'once upon a time' assist viewers in reflecting upon the good times from their past, but allow them to consider what it may have been like for them to live the luxurious 1980s lifestyles the women were a part of. These flashbacks to the ex-wives' pasts are interesting as they highlight situations that would have been criticized by positions of the outsider in the 1980s, but today the ex-wives defend what they did back then and say it made them who they are today. Examples of these flashbacks in the series include parties that the women went to, and how they worked in television, modeling or as waitresses in popular Sunset Strip clubs. Most of these flashbacks were brought up throughout the storyline that centered on Bobbie writing her book *Dirty Rocker Boys: Love and Lust on the Sunset Strip*. Upon Bobbie reading aloud a section of her book talking about how she met Sharise, Shannon Tweed mentions the Hollywood Tropicana in her narrative. She notes quite ecstatically:

> Oh yeah! I remember the Hollywood Tropicana! Back in the 80s, it was a mecca for ladies mud wrestling. The go-to place for stars, athletes and especially guys in rock bands. Everyone from... [picture displayed of Gene Simmons] well, he may have gone here I don't know... But, I'm pretty sure this guy did [picture displayed of Vince Neil].[15]

Bobbie's writers and publishers were encouraging her to depict Sharise as a stripper in the

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[15] "Shout at the Devil", *Ex-Wives of Rock*

book because of her time in the spotlight on Mötley Crüe's "Girls, Girls, Girls" video. Sharise stands strong against her friend and defends herself by arguing that she was not a stripper, she was a mud wrestler. The reason for the contention about this distinction for Sharise was due to her 10-year-old son. In a centered close-up shot, Sharise notes to the camera: "Because I played a stripper in a video, apparently I was a stripper". She follows this up by stating: "I can't have him think that I was a stripper". Shannon Tweed follows up on this in her commentary by nothing: "...one of Sharise's big regrets, next to marrying Vince Neil, is saying 'yes' when he asked her to dance in the video for 'Girls, Girls, Girls'". Shannon sort of makes a mockery of this fact, noting that there is not much of a difference between being a mud wrestler and a stripper except that the mud wrestler would keep her clothes on. Ultimately though, due to her family values now that she has a son, Sharise wants to defend a representation of herself that is consistent with assumptions about her motherhood, and this demands that she not be represented as a stripper in Bobbie's book. This presents a strange irony as the women would have likely defended this lifestyle to outsiders in the 1980s. However, they now condemn aspects of the lifestyle and privilege normative performances of the motherhood role.

Aside from the discussion of Sharise's time in the spotlight on "Girls, Girls, Girls", Bobbie's success in music videos is frequently highlighted in the series as she was the actress in Warrant's "Cherry Pie" video. She often mentions how nowadays, she would be less comfortable being in a music video due to her weight and discusses her drug additions of cocaine and crystal methamphetamine in order to stay thin in the 1980s. She also reflects on how her parents adopted her daughter in order to ensure that she had the best life growing up possible due to the addictions she was struggling with:

I, at the time, thought as a mother it would be the best decision to make, for her

sake, to have her go stay with my mother. However, I missed out on a lot of she and me and it saddens me every day to have to, you know, admit that I wasn't the mother I always wanted to be... [16]

This decision was a positive decision for her as it allowed her to focus on herself and becoming sober, however, it was a difficult one as she expresses how much she cares about her daughter.

These examples from *Ex-Wives of Rock* present an interesting contrast with the music videos analyzed in the previous chapter. To recall, in the "I Want Action" and "Lipstick and Leather" music videos, sexualized imagery indirectly critiqued family values by emphasizing a party lifestyle that devalued monogamy. Even Howe & Friedman's (2014) findings state that all groups they studied who participated in the 1980s heavy metal subculture agreed to "...liv[ing] the risky sex, drugs, and 'rock-n-roll' lifestyle" (p. 625). This illustrates that the social institutional critiques have essentially been reversed in contemporary representations of glam metal, which are presented as independent from subcultural identity. Thus, there is a noticeable shift towards family-related values, norms and lifestyles in contemporary representations of glam metal that were vehemently rejected in the 1980s music videos. As a result, there is a shift in cultural production, which represents change within this new ethos. Lifestyle choices that have been made by these once famous wives of glam metal rockers illustrate change and growth, and, according to the findings of Howe and Friedman, it is clear that the fans have also changed.

"Here I Go Again": Addressing the Narrative of Hope and Change

Alongside the narrative of family values observed in *Ex-Wives of Rock*, the narrative of

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[16] "So Far, So Good, So What?", *Ex-Wives of Rock*

hope and change is also prevalent throughout the series and presented in several different ways for both the characters and the viewers. For the viewers, the narrative allows viewers to feel hopeful that the change for the characters in the future will be positive because they see the positive changes, such as overcoming addictions, that have happened in the ex-wives' lives. The characters, repeatedly illustrate how they have emerged from their party lifestyles to become warm, loving and compassionate mothers and they express their continued commitment to change for the better for themselves and their families. Some of these expressions of hope and change have been discussed in this chapter, such as Athena's fight to keep her family together and her quest to find a new man in her life. These storylines help viewers feel hopeful for the characters as they wish the changes in their lives to be positive ones.

To provide an example of this narrative within the series, there are a few instances when the ex-wives are reminiscing that Shannon Tweed's narration intervenes to outline how each of these women are better off today due to what they have gone through. Further to the discussion the ex-wives had about their weddings on the way to Tobi's, Shannon Tweed noted in her commentary:

> I think it's fair to say the ladies enjoyed their weddings more than their marriages, but for better or worse, the marriages made them who they are today. So, this year, this feels like a torch being passed. I can only hope it's the kind of torch that ignites the energy and passion of generations to come and not the other kind of torch, the one that burns down every good thing in sight.[17]

Interestingly, this comment is somewhat carnivalesque and paradoxical. It is hopeful in a humorous way, but it makes ominous reference to the metaphorical torch's capacity for destruction. The underlying message is that, no matter what life throws at these characters, these events provide opportunities for an individual to grow and change.

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[17] "Simple Kind of Life", *Ex-Wives of Rock*

Change is one of the central framing themes of the show. This theme stretches beyond the overarching narratives of the move from rock wives consuming champagne on red carpets to being forty-something and divorced, as illustrated in the very first episode called "Meet the Ex-Wives"[18], or the move from rock star royalty to parenting, which is emphasized in the third episode of season one.[19] Change is always emphasized in terms of being in flux, as the women start new things, resume old things, move up to better homes, or move down, as Bobbie did when she moved in with a boyfriend with whom she was unhappy. Things are always described as new, from tattoos to attitudes to husbands.

The incitement to move forward no matter what life's curveballs are is a message that is delivered by the narratives of hope and change that thread through *Ex-Wives of Rock.* As a result, this television series can further be situated in metamodernism. Vermeulen and Akken (2010) posit that metamodernism creates an incitement to move forward in a "new narrative of longing" for an alternative future (p. 12). They observe that this narrative of hope and change, however, is connected with feelings of doubt (as illustrated above in Shannon Tweed's reference to the torch that burns everything down).

"Winds of Change": Understanding Glam Metal's Re-emergence and Recontextualization

Connotative readings of the "Fiber One" television commercial and the *Ex-Wives of Rock* reality television series allow us to further understand how the representation of the glam metal style and signification has shifted. In each of these examples, there are narrative elements that appear consistent with the assumption that neoliberal subjects are created

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[18] "Meet the Ex-Wives", *Ex-Wives of Rock*, accessed from http://www.slice.ca/ex-wives-of-rock/video/episode/meet-the-ex-wives/video.html?v=64293955692
[19] "Mama Said"*, Ex-Wives of Rock*

insofar as they shuffle their identities in momentary expressions of relatedness to choices and subject positions presented in contemporary forms of media. These medias address multiple types of viewers, which allow these contemporary iterations of glam metal to be situated within broader social practices.

In the 1980s music videos, recruitment to the glam metal subculture depended upon shared rejections of normative values and institutions. Fans appeared to identify with the critique of social institutions that organized social life. They weren't going to take it, and metal health would drive them mad (in a positive way). However, within this new mature neoliberal ethos, television series such as *Ex-Wives of Rock* reverse these operations by producing narratives that support the individual commitment to the norms of social institutions.

Giroux's (2004) discussion of public pedagogy may help to further explain this shift. His argument that democratic inquiries have been absorbed by neoliberalism and its public pedagogy and that new market identities have been created fits within the hope and change narrative within *Ex-Wives of Rock*. This is a different representation of change than what was seen in the analysis of the music videos due to the lack of collective political critique that is produced within a neoliberal social context. Viewers of *Ex-Wives of Rock* are subjects insofar as they want what appears to be the best for the characters as individuals undergoing particular relatable dilemmas that are seen as separate from larger social processes and structural relationships in an era of apparently private concerns and individual choices.

Broader social practices that are presented in these narratives would have not been accepted in the 1980s presentation of the subculture. Instead, as we have seen, there were actually specific devices used to create particular kinds of subjects that would have been

in direct opposition to these narratives, such as those that privilege family values. Yet, despite the glam subculture's social institutional critiques, glam metal musicians have been able to depict themselves and their families as changed as they have grown alongside their loyal fans, as well as acceptable for their non-fans who readily occupy flexible identity positions in response to relatable choices.

Due to the emphasis on change that has taken place in these contemporary representations of glam metal, the findings in this chapter seem to be consistent with the literature. They are, for instance, consistent with Howe and Friedman's (2014) finding that the recollection of the times spent in the subculture provides positive associations for fans. Most importantly, in consideration of the point of departure that this analysis took from Klypchak's (2011) argument that heavy metal musicians have been recontextualized, this study's observations with respect to viewers' identification with glam metal representations have implications for our understanding of subjectivity in the mature neoliberal condition. The recontextualization of the glam metal style in television genres of product commercials and reality television seem to show that identification with glam metal figures or style does not seem to reside in unique identity construction as it did for ideal viewers of 1980s glam metal videos targeted for recruitment into a marginal subculture. Instead, current recontextualized identification is located in the ordinary dilemmas of family routines, personal conflicts, career changes, relationship management, and life passages to which we can all momentarily relate before changing the channel or shuffling the playlist.

Furthermore, what is interesting is that the narratives that are produced in these contemporary presentations of glam metal might even be consistent with theories surrounding post-subculture. Muggleton (2000) further discusses this notion, which is a

departure from the concept of subculture, and notes that post-subculturalists "…no longer have any sense of subcultural 'authenticity' where inception is rooted in particular socio-temporal contexts and tied to underlying structural relations" (p. 47). In other words, Muggleton observes that his research subjects chose what type and/or which subcultures within which to inscribe themselves. This is a result of the postmodern 1980s and 1990s which he describes as subculturally fragmented due to revivals, hybrids and transformations of subcultures, allowing post-subculturalists to "style surf" and move "quickly and freely from one style to another as they wish" (p. 47). The notion of post-subculture seems consistent with the discussion within this chapter because it anticipates the discussion of flexible identification with subcultural styles.

The observation that there has been an influx of television advertisements and reality television programs that feature glam metal social figures, music and/or style suggests that the meaning of the glam metal style has been recontextualized because how the music and style are presented has changed. As a result, the recent revival of glam metal does not appear to communicate the interruption of dominant culture and group identity through homology that it did in the 1980s. Instead, glam metal's contemporary revived style stands to give insight into how the meaning of style and identity is historically fluid and open to recontextualization. In a post-postmodern era, identity and authenticity are now rooted in choice and self-branding rather than in groups and localities (Nealon, 2012, p. 63). Neoliberalism and the shift from public to private considerations, which had a huge impact on reshaping morals, norms and values, helps to explain this change. Contemporary glam metal illustrates the reshaping of morals, norms and values as fans now appear to identify with the music in its new contexts, which are separate from authentic, subcultural experiences.

Chapter IV

Conclusion

Although there may be a revival in heavy metal more generally, this thesis responds to the noted re-emergence of the glam metal style that was at its height of popularity in the mid-1980s, relatively disappeared in the 1990s, but has recently re-appeared in reality television and advertising. My analysis suggests that the televised contemporary iterations of glam metal do not seem to draw upon the same devices that marked the glam metal subculture of the 1980s. Therefore, I have argued that, as viewers of these recent cultural products may identify with the style and music in its new contexts, the recent revival of glam metal does not depend upon subcultural identification and it does not appear to communicate the interruption of dominant culture and reinforcement of group identity through homology that it did in the 1980s. Therefore, it can be considered recontextualized. Further, this reappearance, which seems to be independent of these earlier subcultural concerns, may illustrate a more general reshaping of morals, norms and values within a mature neoliberal ethos.

As I sought to explore both the historical and the present-day positions of the subculture in order to address my research inquiries, a recontextualizing shift in the style and signification of glam metal became evident. In addressing the historical position of glam metal, it was determined that there were three key devices that structured the discourse of the style: emotionally-charged recruitment into a negatively defined community; social institutional critique aimed at education, health, and the family; and carnivalesque reversals of power. A remarkable aspect of the style presented through the three devices was that the values of the subculture in the 1980s were only presented negatively in the critiques of institutions and in the carnivalesque reversals of power that

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the videos offered, but no preferred values for the subculture were given. Therefore, the elements of style for the subculture appeared to be located in the things that participants agreed to reject, not in the things that they agreed to accept. Given that the videos vividly rejected prominent social institutions, I argued that the devices present in the videos established the glam metal style of the 1980s as subversive and that they challenged the dominant values and forms of social organization of the time.

These devices provided a point of departure for making sense of glam metal's recent revival in the current context. One of the key problems that this thesis set out to explore was if and how the adoption of subcultural style has become independent of the symbolic construction of group identity, but it addressed this through analysis of the cultural products that feature this style and its representative figures in more recent presentations. My analysis suggests that the narratives found within the Fibre One cookie advertisement and the reality television series *Ex-Wives of Rock* neither assume that viewers are members of a subcultural group and nor do they draw upon the kinds of recruitment devices that were activated in the 1980s music videos that I analyzed.

The cultural products that I examined instead emphasized the commonalities and common-sense of their presumed viewers by giving particular attention to the social practices of everyday life, such as the private consumption of healthy lifestyles, as well as the sound management of relationships, parenting, and employment. These were consistent with, rather than oppositional to, commonly held values of a mature neoliberal present. Group identity is not a concern for the recontextualized appearances of the glam metal style examined in this thesis. Rather, in these contexts, the style is presented for viewers whose identities seem to be presumed to be mobile and versatile. In this way, Nealon's (2012) speculation that post-postmodernism's intensified consumption has

anchored identity and authenticity in choice and self-branding instead of in groups and localities (p. 63) informs this thesis' analyses. These are further informed by Vermeulen and Akken's (2010) notion of metamodern idealism, a way of feeling that they suggest is now prevalent, which takes its force from the promise and hope for change, as well as by the ways in which subjects can understand themselves as occupying positions that are not necessarily demarcated by localities. In consideration of television shows and advertisements, the contemporary presentation of glam metal seems to be less reflective of identification with a coherent, subcultural scene and instead offers new, flexible forms of identity.

The significance of this research is broad, and can be beneficial for a variety of different fields relating to the study of culture. As discussed in the first chapter of this thesis, the study and significance of glam metal success is often overlooked in heavy metal music studies as a defining decade for the music subculture as a whole. This research does not only contribute to the discussion of recontextualization that Klypchak (2011) uses to explore heavy metal artists, but also provides an extension of this understanding for other sub-genres in heavy metal. Due to the comparison of Hebdige's (1978) study of subcultural style with recontextualization, the attention to the neoliberal context in this research provided an understanding as to how subcultural identities can develop, shift and/or change over time. In this instance, recontextualization produces a departure from homology and perhaps from the concept of subculture as well. This was mentioned in chapter three in noting the concept of post-subculture which Muggleton (2000) explores. Recontextualization produces this departure by raising the question as to whether similar recontextualizations can be observed in other subcultures or even whether subculture remains a relevant concept in a mature neoliberal context.

"Miles Away": Areas for Future Research

There are many questions still to be asked, as well as other methods to consider, with respect to this topic. Future studies might consider qualitative interviewing, autoethnographies and/or photo-elicitation in order to dive deeper into the personal perceptions of fans, exploring their personal understandings of the historical context of the music as well as its contemporary revival. These other qualitative methods would further paint a picture of how a fan's subject position has proliferated. They might also assist in enhancing the research surrounding this topic by empowering the participants and triggering deep meanings (Clark-Ibanez, 2004, p. 1513), which would allow a better understanding of the "intimate dimensions of the social" (p. 1511). Ultimately, exploring these other qualitative methods would only serve to enhance the inquiry of how the style and signification of particular subcultures, like glam metal, impacts the identity formation of individuals.

Despite the array of examples I illustrated throughout this thesis to answer my research questions, I acknowledge that there are many other music videos, television series/episodes and television commercials that could have been used to further enhance my inquiries. Therefore, future studies might consider similar methods of discourse analysis to compare and contrast the messages within these reality television shows themselves, as even just exploring these shows would result in rich information about subcultural practices. Even the wide array of observed television commercials and their messaging could be further compared and contrasted against each other to better understand and explore messaging that is being consumed by subjects. There is more than just glam metal tunes that are popular in television advertising, and the various messages

that these advertisements produce would be an interesting inquiry especially with relation to subcultural identity or, in contrast, mobile neoliberal identities.

Another interesting point of inquiry, one which I originally considered for this study, would be to explore the various generations and their interests in classic forms of heavy metal. As Kahn-Harris (2007) notes regarding the revival of classic heavy metal acts on stage, furthering this inquiry and interviewing participants from these various generations would inform a better understanding of how subcultures develop new fans and audiences. In the classic heavy metal acts that I have attended, I have frequently seen children and teenagers in attendance with their parents. I also see many young heavy metal fans there on their own with their friends. It is even more interesting when I have seen them try to adopt the style that was popular from the 1980s. I have observed young teenagers wearing animal print, wigs, elaborate makeup and so on, and this has made me wonder what it is about the music that makes them willing not only to pay top dollar to see these acts perform, but also to feel drawn to dressing up and going with a group of their friends. This may be of interest to me because I have often wondered why I have wanted to attend these concerts, and understanding this intergenerational draw to the music might help me better understand my position as a concert attendee of these big name acts.

Upon reflection, it has become clear to me that glam metal has grown into something that I do not think the bands who sought fame on the Sunset Strip in the mid-1980s ever thought that it would. It may have been a phenomenon in the 1980s that did wane in the 1990s, but it has come back in new forms. Glam metal's new forms have not only attracted old audiences to 'try (back) on' their favourite styles of the 1980s, but they have also invited new audiences to 'try on' momentarily different stylistic veneers. Since

its inception, the popularity and style of glam metal has been changing and adjusting to the cultural conditions it has faced, and it has served to prove that the style's signification is worth examining as it has stood the test of time as a "Rock of Ages".

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