

DOING WHAT YOU'VE GOT TO DO: THE ROLE OF WORKING CONDITIONS
ON MUSICIANS' WORK BEHAVIORS

By

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Introduction

Music has been the subject of sociological inquiry for decades. While the specific topics that have been explored vary, there has generally been a focus on the role of music in culture (Etzkorn 1964; Martin 1979; Binder 1993; Lena 2006) and on listening audiences (Johnstone & Katz 1957; Hebdige 1979; van Elderen 1984; Kruse 1993; Duffett 2001). The musicians behind the music have been studied far less frequently (Niketta 1998), and when they have been it is usually in regards to their embodiment of genre ideals (Román-Velázquez 1999). One missing piece from the analysis about music, musicians, and audiences involves musicians who are not only personifications of a genre's ideology, but also *workers* laboring within specific contexts that shape and influence their behavior.

Through a case study of the Vans Warped Tour, this paper examines the working experiences and work behavior of small bands performing on the tour. The Warped Tour is a unique working environment that exposes bands to conditions unlike those they may have encountered on other non-festival tours. Working on Warped presents musicians with new and different experiences and challenges that they must attempt to incorporate and overcome if they are to successfully remain on the tour. Work for musicians can include not only the actual production of music on stage or in a studio, but also interactions with the audience, as well as the act of promoting and selling albums and band related merchandise.

I propose that the novel working conditions on the Vans Warped Tour impact the working behaviors of small bands on the tour, sometimes in ways that contradict their ideologies about work. I explore the following questions in this paper: What work

ideologies do small bands on the Warped Tour hold? In what ways are the working conditions experienced on Warped unique and challenging to these musicians? How do these working conditions impact the working behaviors of bands on the tour, and do the resulting behaviors reinforce or challenge these musicians' work ideologies? Finally I will suggest that the inclusion of working conditions in analyses of musicians and their ideologies about work and work behavior will result in a more thorough understanding of how musicians negotiate their relationship to genre ideals.

Working Musicians

Previous work on the sociology of music has tended to focus on the ideology of music, or the ways that musicians embody the ideals of their respective genres. Early research, such as Hebdige's highly influential *Subculture: The Meaning of Style*, has been criticized as too theoretical, with no empirical evidence to support its claims (1979). Later works on the same topics have focused on extensive interviews and ethnographic data in an attempt to overcome this flaw (Liang 1985; Fox 1987; Blush 2001). While there has been sociological research on the identity performance and ideology of specific musical genres, this work has generally not contained an analysis of working conditions (Kruse 1993; Thompson 2004; Halnon 2005; Matula 2007).

A small body of research has included statements on musicians' ideologies about work. This work primarily has focused on motivations behind musical work (Redhead and Street 1989; Hesmondhalgh 1999), the role of gender in musicians' work (Groce and Cooper 1990; Valdez and Halley 1996), and professional norms (Tunnell and Groce

1998). There is currently no contemporary sociological research on concepts of professionalism or career goals of popular musicians.

The pool of research on the actual working behaviors of musicians is even smaller. There has been some work on the division of labor among musicians and band-mates (Clawson 1999; Weinstein 2004), musicians' decision making in regards to lyrical content (Armstrong 2004) and the construction of musicians' personas (Henry 1989; Hess 2005). Again, this work does not incorporate lived working conditions as a variable of analysis.

To date, only one sociologist has attempted to incorporate an analysis of the working environment into research on work ideology. Stephen Groce's 1989 article, "Occupational Rhetoric and Ideology" included consideration of the way that the working environment could impact the formation of musicians' ideology about their work. He found that the physical settings of musicians' performances and the compensation they received for their work did influence the ways that they constructed their work ideologies. Because this research was based off interview data, the actual working behaviors of the musicians involved were not included in the analysis. Groce's work has yet to be continued in a contemporary setting, or with additional variables.

The current literature's emphasis on ideology in the absence of actual behavior would lead one to conclude that what musicians *do* at work is determined by what they *think* about work. Thus if a musician's work behavior did not align with his/her stated work ideology, the logical conclusion would be that (s)he had not fully internalized the genre's ideals, or that (s)he was lying about his/her commitment to those ideals. I propose that under certain circumstances the lived working conditions musicians are

operating under can create scenarios where the enactment of their work ideologies becomes impractical if not impossible. In these scenarios musicians may adapt their behaviors to fit the working environment, even when this contradicts their ideological stance on musical work. This is not necessarily a reflection on their commitment or internalization of their genre's ideals, but rather a byproduct of the current state of the music industry.

Research Methods

My data collection was conducted on the Vans Warped Tour during the summers of 2006 and 2007. I engaged in participant observation on 24 tour dates in 15 different states across all regions of the United States. I traveled on the tour with a performing band, and was employed as their "merch girl", helping them to sell their merchandise at each stop. My position on the tour allowed me to observe bands while they were working both onstage and off, as well as to observe and talk with audience members. I did not hide the fact that I was conducting research from the musicians or audience members I interacted with, telling them when I was able to make it a natural part of conversation. I did not make an explicit point of alerting everyone around me that I was a graduate student researcher, in part because the people I told appeared largely uninterested and no one questioned what my research purpose was.

The bulk of my observations focused on small bands on the tour. All of the bands in my sample were either unsigned at the time I encountered them or were signed to small independent record labels. The small bands on the tour were almost exclusively male, although there were some female musicians in my sample. The musicians' ages ranged

from late teens to early thirties, although most were in their early to mid twenties. I also collected data on these small bands' support personnel on the tour. Every small band brought along at least one other individual who was not a band member to provide them with additional assistance. I was uniquely positioned to interact with these individuals as I too was working in this regard. The support personnel were more evenly distributed along gender lines, with males and females being equally represented. Their age range reflected that of the musicians, with the majority in their twenties.

Ideology

While the bands on the Warped Tour can be classified as belonging to several different genres, the designation of any particular band to one genre or another can vary depending on who is asked. Musicians themselves are often unable or unwilling to categorize their own music as belonging to any particular genre (Groce 1989; Gunn 1999). For the purposes of this paper, what is unique about each of the bands is less important than the many things that they share in common. If genres are conceptualized as sets of rules that govern the production of musical works, the bands on Warped Tour can all be grouped together in the over arching "rock" genre (Fabbri 1981; Fornäs 1995).

While musical scholars at times classify punk, emo, goth, metal, and alternative as distinct and separate from rock in general, the choice of how to classify a band or piece of music is always situationally bound and depends upon which genre rules are being used (Fornäs 1995). While there are certainly tonal and stylistic differences between bands from these subgenres, but the fact that they all share a common history and have strongly influenced one another has resulted in considerable ideological overlap between the

subgenres present on Warped (Harrell 1994; Gunn 1999; Hesmondhalgh 1999; Tsitsos 1999; O'Connor 2002). As “the purpose of a genre is to organize the reproduction of a particular ideology” (Walser 1993: 34), considering bands with different tonal qualities as one cohesive group is appropriate for this context.

The subgenres represented on the Warped Tour lineup share a number of ideological and cultural concerns that influence both the production of their music and their working behaviors. They all share a deep concern with the role of fashion as a marker of genre affiliation, and here is considerable overlap among the styles of the subgenres with the color black, tattoos, fetish wear and dyed hair as unifying themes (Hebdige 1979; Krenske and McKay 2000; Bailey 2005; Sweet 2005). Style is an important marker used to distinguish those who are musicians or fans of particular subgenres (Thornton 1995; Williams and Copes 2005). Musicians are expected to embody their subgenre through their personal style in order to be read as ‘relevant’ to their audience. As one musician on Warped told his band mates, “We need to look cool everyday so that kids will look at us and say, ‘Fuck yeah! I want to see that band’.” This emphasis on style can also backfire if not embodied appropriately for the audience. Such is the case of the musician who told me, “There are all these crust punks here and they are looking at us (the band) like we have on fucking three piece suits!” when in reality they were all wearing denim jeans and either western shirts or clean t-shirts.

The subgenres also share an ideology of alienation and rebellion, in which they define themselves against what members consider and construct as the ‘mainstream’ or hegemonic other (Arnett 1993; O’Donald 2000; Barker 2003; Bailey 2005; Moore 2007). While the idea of a monolithic mainstream may be a creation of the subgenre’s fans,

(Thornton 1995) the fact remains that many of the musicians and fans see themselves as different from, and more unique than, those they would define as ‘normal’ (Willis 1994; Moore 2004; Gosling 2004). These self-definitions as ‘different’ impact the expectations of working musicians and their actions. Musicians on Warped would regularly mock the concertgoers who did not appear interested in their music or merchandise, and one of the most common insults was that these audience members did not like anything that they could not buy at Hot Topic (a chain store that sells ‘subcultural’ wares in shopping malls).

For the purposes of this study, the subgenres’ most important commonality is their ideologically based lack of concern with economics. The preferential valuing of music as art over economic success has been documented in rock music in general (Weinstein 2004) as well as in punk (Thompson 2004; Moore 2005), indie (Hesmondhalgh 1999; Hibbett 2005), emo (Bailey 2005), goth (Gunn 1999), metal (Halnon 2005;), and alternative (Kruse 1993; Schippers 2002). The musicians on Warped regularly expressed this sentiment saying things like, “I can’t complain that I am broke, I get to get onstage and play music everyday” and “I don’t give a shit about being rich and famous, I just want to make music.”

These rock ideologies impact both the ways that musicians think about their work, and the types of work behaviors that they choose to engage in. However, focusing solely on these ideological viewpoints ignores the impact of other factors that influence working behaviors. Musicians’ work occurs within specific contexts, and the context matters. The working conditions that musicians are under impact the ways in which they carry out their work, and sometimes lead to work behaviors that contradict their genre ideals. The

Vans Warped Tour is one example of a working environment where sticking to one's musical morals, particularly in regards to economic concerns, is not always possible.

The Vans Warped Tour

The Vans Warped Tour was founded in 1995 by Kevin Lyman as a traveling music and skateboarding festival. Warped has continued to run annually, and is known in some circles as 'the tour that won't die' as it is the longest running musical tour in the country. Warped's focus has always been on music, but its original format has changed over the years and the emphasis on extreme sports slowly diminished in concert with skate boarding's waning popularity. The original line-ups featured mostly punk and ska bands, reflecting the punk and ska revival of the early and mid nineties. More recent line-ups have still included ska and punk groups, but have expanded to incorporate emo, metal and goth bands as well.

The Warped Tour was founded with an explicitly stated egalitarian ethos that reflects the ideologies of the rock genre. In a press conference before the 2007 tour, Lyman proclaimed that at Warped, "Everyone's a headliner, it's what you make of it" (Rowles 2007). There is no true "headliner" of the tour, and the time slots when bands perform change from day today, supporting the idea that economic success is not an indicator of artistic achievement and that all bands are equal. However, there is still a clear hierarchy of musicians in place, and while the times shift, the more popular and higher paid bands always play towards the end of the day and on the same two main stages. The exact number of stages can change depending on the venue, but there are always the two main stages and at least four to five smaller stages.

There is also a hierarchy in the stages and some are physically larger and more prestigious than others. For example in 2006 and 2007, the Volcom stage was ‘better’ than the SmartPunk.com stage, which was in turn better than the Hot Topic stage. This point was clearly illustrated by the excitement of the Hot Topic stage bands when some of them were reassigned to SmartPunk after the truck towing their stage was struck by lightning.

Lyman makes a point of bringing up the alleged classless nature of Warped in most of his press appearance and interviews. In one interview he proudly proclaimed, “I continue to recognize the smaller stages. The kids that are out in these little vans, driving every night. One thing, they’re never hungry on Warped Tour. There’s always food around” (Aleshouse 2004). This may have been true in 2004, but by 2006 this was not the case. Many of the smaller bands on Warped did not have access to free food like the larger bands did, and those who were lucky enough to receive catering passes were only allowed one meal per day, compared to the three meals provided to musicians from larger acts.

The Warped Tour was originally founded with an explicit set of beliefs and principles in mind. While it is not possible to know how seriously those involved take their stated ideology, it is possible to point out instances where the lived experiences for some on the tour do not match up with what is being promoted. Warped Tour is a unique event and it creates a unique working environment for many of the bands involved. These working conditions in turn impact the working behaviors of bands on the tour in ways that contradict both their own work ideologies and the alleged ideology of the tour.

Working Conditions for Small Bands

Most, if not all, of the small bands on the Warped Tour claim to be involved in music for reasons other than the pursuit of fame and fortune. The majority of them, particularly those who have been on Warped in the past, do not even expect to make any money in the immediate future. As a drummer who has played in several very successful punk bands and who has toured with Warped multiple times put it, “There is no point for a small band to be on Warped for more than a week...They aren’t going to make any money.” Indeed many musicians who go on Warped end up in debt at the end of the summer having lost money as a result of touring. The structure of the Warped Tour disproportionately disadvantages small bands as the result of the schedule, the lack of available amenities, and the pay structure.

The Warped Tour travels at a rather frenetic pace, particularly given the scale of the festival. This point is best illustrated in contrast to the types of tours small bands usually undertake. Warped Tour dates are all-day affairs, with bands checking in at 8am and usually staying on-site until 7-8pm if not later. Because Warped is such a large event that people travel to attend, it makes the most sense for those in charge to schedule consecutive dates in geographically disparate locations. It was not uncommon during the 2006 and 2007 tours for bands to drive 8-12 hours overnight to get from one venue to the next. These could easily turn into 12-15 hour drives on nights when multiple stops were necessary, if traffic was especially bad, or if the directions provided by the Warped Tour production staff were incorrect. These types of drives effect small bands who are driving their own vans and RVs much more severely than larger acts who have space on tour buses with paid drivers. The long drives result in most bands having to take turns driving

and sleeping in shifts. While some bands have access to RVs that provide them with more space and comfort, these vehicles not only cost more to purchase or lease but also to run.

Most small bands, whether they use a booking agent or schedule their own shows, do not plan national tours with such long drives. Because small bands' national tours tend to take place in local bars and clubs, it is not unusual for performers to play several dates in the same metropolitan area or to play in neighboring cities on consecutive nights. Even when long drives are encountered, most concerts take place at night which means that bands do not have to be on location until at late afternoon at the earliest. These more flexible arrangements also allow for small bands to schedule time in cities where they have friends, relatives, and/or fans allowing them to partake in the hospitality of those who care about them. Thus, on club tours bands can take advantage of free places to sleep, eat, and do laundry; luxuries which are not usually available on Warped due to the schedule. Since bands on Warped cannot control when and where their days off will occur, lodging, food and laundry money usually must come from out of pocket.

These types of amenities are not only paid for from band funds on their days off. Kevin Lyman may have fed all of the small bands in 2004 as he claimed, but this practice was certainly not in place on the 2006 and 2007 tours. Catering passes were provided for a few of the small bands on the tour depending on which stage they played, but not everyone had catering, which led to some contention. Two small bands played the entire 2006 tour on the least prestigious of all stages, the Famly (sic) Clothing stage, without catering passes. In 2007 one of the bands played only one week on the Hot Topic stage with catering, while the other returned for the entire run on Famly. The Family stage band

was furious that the other band got one free meal everyday while they had to pay for it, even though they were on the entire three months of the tour versus only one week.

The fact that bands are not given free food does not necessarily make Warped different than any other tour. However, being onsite all day long resulted in bands that did not have catering still having to purchase their food at the venues. In 2006 lunch from the caterers was a bargain at \$5, but by 2007 the price had been raised to \$10, still a good deal for the quality of food but an industrious musician could feed his/herself for much less than that on tour.

The larger bands not only got free food on the tour, but they also got free water and ice to keep it cold. Small bands were not provided with water or ice by the tour even though they were many times more likely to be spending the entire day outdoors, as compared to larger bands that tended to only emerge from their buses to perform. Access to drinking water was important due to the record-breaking heat in 2006 and 2007, as well as the outdoor venues. For example, in 2006 at the Boston show there were audience members passing out from heatstroke less than half an hour after the gates opened. A tour that was played in clubs and bars would not have faced the same heat issues, and virtually all venues provide water for performing musicians (many bars offer free alcoholic drinks as well.)

While it was certainly possible for bands to find retailers where they could purchase water, in actuality this could be much more difficult than would be anticipated. Most of the driving took place late at night through unfamiliar territory. Unless there was a 24-hour store that was visible from the freeway finding a place to stop and buy bottled water could be nearly impossible. The high temperature combined with the physical

exertion of working meant that a band with four members could easily go through more than a flat of bottled water per day. Over time this could prove to be not only expensive, but also inconvenient. Stocking up with multiple flats when stores were available was usually not an option since most bands had their vehicles and trailers packed to full capacity with musical equipment, merchandise, luggage and sleeping people. Drinks could certainly be purchased at the venues, and were when there was no other option, but this could be very expensive since the price of a bottle of water could be as high as \$3-4.

The larger acts not only received more goods from the Warped Tour, they were also paid for their performances. Kevin Lyman has repeatedly stated in interviews that he is committed to putting on a big show with low ticket prices (Zemler 2004; Fredrickson 2007) and one way of achieving this goal is to not pay all of the performers, thus keeping costs lower. The smaller bands were not paid for performing and received no monetary compensation and usually no amenities either. Bigger acts not only received large paychecks for each performance, but also received free goods from the tour that smaller bands had to pay out of pocket for. Small bands would be used to paying out of pocket for necessities while on tour, but most club shows would be booked with a guarantee of payment. None of the band members that I spoke with performed for free on any other tours besides Warped.

Not only were the small bands not paid by the tour, but their costs in general were much higher than they normally would be. Longer drives resulted in more trips to the gas station, and sleeping in vans and RVs during the summer meant that the air conditioner had to be kept running through the night even if the vehicle was parked. Working outside all day in the heat resulted in having to consume above average quantities of water that

had to be paid for out of pocket. What was so striking was not only that the costs of traveling with the tour were so high, but also that they were disproportionately higher for small bands compared to large acts who were provided amenities free of charge. The result was that even bands that generally speaking were not concerned with achieving economic success through their music had to become very concerned about money while on the Warped Tour. Since bands were not paid by Warped, the only way to earn enough money to finance touring was through the sale of their merchandise.

Salesmanship on Warped

All of the bands on Warped Tour engaged in some type of economic exchange with audience members, regardless of their level of popularity. Sales were certainly important to larger acts as well, the biggest of whom were rumored to make more than \$10,000 per day off merchandise alone. Selling merchandise was particularly important to small bands because their touring costs were so high. As one musician lamented to me, "We have to start making some fucking money...otherwise we are going to get home completely broke." Many bands had daily quotas that they tried to meet in order to ensure that they were bringing in enough money each day in an attempt to, at minimum, break even.

Small bands were so concerned with making sales that they all brought additional people along to act as salespeople for their group. This was not a decision to be taken lightly as additional people meant higher expenses as well as less room in the van or RV. While some bands only brought along one extra person to help sell merchandise, others brought as many as three. These people were often friends or romantic partners, but

some bands interviewed strangers to fill their tour support positions in order to only bring people that they thought would be good at making sales. The lead guitarist from one small band told me that they had a great deal of difficulty finding the right person to bring along. “Everyone thinks they want to come because they think it’s Warped Tour and it will be all this fun...they have no idea how much hard work it is! We just had to make sure we brought people who would be able to handle it.”

Most small bands worked in their merch booths themselves for at least part of the day, although there was one all-male band that left their merch tent under the sole direction of their (very attractive) girlfriends. The underlying assumption was that it was easier for musicians to make the sales themselves because audience members were more likely to relate to them. One singer/guitarist told me, “Sometimes it is just easier for me to sell shit than for (their tour support). Kids want to meet the band, or maybe they just don’t want to tell me that I fucking suck to my face.”

Smaller bands faced obvious challenges to selling merchandise because they were not known outside of their home regions. Large bands not only had greater name recognition, but also were allotted better locations on the venue grounds to set up their merch tents. All bands on the tour were given some sort of space within which to promote their wares. Most were allowed to erect open sided tents, within which they would set up long tables to display their merchandise and which also provided much needed shade. The most unfortunate small bands were those on the Hot Topic stage who were forced to share a single tent within which they were only allotted one square foot of table space. The spatial layout of the tour changed depending on the venue, and there were no constants other than the relative arrangement of merch tents. Regardless of the

venue, the man in charge of assigning tent spots always put the larger acts together in the best locations, those that were the farthest away from any of the stages. Small bands were relegated to the less desirable locations, either on the fringes of the venue where only the bored and lost wandered, or in spaces right next to stages where it was difficult to conduct business over the roar coming from the speakers.

The ability to be heard was crucial as for these small bands since selling was a proactive endeavor. Large bands could afford to have someone else set up and man their booth while they spent most of the day backstage. If their name recognition was high enough their fans would seek them out in order to buy albums and t-shirts. Small bands never had that luxury even when playing in their home state. They often employed bullhorns and high-powered water guns in attempts to entice audience members over to their booths. In the absence of such technology they would resort to yelling and wildly exaggerated gesturing.

Being proactive was vital as most the audience would not have heard a small band's music before. The odds of a randomly selected audience member having seen their set tended to be small for two reasons. First, the bands were only allowed to play for 30 minutes, and second, the smaller bands were scheduled to play at the same time that larger more popular acts were performing on the main stages. If a small unsigned punk band was playing the SmartPunk stage at the same time that Bad Religion was playing on main stage they were not likely to be performing in front of a very large audience. Therefore playing their band's CD was an important component of making a sale. Every small band on the tour had at least one portable CD player with headphones

that was used to play their music for potential customers. The vast majority of the larger bands, even those with recently released albums, did not need to employ this tactic.

Small bands attempted to make sales both from their merch tents and while walking around on the grounds of the venue. While a large number of small bands employed the ‘wandering salesman’ technique, none of the large bands did as it was not necessary for them. The wanderer’s job was to walk amongst the audience when they were waiting in line before the gates opened, or on the tour grounds during the day. They would then strike up conversations with audience members and attempt to convince them to make a purchase. The wanderers usually only sold CDs for simplicity’s sake, and they would carry portable CD players in order to give potential customers a free preview. Not all members of bands or tour support would work as wanderers. This position tended to be reserved for those who were the most gregarious or the best looking as this tended to be the most difficult way to sell. One young woman who was brought along for the sole purpose of being a wanderer complained to me about her work. “This is so much harder than I thought it would be...I thought I would just shake my ass and people would buy stuff but...these kids are (harder to sell to) than I thought.”

The small bands on Warped Tour employed a variety of tactics in order to try and maximize their sales. While the locations where sales were made might differ, the strategies used in making sales were very similar. Bands would use (a) their own subcultural capital, (b) challenges to audience member’s genre affiliation, (c) gimmicks and/or (d) outright lies in order to boost their ability to make sales. These strategies stand in contrast to the anti-commercial ideals that so many of these musicians espouse, but in light of the working conditions on the tour they are not left with many other options.

The first step in attempting to convince an audience member to purchase a band's CD or apparel was to get them talk to the salesperson. This meant convincing a passerby to stop at a band's merch booth or engaging them in conversation out on the venue grounds. This could be very difficult, and it was not uncommon to see audience members making rude remarks or completely ignoring the members of small bands who would try to talk to them. One young woman who was employed as a wanderer attempted to talk to a young man who rebuffed her advances only to later return and throw a rock at her. I myself experienced a milder form of audience abuse when a pre-teen boy walked by the merch tent I was sitting under and screamed "Slut" while he threw a condom at me. While many audience members were impressed by anyone who was with the tour, others needed slightly more convincing that the bands in question were worthy of their attention.

One of the easiest and most common ways to establish credibility was through the display of "subcultural capital". Subcultural capital refers to the possession of either knowledge or commodities that mark the owner as belonging to a particular group. This form of capital serves to not only create boundaries between those on the 'inside' versus the 'mainstream', but also to establish hierarchies within a group (Thornton 1995). Embodied subcultural capital was displayed by all of the small band members and their tour support in blatant attempts to connect with the audience.

While it is true that most of the musicians on the tour already embodied their subgenre's stylistic norms, they went out of their way to flaunt them on tour as much as possible when attempting to make sales. Heavily tattooed men would often take off their shirts before setting out to attract customers and would be observed putting their clothes

back on once they were done. The drummer from the band that interviewed potential ‘merch girls’ told me of one who was ultimately chosen, “Her face is ‘busted’ but she’s covered in tattoos.” Their other salesperson was chosen because she had “emo hair” and multiple piercings. It was also not unusual to see musicians sitting in their tents sweltering in leather jackets or combat boots, articles which were usually removed once they were out of sight of their potential customers.

Musicians who were attempting to make sales would also often subtly challenge audience member’s knowledge of, and commitment to, their subgenre. For example if someone walked by wearing a t-shirt of another band from within the same type of music they would call out something to the effect of “Hey! If you like (name of band on shirt) then you have got to check this band out!” While this certainly did not guarantee that the fan in question would also like the small band, they could usually be enticed to come over and listen as to not do so could be taken as a sign that they did not actually listen to the type of music they were advertising on their clothing. There was a female singer who would yell out “Do you like girl bands?” to all the female audience members who passed her booth. She made many sales to other young women who would buy her album simply to support a female musician.

A similar process would take place when musicians would challenge audience members’ commitment to genre ideals. They would often emphasize the fact that they were unsigned, were not played on the radio, had recorded/released their albums themselves or wrote all of their own material. Audience members who were eager to advertise their own commitment to the genre’s ideological commitment to anti-

commercialism could often be convinced to purchase their CDs without even listening to it first.

When all else failed small bands would resort to the use of gimmicks in their attempts to make sales. Some of the gimmicks veered towards the mundane, such as the 'gift with purchase' where audience members could buy a shirt and get the CD for half price, or buy a CD and get a free sticker. The more flamboyant stunts involved giving away some form of subcultural capital with purchase. For example, one band gave out free "pirate stencils" which were fake tattoos in the design of a skull and crossed swords. They constructed templates out of cardboard and used spray paint to apply them to willing customers' exposed body parts. Another popular gimmick was the "free mohawk with purchase". This band kept a set of battery operated hair clippers in their merch tent, and those who felt so inclined were invited to have their hair shaved off into various designs (with the mohawk being the most popular) but only after purchasing the band's album.

If all else failed, musicians from small bands were not above lying to audience members in order to make sales. Band members frequently created alternate selling personas that they would adopt when talking with potential customers. These roles were constructed for the sole purpose of moving product and the actors engaging in them recognized and admitted to the fact that this was not who they 'really were.' Musicians from small bands and their support personnel would lie to audience members about whether they were in a relationship (usually claiming to be single), their drug or alcohol use (claiming to use more than they did), where they were originally from, how long they had been playing music, and what types of music and bands they listened to among other

things. The band I traveled with was founded by the singer and drummer who are identical twin brothers. The drummer would often claim to be his brother if the person he was talking to seemed more interested in talking to the lead singer. Tour support personnel were often encouraged to lie about their status as well, and would tell customers that they were in the band. Once young woman laughingly told me that she would convince listeners that she was the singer in the band she was selling for, even though their singer was male. She told me that, inexplicably, it worked often, especially with female audience members.

Another band on the tour had incurred major debt by choosing to rent space on a tour bus instead of driving their own van. Their merch booth was manned by the girlfriends of several of the members who placed a large donations jar on their table. Attached to the front, under the glaring headline "Save Cuddles the Kitten" was a hand written sob story detailing the various ailments Cuddles was currently suffering from, which included a missing limb. The sign reassured audience members that all the proceeds would go to providing Cuddles with the veterinary care she needed to ensure her survival, as without medical intervention she was certain to die. Upon being asked about the alleged Cuddles, the young women readily admitted to me that it was a lie, but that it worked because "Nobody wants to donate money to a band, but everybody loves kittens!" Their hypothesis appeared to be true as their jar was full of crumpled bills.

Small bands went to extreme measures on Warped Tour in order to ensure that they were able to make sales and continue on the tour. The fact that their selling strategies were so intricately planned and were discussed everyday serves as an indication that these musicians were very concerned with their economic standing on the tour.

Bands would perform on-stage for 30 minutes each day, but would devote between 6 and 8 hours a day to making sales. Their economic performances were more time consuming than their musical performances, and took up a disproportionate amount of their energy in addition to their time. Regardless of how committed these musicians were to their music and the ideal of art over commerce, the reality of the Warped Tour forced them to arrange their work behavior in ways that did not reflect their ‘true’ priorities.

Conclusion

Previous research has suggested that the work behaviors of musicians are guided by their ideologies about work. In this paper I have proposed that under certain circumstances the working conditions musicians are in create an environment in which the enactment of their work ideologies becomes difficult to achieve. In these situations musicians may adapt their working behaviors in ways that do not align with their ideological stance on musical work.

While the bands on Warped Tour can be defined as belonging to different genres such as punk, emo, goth and metal, for the purposes of this study it is possible to subsume them all under the ‘rock’ umbrella. All of the subgenres present on Warped exhibit a common ideology about their genre and about musical work. They all share a common emphasis on the importance of fashion as a marked of genre affiliation, as well as self-definitions that construct members in opposition to the ‘mainstream’. Lastly and most importantly, all of the subgenres on Warped share an ideological stance towards economic success that values the creation of music over monetary gains.

While many of the small bands on Warped are involved in music for reasons other than money and none of them expect to strike it rich while on the tour, they still need to be making a lot of cash in order to remain on Warped. The structure of the tour makes it harder for small bands due to a variety of factors. The scheduling of dates disadvantages small bands because they cannot afford drivers and are unable to arrange for time off in places where they could eat, sleep, or do laundry for free. The lack of amenities such as catering, water, and ice, particularly in light of what large bands are given, results in small bands paying considerably more out of pocket for necessities. Lastly the pay structure of the tour provides compensation for the big acts but not for small bands.

Because the costs of being on the Warped Tour are so high, selling merchandise becomes very important to small bands on the tour. They must then develop strategies to compensate for the fact that most of the audience members will be unfamiliar with them and their music. Bands employ a variety of tactics to overcome these limitations including using their subcultural bodily capital, subtly challenging the genre affiliation of audience members, using gimmicks, and lying to make sales.

It is reasonable to question why small bands are willing to endure such hardship when it goes against their ideological stances about music. While the motivations for beginning a musical career are varied (and may include such hedonistic motivations as sex and the search for “coolness”), the reasons bands want to go on Warped are not. They endure the hardship because they think it will help their careers. The current state of the music industry has resulted in record labels becoming more and more afraid of signing new artists that are not proven hit-makers. Record sales are down across a variety of genres and digital downloads have changed the landscape in ways that are not

yet fully understood. Labels do not want to sign bands that they do not think will be able to get exposure and make money (Peterson & Berger 1975; Ahlkvist & Faulkner 2002; Wikstrom 2005). Small bands believe that being on Warped Tour will help them in their attempts to get signed (either for the first time or with a better deal) through increased visibility, increased contacts, and increased sales. As incredible as it may sound, there were small bands on Warped Tour who had financed not only the recording, production and manufacturing of their own albums but had then paid out of their own funds for SoundScan so that they could establish a record of how many albums they sold. While these musicians may not have been aiming for fame and fortune they were realistic enough to know that it can difficult to sustain one's self as a performing musician without a record deal. They may have believed that focusing on economics and sales while on Warped would allow them the freedom to focus solely on their music at some point in the future.

This study has examined how the working conditions on the Warped Tour impact the actions of musicians in small bands. While it is beyond the scope of this particular project to fully analyze how these working conditions impact the identity performances and ideology of the actors and their musical genres, there is evidence that this may be the case. Further research is needed to explore working conditions for bands both in other working environments and at other stages in their careers in order to create a more nuanced understanding of how this process might take place.

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