"A Different Starting Place": DIY festival cycles as queer feminist music scenes

by

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Abstract

Although music scholarship has addressed queer topics in the past, a focus on lived experiences and community interactions has been notably absent in the literature. This work considers some of the challenges that may be inhibiting the emergence of a queer focus for fieldwork-based music studies: the tendency to read queer subjects in exclusively comparative ways—such as in relation to their contemporary non-queer subjects and environments—or through specific unrelated venues or events.

As a remedy, I suggest that ethnomusicological methods may benefit from understanding queer musical practices as rooted in ongoing queer cultural production, an optic which is both historically informed and inwardly focused toward queer communities. Drawing on and expanding concepts from popular music studies, queer *scenes* are introduced and extended as queer *cycles*, connecting musical activities across geographic locations (*translocal*) and across time (*transtemporal*). The discussion then uses this type of inquiry in its reading of three music-focused queer feminist scenes between 1976 and 2016, including Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, Riot Grrrl, and Ladyfest, to explore this history from both linear and non-linear perspectives.

An in-depth look at one translocal queer feminist music festival scene, called Not Enough, comprises the core of my ethnographic research, providing a sense of how a scene-based approach to queer music can support ethnographic studies. Founded in Portland, Oregon where seven consecutive festivals were

staged (2010-2016), Not Enough festivals spread in later years to New Orleans (2013-2014), Winnipeg (2013), and Edmonton (2015-2016). I show how Not Enough festivals negotiate their unique festival identity while still retaining core elements that closely associate them with other queer feminist scenes, and apply the previously introduced framework to do so, using material collected from interviews and participant observation, as well as archival and previously published resources. Finally, I argue that an examination of the ends of festivals, not previously considered significant in the literature, are crucial for understanding the larger cycle of queer feminist music scenes. This discussion highlights the complexities of lived experience and the elements of cultural history that are so key to ethnomusicological approaches, but which have been lacking in much of the music scholarship on queer scenes to date.

Preface

This thesis is an original work by Cynthia Corinne Boucher. The research project, of which this thesis is a part, received research ethics approval from the University of Alberta Research Ethics Board, Project Name "Making Space: an ethnographic study of Not Enough festivals", No. Pro00067791, January 19, 2017.

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I am privileged to have enduring friendships with some endlessly supportive, wildly creative, and unquestionably brilliant people. This past year was both challenging and exciting, a whirlwind that, without the support of this chosen family, I would have surely failed. I am so lucky to have such a wealth of love and support.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

From Audience to Elusive Moose

Elusive Moose is a folk music group that came together just weeks before the 2016 Not Enough Fest Edmonton, a music festival for women, queer, and transgender people. In the group's performances, harp, mandolin, electric bass, and guitar support haunting three-part vocal harmonies or playful lilting melodies. Their first performance—May 22, 2016, at the second Not Enough Fest Edmonton—delivered deeply personal lyrics brought by the mandolin player and harpist and reshaped musically by the group with just two all-members rehearsals before the first performance. Elusive Moose members had varied levels of previous musical experience. Tasmia Nishat, the group's bass player, had only picked up her instrument—her first instrument ever—a couple of months prior. Not Enough Fest Edmonton was her first time on stage as a musician; she played to a crowd of more than 300 listeners.

A freelance writer and frequent traveler, Nishat said that she had always been interested in getting into music but for many reasons found herself sitting out or in the audience. In her elementary school years, she was turned off of joining the school band because of a $50 entry fee. Later, the lack of elementary band experience disqualified her from joining the school bands in junior high and early high school. After switching schools, Nishat tried to pursue the formal band program again but was never able to attend. In 2015, a friend told her about Not

Enough Fest Edmonton, followed by another friend who mentioned she was a Not Enough Fest volunteer. Nishat was interested. At the last minute, she decided to head to the last of several "Instrument 101" workshops offered by the festival months in advance of the final event.

For Nishat, and others new to Not Enough, that workshop would have been a first introduction to the festival's unique model. The DIY, volunteer-run event was actually a series of meetup and workshop events, fundraisers, and skillshares all aimed at moving women, queer, and trans people from the audience to the stage, regardless of their level of musical experience. The introductory workshop Nishat attended was a beginner's bass workshop. At first, she was unsure about attending—she wasn't a bass player yet, she didn't even own an instrument to learn on. But the bass was an appealing entry to the world of music and Not Enough Fest organizers put an emphasis on experimentation and breaking down the idea that stage musicians need to be polished and perfect:

> And it was really cool because without much training you could make the bass sound really good. So, that was really appealing… I maybe would have thought I would have to become good at music before I could join. Like become a perfect bass player before I can go in a band. Whereas, [at Not Enough Fest] it's learn as you go. Which I think is a great philosophy.…at that point, I was like, OK, I do want to join. (Tasmia Nishat, personal communication, June 19, 2017)

Nishat decided she wanted to perform. The next step would be attending one of the "Meet Your Band" events hosted around the city. Festival organizers brought people together and engaged them in a variety of musical and non-

musical ice breakers, getting people talking about what kind of music they wanted to play, their experience levels, and practical details like scheduling. Once again, Nishat missed out when she wasn't able to attend these events due to scheduling conflicts. She tried inviting a friend to form a band with her for the festival, but after initially agreeing the friend became unavailable. At that point, Nishat was ready to sit out for the festival: "I guess that sucks, but that's life," she said (Tasmia Nishat, personal communication, June 19, 2017). Luckily for Nishat, Not Enough Fest wasn't about being at all the workshops or hitting the predetermined milestones. These things are there for people who need them. When Nishat found out she could still form a band without doing so through festival events, she renewed her efforts. She ended up in contact with the mandolin player through a Facebook post. Her friend, the harpist, suddenly became available again. The harpist knew a guitarist who was welcomed into the group just two rehearsals before the show. So, in May 2016, the group performed their first show as Elusive Moose.

In describing her efforts to gain musical experience before and after Not Enough Fest, Nishat highlighted the ways that her festival involvement shifted her perspective about what it means to be a musician, play in a band, and perform on stage. She told me:

> I feel like a lot of people have barriers in their mind of like "Oh, I'm not a musician, it's kind of a cool thing, but that's not me." So it's kind of like opening the door and saying, "it can be you." They kind of brought down the barriers: mental barriers, physical barriers, perhaps financial barriers. And they just made it so that

people could see themselves as musicians. (Tasmia Nishat, personal communication, June 19, 2017)

Whereas before the festival, Nishat tried to access music through formalized programs—public school band classes and the more formalized aspects of the Not Enough Fest program—afterwards, her understanding of being part of a band was much more flexible. Elusive Moose started practicing for open mic shows in its original four-piece form. The harp player left the ensemble and the band continued with just three members, performing a local festival with just four days' notice. Soon after, Elusive Moose secured a festival gig at the Heart of the City Music and Arts Festival, a long-running outdoor family event that is staged annually in Giovanni Caboto Park, in Edmonton's Italian district. It wasn't until the last minute (again) that they found out they would be performing, and it turned out the mandolin player would not be available. So they called on the guitarist's sister to join in and the three took the stage. Elusive Moose was now a completely different configuration than it had been just weeks prior. When we spoke, Nishat said she now planned to pursue music in whatever form possible. Just a year after her first performance, Elusive Moose was performing open mics and Nishat was learning to play the violin. She said that even without a formal band, she would always continue to pursue musical experiences on her own.

(Queer) Music Festivals

This work, at its heart, delves into the ways that ethnomusicologists have or have not addressed real-world queer and feminist musical practices, and the ways that attention to a story like Tasmia Nishat's could ground future theory in lived musical experience. Although festival studies is not my primary area of interest, most of my ethnographic, archival, and textual examples are drawn from music festivals. Emerging from my analysis of these festival examples are some insights that may contribute to a different understanding of music festivals, their meanings, and their relationship to other festivals or cultural/community activities.

David Harnish (2006) has noted that music festivals, as a subject/object of inquiry tend not to be a focus in ethnomusicology. Instead, the work in anthropology and folklore studies has positioned festivals into one or the other of two broad and not entirely distinct "camps." The first "defines festival as cultural representation revealing deeply help ethos and belief" (Harnish, 2006, p. 16). For example, anthropologist Karen Avenburg (2012) has explored the ways that the local Virgen del Rosaria fiesta, in Iruya, Argentina, offers an opportunity for "communalization," or the renewal of "a notion of local identity." It brings people together in preparatory activities and, in performance, "condenses various historical moments of the community," including its origin legend, rooted in both cultural and religious local histories that may date to a pre-Columbian era (138). Works examining the cultural representations or the identity-shaping aspects of

festival can also be found in ethnomusicology. One local example is Marcia Ostashewski's (2009) detailed study of Ukrainian festival traditions in Vegreville, Alberta. Her study focuses on the way that relatively recently developed traditions are "(re)presented" as a "timeless Ukrainian culture" in the construction of a "distinct Ukrainian ethnically defined Canadian identity" (2009, p. 650) that is cherished and celebrated.

The second camp of festival literature identified by Harnish is one that "views [festival] as public display mediating cultural or subaltern expressions or identities that may be ethnic, sexual, political, or any combination of these" (2006, p. 16). Research out of popular music studies most clearly exemplifies this festival grouping. For example, Simon Frith and John Street's (Frith & Street, 1992) comparison of two "awareness raising concerts," Rock Against Racism and Red Wedge, fall firmly into this group because the festivals discussed have prioritized their political aims. Popular music studies has also been the discipline most likely to address the smaller and non-commercial music festivals. Some of the scholarly work directly related to the individual, largely non-commercial festivals discussed below would fall into this latter festival category. For example, Elizabeth Keenan's discussion of the politics surrounding the first Ladyfest (2000)—a punk and indie music festival in Olympia, Washington, that prioritized women's participation—positions the festival, as well as the dozens of subsequent Ladyfest festivals around the world, as (attempted) mediators of feminine identity and expression; Bonnie Morris frames the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival as

a site for the production and expression of women's experience (Morris, 1998); and Chelsea Starr explores the ways conventions became one of the "art worlds" for segmenting Riot Grrrl as a "feminist subgenre" of punk (Starr, 2000, p. 43).

Of course, there is no real hard line between the two festival types. Yet, illustrating this tendency does help to outline the place where my work here will contribute to the existing festival literature. After introducing the framework, Harnish (2006) almost immediately challenges the dichotomy between a perceived old-world-culture type festival and those that are constructed around more recent social or political positions. He does so through a discussion of the ways that the Lingsar festival, a temple complex festival in Lombok, Indonesia, fails to fit clearly into its cultural representation "camp." The tendency for authors to take a cultural-representation festival and show its function for modern political or social ends is a common turn. Marcia Ostashewski's (2009) work, for example, explores both current practice and recent history from socio-political perspectives. But the reverse is less common: authors rarely seem to look for elements that may be rooted in an older cultural history when examining music festivals that focus on popular musics or more recent social and political subject positions.

This closely parallels a similar problem in the way that music scholars have approached queer topics, which I discuss at length in Chapter 2. For example, although the literature on feminist festivals cited above may touch on connections between festivals (Keenan, for example, briefly connects Riot Grrrl to Ladyfest), all studies inevitably focus on the time, place, and contemporary

perspectives of the primary event under discussion. This gives the sense that these queer and feminist musical activities are naturally aligned with the social and political grouping of festivals, lacking in any rich cultural history. It can sometimes make the festivals seem like isolated events, marked as brief displays rather than as part of an ongoing set of repeated, changing, and overlapping expressions of a deeply felt identity. In the chapters that follow, my discussion of queer feminist history and musical practice will explore how music festivals that seemingly slot into the contemporary festival category might also be viewed (with great value) through a more historically or culturally connected lens, blurring some of the lines between cultural representation festivals and those festival realms for comparatively contemporary social and political expressions.

Old or New: What is Not Enough?

The philosophy of Not Enough is not something that has been particularly well defined by organizers, volunteers, or performers associated with the festival. Different people take the words to have different meanings. For Nishat, it seems like her world was lacking in examples of how women of colour can become musicians without using formalized structures. The "not enough" perhaps applied to her lack of opportunities to try out instruments, to access free learning opportunities, or to learn that good music could be made with only a small amount of musical knowledge and skills. For Sheana Corbridge, one of the original founders of the first (2010) Not Enough festival in Portland, it was a lack

of queer bands in her local community. For Kendra Cowley and Stephanie Olsen, organizers of consecutive festivals in Edmonton (2015 and 2016), it was a lack of opportunities for women, queer and trans people to learn instruments and meet other women, queer and trans people to form bands with. "Not Enough" can take dozens of forms: not enough representative bands, venues who will book diverse shows, opportunities to meet diverse musicians, opportunities to try instruments, opportunities to perform as a non-professional, opportunities to experiment freely, and most of all, not enough opportunities to participate in music in ways and environments that are identity-affirming, welcoming, and not intimidating.

More often than not, the rhetoric about what there is *not enough of* is expressed by festival participants in terms of barriers to access. It is a barrier that queer people do not see themselves represented in the media, for example. Or that those representations are somehow lacking—they are stereotypes or fail to reflect the diversity of queer feminist communities. It is a barrier to have to pay to see live bands that include performers who are representative of your identity, or for a babysitter if you want to see a live music show. It is a barrier to youth that the popular music scene centers around bars and clubs that they cannot access until they reach the legal age for the sale of alcohol.

Broadly, I think "Not Enough" encapsulates a particular set of assumptions about how and when queer people and women can access musical activities as practitioners. These ideas limit women, queer and trans people's ability and willingness to become musicians; they may also limit others'

willingness to accept women, queer, and trans people as legitimate musicians.

This creates what is perceived as a cycle of exclusion: women, queer and trans

people have access to musical communities,[1] don't get the right skills, such as a

basic level of knowledge for playing instruments or using music technology.[2] In

many cases, this perceived lack of musical competence "justifies" their exclusion,

which creates challenges to identity-affirming musical participation, which limits

representation and future access. Unable to see themselves, or their identities, in

the music around them, women, queer and trans people don't—or can't—pursue

the right skills. At this point, the cycle begins anew. Of course it's not as straight

forward as that in practice, which is precisely why challenging the structure is

difficult. One breakthrough performance (say, just one successful trans-led band)

comes to represent progress even though the structural problem is left

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[1]Although no research is available that supports organizer and participant claims with regard to access limitations for musical communities, there is ample research supporting the idea that queer people, particularly transgender people, experience many more barriers generally in life, including challenges related to housing (Durso & Gates, 2012; Esses, 2008; Sakamoto, Chin, Chapra, & Ricciardi, 2009), employment (Barclay & Scott, 2006), health care (G. R. Bauer et al., 2009; G. Bauer, Scheim, & for the Trans PULSE Project Team, 2015; James-Abra et al., 2015; Pyne, 2012), and a fear of public spaces (G. Bauer et al., 2015), to name but a few, which would likely impact their ability to participate in arts activities, including music.

[2] Similarly, there is a lack of research pointing specifically to the claim that women and queer people experience more barriers to learning pop instruments. However, there is some scholarly work that addresses male dominance in popular music. Smith et. al. (2018) recently showed that since 2013, 90.7% of Grammy nominees were men and that among Billboard Hot 100 end of year charts 2012-2017, the ratio of men to women was approximately 4.9 to 1 (6).

unaddressed. Not Enough festivals are about breaking this cycle, taking a different route, and providing a queer feminist musical culture for queer feminist communities, outside of the mainstream altogether.

While the term "Not Enough" applies most explicitly to the festivals that bear that particular name, the concept in itself, as it applies to women and queer people, and to some degree transgender people, is not new. Queer feminist communities have a long history of turning away from mainstream music, from which they are consistently (and often systemically) excluded, looking inward for their own modes of cultural production. One element of this project is to more explicitly highlight this history to connect the queer feminist music communities of today with those of the past. The relationships between eras are more tangible and important than current scholarship would suggest.

I want to highlight this process because when reading scholarly analysis of queer subjects and subjectivities, I am often struck by how isolated and disconnected they seem from each other, and from my daily experience as a queer individual. This inward turn is always described as reactionary: queer women create their own space *in response to* their exclusion from the mainstream. This focus on resistance or countercultural perspectives is common in queer cultural studies (e.g., Ingram, 1993) and popular music studies (e.g., Sakolsky & Ho, 1995), and dominates the discourse around women and queers in pop (e.g., Ciminelli & Knox, 2005; Downes, 2009; Oden, 2011; Rauzier, 2012). This type of narrative is useful because it can highlight an important function for music in a

particular scene, or its utility in effecting certain social or political change. While I definitely have always agreed that the reactionary viewpoint plays a large role in the creation of separatist spaces, I also find the antagonistic attitudes implied in reactionary narratives somewhat reductive (I explore this further in Chapter 3). I am interested in challenging (or perhaps finding a complement to) the "resistance narrative" given—by scholars or participants—to movements like Riot Grrrl. I have also seen another side: queer feminist spaces are those where queer-identified people create things for one another as part as an ongoing artistic expression of shared identity, which can also be, but is not always reactionary in nature. My own Not Enough mission is that I want more scholarship that reflects a queer-centered perspective for queer music. For me, the value of this work is rooted in a desire firstly, to recognize my own musical experiences and the things I observe in my community, and secondly to have these reflected in my discipline's discussion of queerness. To expect anything less would, I think, be a disservice to both the discipline and its interlocutors—which of course includes queer and feminist musicians.

That I do not feel my own experiences reflected in ethnomusicology is largely because, as I show in the next chapter, queer subjects have been sorely lacking from the discipline. There is simply not enough study happening around the everyday musical production of queer people. To my knowledge, no authors have even commented on this gap. I think the gap itself deserves significant attention. What is it about queerness that is so difficult to access within this

discipline? How might we go about tentatively dipping our toes in to the waters of queer studies, especially through fieldwork with queer people conducted in ways that validate both the current practices and the cultural histories from which they emerge?

Overview of Chapters

This work will begin to address some of the challenges for queer ethnomusicology, exploring some of the ways that existing methods and concepts might be applied in a queer context. In Chapter 2, I take a closer look at what little discussion of a queer subdiscipline has emerged within ethnomusicology, as well as some of the related work in anthropology that might help to inform an approach in music. I go on to explore some of the challenges that I envision for the emergence of a more robust body of queer fieldwork and introduce some of the key concepts that I will address throughout the work.

In Chapter 3, I introduce festivals—including the four specific festival groups from which I draw examples throughout this work (Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, Riot Grrrl, Ladyfest, and Not Enough Fest) as a lens through which we can begin to explore the history and current practices of queer feminist musical communities. The festivals represent an intense period of expression but are also tangled up with other messaging in missions, media, and community discussions. Paying attention to the broader discourse can help to draw out some larger concepts about how we can articulate the intuitive connections between

chronologically and geographically separate queer feminist activities. In the past, this sort of analysis has sometimes been conducted through a "subcultural" lens. Addressing this in Chapter 3, I critique this approach and compare it to the concept of "scene," which has been increasingly used by popular music scholars in place of cultural and subcultural narratives. However, departing from the current scene scholarship, I propose that scenes can be understood as interrelated, operating at a high-level as cycles of change connected via key cultural concepts and practices.

Drawing on texts and interviews with festival organizers, Chapter 4 points to some common elements among queer feminist festivals over time, suggesting that a few core concepts and practices are shared among many dozens or hundreds of different festivals. Here, I introduce a five-part framework that might help scholars to describe a queer feminist scene in a non-linear way that is both historically informed and observable in an ethnographic setting. I demonstrate the ways that the framework elements can be identified in, and why they are meaningful to, three of the festival examples introduced in the previous chapter (Chapter 3).

I take a closer, ethnographically-informed look at Not Enough festivals in Chapter 5, discussing the ways that this set of festivals aligns with and reinterprets the past in an ongoing negotiation about how queer feminist communities are represented through musical events. This chapter draws on the core elements presented in Chapter 4 to show how musical and visual references can make

explicit statements about how one festival aligns socially and politically with another while still maintaining the core relationship.

Finally, Chapter 6 addresses how a more thoughtful consideration of festival endings and closures can aid our understanding of an ongoing queer feminist musical scene. This examination of the endings of festival is both a new contribution to festival scholarship and a necessary element for drawing together the diverse events and concepts discussed in this work in more practical ways. It shows how both practice and ideological shifts can contribute to changes in the ways that specific events are created and maintained over time. It is not a single factor that ends a festival or slows interest in a scene but rather many competing factors that may be practical, personal, political, or ideological. Yet, at the same time, that ebbing is necessary to the cycle: it creates a gap (a sense of "not enough," perhaps) that will eventually pass to community organizers, musically inclined, who will fill it in different and creative ways.

Chapter 2: Queer Ethnomusicology – Not a Thing Yet

Queers: The Word

One of my primary interests in this work is to contribute to the field of queer or LGBTQ+ ethnomusicology, both by examining what musicologists and ethnomusicologists have already produced on queer topics and by looking for space within this existing work where we can reimagine what an LGBTQ+ ethnomusicology could look like—based on real-world experiences. What does it mean to say you are conducting LGBTQ+ or queer ethnomusicology? In what ways can we take this topic beyond queer text or abstracted queer subjects to include a wider variety to queer experiences, including those not readily read as queer via their difference from the mainstream status quo?

As a focus for this discussion, the latter part of this work takes up radical queer feminist music festivals, their participants and their histories, to demonstrate the life cycles of events and festivals' relationships both to each other and to elements of social and political life. Through this discussion, it will become clear that queer histories overlap and intertwine with feminist histories. Queer histories often begin within feminist narratives and are dependent on them—philosophically, socially, and sometimes even economically—for ongoing support. This is particularly true for histories focusing on the experiences of women. However, not all of the women I discuss would have identified with the word *queer*. In the 1970s, the women who attended the Michigan Womyn's

Music Festival and other women's music festivals commonly referred to themselves as "lesbian," "lesbian-feminist," "woman-identified," "womon," "womyn," or "wimin." The separatist feminisms at this time were meant not not to giving primacy to sexuality,[3] but rather, to frame the building of isolated lesbian worlds as a way to "create entirely new institutions and shape women's culture" apart from patriarchal society (Faderman, 1991, p. 216). *Queer* is the language used in Not Enough festivals in 2009-2016. In discussing the scenes and cycles chronologically back to the 1970s, I continue to apply the word *queer* to LGBTQ+ people—even to those who were more likely to identify with words like *womon* or *lesbian*—in order to maintain the conceptual connection (discussed at length in Chapter 3) between the two time periods. Similarly, definitions of feminism have changed over time. When I reference a *feminist activity* or *feminist narratives* (or similar), unless I am specifically pointing to a feminist wave, I mean activities and narratives that are aimed broadly at creating awareness about and increasing women's position with regard to social, economic, and political power.

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[3] Some women at the time felt that the notion of lesbianism could only exist in a patriarchal environment. They understood the term *lesbian* as one of the ways that men have "divided up humanity" (Radicalesbians, 1970, p. 397). The word was viewed as a way to dehumanize women as unable to adhere to the role of a "real woman" who identifies with a man's "power, his ego, his status, [and] his protection" (p. 397). Instead, women were called to develop a new identity: "That identity we have to develop with reference to ourselves, and not in relation to men" (p. 399).

Although historically the language around queerness and feminism varies, a key unifying element here is regarding what it means to be a woman: lesbians are also women; some trans people are women; some non-binary people have female bodies and experience negative consequences rooted in misogyny. The reality of experience for people who are both queer and women is that these elements cannot be wholly separated from one another. Coined in 1991 to describe the overlapping of racial and gendered experiences of women of colour (Crenshaw, 1991), the term "intersectional" is now widely used to express the ways that "overlapping systems of subordination" (Crenshaw, 1991, p. 1265)—those related to the marginalization of people based on race, class, gender, ability, etc.—are interrelated. It is, for example, challenging to talk about race in Canada without also talking about class, and to consider one without the other changes our understanding of the topics. So, when we talk about lesbian history, trans history, non-binary history, or the history of female bodies, we are also necessarily talking about women's history. At the same time, women's history is not always lesbian history or transwomen's history. It is in those differences that we find an opportunity to draw out a queer subject matter more fully, to see how queer experiences build on but may be separate from gendered experiences. Feminist thought has heavily influenced queer theory, LGBTQ+ studies, and many of the daily or community activities of LGBTQ+ people. Further, I feel that of the feminism-derived focus on non- and anti-normative genders and sexual identities could also be read through queer theoretical perspectives without much

compromise—the philosophies seem often to work in tandem. Because of this close relationship, this study might help to bridge the gap between feminist and queer ethnomusicological scholarship, particularly by expanding discussions beyond lesbian and gay subjects—such as those in pivotal volumes like *Sexing the Groove* (Whiteley, 1997), and *Queering the Popular Pitch* (Whiteley & Rycenga, 2006)—into areas that have received less attention from scholars and which have been less directly associated with feminist work. From my perspective, the greatest potential here is to incorporate a wide queer lens that includes trans, bisexual, non-binary, and/or pansexual people.

Because of the particular LGBTQ+ and women's music festivals I have chosen for this study, I am largely addressing musicians and audiences who are female bodied and/or female identified. My choice of examples was largely shaped by my ethnographic work with Not Enough festivals and festival organizers. Because I was working with a festival for women, queer, and trans people, I wanted to ensure my historical and theoretical analysis tied in conceptually with this identity focus. Further, I feel the examples are both accessible and challenging for the theoretical issues I hope to address. Add to that the historical division of LGBTQ+ communities along lines of gender and sexuality: for example, gay men and lesbian women have historically formed social (and often political) circles apart from one other.[4] This division made

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[4] See for example Faderman, 1991; E. L. Kennedy & Davis, 1993. Both document lesbian worlds as subcultures distinct from those of men.

women's only spaces that no doubt influenced the concept of women's music and women's festivals, and means that men are excluded from many of the movements I explore and, therefore, much of my analysis. For this reason, the G in LGBTQ+, as it stands for cisgender gay male identity, is something of a misnomer when applied to this project. At the same time, it would be inaccurate to describe this work as exclusively lesbian, bisexual, and trans. I prefer the umbrella term *queer* for a number of reasons. Firstly, as a woman who identifies as *queer* specifically (and not lesbian, though I may shortcut to this label with acquaintances when I want to convey queerness without pesky identity questions), I like this word because it reflects who I am. Part of that reflection is in the way I feel connected to all parts of the LGBTQQ2SAI[5] "alphabet soup" of identities. I understand my difference in terms of gender and sexuality but I also perceive that something about my identity bridges the historical gay/straight, cis/trans, man/woman binaries. *Queer* breaks down these binaries and offers a spectrum of possible identities (not necessarily situated between any two poles). It offers space for those who are questioning. It offers space for those willing heterosexual and cisgender people to imagine themselves as part of something other than a set of binary possibilities, and to better understand, and hopefully work against, gender and sexual conformity even as their experiences conform to dominant narratives.

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[5] There are many variations of this acronym. This is a more comprehensive version, which reads: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Two-Spirit, Asexual/Agender, and Intersex. I use LGBTQ, adding a + to the end to reference other associated identities.

Queer is inclusive, critical of segmentation of the community along these lines, and better reflects that many of the fractures are conceptual, rather than reflections of lived experiences. *Queer* provides space for intersectional gender and sexual identities without implying potential exclusion through segregating labels.

To say someone is *queer* is to note their queer difference without being overly specific about bodies and desires. There is opportunity for further definition (queer *woman*, queer *person of colour*, or even *lesbian*, or *trans*), but it is not always necessary. Now especially considering the ever-widening variety of distinctions between identities and orientations, such as those between orientations related to romantic attraction and sexual attraction, non-inclusive labelling is too limited and risks exclusion of community members. Non-inclusive labelling is also misaligned with the philosophies espoused by those involved in the communities with whom I have worked closely for this and other projects (this is most clearly articulated in Chapter 5). The key to the umbrella term *queer* is to remember that it is dynamic and not intended to erase any one identity. I use the term *queer* as much as possible throughout this work, somewhat politically to refer to groups of people, communities, or LGBTQ+ concepts, although I will also employ more specific identity labels where warranted by individuals' or community self-identifications. I will also frequently refer to festivals or activities as *queer feminist* as a way to prioritize the intersectional experiences of individuals, describe the politics often expressed through those activities, and to

acknowledge that many of the examples discussed in what follows were, when they took place, framed as women's activities, rather than as explicitly queer events.

Queer Contributions, Ethnomusicological Contributions

Merely using the word *queer* raises a number of questions about how I will navigate the various theoretical associations of the word. In particular, this word has become closely associated with queer theory, where queer has an academic application distinct from particular genders and sexualities. I will certainly draw on concepts developed in queer theory to discuss some elements of musician's performances and to demonstrate some of the ways that performances can highlight or challenge societal norms. However, I am hesitant to make this a central tenet of my work and aim, instead, for a broader understanding of queerness in music and music in queer communities. This hesitation stems from my sense that such analyses can create expectations for queer musicians that are not justified in ethnographic observations. In many ways, the notion that queer musicians are deconstructing narratives of gender and sexuality is true. Often, it may be deliberate; sometimes, it may not. Sometimes, queer musicians may not appear to challenge dominant narratives at all—a factor that hasn't been explored at all in the current literature. It is in this space, where I as an interpreter cannot deem something queer—or where my queer reading may be reliant on something that is inconsequential to the musician (i.e., where subjective reading is favoured

over ethnographic interrogation)—that queer theory is most in danger of becoming disconnected from the communities and performances it purports to describe.

While valuable and insightful, many analyses of queer subjects in music have been more concerned with difference from the normative than the cultural production of music by and for queer people that interests me most. This persistent focus on the ways performers display resistance against dominant narratives means that scholars are sometimes unable to fully flesh out the relationship between the theorist's "queer music" and the worlds of its practitioners. When studies include no direct input from queer musicians and audiences, analysis can sometimes come to rely on well-worn stereotypes to draw conclusions about the performances of non-normative gender. For example, Chuyun Oh and David Oh, after suggesting that cross-dressing in K-pop has no implication of homosexuality or compromised masculinity in Korea, nevertheless read cross-dressing K-pop performances as "queer," drawing on queer theoretical approaches that equate performed gender differences with "queering" (2017). In a more concerning example of the same approach, David Ensminger writes about a heterosexual punk rocker, Jack Grisham of Tender Fury, as "queering" his performance through "the performative ritual of cross-dressing, of masking the heteronormative rock'n'roll posturing," but then immediately quotes Grisham using a gay slur, noting that Grisham faked his queerness (because he could not handle how many women he had to bed) and cross-dressed to irritate his parents

(2011a, p. 55, 2011b, p. 155).[6] Both examples certainly illustrate the ways that performance can disrupt gender narratives, however such readings separate the performer's identity from the performance, taking both out of a lived queer cultural context. For this reason, I think ethnomusicologists will find the blanket application of a queer theory difficult when trying to do justice to real world communities that include the vibrant variety of musical and personal identities found within the umbrella of queer. For queer theory to contribute to ethnomusicology, it will need to be useful in the context of lived experiences, and not just those of individuals, but those of groups of people and their imagined communities.

Unsurprisingly, the work of grounding queer theory in real-world experiences has been most concentrated in the discipline of anthropology, although not everyone agrees on the impact this work has had for the development of a queer discipline. In her chapter "Queer Anthropology," Cymene Howe (2015) provides an overview of queer anthropology's contribution to her field and suggests that homosexual and homoerotic subjects are only just now emerging as "legitimate" objects of study in anthropology. However, this new "legitimization" does not mean that queer subjects were previously absent from the discipline: anthropology has taken on queer subjects for more than half a

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[6] Also see Shange, 2014, or writing about k.d. lang: Bruzzi, 1997; or Mockus, 1994, which is discussed below)

century, with Ford and Beach's *Patterns of Sexual Behavior* (1951) as the earliest ethnographic example I can identify.

Contrary to Howe's claims, other anthropologists have suggested that lesbian and gay subjects have fallen out of the discipline. They turn the question around: where once it was asked how queer theory can contribute to anthropology, they have instead been raising the question of what contribution anthropology can (again) make for queer areas of study (Graham, 2016). Recently, the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) addressed the question of anthropology's queer contribution given that queer theory has been around for decades (Graham, 2016). The panel participants overwhelmingly pointed toward a need to ground queer theories in ethnographies and real-world accounts of experience. Queer theorists have been criticized for their overemphasis on cultural text and work that often "has little foundation in any kind of empirical work" (Edwards, 1998, p. 473). The EASA panel suggested that anthropology's contribution to the field is that it offers the opportunity to test queer theory in the field or problematize the connections (or disconnections) between theory and practice: ethnography "troubles" academically-defined frames of queerness, such as queer theory and "idioms of intersubjectivity" (2016, p. 370) to shed light on new interpretations and connections. Similarly, I believe that ethnomusicological perspectives offer an opportunity to test queer theories against both "real-world accounts of experience" and the artistic expressions of queer individuals, perhaps providing an opportunity to compare and contrast two sides

of lived queerness: as an identity expressed as part of daily life and as one expressed through more self-consciously constructed artistic representations.

The trend in anthropology has been toward the increased adoption of queer theoretical perspectives. Anthropologist Martin Manalansan (2005) suggests this shift is signaled by the transition from "the language of *homosexuality* to *gay and lesbian* to *queer*" and in renamings such as the Association for Queer Anthropology, for which previous names variously included *homosexuality* and *lesbian and gay* terminology. However, despite considerable cross-overs with this discipline in regard to the study of living cultures, Cheng and Barz (2015) noted a lack of ethnomusicological representation in queer anthropology, pointing to the influential *Out in the Field* (Lewin & Leap, 1996) and *Out in Theory* (Lewin & Leap, 2002) as volumes where more representation from the music discipline would be expected. This criticism could be extended to the third book in what I have come to think of as Lewin and Leap's "out-in-anthropology trilogy," *Out in Public* (2009). Yet this trilogy raises issues that impact the field of queer anthropology, and by extension are also relevant to ethnomusicologists. To mention a few, the volumes address: disclosure and how the researcher's identity is implicated in and impacts the field (Burkhart, 1996; Carrillo, 2009); the history of queer studies in anthropology and how politics and knowledge changed what was considered "objective" research over time (Rubin, 2002); the impact of poverty in queer communities (Maskovsky, 2002); that, in practice, queer subjectivity cannot be a cut and dried

alternative to gay subjectivity (Maskovsky, 2002); and that queer identity might not actually be central to a queer person's identity (Brodkin, 2009).

Many of the works in the Lewin and Leap trilogy walk a line between queer theory and queer cultural studies, partially theoretical and partially imagining queerness as lived experience. Through these volumes, it is easy to see how what they call "lesbian and gay anthropology" has evolved over the past decade and a half. In *Out in the Field*, scholars describe their experiences as gay and lesbian field researchers; they grapple with the challenges of writing about gay and lesbian people. In *Out in Theory*, the scholars begin to shape the discipline: a central goal of the work is to "legitimize the field's scholarship and address issues in terminology…, define lesbian and gay anthropology's scope and subject matter and locate factors that connect it to the wider concerns of the profession" (Lewin & Leap, 2002, p. back cover).

Less than a decade later, *Out in Public* was subtitled *reinventing lesbian/gay anthropology in a globalizing world* (Lewin & Leap, 2009), and the authors were already engaged in reworking the discipline they had just recently established. It is only in this last volume that there is a move away from lesbian and gay toward something that might be queerness, although the editors retain the "lesbian and gay" focus nominally. Here, there are articles about BDSM, rural queer experience, and entire sections of the publication dedicated to the interrogation of various categories: "Part II. Sexual Sameness is not a Self-Evident Terrain," and "Part III. Unpacking the Engagement between Sexuality

and Broader Ideological Positions." Yet, at the same time, many of these works are grounded in real world experiences. For example, Ellen Lewin shows the instability of "gay" as a category, through the lens of the experiences of gay fathers (Lewin, 2009).

In ethnomusicology, we haven't had to have the debate about grounding queer theory in lived experience. This is partly because we haven't had our musical equivalent to *Out in Theory* or *Out in the Field* in ethnomusicology: we have yet to carve out this discipline, its boundaries, its rules, or its "legitimate" subjects. This gap in our discipline is particularly surprising given the now prevalent analytical practices employed by "new musicologists, many of which draw on feminist and queer analytical techniques, including queer theory. It seems that the physical proximity of being housed in the same department does not transfer such philosophies between these sister disciplines. So why then—given that queer theory emerged as a major area of inquiry in a variety of arts and humanities disciplines; that offers the opportunity to ground both cultural and artistic expressions of queerness in real communities; and that scholars were undoubtedly aware of the application of queer theories and tools in music departments across Canada and the United States—haven't we seen the emergence of a queer ethnomusicology?

Challenges in "Queer Ethnomusicology"

The question of why a distinct queer ethnomusicology has yet to emerge is an issue to which I have dedicated significant thought over the past decade or more. Though, like many graduate students, I am constantly finding new material, new authors, new ways of thinking to develop my own views, I have been unable to find any scholarly discussion of this gap in the ethnomusicological literature. However, a lack of attention to fieldwork-based studies of queer music culture is not exclusive to ethnomusicology. Those interested in intersectional approaches to queer music cultures have also noticed the absence of a robust literature on the topic on which to base future studies. For example, Jodie Taylor, writing about media and cultural studies, has noted that "in spite of abundant empirical examples of queer music cultures, subcultural studies scholars have paid minimal attention to queer sexualities and their concomitant stylistic modalities" (Taylor, 2013, p. 194).

In an attempt to address this gap, William Cheng and Gregory Barz created a blog post entitled "Ethnomusicology's Queer Silences," (Cheng & Barz, 2015), as a discussion point around their upcoming edited volume *Queering the Field: Sounding Out Ethnomusicology* (the post appeared on the publisher's blog website).[7] In that post, Cheng and Barz provide the only writing specifically about

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[7] At the time of writing, the work was slated for release in 2019, a delay of 2 years from the original publication date (hence the post and the release date do not align as they originally had—as a sort of teaser for the volume).

a queer ethnomusicology that I have so far been able to identify. As Cheng and Barz, without saying so explicitly, position themselves as the emerging leaders for this underrepresented segment of ethnomusicological study, their brief notes here are worth scrutiny (and also serve as a convenient framework for raising a number of the challenges I envision for the discipline). Because it is unclear whether they are writing about a lack of queer theory or a lack of LGBTQ+ studies or queer studies within the discipline, I have opted to address each issue separately.

The authors point to a lack of queer subjects and topics in the field and fieldwork of ethnomusicology, suggesting this gap may have resulted in part from queer anxieties over marginalization and scholarly pressures that may have "impeded harmonious and ethically sound dialogues about queerness." They write that "in the early 1990s, queer pursuits in musicology encountered predictable resistance and, in some cases, explicit homophobia. Ethnomusicologists mostly stayed out of the brawl." They follow this by suggesting that perhaps "it's because ethnomusicology was in a sense already queer (a disciplinary outsider relative to music history and music theory), and as such, scholars saw little need for explicit articulations of queerness." The discipline's queered academic status may deter the pursuit of queer topics out of "fear of further marginalization" (2015). Here, Cheng and Barz raise two issues worth further consideration, both related to marginalization.

The first is a general type of marginalization—this is always undeniable for queer individuals. However, my experience has been that academia is, relative

to other environments in which I've found myself, a considerably safer place to explore queerness and place to be queer and think queerly. While my experience isn't universal, there is also other evidence that queerness and academics are well-matched. Post-secondary teaching roles are disproportionately filled with queers, and in particular lesbians, and some skills learned in managing queer stigma may actually give queer academics an edge over others (Tilcsik, Anteby, & Knight, 2015). The second claim raised by the excerpt of Cheng and Barz's essay cited above is about the marginalization of ethnomusicology among the music disciplines, which is an assertion that, though historically accurate, requires further discussion. However, what is important here is that this claim boils down to equating the marginalization of queers with the supposed "marginal" status of ethnomusicology. Musicologists and music theorists are the heteronormatives; ethnomusicologists are the queers. Because we're already the queers, the logic goes, we would avoid queer topics to avoid further queer marginalization.

Underlying this argument is the notion that being marginalized or being outside the mainstream means that something or someone is "queer," and that the notion of queerness can be understood outside of its relationship with gender and sexuality. Here, "queer" is simply used as a synonym for "different". This equivalency raises and number of ideological problems. Are all modes of difference from the mainstream "queer" in this sense? And in what context does something mainstream become "the queer": if it is removed from its usual milieux and planted inside the marginal? I think likely not. Ultimately queerness and

marginalization are different. One might result from the other, but they are not interchangeable. Using queer concepts in this way is beneficial to scholars because they can align themselves with a trendy philosophy or make parallel points without having to do the (not always feasible) work of really challenging these constructed categories. There are definitely good ways to capitalize on this to make visible some important arguments, to speak around ideas in order to give strong impressions when word counts are limited, or to work in interdisciplinary ways that take methods—such as deconstruction—and apply them in new realms. But in this case Cheng and Barz do not write about ethnomusicology as the deconstructed category of musicology; instead they simply create two categories of musical study. Taking a concept—say textual analysis in musicology—and posing a supposed opposite—say fieldwork-based studies in ethnomusicology—is not truly breaking down real structural categories in a way that mirrors queer theory's deconstruction of sexuality and gender. Being in a category apart is still being in a category.

One final problematic queer theory component of Cheng and Barz's conception of ethnomusicological queer silences is their willingness to remove gender and sexuality from conceptions of queerness. If it's not focused on categories of sexuality and gender, or a related topic, the work is not queer theory, it is just post-structural theory. That, of course, does not mean that the only topics of study in queer theory are gender and sexuality *themselves*. Rather, it is possible to extend queer notions to explore how queerness impacts people's perceptions,

experiences, and choices in other realms of life. A leader among scholars who have extended queer theory to other concepts is Judith/Jack Halberstam. In his work *In a Queer Time & Place: transgender bodies, subcultural lives* (2005), Halberstam explores "queer temporality" and "postmodern geographies," in particular breaking down time and place as normalized structures upheld by a "middle-class logic of reproductive temporalities" (2005, p. 4). That is, the way that we imagine our lives—school, high school sweethearts, college, marriage, children, home-owning, empty-nests, grandchildren, and so on—is distinctly heterosexual and cisgender. Queer temporality imagines a life without the logic of reproductive cycles, rooted in conceptions of time and space heavily influenced by non-normative gender and sexual identities. Halberstam has extended the notions of an "alternative life narrative" (4) from this book to a chapter about music (reprinted in Queering the Popular Pitch, Whiteley & Rycenga, 2006), which explores arts-based subcultures as an alternatives to families in queer communities. Although I disagree with some of the language Halberstam proposes ("alternative," "subculture") for my project here, I would propose that if we want to incorporate queer perspectives into music studies, we need to approach it through a similar mindset: find the ways that queerness impacts the way people think about or do music and ethnomusicology, be they through structures within the discipline or among our research informants (and do so without the assumption that marginalization is necessarily a key component for queer for identity). I feel strongly that in order to do so in ways that are

meaningful to a fieldwork-based discipline like ethnomusicology, we first need to find ways to talk about queer musical communities and identify perspectives that we might consider to be uniquely or most commonly connected to real lived queer experiences.

Shaping a New Queer Ethnomusicology

Without tools for taking a more wholistic approach to talking about queer identity, queerness is very often essentialized by its differences from the non-queer; gay versus straight transgender versus cisgender queer desire as something apart from non-queer desire even queer identity in opposition to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans. This phenomenon can be observed in the way that scholars talk about queer subjects. The article that initiated my now long-time thinking about the ways that music scholars talk about queer subjects was Martha Mockus' "Queer Thoughts on Country Music and k.d. lang," published in the edited volume *Queering the Pitch* (Brett, Wood, & Thomas, 1994), which I first read as a Masters student in 2005. Mockus discusses kd lang's masculine identity in opposition to the expectations of country music. While acknowledging some vague connections (not directly related to lang) between country music and lesbian scenes in the 1970s and early 1980s, Mockus's discussion focuses heavily on lang's identity and presentation through camp, masculinity, and androgyny, as well as the reception she received in the media about these identity elements. lang doesn't fit in and eventually said she gave up on the idea of being accepted by

country musicians and critics (Mockus, 1994, p. 260). Having by then had a fairly well-rounded self-education in queer history and queer music, I was confused by the fact that Mockus identified country music bars as lesbian sites, acknowledging a deeper intersectional history, but failed to position lang's music with regard to *queer music*. Mockus doesn't acknowledge the existence of other queer country musicians or the rich history of the women's movement that would have contributed to lang's work and mainstream reception.

For me, there are two strong elements lost in the analysis. The first is that by the 1980s queer country music had emerged. The genre dates back to at least 1973, with the release of Lavender Country's self-titled album (1973), but can arguably be traced through innuendo and cross-gender performances to much earlier titles (Doyle, 2005). Queer country musicians came out in force (comparatively) by the late 1980s and early 1990s and so, by 1994 (when *Queering the Pitch* was published), would have been fairly well established as a genre for those interested in further investigation. What is, on one side, read as lang's failure to adhere to country music gender roles can be flipped to read as her comfort with a quintessentially queer style and stage presence. Long before she came out, lang certainly made queer statements that can easily be read alongside contemporary queer politics. What, for example, mocks the traditional marriage structures more than accepting an award for promising artist in a white wedding gown, offering her 1985 self to the country music scene with the "promise" of a

bright future together?[8] It's difficult not to read this as a queer challenge against

the heteronormative backdrop of the Juno awards but I think it's important to note

that this almost cross-dressing type statement would not be unusual in a queer

scene; bolstering my impressions, lang has referenced her attachment to those

then-underground cultures by referring to herself an "old school homosexual"

who says that while she's glad to have played a major role in queer rights and

visibility, still "kind of miss[es] the cryptic nature of our lifestyle that was kind of

underground and exciting" (Clevett, 2008).

Secondly, Mockus glosses over women's music—a genre of music by, for,

and about women that emerged from second-wave feminist circles in the late

1960s and early 1970s[9]—which was a powerful movement during the time of kd

lang's first forays into the music industry. Maxine Feldman, an icon of both

women's music (including the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival) and queer

history, said "These girls wouldn't be doing what they're doing if we hadn't raised

the consciousness of the music industry. It was my white tails before kd lang's

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[8] Same-sex cohabitants gained limited rights in the Netherlands in 1979. The first
same-sex law, Assembly Bill 167, was introduced in California in 1991, just two
years after Denmark became the first country to legalize same-sex unions.

[9] This definition depends on who is asking and who is answering. Some queer
sources identify "women's music" as code word for "lesbian music," a strategy to
allow women to participate in the scene as listeners without outing themselves to
others (e.g., Jamie Anderson, 2008, who writes for the lesbian website
AfterEllen.com; Carson, Lewis, & Shaw, 2004, p. 100). Sources not closely
aligned with queer culture tend to attribute the term to the idea that the music
comes from a woman's perspective (e.g., Walden, 2017, who is writing for a
mainstream newspaper).

suit" (Morris, 1998, p. 58). This sentiment that has also been expressed by other prominent Michigan performers and women's music musicians, like Holly Near and Cris Williamson (Lont, 1992). One scholar has pointed out that "performers, like kd lang, resemble the lesbian images women's music has always portrayed" (Lont, 1992, p. 250). By focusing on mainstream country music and lang's difference from that industry's expectations, Mockus (and other lang scholars) elides the queer elements that may have contributed to lang's music and image. lang becomes identified as a cultural outsider, rather than as a progressive, radical insider to a different culture, one whose existence Mockus fails to acknowledge.

Once I had noticed the ways that scholars define queerness exclusively by its difference, it became something of which I was hyper-aware. I began to see such definitions in my own work and in the work of others, even those whose work I would consider important for advancing queer thinking with regard to music and ethnomusicology. For example in *Queering the Pitch*, Susanne Cusick suggests non-queer relationships come with preconceived power structures, whereas lesbian ones do not (1994); or in *Queering the Popular Pitch*, where Judith Halberstam presents queer subculture as an alternative to gay and lesbian families (2006); or where this opposition is clear in the titles of Freya Jarman-Iven's "Queering(ing) Masculinities in Heterosexist Rap Music" (2006) or Stan Hawkins "On Male Queering in Mainstream Pop" (2006); or how about in *Sexing the Groove* when Mary Celeste Kearney highlights the clash between lesbian punk and the expectations for women's music (1997); or in Nadine Hubbs' *Red*

Necks, Queers, & Country Music where she spends the entire volume trying to debunk the now ingrained stereotype of working class opposition to liberal lefty queerness (2014)? All of these works (and Mockus's work, as well) offer rich analyses and critical insight into the relationships and between gender, sexuality, and music. Yet, none is able to position queerness itself (especially culture or history), rather than difference, as its focal point for defining queer subjects.

My scholarly interests are most heavily focused on the social practices and the relationships that queer people form, including queer histories, queer networks, and the modern expressions of queer culture, especially through music. "Difference" can be a difficult concept to work with when exploring the internal relations of any particular group. How can we talk about internal queer politics, queer culture, and dynamic communities when we are at the same time focused on maintaining the definition of that community as already apart from something? In many cases, I suspect that the lived experience is not one of constant difference, but instead focuses on experiences and elements of cultural history and creation that are inflected by the experience of difference, rather than defined by it. I would say that this is true of my own experiences, even as someone who spends a lot of time thinking about queerness. When we focus on the difference of queerness, it may also become easy to miss the nuances, or gloss over elements that may be more significant for the community. For queer people, difference from non-queers is only the surface. It is easily observed in music through gender

bending, camp, bar culture, same sex narratives, which have all been touched on by scholars from various disciplines.

How queer elements are interpreted, shared, and understood, both across large geographical regions and over decades of history, are also currently missing from the music literature. I am instead interested in working with and talking about queer communities in their own right and in ways that acknowledge difference but do not objectify it as a defining (or even particularly interesting) characteristic of queerness. I imagine queer ethnomusicology involving a new approach to talking about queer activities that doesn't depend on definitions by opposition: I want to frame queer music as a proactive expression of queer culture rather than as a reactionary expression of counterculture. Or at the least, as both of these things. And I think that this has been very difficult for scholars to conceptualize. Surely, contextualizing that will mean talking about how broader society, legal restrictions, social perceptions, and all of that environment, impact the formation and maintenance of queer community. Some of that will involve a discussion of difference. Difference may be highlighted in participant narratives. But the ways of interacting, the role and function of music, the imagined connections not just to conceptual categories (lesbians, gays, trans) but to real events and real histories, the social hierarchies or lack thereof: these are things we could potentially be talking about as the core of queer ethnomusicology. We could, I think, be talking about musical communities, musical practice, music histories, just as we might for any other cultural group. Here, I think, is one major

challenge, at least for me, but probably also encountered by other scholars working to develop this field. The more you come to know the topic, the more difficult it becomes to conceptualize any kind of consistent queer environment that might constitute a research field: something with a place and time what can be visited and observed.

Locating Queer Music

In some ways, it may be logical to argue that a specifically queer ethnomusicology is not needed. After all, ethnomusicology already accounts for the social aspects of music and so scholars can incorporate discussions of queerness as the need arises. I would love for scholars of all subjects to seek out this kind of diversity and intersectionality in the communities and individuals with whom they work. However, I also perceive that there is potential for a deliberate queer focus in ethnomusicology. Instead of a queer ethnomusicology based solely on oppositional categories, then, I argue for exploring queer musical practices and communities primarily as areas of studies in and of themselves, secondly in relation to each other, and only lastly in opposition to non-queer perspectives.

In my view, one reason why queer theories and topics have not been adopted as quickly in ethnomusicology as in other disciplines is precisely because of the focus on fieldwork, immersive observation, and participant methods of learning and understanding music practices. As ethnomusicologists, we have yet

to establish what queer ethnomusicology would look like, especially in terms of using ethnographic methods, rather than textual analysis, to gain an understanding of queer topics that incorporates lived experience and insider input. This failure to grasp the "field" of queer ethnomusicology means that we have had difficulty moving away from text-based analyses, that are more closely associated methodologically with popular music studies and musicology, in favour of mixed methods approaches that incorporate primary input from musicians. Who is a queer subject and what is a queer community, if we are talking about living musical actors, networks, and exchanges? Whereas the anthropological field is broad, encompassing the whole of human activity, ethnomusicology examines but a subset of that activity. This seemingly limited area of inquiry is further challenged: public queer music is often event-based and (compared to mainstream) infrequent; taboos around gender and sexuality limit the queerness that appears in advertising that is publicly accessible, further closing off the field to those not already in-the-know. Looking beyond context of Canada and the United States, some systemic and broader political influences are also at play. For example, there are questions around the viability of conducting research in fields with active anti-LGBTQ+ laws or the willingness of funders to invest in an underdeveloped discipline that could, due to laws and taboos, risk the well-being of both researcher and research participants. Some types of funding, such as that provided through the Fulbright Program in the United States, are dependent on the host country selecting or approving the researcher's application. For those

interested in exploring queer music in the context of countries actively suppressing queer expression, researchers would not be funded or provided admission to the host country.

From my current perspective, then, there are two closely related practical challenges for ethnomusicologists to conceptualize a queer field for study, approaching queer musicians and communities as subjects in their own right. The first is the ability to access and appropriately frame queer communities. On the most basic level, there is the problem of the closet. Individuals are closeted, but the community is also very protective of its privacy in order to shelter but still include those who are not public about their gender or sexual identity, as well as to protect out-of-the-closet members from harm. I would suggest also that is true around the world but is stronger and more urgent in places with fewer human rights protections, although this work will not address communities outside of Canada and the United States. For researchers interested in musical performances, this might mean that some level of affirming environment and a broad degree of out-ness is required of participants in order to ensure their safety and to observe their musical work in the context of local queer culture.

Already, this skews the possible perspectives: the work becomes situated within the out-and-proud segment of queer experience. While that is not necessarily a research deal-breaker—there are many cases where we would study the most prominent members of a group and contextualize their prominence— queer topics also involve a closeted-ness among the audience, making it difficult

to explore the impact of artistic activities or to easily capture how communities may or may not coalesce around various types of cultural practice. From a practical standpoint, this community protectiveness has a limiting effect on scholars' abilities to easily access the community. It may function as something of a deterrent to focused study in a sub-discipline that already poses so many other challenges with so little existing scholarship on which to build one's ideas.

Part of the access question is one of defining the group of people the study will involve. Once a researcher is engaged with the queer community, identity issues can quickly alter the scope or research questions because of the sometimes fractured nature of this community group. Lesbians, gays, transgender folk, and queer people all arguably participate in different subcultures. At the same time, there is plenty of overlap, both in terms of identity and community lesbians can be transgender, for example, and participate in both women's groups and trans groups. A diverse selection of identities will be present at any one queer public event, particularly those that are larger in scale. Where this is not the case, many events would fail due to lack of participation. In a city such as Edmonton, there simply aren't enough people to support larger events for individuals who identify with LGBTQ+ sub-groups. The combination of (often, but not always) hardline identity categories with mixed-identity events means that it is difficult to talk about queer community (often mixed identity) and queer music (often focused on individuals and their immediate circles) in meaningful ways even though the community may think and speak about itself as a whole. Further, because

queerness is often an invisible identity (unlike race, or often class or ability), few queer people make this element of their identity visible at all times. For many people, much of the culture of queerness is event-based. This makes it difficult to engage with on queer subjects an ongoing basis.

Ethnomusicologists have been able to study nationalist musics, family practices, cultural or religious musics, or musics bound to particular times and places, and can, rather imperfectly, identify the markers of that culture or music. Because of the fractured and sometimes isolationist qualities above, the same is not yet true for queer identity and culture: there is no visual marker of queerness and there is no queer sound; people can be gay but not queer, or they can be queer but not in the community. Scholars interested in qualitative study of queer music have begun to meet this challenge of "community" definitions by addressing definable segments of LGBTQ+ musical life, such as queer subjects in punk (e.g., queercore/homocore; see Ciminelli & Knox, 2005; Rauzier, 2012), or places/spaces where queers are consumers (not producers) of music (e.g., queer dance scenes; see Taylor, 2008, 2010, 2012b). These studies are limited in their ability to address the complexities of LGBTQ+ engagement with music and musical practice because they are delimited by elements of musical study defined by musicological genre or place, rather than by the LGBTQ+ community engagement. The focus of such studies tends toward examinations of LGBTQ+ navigation of existing hetero-cis-gender-defined music or activities (akin to exploring "difference"), rather than on how individuals and groups of individuals

draw from existing queer and feminist practices to create something entirely new and unique to meet queer needs.

The Shifting Place of Queer Culture

There has been a shift, in Canada and the United States, over the past ten years. Queer culture is shifting away from the bar culture and stand-alone queer spaces that were the foundation of primarily gay and lesbian circles, historically. The phenomenon has been discussed in the media and was mentioned in an ethnographic interview, almost offhandedly, by the founder of Not Enough Queer Music and Arts Festival in Portland. She was talking about a venue and mentioned, "Actually this lesbian bar was closing down, because they're all closed down now" (Sheana Corbridge, personal communication, May 5, 2017). It struck me later that it was such a common experience that I didn't think to ask her more about it. Suffice to say, the lives of yesterday's gays and lesbians are not the same as the lives of today's young queers. Gay and lesbian bars are being "squeezed out" by high rent, technology-based dating (Koff, 2016), and shifting demands from queer youth. Gay bars are now perceived as having "nostalgic magic," with one commenter writing "I bet the only people missing the gay bars are the ones now too old to go to a bar" (anonymous comments to Koff, 2016).

I think this decline in the "traditional" queer cultural spaces, not to mention practices, has led to a shying away from queer topics in academics, something that Cheng and Barz (2015) refer to as queerness going "out of style"

in academics. I think this is a little uncritical. Instead, I think that the legalization

of same-sex unions in 2005 (in Canada; 2015 in the United States) had a lot to do

with this shift. I'm not alone in that thought. One author noted that the

"mainstreaming" of queerness through legalized civil unions plus the increased

use of dating apps and online spaces was a "double-whammy" that might mean

gay bars are "doomed" (Thomas, 2011). Once the so-called primary goal

(marriage rights) was achieved, a lot of the more affluent gays and lesbians that

were patrons of these places were quick to abandon queer bar culture for a largely

heteronormative family life.

Another part of this shift has to do with queer youth and the new

perspectives and values that they are bringing to queer culture. While it is difficult

to summarize in any universal way, youth and younger (30ish and under) activists

and active community members seem to have brought a new brand of inclusive

ideology to queer spaces. There has been a shift politically for queer activism to

be more inclusive of perspectives from trans folk and queers of colour, meaning

the white gay male spaces are falling out of fashion. Inclusivity has been newly

extended to emphasize different types of accessibility—no physical barriers; no

age restrictions (so, again, less focus on bars) and families welcome; the provision

of free food, transit tickets, childcare, and other elements to make it easier for

people of all sorts to participate. A de-emphasis on spaces designed around drugs,

alcohol, and offline social spaces among youth means that queer subcultures are

creating new spaces outside of bars (in Edmonton, these include the not-for-profit

bicycle club, youth-oriented not-for-profit organizations, and bookstores) or in virtual or more private (and difficult to access) arenas. For ethnomusicologists, this shift means that we're in a place that's hard to start from, with very little existing literature and a field that is changing faster than we can trace it. It means that one issue for working with queer communities, particularly queer youth, is to develop the tools we already have for talking about communities in a way that makes them useful for talking about groups of people who are not bound by geography, place, time, venue, genre, and so on.

Meeting the Challenge of Queerness in Ethnomusicology

For me, all of these challenges—a tendency to focus on textual analysis rather than seeking out informants or using mixed methods, a tendency to view queer culture through the lens of non-queer culture, as well as those more practical challenges related to access and more recently shifting place of queer culture—are the barriers to the emergence of a queer ethnomusicology. Discrimination and marginalization, I think, play comparatively minor roles, though certainly experiences of such things by both researchers and research participants can add to or complicate our understanding. It may be that, even after careful consideration, such a sub-discipline as queer ethnomusicology is not warranted or desired. If that is the case, consider this work a hopefully engaging qualitative thought experiment. Instead, though, I think that careful consideration of queer communities is reasonable and justified and will open the doors for

future interesting work. But if we are to approach it as a possible realm for investigation and work toward developing a body of literature from which future studies can be based, how would we start?

In this work, I begin to recognize queer communities as cultural producers in new ways by acknowledging that every radical feminist and queer community or event has a history, a set of cultural references, and repertoire developed by themselves and others, from which they draw to produce new arts and culture. It seems obvious when we say it out loud (or write it down) but looking at the existing literature we have yet to approach these communities from this point of reference. They may also draw from other milieux, but the core of the activities is determined by the queer community, for the queer community. Queerness and radical inclusivity are the ideological frames from which distinctly queer events emerge, whether intentionally or organically. I approach the topic in this way through two broad concepts: scenes and life cycles. Scenes are where things happen, and the ways that people imagine themselves to be participating in something with other people. That something can be defined by musicological genre (often), place (often), or, as in my use of it, identity. Life cycles involve the growth and death of scenes over time and between places/spaces. Creating a new scene uses the seeds of an old one (though the process is not perfect or organic), in a form of ongoing negotiation about the meaning and practices of queer expression. In the following chapter, I look at these concepts more closely,

developing some of the implications of this approach with regard to queer topics

in ethnomusicology.

Chapter 3: Scenes and Cycles

This chapter advances a way to think queerly about how we use our ethnomusicological language, especially with regard to queer and the closely intertwined radical feminist communities. I explore the ways that subcultural theories are insufficient for describing queer musical communities and suggest that the existing concepts of scenes and festivals can be adapted, or perhaps extended, to help us conceptualize translocal queer communities that reference each other, reference the past, and lay foundations for future meaning-making. These activities are not always passive, as we will see, and can be intentional, as is evident in intergenerational cultural transmission among families or within place-based communities around the world.

Although I believe that what follows is in many ways a "queering" of our ethnomusicological thinking, I do not think this theoretical framework represents a major interruption of ethno-methodology or practice. Ethnomusicology has already recently begun to explore scenes and ways of transmitting or participating in musical culture that are not bound by place, or by familial connections. In what follows, I suggest that these concepts can be extended over time, acknowledging the life cycles of scenes and their activities as a way of talking about the interconnectedness of seemingly disparate music activities.

Focus on Festivals

Instead of exploring queer music through the long-standing idea of queer subculture, this study will attempt to illustrate a framework for a scene-based understanding of queer feminist music events over forty years, beginning in 1976 (although some further historical discussion will be provided for context). Although this approach has not been applied in a broad scope to festivals or queer music, my turn toward scene studies is not in itself innovative. This shift away from subculture has already been well-rehearsed in popular music studies since its introduction in the early 1990s (Straw, 1991, 2015). After introducing the festivals to give a more tangible element for readers to keep in mind during the discussion, I will return to the concepts of subculture and scene and more fully address why I think this is a necessary shift for the study of queer music.

Although I will mention other events as they become relevant to my discussion, I focus predominately on four events described below. I think of events in two ways: as music- (and sometimes arts-) related gatherings that happen on specific dates and at specific times; and as a series of events that fall under the same "brand" name, sharing approximately the same mission and organizing structure. So, Ladyfest Boston 2017 was a specific event that happened in Boston on April 14-17, 2017. We might also say that Ladyfest Boston was one instance of Ladyfest. The Boston organizers write, "Ladyfest Boston 2017 is part of a long standing tradition of Ladyfests worldwide. Ladyfest is a DIY, community-based and volunteer-run festival that highlights artists that

are underrepresented and active in the vibrant arts and music communities around the world" ("Ladyfest Boston 2017," 2017). This project treats festivals like Ladyfest, with multiple iterations run by different groups of people around the world, as both a series of single events and as a larger cycle, the "festival" as a whole. Where individual festivals are referenced, their specific city and year will be indicated. Otherwise, references to festivals made up of many events indicate the festival series as a whole.

I chose to focus on festivals and events for a few reasons. Firstly, it is fairly easy to put borders around what constitutes participation in a festival and what does not. As an early foray into ethnomusicological exploration of queer music, it would be difficult to manage a wide-reaching, all-encompassing overview (including varied audio/video media, all the local scenes, and different ways of engaging in music scenes, such as via consumption, production as creator, or facilitator as organizer) while still also giving sufficient weight to the theoretical components I wish to highlight. Festivals are therefore a way to delimit the scope of my discussion, allowing to some degree fairly large historical leaps in my discussion to provide illustrations. At the same time, the "easy" borders of a festival should not impoverish the discussion because festivals make up for their infrequency with intensity, allowing them to become concentrated versions and agents for change within the larger scenes of which they are a part (Dowd, Liddle, & Nelson, 2004).

Focusing on one festival series, the Not Enough festivals, also provides an opportunity for a closer analysis of the ways the connections I discuss actually play out in practice (since ultimately, and although I spend a considerable time reviewing queer feminist music history, I am seeking a way to access current queer musical practice). Festivals are also each firmly rooted in individual times and places (though their impact and influence may be lasting). The music performed at these queer feminist festivals, especially ones requiring performers to present new projects, is most often new or recently composed. Given this often up-to-date status, and popular music's ability to both express current social and political climates and exert change on those environments (Randall, 2005), the music and festival aims will often reflect contemporary thinking or contribute directly to it in this way. Layering onto this the explicit social and political statements that often accompany festivals—organizers (and sometimes musicians and volunteers) breaking down the various components of their aims and how these connect to contemporary community, regional, national or global climates— festivals are well positioned for observing the relationships between politics and music I wish to highlight in my discussion.

Primary Events in this Study

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival

The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival (MWMF, Michfest) was one of the longest running festival cycles in the history of women's music. The

volunteer-run event lasted from 1976, until its 40th anniversary in 2015. MWMF was a radical women-only festival that took place annually in Oceana, Michigan in a space affectionately referred by attendees as "The Land." By the 2000s, the festival—which included music, visual and performance art, and workshops—was attracting at least 4,000 women to its week-long event annually (Greenfield, 2006). Most of its attendees were lesbians, although "all" women (excluding transgender women) were welcomed to attend.

Riot Grrrl

Riot Grrrl was a radical feminist underground punk movement originating in the early 1990s in Olympia, Washington. Unofficially led by the members of a few key bands, including Bikini Kill and Bratmobile, Riot Grrrl culture and activities were coordinated through the mass mailing of zines, as well as through letters to and from fans, verbal messaging at punk shows, and conventions (festivals). The movement initially developed in response to the exclusion of women from the punk scene and the perceived inability of second wave-feminist groups (e.g., women's music movements like Michigan Womyn's Music Festival) to meet the needs of (primarily white, heterosexual) feminist women. Though sometimes viewed as an alternative to mainstream second-wave feminism, Riot Grrrl used many of the same tactics—and addressed many of the same topics as sexuality, domestic abuse, sexual abuse, and systemic inequality between genders—as their feminist forerunners (Piepmeier, 2009). While there was no

official end date for Riot Grrrl, the core group of musicians became fractured in the mid-1990s when their message was co-opted by mainstream media (Marcus, 2010; Soccio, 1999). Now highly a romanticized movement, the Riot Grrrl name lives on, invoked by modern organizers to indicate feminist and DIY approaches to politics and music.

Ladyfest

One of the major reinterpretations of Riot Grrrl (Foster, 2001), Ladyfest is a global (though predominantly US) series of community-based one-off and annual music festivals. Although the event centered on music made by and for women, usually restricting organizers and performers by gender, most festivals welcomed people of all genders as audience members and were actively trans-inclusive for all festival roles. Like Riot Grrrl, the festival started in Olympia, Washington, with the first festival taking place in 2000. Subsequent festivals were established in the following year by attendees of the first year's festival, with each year bringing more events worldwide. Though Ladyfest events are ongoing, the festival peaked in 2004 (at least 25 festivals) and 2005 (at least 33 festivals), with more than 100 events total bearing the Ladyfest name by early 2006 (Ladyfest, 2005).

Not Enough Festival

Not Enough was a radical queer and feminist music festival that originated in Portland, Oregon in 2010 as the Not Enough Queer Music and Arts Festival, aimed at facilitating new collaborative projects amongst queer artists and musicians from across the state. The festival subsequently ran in New Orleans (2013 & 2014), Winnipeg (2013), and Edmonton (2015 & 2016), each with different organizers and slightly different approaches, but the same overall mission of increasing the number of people participating in each city's queer music and arts scenes. Unlike other festivals, which are largely curated by an organizing committee, Not Enough festivals hosted pre-festival workshops and meetups (often 4 to 8 months in advance), or facilitated online spaces, where interested people could meet others to form new collaborative projects. Often, musicians who performed in the festival had never previously performed on stage. Some, like the band Elusive Moose's bass player Tasmia Nishat (who picked up her first instrument ever just two weeks before getting on stage), were entirely new to the act of creating and performing music.

Subculture and Scenes

Music scholars have already developed some analytical concepts that could be of use for queer topics. In this section, I explore two concepts already established in the music literature —subculture and scene—for their utility with regard to analyzing queer musical practice. I then expand this discussion to draw

in two concepts less-established in the current literature—translocality and event cycles—that I believe can help to clarify the relationships between events that occur in different places at different times.

Subcultures

One of the ways that scholars have recognized cultural producers outside of the "mainstream" or "normative" culture is to talk about groups of people as participating in a subculture. Under the umbrella of the dominant culture, subcultural groups participate in specific activities, styles, and ideologies that set them apart from the mainstream. For the analysis of queer music—particularly from a high level perspective that includes diverse intersectional identities, geographies, and historical points in time—subcultural theory seems to fall short on several fronts. To begin with, subcultural theory assumes, to some degree, related styles of dress, genres of music, aesthetics, dance forms, and social and political aspects beyond artistic and stylistic expression (like class perspective), which mark participation in that subculture (Hebdige, 1991), all of which are absent from queer culture as a whole.

Certainly, there are many internal markers of participation in queer culture. For example, while I am critical of camp and gender difference as the boundaries for what is included in queer culture, these elements are certainly signifiers or symbols of queerness. Codes of communication, such as modes of making eye contact with strangers (a type of acknowledgement) or avoiding

gender pronouns when speaking about partners or members of the community, are second nature to many queer people and become identifiers to others in the community. These latter codes, however, are not really expressions of culture in the same way that, say, cowboy hats signify country music. That is, they are functional as well as cultural—they are a way to communicate without outing one another to others present. Other internal codes will develop and then disappear as they are co-opted or exchanged for new signals. For example, femme flagging, the practice of feminine lesbians and bisexual women painting the nail on the ring finger a different colour than the rest, has become a mainstream fashion trend at the time of writing, erasing this marker of inclusion from the queer codebook in my city. Similarly, hanky code—a way of using coloured handkerchiefs to indicate different types of sexual interest—has been appearing more often outside of queer community (at least in Edmonton).

For this reason, markers of inclusion are fluid and not universal among queer people. Because the idea of what makes a "subculture" is so radically different for queer and non-queer communities, much of the available theoretical frameworks do not apply. Consider, for example, that leading subcultural scholar Phil Cohen's early work hinges on economicdrivers for the development of youth subcultures (Cohen, 1955), a factor which has some influence in queer cultures but is certainly not the central driver for the subculture's development (which, if it's not clear, would be queer identity). In a queer subculture, the subculture might

in fact exist despite economic drivers, rendering much of Cohen's work (still in use today), irrelevant to queer analysis.

Secondly, there is a sense that subcultures are primarily youth cultures, implying that at some point people grow out of the culture. Queer people do not grow out of queer identities, even when those identities may transform in meaning or expression over time, on an individual basis. Other scholars have also challenged subcultural theory with regard to its application solely to youth culture in music (Huq, 2006; McRobbie, 1990). With regard to queer studies, some would argue that queer cultures retain major aspects of their youth culture through the aging process. For example, Halberstam writes, "In my work on subcultures, I explore the stretched out adolescences of queer culture-makers and posit an "epistemology of youth" that disrupts conventional accounts of subculture, youth culture, adulthood, race, class and maturity" (2003, pp. 313–314). While effective for challenging conceptions of youth culture and adulthood in a queer theoretical context, in practice with living and dynamic communities, a blanket application of this subcultural approach risks that the association of queer culture with youth culture would imply an immaturity that is not an accurate characterization of musicians' activities, or the logic and language of "stages" that equates a persistent reality with a temporary expression of youthful rebellion.

Subcultural perspectives are also closely tied up and have been regularly used to describe "deviant" behaviours. Early subcultural theories were rooted in early 20th century scholarship about male youth gangs (e.g. A. K. Cohen, 1955).

On the margins of society for social and economic reasons, young men were thought to gravitate toward criminal subcultures as a way to find support and prestige when few other options existed (Becker, 1963; Cohen, 1955; Osgerby, 2014; or for a more modern take, including on prostitution, drug use, and domestic abuse, see Tewksbury, 2000). With regard to queer studies, we would need to think of queer communities as directly resulting from queer stigma, with queer people being shunned from society, seeking out bastions of queer thinking, and using that space to behave in ways that are (implied: justifiably) unacceptable in the mainstream. While there is definitely an element of seeking refuge for some individuals seeking out a place in the queer community, this perspective discounts the cultural value that, I think, supersedes the narrative of "safety in numbers." Queer culture is not made up of outcasts and social deviants; and so for me building a subcultural queer theory is in danger of playing into homophobic and transphobic segregating of queer people.

Recently, there seems to be a reclaiming of the term deviance in queer scholarship and the term has elsewhere been "reframed to imply differences" (Franzese, 2009). This type of subcultural frame does not fit the perspective on queer culture that I am trying to provide. It posits subcultures as both social outcasts and reactionary to immediate circumstance, both of which have some play in queer cultural production but should not serve as a central frame of reference—doing so overemphasizes the role of dominant culture on queer cultural perspectives. Additionally, there is a risk in this conceptualization of

queerness that some sort of reintegration of the *sub* into the dominant *culture* is desirable or at all warranted. Most of all, I am reluctant to adopt subcultural theories as an approach to framing queer musical practices because the issues with the approach described above risk direct conflict with my mission to shift the language around working with queer communities: to affirm them as cultures with histories and varied influences, driven largely by internal cultural producers, and to leave behind the romanticized story of all queer art as (only) a form of "queer resistance" somewhat to the side.

I am reluctant to say that there has been no solution to the challenge of talking about queer communities: Halberstam's exploration of subcultural lives as an alternative to heterosexual modes of understanding—a discussion driven by his philosophical goals—has many appealing features. It does make connections over time, such as with the extension of 1990s Riot Grrrl into the early 2000s as a single evolving subcultural space. Halberstam's notion of subculture in contrast to communities is also valuable. Whereas communities suggest nearby family and familiar faces, "subcultures… suggest transient, extrafamilial and oppositional modes of affiliation" (Halberstam, 2003, p. 315), much like those that make up the scenes and events I will discuss below. Finally, the work also hinges on an aspect that is distinctly queer: alternate epistemological frames of reference for those whose lives are not structured around family obligations. However, transferring this theoretical approach onto real-world communities has many limitations. The reality of queer communities is that not everyone is living a post-

structuralist queer life. Many queer events offer services like child-minding or are intentionally scheduled for all-ages venues that permit minors and families to attend. Like so much queer theory, Halberstam's analytical approach in an ethnographic setting would exclude all but the most spectacular examples of queerness, putting his subcultural approach at odds with the ethnomusicological intervention that I propose. I want to understand queer communities and their ideological relationships in practical ways that describe lived experiences; Halberstam, a philosopher and post-structural queer theorist, is more engaged in making observations to illustrate larger philosophical phenomena rather than focusing primarily on the lived experiences and activities of what we might call "everyday" queer people.

Scenes

One of the challenges related to discussing queer culture is that queer culture has a tendency to be event-based or be developed and specifically marketed to only parts of the community (e.g., to gay men, to lesbians, or to transgender people). Events might seem, at first glance, to be somewhat disconnected from one another. By the "disconnectedness" of these activities I mean that they are often viewed as separate from one another, in both time (occurring at different times of the year, but also in different years) and space (both physical and geographical). I also mean that queer feminist musical activities are, on the surface, quite different from one another. The women-only

campsite-based folk festivals of the 1970s have different aesthetic and ideological

approaches to radical queer feminist music and space than do the all-bodies-

welcome all-genres-welcome urban music and art festivals of the 2000s. Our

current mode of thinking about festivals is not well-suited to talking about these

two things as related. They lack mutual grounding, from an ethnomusicological

perspective: they have no shared place, no shared musicological genre, employ

different instruments, and have no (or limited) familial or national connection; the

events are of different sizes, organized in different ways, with different rules, and

exclude/include different queer identities. And yet, as both are radical queer

feminist spaces constructed around the contemporary needs of queers and

feminists, we can intuitively say there is some connection between them.

As an alternative to a subcultural approach to considering queer music and

musical activity, I approach music and musicians through the real-world

interactions that happen in local communities (local *scenes*), the direct

connections between local scenes and translocal scenes, and the relationships

between scenes as they change over time (*cycles*). This approach— an

interdisciplinary one that draws its key elements from popular music studies —

will extend some existing concepts to better suit this discussion, using radical

queer feminist music festivals and related events (e.g., shows, skill-sharing

events, meet and greets) as the primary vehicle for illustrating these points.

Approaching queer music and musicians from the perspective of scenes

and cycles also offers the opportunity to shift our perspectives about the cultural

influences on certain musical practices. Instead of positioning queer feminist musical activity via the mainstream music industry, we can begin to view queer feminist activity via a set of internally produced cultural needs and norms. Consider for example that a subcultural take on queer country music would position queer country as an offshoot of the larger country music genre, and therefore "sub" or "making space" inside the heteronormative and often homophobic dominant genre. On the other hand, queer country music can also be understood as queer individuals drawing on country music, bringing country into a queer realm and using the cultural history of queerness to develop a new queer music scene. In the subcultural instance, the dominant country subculture is prioritized. From the position of a queer scene, queerness and queer history can be centrally positioned, an arrangement that would be necessary for the development of a queer ethnomusicological discipline.

Scene theory approaches scenes as place-, time- and/or genre-based activities that centre around local venues and core groups of people (Straw, 1991, 2015; Woo, Rennie, & Poyntz, 2015), shaped by those elements as well as by socio-economic factors, culture, and history (Pilkington, 2014). For example, the film *Dead Venues* is a nostalgic retrospective on the local Edmonton music scene that revolved around live-music venues, each of which is now closed (McDonald, 2015). A set of short dives into each venue, the film examines the character, the music, the artists, and local musicians and audience members' experiences with each venue, exploring the ways the scenes were constructed and faced challenges

from shifting musical and community tastes and interests. Loosely bound by common genres, each venue is clearly delineated by its place (a specific venue in Edmonton's intersecting and overlapping scenes) and its time (when it was open and/or popular and when it was not). For each venue, the place and time are significant: challenges and successes are as much a product of larger social and cultural activity as they are produced by the specific bands and business decisions of venue owners.

Scenes work well for an ethnographic approach to music. Studies of scenes can include exploration of the cultural markers that include or exclude people or activities from those scenes—those factors which contribute to an "authentic" scene (Urquia, 2004; Wiltsher, 2016). They can also focus more generally on "situations where performers, support facilities, and fans come together to collectively create music for their own enjoyment" (Bennett & Peterson, 2004, p. 3). This focus on the participation of groups of people in music as producers or as listeners and audience members is an emphasis particular to scenes. Whereas the larger music industry requires a high number of listeners and a low number of mass market musicians to be successful, a scene requires a collective of people working, listening, and producing together in an ongoing exchange, contrasting with the mass market model (Bennett & Peterson, 2004).

In a similar vein, the idea of a scene is particularly useful for discussing queer musical activity because it moves away from a focus on the musical object and draws attention to "the field of social relations in which music is circulated"

(Woo et al., 2015, p. 287), providing a space to acknowledge both the philosophical or ideological groundwork that may underpin any one scene, as well as that some of a scene's success (or decline) is practical (space, finances, etc.). With regard to queer music, then, in order to move away from the emphasis on camp and gender deviance that characterizes the recognizable aural experience of queerness, it will be important to move away from exclusively examining musical objects. In scenes, relationships and the negotiations of social fields are spotlighted, with those musical elements following as queer musical production and consumption characteristic of that social field. With regard to the social field, scenes also answer a question common to discussions of queer culture and community: who counts? Importantly, scenes are made up of people who opt-in to the scene, rather than fall into it by way of their immutable identity characteristics (e.g., sexuality, ethnicity). They are "clusters of producers, musicians, and fans [who] collectively share their common musical tastes and collectively distinguish themselves from other" (Spring, 2004, p. 1). The opt-in nature of scenes avoids the risk of problematically labelling queerness in places where such labels might be inappropriate or unwanted by musicians.

Scenes have also been used as a way to differentiate the commercial music industry from the do-it-yourself (DIY) industry that is "largely the domain of small collectives, fans turned entrepreneurs, and volunteer labor" (Spring, 2004, p. 5). All of the scenes explored in this study fall into this category—though some actively engaged or were co-opted by mainstream media and commercial

endeavors, all started off as small social or political endeavors led, like other DIY

scenes (Spring, 2004), by a handful of very motivated individuals. The complex

dynamics and intentional direction given by these individuals can become

essential to the scene's development, despite the scene's "real" (externally

observed) focus on making and/or consuming music (Spring, 2004). For example,

Norman Urquia (2004) examines the way that salsa dance performers construct

identity through music and dance using discussions around the performers

expectations and critiques of each other, including cultural nuances in terms of

values and regional musical styles. Thus, scene studies can explore many facets of

activity: the musical elements, the aesthetic elements, the individual leaders, and

the other participants that make a scene feel vibrant and attractive for ongoing

engagement from a wide array of participants.

Given its flexible approach to "clusters of producers" and the industries of

musical production, the idea of a scene seems like it would be available to help us

understand all sorts of gatherings (and in fact has been criticized for this very

quality[10]). Despite this flexibility, most studies that self-consciously employ this

still-developing concept in music focus solely on genre and/or place.[11] I have

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[10] Scenes have been criticized by scholars for the same qualities for which they are valued. Hodkinson writes, "The term 'scene' is openly lauded…for its catch-all qualities, but the attempt to allow for the fixities and fluidities of virtually any music-related practices or affiliations, surely risks limiting the term's theoretical value" (Hodkinson, 2002, p. 24).

[11] See, for example: Darroch, 2015; Drysdale, 2015; Eichhorn, 2015; Fox & Riches, 2014; Messelink, 2016; Novak, 2013; Pilkington, 2014.

briefly mentioned previously the ways that queer scholars have tried to overcome the challenges of queer ethnomusicology, where ethnomusicologists have turned to analyses of venues and small, distinctly queer genre-centered scenes as a way of making queer subject matter accessible. These works also easily fit into what we would expect from a genre- or place-based discussion of queer scenes. Consider the work of Jodie Taylor (Taylor, 2012b), a scholar who focuses on queer music scenes. In examining the differences between "queer" and "gay" scenes in Brisbane, Australia, Taylor shows how diverse musical tastes may correspond with queer identities, in direct contrast to the focus on club and house music in gay male venues. Her approach demonstrates how political forces in the LGBTQ+ community in Brisbane can impact the ways that individuals use music to shape and define their own identities and communities, including through intentional change within the broader LGBTQ+ culture. By focusing on internal cultural conflicts in LGBTQ+ subculture—centralizing LGBTQ+ engagement in her discussion—Taylor is able to show queer club culture as both a social and political response to the gay club culture that has been ongoing for decades. Where one scene fails to meet the needs of an evolved political position in Brisbane, a new scene develops in response. When reading the local scenes, we might read them like something of a Venn diagram, in which each scene is viewed as distinct by its participants, but external analysis reveals that the scenes overlap and include intersections between people, places, and ideas.

Examining local queer music scenes in this way offers much potential value: for example, Taylor's comparative approach is able to show the diversity of Brisbane queer music consumption (though she clearly favours and is an insider to the queer scene, which sometimes makes the gay scene come off as stagnant and politically regressive). On the other hand, an overly localized focus on scenes risks making some scenes appear as subcultures: in Taylor's work, the queer scene reads like a "deviant"-type subculture compared to the "dominant"-type gay culture, obscuring the strong social and historical connections between these two scenes. Her narrow focus on club scenes also has a tendency to frame queer and gay people solely as consumers of varieties of mainstream music. Her studies do not focus on the cultural producers of queer music, or the ways that such scenes are established, maintained, or transformed through social and cultural practices. Nor do they account for the wider social and political forces, contemporary and historical, that might have contributed to the development of varied LGBTQ+ scenes she documents. In the approach to exploring queer scenes I advocate in this work, the framework is intended to provide an opportunity for this broader perspective on the interrelationships between the musical work of varied groups of queer people, and to experiment with thinking about scenes together, rather than as a means to compare and strike contrast. Although he doesn't address queer music scenes, Barry Shank's (1994) discussion of the music scenes in Austin—competing and intersecting worlds of pop, punk, rock, country all simultaneously rooted in the same local—is an excellent example of the ways

that looking at music via scenes can shed light on identity politics and the ways that identity is constructed through music. In Shank's case, his exploration of the Austin music scene shows the ways that each genre-based scene connects to the history, folklore, and previous musics associated with a place-based Texan identity.

Translocality & Cycles

Translocality

The notion of a scene does not only apply to localized activity. The term equally applies to "our favourite bar and the sum total of all global phenomena surrounding a subgenre" (Straw, 2001, p. 248). A scene without geographical borders has come to be known as a *translocal* scene (Bennett & Peterson, 2004; Dowd et al., 2004; Harris, 2000) and each of the primary festivals examined in this work fall into this category. At the local level, the specific events surrounding the festival might be a part of the local scene. But in many ways each event is connected to other similar events occurring around the world. We are accustomed to this in many milieux—brands, for example, are global identifiers and trade on the similarities between brand items in one place and those found in another. In the case of Riot Grrrl, Ladyfest, and Not Enough festivals, these connections are explicit, via the use of the same festival name and concept in a variety of different locations. However, all four festival examples explored in this work are also translocal in other ways. Michigan Womyn's Music Festival took place in the

same location each year, but it might also be considered translocal because the festival draws together the many local influences of its participants, who travel to reach the site (Hodkinson, 2002, pp. 65–84), and because of its connection to women's music: the festival is underpinned by a widely shared connection to a particular "gender and feminist consciousness" (Dowd et al., 2004, p. 154). The same could be said of each of the other three festivals. Occurring at different historical times and in different places, each localized music scene was connected to a larger scene of queer feminist music activity that ranged beyond genre and often even beyond specific gender and queer politics to a radical repositioning of women and queer people. This radical repositioning appears slightly different in each iteration due to the differences in particular local politics, each of which contributes to a larger "consciousness," or, often, explicit musico-political agenda. The connections are maintained by the individuals in the scenes, especially through travel between festivals, by redeveloping subsequent iterations of the same festivals, and through the sharing of music, zines, and online media.

For example, a number of authors have tackled the queer punk rock scenes (e.g., queercore/homocore; see Ciminelli & Knox, 2005; Rauzier, 2012). These studies are limited in their ability to address the complexities of LGBTQ+ engagement with music and musical practice because they are delimited by elements of musical style defined by genre or by a localized scene, rather than by the LGBTQ+ community engagement. For example, Ciminelli and Knox open their history of queer rock by implying that the queer underground music scene

was something made from nothing, or perhaps born from a few independent rebels. They write that "the term "homocore" was first bandied about in the mid 1980s in music circles from Toronto to Los Angeles and San Francisco after popular Canadian underground filmmaker and photographer Bruce LaBruce and G.B. Jones…coined the term as a joking reference to a queer rock community that didn't even exist at the time" (Ciminelli & Knox, 2005, p. 7). The book takes quite a narrow focus on the genre, failing, in my view, to acknowledge socio-political forces that would have shaped homocore (e.g., AIDS, the exclusion of men from other women-run queer scenes) and the ways that both musicians and audiences engaged with that genre, beyond observing that something new was needed because the gay scene was "assimilationist" or the punk scene was too "sexually conventional and boring" (p. 8). This depicts the primarily gay men who created homocore as stereotypically sex-driven, taking such comments from homocore participants at face value rather than investigating the underlying values and attitudes that lead to these statements. The result is reductive view of the scene, suggesting that queerness might be defined as nothing more than unspecified types of sexual desires that fall outside of mainstream.

While I think definitions such as the one for homocore framed by Ciminelli and Knox do something of a disservice to LGBTQ+ people generally (it's time, I think, to move away from this idea of queers as sexual deviants), the larger problem with genre-based discussions is that the focuses of such studies tend toward examinations of LGBTQ+ navigation of existing hetero-cis-gender-

defined music or activities (e.g., homocore's "boredom" with gay and punk

scenes—akin to exploring "difference"), rather than on how individuals and

groups of individuals draw from existing queer and feminist practices to create

something different and unique to meet their queer needs. Further, the focus on

genre completely excludes all of the other people who may have been tangentially

involved in creating the homocore genre, but for whom the genre never played a

central role. An easy connection with regard to homocore is the parallel

development of Riot Grrrl in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The two movements

use many of the same modes of communication (e.g., zines, shows), drew from

similar aesthetic pools (i.e., punk), and may also have been influenced in different

ways by the same historical events (e.g., HIV/AIDS reinforcing queer stigma; rise

of gay marriage conversations; growing DIY scenes after the 1987 stock market

crash and early 1990s recession; increased availability of DIY recording

technology; etc.).

Cycles

Most scenes do not wink into and out of existence. They involve an often

deliberate process of change, usually by way of organizers planning events or

making spaces available to certain groups of people. When those efforts are

stopped, the scene eventually diminishes and disappears. Alternatively, it is

picked up by another organizer and, likely, changed to suit slightly different

needs. This constitutes the basis for cycles of scenes. As a simple metaphor, we

might think of them as life cycles—scenes emerge, are maintained, produce new scenes through the transfer of ideas or people, and fade away, leaving their progeny behind. The life cycles described in the film *Dead Venues* is an excellent representation of this thinking. The venues discussed in the documentary do not come into existence, become a venue, then disappear. Instead, they are continually transformed as the local scene changes. They have different owners. They feature different music and develop different organizational and audience cultures over time (McDonald, 2015). Yet, they are the space in the same physical location. Similarly, scenes change over time: they are differently inflected by politics, resources, organizers, and audiences.

Of course, the way that scenes produce cycles is much more complicated than the way a venue experiences cycles. Their influences are infinite, and their contact with individuals is massive: audience, musicians, industry, varied regions, all spanning decades of changes. Each single scene may draw on dozens of existing resources (like people, albums, or formal and informal archives) or ideas during its emergence. Although not a precise parallel, Abbott and Seroff's (2017) description of the many points of contact in the development of blues is an excellent illustration of the way ideas bounce between people and places. They note that blues was "incubated in black southern vaudeville theatres," the cultural centers of communities in the south in the late 1800s and early 1900s (Abbott & Seroff, 2017, p. 3). They trace the performances of musicians through dozens of venues, the borrowing and transferring of songs and styles between musicians and

cities, as well as between male and female performers, all the way through the first two decades of the century to the commercialization of blues, driven by interest from white audiences, in the 1920s (Abbott & Seroff, 2017, p. 350). Scenes can fracture: they may change slowly over time or hold steadfastly to their founding principles and can also create branches and scene offshoots. In blues, these would include regional blues genres, or experimental styles. We now know this intuitively; there has been sufficient study in various scenes and genres for our minds to compare them without a formal framework. A local or even translocal scene may influence future scenes years after the scene can no longer be physically accessed—musically, we might say something is inflected with a certain sound, or we might hear samples borrowed from old albums. When a scene has a strong identifiable development, it can be easier to identify the trajectory, like in early blues. But when strong links to genre, or racial identity, for example, are absent, scenes can be more challenging to examine. The connections might not be so direct or the scene may be so radically transformed that it is not wholly recognizable. For this reason, it is helpful to think of scenes as operating in a larger cycle.

Just as scenes can be local and translocal, their cycles can be temporal or transtemporal. A temporal scene has a fixed time frame. In a local scene, the specific place of activity can be identified and discussed in a fairly bounded way (e.g., the local Edmonton Not Enough festival happened in Edmonton and used specific venues). Similarly, the events of a local scene take place on particular

dates and often even at particular times. Every scene necessarily spans a period of time. A single event is a concentrated representation of the larger scene of activity that surrounds particular genres, or, in the case of queer feminist music, ideas. A festival may run for three years, and so we could say that the festival's scene, including the specific event and the associated scene created by participating in that event, was temporality bound to three years. Its temporal cycle, made up of a variety of specific events that come and go during the scene's existence, and come to a close when the scene's activities are no longer running. On the other hand, transtemporal cycles are those which transcend the dates/times of specific events and the local scene influence. These can be read *across* historical periods. A transtemporal cycle is produced when the *ideas* skip the boundaries of place and time to influence future scenes. A pattern of scenes develops, over time, where ideas are adopted, transferred, and evolved to suit new social, political, or recreational goals.

Thinking transtemporally is, I think, an important route to thinking about current queer feminist music activity as part of a larger cycle of queer feminist musical activity. When I hear participants from Not Enough festival in Edmonton say that what they are seeing or doing is new and unique, I have a moment of conflict. Yes, it's new. Its particular realization is certainly unique. But so much of what I saw during the festival and heard in my interviews echoed the past, not only the immediate (linear) past. There was a strong desire among organizers to influence the future of queer feminist music, as well. Transtemporality is more

than just saying that queer feminist ideas are passed down over time. It is about the life, death, and transformation of ideas, a cycle that allows us to read disparate musical scenes and events as one large movement toward ever more queer feminist goals (even as the goal posts shift over time).

Chapter 4: Introducing queer feminist music scene cycles

The period of the late 1960s into the early 1970s marks the "beginning" or "emergence" of the queer feminist music scene we see today, at least in the format we are accustomed to seeing and hearing (e.g., festivals, collectives). Leading up to the 1960s, gays and lesbians were building momentum toward what would eventually be seen as, by both insiders and outsiders, a gay culture (or, more accurately gay culture and a lesbian culture, since these were quite separate until the late 1980s). Allan Bérubé (1990) documented gay and lesbian social groups in during World War II, when many women joined the military specifically for its homosocial opportunities. The Women's Army Corps was rife with lesbian cliques and short haircuts. On the men's side, there were gay cliques like those among women, but also GI drag performers, who drew on campy behavior and language to create an overt counterculture against the hyper-masculine expectations of military audiences (e.g., *mother superior* is the flaming queen; *sister in distress* was a jailed gay man [86]). The drag culture found in bars and at fundraising events today reaches back nearly a century to Harlem drag balls of the 1920s and 1930s. In music, there are numerous isolated recordings of songs with homosexual content by gay and lesbian performers ranging back to the 1920s and 1930s, with Ma Rainey's 1926 "Prove It On Me Blues," in which Rainey declares her love of neck ties and lack of love for men, as an early well-known example. The 1920s and 1930s also saw the "Pansy Craze," in which

openly gay performers were briefly popular with heterosexual audiences (Chauncey, 1994; Elledge, 2015). Although these outlets did exist, at a time when lesbian and gay taboos had yet to see strong public challenge. It would also have been difficult for little-known gay and lesbian performers to risk exposure, outside of a geographical enclaves or cultural interstices, to garner interest from record labels or performance venues.

The campy stereotyped queer culture most familiar to modern audiences draws heavily from these early balls and forms of hetero-tainment but is most recognizable as queer culture by and for queer people beginning in the mid- to late-1960s.

The International Imperial Court System, an early grassroots gay organization that has been fundraising for gay charities for more than 50 years, was founded in 1965 by drag performer and musician, Jose Sarria, sometimes credited as the "Rosa Parks" of the gay civil rights movement ("Obituary: Jose Julio Sarria, 1922-2013," 2013).[12] Edmonton's chapter of this organization is

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[12] Sarria is best known for his charitable, educational, and community activities, as well as (within the Imperial community, at least) for his bid for a position on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1961 (sixteen years before Harvey Milk would famously earn—and die in—that role).

called the Imperial Sovereign Court of the Wild Rose,[13] and still runs in much the

same way as is described in accounts of Sarria's earliest events. Sarria centered

his fundraisers on a series of Coronation Balls, which feature drag performances

by men and women, as well as dancing and music. As a musician, Sarria released

a campy live recorded album titled, ironically, *No Camping* on Velvet Records in

1962. The record is full of the live audience banter, with gender-bending jokes

and sexual innuendo characteristic of drag hostesses entertaining gay and lesbian

audiences. That particular camp style was also captured in some of the studio

recordings by a company called Camp Records, in particular the song "A Bar is a

Bar is a Bar" (c1965). Though comedic and laden with campy effects, the song is

highly political in nature, highlighting the discrimination and community impact

of bar raids and gender laws that impacted queer culture and queer music scenes.

(Not incidentally, the Black Cat Bar, in which Jose Sarria recorded parts of *No*

Camping, was shut down in 1963 after 15 years of police harassment for its gay

clientele [Boyd, 2003, pp. 145–146].) "A Bar is a Bar is a Bar" appeared on the

LP *The Queen is in the Closet* in the 1960s (c1965). The label would produce a

number of records in the 1960s that documented the gay male experience in the

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[13] The use of "wild rose" titles in Alberta has become somewhat taboo in
progressive circles in recent years due to the affiliation of the term with a certain
right-wing political group that is a leader in contributions to the province's anti-
LGBT rhetoric. Founded in 1975, the not-for-profit imperial organization predates
the Wild Rose Party of Alberta by about 27 years and during that time has
contributed socially and financially to the LGBTQ+ community. The names of
both organizations originate with Alberta's provincial flower, *rosa acicularis*,
commonly known as *wild rose*.

United States (particularly the west coast), including titles such as "Mad About the Boy" (Camp Records performers, c1960s), "Rough Trade" (The Boy & The Gentle-Men, c1960s) and "Stanley the Manly Transvestite" (Rodney Dangerfield (pseudonym), c1960s).

What sets the gay and lesbian culture of the late 1960s and earlier apart from that of the 1970s and later, is *the closet*, that is, the secrecy around gay and lesbian identities. Both the men and women soldiers of Bérubé's Second World War descriptions developed rules that "protected them from exposure" (p. 104). They didn't talk about homosexuality; they never outed a soldier to others. The criminalization of homosexuality meant that breaking these rules could result in dishonorable discharge or even formal prosecution. Similarly, all of the Camp Records albums were released anonymously. Appearing on the back cover of the album *Mad About the Boy* (c1960s) was a letter from some Camp Records producers emphasizing the closeted nature of their positions, as well as those of the performers. They wrote:

> Unfortunately, we are not at liberty to give credit, to the arranger, and the many gifted artists involved in this production. However, to those with a discerning ear, you will recognize the stylings of some very fine and well known personalities. You can only guess as to who they are……..and chances are, you'll be right!

> Our male soloist, is a delightfully gifted young man, whose name unfortunately must be withheld at this time. We will merely refer to him as…….the boy. In years to come, perhaps his name in conjunction with this production will become known……(thus giving the owner of this album, a collectors item.)

> The vocal group used in this production is [made] up of four of the better known Hollywood T.V. and screen personalities. Here again, we are not at liberty to reveal true names……..so for now, we will refer to them, as…..the Gentle-Men. (Mad About the Boy, c1960s, punctuation original, emphasis added)

While there has been speculation that the Camp Records label, given its exaggeration of camp styles and gay experiences, might have been devised as a way to mock the gay community (Doyle, n.d.), some of the lyrics are, while campy, still highly sensitive depictions of gay experience during the 1950s and 1960s. Without anonymity, those involved as performers and producers of such albums would have risked having their names published and seen by family members who might disown them, by employers who could legally fire them, or by more extreme homophobic community members who might turn violent.

The underground homosexually-themed music of the 1960s is heavily centered on gay men. There are, of course, exceptions. Notably, singers like Ma Rainey and Gladys Bentley, as well as other female musicians already marginalized for their blackness, were able to express homosexual and transgender identities fairly openly (but not without scrutiny) in their music (Chen, 2017; Rowden, 2007). However, white men retained the power to own record labels and record music and so were likely able to unobtrusively create queer recordings more easily than women. The excerpt above from Camp Records hints that those involved already had access to means of production for the albums via their active involvement in the entertainment industries of music and television.

Women, even those who were not openly queer, would have lacked this privilege, contributing therefore to the lack of extant recordings from among queer women during this era. It is not until the early 1970s, when the coincidence of a new gay liberation movement and more affordable audio technologies allowed queer women to take control of their musical environments.

First Queer Feminist Scene(s)

The women's music scene grew out of an intersection between feminism and the early gay liberation movement. Emerging from a momentum created by a new second wave feminism, the 1960s political actions of the Civil Rights movement, the culmination of the homophile movement in the Stonewall riots in 1969 (launching Gay Liberation), and the direct action learned during protest against the Vietnam War and the Civil Rights movement, the women's music movement saw women create new types of spaces for themselves within the singer-songwriter genres and rock music of 1970s popular culture. This women's music movement, made up of (predominately white) feminists and lesbian-feminists who created music about themselves and their communities, experienced a "golden age" in the 1970s alongside the women's political movement (Hayes, 2010, p. 47). Some of the earliest women-only performances were during this time, as well. One of the first was in 1970, by the New Haven Women's Liberation Rock Band, a group that later joined the Chicago Women's Liberation Rock Band to produce an early feminist album, *Mountain Moving Day*

(Morris, 2015, p. 291). Around the same time, some independent lesbian-feminist music began to emerge, including Maxine Feldman's now infamous "Angry Atthis," first performed in 1969 (but not released until 1971), and Alix Dobkin's LP *Lavender Jane Loves Women* (1973), released via the Laurie Fuch's label Women's Wax Works label, which is still operating today as Ladyslipper Records.

It is during this time in the 1970s when pockets of musical activity transformed into small local scenes that centered around collectives like Olivia Records in Washington, D.C., formed in 1973, and the Boston Women's Music Collective, formed in 1975 (Richards, 2015). These collectives organized workshops and events, and provided information to women about local venues (Richards, 2015). Local scenes became larger translocal scenes as women traveled to perform, attend music festivals, and distributed their recordings. For example, Meg Christian and Holly Near, prominent Olivia Records performers, were involved in the first Michigan Womyn's Music Festival (1976). They also contributed to other collectives, such as in 1976, when they gave an interview at the Boston Women's Music Collective (Richards, 2015). This travel and ongoing interaction created networks of interest and communication that would help attract large numbers of (often queer) women to the women's music scene.

Closely related but not always overlapping with the women's music movement, this period also saw the emergence of out-lesbian and out-gay singer-songwriters. By singing explicitly about same-sex love, but often also through

intentional statements, these musicians were politically outspoken in their music.

This music was an extension of a more visible gay and lesbian culture that had

been building through the 1960s. It took off after the Stonewall riots in 1969.

There was, for example, a broadly distributed gay-themed magazine, *The

Advocate*, which was founded in 1967. One *Advocate* author, Martin St. John,

wrote in 1973:

> Is there such a thing as a gay culture? There are gay bars; gay
> activist organizations; gay churches; gay social welfare
> organizations; a scattering, even, of gay politicians; a variety of
> gay life-styles; and, some say, gay architecture, art, and humor.
> But something has been missing: Folk music, protest songs,
> liberation anthems—the possible forms are many, but they all give
> voice to the heart of a people. That void is now being filled. (St.
> John, 1973, p. 2)

In particular, St. John was referring songs by Madeline Davis and Maxine

Feldman, both lesbian activists and musicians, as an artistic expression of "gay

culture." While these two women's music is held up as the burgeoning folk music

of all gays (and, implied, lesbians), gay liberation was often divided along lines of

gender. The different treatment of lesbian women (largely ignored, historically),

and gay men (heavily marginalized and at greater risk of violence), alongside the

misogyny common to most social and political movements born in the 1950s and

1960s, and the emergence of a gay-male led men's movement in the 1970s,

ensured an ongoing cultural rift between these two groups until the AIDS crisis in

the 1980s (and still, to some degree, thereafter). As a result, queer women's music

has historically been more closely aligned with women's music than with gay

male music. Still, these outspoken musicians' participation in women's music—

viewed at least by gay critics as musical representatives from gay culture—

bolsters the impression that women's music was a distinctly queer feminist scene.

Queer and Feminist Scenes: Building a lifelong intersection

While the narrative history of queer feminist scenes can demonstrate the

ways that movements often build on one another, at the same time, they have a

tendency to make this story seem natural and seamless. Such a brief overview

could never encapsulate the myriad influences, changes, negotiations, individual

opinions, and situation-driven decisions that doubtless drove the direction of

queer feminist musical activity. In a narrative, references only make sense at a

chronological distance, but in the queer feminist scene, many relationships exist

that are not dependent on chronology. In what follows, I suggest a framework that

might allow both perspectives to emerge: on the one hand, a narrative history that

sees one activity leading to the next; on the other a framework to describe those

relationships that exist across time with necessarily reading a chronological

progression.

The lines between what constitutes women's music and what constitutes

an emerging music aimed at lesbian musicians and audiences is far from clear.

That it would be desirable to make a distinction between the two is somewhat

questionable. Although certainly it could be interesting (for me, at least) to

partition off lesbian performers to examine their particular experiences or musics, the reality is that something of the complex social dynamics that led to the development of this music, including both its genre and related politics, would most definitely be lost in doing so.

Compare, for example, two songs that featured in St. John's article mentioned above: Madeline Davis's song "Stone Wall Nation," (1973) and Maxine Feldman's "Angry Atthis" (1969/1971). On the face of it, these two songs speak to the same issues and were inspired by similar experiences of lesbianism in the 1960s and early 1970s. Yet, if we listen more closely to their texts and the positions of their authors, it becomes clear that one of these songs is a queer-separatist anthem and the other is a feminist anthem.

The title "Stone Wall Nation" is already a give-away that Davis's song can be more readily understood as a queer-separatist anthem, with its reference to the now infamous bar where Gay Liberation was launched. Further, the idea of a Stonewall Nation, a gay-only electoral district of California, was actually proposed by the activist group Gay Liberation Front in 1969 ("Gay Mecca No. 1," 1970). Beyond that, the song is openly inclusive of both men and women through its references to both brothers and sisters. Davis defends the dreams and relationships of both groups and leads her mixed-gender audience in a rally to develop a place that is safe for everyone. In life, Davis was a founding member of a chapter of the gay rights organization, the Mattachine Society, and spent decades conducting academic and community work focused specifically on the

gay and, in particular, lesbian community. Davis co-authored an important lesbian history, *Boots of leather, slippers of gold: the history of a lesbian community* (E. L. Kennedy & Davis, 1993), and is the namesake of the Madeline Davis Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Archives of Western New York, which houses manuscript collections and archives from more than fifty New York and Ontario LGBT organizations. Her work was undoubtedly focused on gays and lesbians and had little to do with the broader women's movement that emerged alongside Gay Liberation.

By comparison, "Angry Atthis" is a very woman-focused, rather than a solely queer-focused text; it is introspective and personal, rather than a rallying cry to others. Again, the title is something of a give-away. Feldman choose the name "Atthis" for her song because of the double meaning: the word broken out into two meant that she could say she was angry *at this*, this being the persecution lesbians and gays, but she could also indicate her own lesbian identity by referencing *Atthis*, one of ancient Greek poet Sappho's supposed female lovers (J. D. Doyle, 2012). The text of the song is very focused on Feldman's own identity, her own queer experiences, her own fears, with the only external reference, "We run half of our lives," only briefly indicating the song's applicability to a broader audience in its use of "we." The sense that the song is intended for the women's music scene extends to its production and Feldman's community involvement as well. Feldman embraced the women's music movement ideology of seizing the means of production, releasing the album *Angry Atthis* (1971) on Harrison and

Tyler Productions, owned by (Canadian) Robin Tyler and Patty Harrison. Although Harrison and Tyler were lesbians, they were primarily known in the 1970s as a feminist Women's Liberation-focused comedy duo. In her life, Feldman was also much more involved in the women's music movement than Madeline Davis. She ran the Oasis coffee house in Boston, a venue that featured many female performers (Jaime Anderson, 2008). She was a prominent participant in women's music festivals, including the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, for which she was among the first performers. Feldman performed at the festival more than a dozen times and wrote the anthem "Amazon," with which she opened the festival until 1989 (Morris, 1998, p. 58).

Despite some easy separation between the two songs, other aspects quickly blur the distinction. Both are folk songs, with relatively unpolished aesthetic and fingerstyle guitar accompaniment characteristic of the women's music genre. Both have distinctly queer narrators and express similar sentiments about the fear and intolerance around queer identities. Though Feldman was most closely associated with women's music, she has openly indicated that performing for male audiences was important to her because even women's audiences found her a little bit too overtly queer (Morris, 1998). She said on several occasions that she would play for any audience that would have her (Jaime Anderson, 2008; Morris, 1998), which makes it difficult to pin down Feldman's audience by biography alone.

Having financial control of the music which they produced was a key feature of the women's movement in general (Hayes, 2014). For example, the first women's label Redwood Records, was established in 1973 by lesbian singer songwriter Holly Near. She used the label to release her first album, *Hang in There* (Near, 1973), which launched her still ongoing career in music. What makes the women's music movement most significant to the narrative I am exploring here is that women's music is really the foundation of all future queer feminist do-it-yourself (DIY) activity (Theophano, 2002), and lesbians were at the forefront of the women's music movement (Mockus, 2005). As noted above, where queer women encountered barriers in the mainstream, they began to simply create their own versions of music institutions, such as record labels and music festivals (and non-music institutions, such as bookstores, and health centers [Hayes, 2010]). These new organizations and institutions formed the basis for a music scene that addressed both women's and queer issues.

In positioning women's music as the foundation of all future queer feminist DIY musical activity, there is a risk of creating a narrative that suggests a sort of organic progression from one activity to the other. To begin, the history presented in this work is a vehicle to illustrate a larger point about reading queer feminist scenes as interrelated, and is therefore incomplete and narrowly focused. In the 1970s, advancing technology created new possibilities for life, work, and musical production. For example, the invention of the cassette tape in the 1960s meant that by the 1970s, folk artist Kathy Fire could record an album in one hour

and distribute it independently before it was picked up by Folkways Records (Boucher, 2008b). In 2016, queer feminist performers from the Not Enough festival also recorded and self-released a cassette tape of their music, recorded independently via non-profit radio. Both took hold of the distribution of their music. They even used the same media for that distribution, which for Not Enough is a reference to 1970s practices as much as to the recent bump in the format's popularity (Arnett, 2015). Yet their social and political environments were worlds apart. Contemporary environments can (and should) be considered as influences for individual musicians, but are not necessarily the most effective or illuminating route through which to view the queer feminist scenes as a whole. Disrupting this chronological historical perspective allows for an examination of the connections between diverse but interrelated queer feminist scenes in a way that goes beyond what we might think of, in this case, the passing on or rebellion against an older generation's queer feminist approach to music and musical community.

Describing a Queer Feminist Music Scene

Briefly: differentiating scenes from identities

Simply being queer or feminist fronted, or even lyrically identifying as such, does not make a band part of the queer feminist music scene. There are lots of queer musicians who would not be classed as part of the scene explicitly. Take, for example, a comparison of two trans-fronted bands: Against Me! and The

Cliks. Both groups perform rock and punk rock. The lead singers of both experienced very public "on stage" transitions as they continued to perform as they came out to family, friends, and fans. Both bands have performed at Pride festivals on national and global stages. Against Me! is by far the more financially successful of the two, receiving radio play on rock and modern rock stations across North America, and therefore is better known generally speaking. The Cliks are a Canadian band with relatively small following outside of Canada, though inside of Canada, the Cliks have been fairly successful. The band has toured with Tegan and Sara, as well as Cyndi Lauper (Xtra Staff, 2013). The Cliks has two major label releases, and its front man Lucas Silveira has capitalized on that success to found a multimedia production company with the same name (The Cliks Production Inc.), as well as a life coaching consulting business.

Of the two bands, Against Me! has pressed queerness more clearly into its image. The band's frontwoman Laura Jane Grace has done numerous interviews about her transition. The band released an album in 2014 called *Transgender Dysphoria Blues* that was included in National Public Radio's (NPR) list of 150 greatest albums made by women (NPR, 2017). The album features cover art of a breast mounted atop a piece of meat (artwork by Chris Norris, a.k.a., Steak Mtn) with art inside depicting a disassembled woman, all clear references to Laura Jane Grace's transition and/or status becoming a woman. Yet, while Against Me! is explicit with its transgender messaging and The Cliks is not, it is the latter band

that is viewed as part of the "queer scene" in my community. Against Me! is read as part of the rock scene, frequently heard on the popular modern rock station Sonic 102.9. Certainly Laura Jane Grace is considered a transgender *role model*, but some musicians and listeners here have expressed that they do not feel she is *part of the queer scene*.[14] In part, this is because The Cliks is also composed of a number of lesbian members and so is appealing for its broad-based queerness. But again, it's not just about membership and identity. The Cliks actively pursued queer audiences, particularly in the earlier stages of the band's development. The members are less forward with their queerness but have deliberately cultivated their local relationships. The group is listed among the top LGBTQ+ bands that shaped the music scene in Toronto (Bunce, 2016) and appears in a variety of lists such as "10 queer Toronto bands you should be listening to" (julia, 2014). The key to The Cliks being read as part of the Canadian queer music scene is that their queerness is not solely in the translocal realm. They have local connections, DIY

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[14] This initial observation came from work I conducted with trans men who were performing as drag kings at Toronto's Crews and Tango bar, in 2008. I had noticed two different ways of speaking about these trans performers. In 2008, in the green room, the troupe was excited for an upcoming Cliks performance. Although nobody present knew Lucas Silviera personally, many expressed that he was "part of the community." Later, in 2012 when Laura Jane Grace came out as transgender, several performers with whom I am still in contact expressed that they were pleased a trans person could retain a successful profile while transitioning, and were excited to see a trans person on stage, but this excitement was not rooted in any expressed sense of community kinship. Similarly, and anecdotally, I have heard lesbians in Edmonton express a kinship for the Cliks as "our band" or "Canadian-grown" that walks a line between a nationalist tie and a sense of community or scene affinity.

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connections, and those connections are from within the existing queer music scene. It is the internally developed queer culture, performed for queer audiences, that sets The Cliks apart from Against Me! as constituting a part of the scene experiences for Canadian audiences.

If we cannot define participation in the queer feminist music scene by the identity of the musicians alone, what then marks a performer or band as part of the scene? This question can be further complicated: from whose perspective can we define scene participation? Whereas in Canada I view the Cliks as more embedded in local scenes, especially in Toronto, the experiences of queer community members in, say, Florida, will differ. If we are to understand in a broad sense what elements contribute to our sense of a queer feminist music scene—instead of through granular details, such as community perceptions of inclusion—any framework will need to provide room for sufficient variation to account for inevitably diverse perspectives.

As one possible approach to drawing (sometimes loose) boundaries around queer feminist music scenes, there are five qualities that, together, give us the sense that something is part of the queer feminist music scene: it must have music as a primary creative focus (a given in a "music scene"); it must focus on women's and queer issues and be led by women and queer people; it will lean toward DIY and not-for-profit organizational structures; it will be political and/or resistant in ideology; and it will be translocal in conception (and, often, practice).

1) **Music as Focus**

I specify that queer feminist music scenes must have music as a primary creative focus not because "music" needs to be specified in this case, but rather because by naming it so generally I hope to emphasize again that a queer feminist music scene, across all the examples, is musicologically genreless. "Women's music" is a genre defined ideologically by its "market function" (Frith, 1996, p. 83) of being music by women for women, and more loosely defined by certain tendencies to be "feminist, to be lesbian, to be independently produced, [and] to be live or acoustic" (Frith, 1996, p. 87). "Queer music," "queer feminist music," or even "LGBT music" could also be ideological genres of music, but the terms have not been seriously used as such, to my knowledge, except in Wikipedia (Wikipedia contributors, 2018) and by J.D. Doyle, a die-hard collector of queer music and ephemera (Doyle, 2015). Instead, the current practice is to speak and write about queer *musicians*. Of course, the music that is performed in the queer feminist scene can often be named to a musicological genre, but the scene itself, as a "queer feminist" whole, cannot. It is usual practice to define scenes by their place, "the Edmonton music scene," or by their genre, "the metal scene," or both, "the Edmonton metal scene." Instead, the queer feminist music scene is defined by ways that people engage with certain elements of their identities. Like with "women's music," Frith identifies this as something that is "*brought* to a sound" (1996, p. 86, emphasis original). So, queer feminist music can be folk. It can be

punk. But it can also be experimental, noise, cover songs, country, or any other genre of music.

Of course, different events have a tendency to carve out spaces within genres—ones that will come to be closely associated with that event (even if the event is not specifically delineated by genre). Women's music in the 1970s, for example, was dominated by singer-songwriters performing folk genres. As part of that movement, the Michigan Womyn's Music was closely tied to the genre of women's music, and thus dominated by folk singer songwriters. Riot Grrrl emerged from punk scenes and developed a particular brand of punk alongside mainstream punk styles and some experimental punk styles. Specifically queer women's bands are sometimes classed as queercore bands (an offshoot of 1980s gay men's queercore scene focused on a rejection of what they read as a vanilla, heteronormative gay club culture), or sometimes classed with Riot Grrrl. Ladyfest, inspired by Riot Grrrl, began as a predominately punk-rock oriented festival but was considerably more diverse in terms of genre: the first festival included Riot Grrrl familiars Butchies, Bratmobile, The Gossip, and Sleater-Kinney, but also included an after-hours "Metal Karaoke" event, a feature evening of country music, and an evening of lighter sounds, like indie-folk rocker Cat Power, folk artist Amy Blaschke, and pop duo The Softies.

The tendency for certain events to gravitate toward particular genres is more importantly a product of the specific times and places of those events than of the queer feminist music scene viewed as a whole across both time and place.

For example, the aggressive punk rock sound of Riot Grrrl can be viewed as a reactionary statement against the "proper" submissive behavior of women (e.g., as represented through women's music's softer, folky sounds), as well as alongside its non-queer influences in the politics of punk rock. Genre plays an important role in understanding this specific movement in the time and place it occurred but does not define the scene as a whole. Even for its time, musicological genre is not definitive of the 1990s Riot Grrrl era: other genres of queer and feminist music (e.g., women's music, queer country) were being performed in other places and would, if explored further (which they are not here), fit within the framework of "genreless" queer feminist music scenes, as well.

2) **Highlighting Women and Queer People**

As an element that makes queer feminist music scenes recognizable, the presence of women and queers, and the prioritizing of issues impacting queer and feminist communities, seems as obvious as the need to have music present in the music scene. Yet, just as the ways that music is present in the scene (i.e., genre) varies widely, so too are the ways that individuals engage with and incorporate the considerations of gender and sexuality difficult to pin down in specific ways when attempting to visualize a large queer feminist music whole.

Since there is no queer *look* and no queer *sound* it may not be possible to pin down gender or sexual identity through the visual or aural experience of performance. Many queer or women performers will not directly address queer

feminist issues with their lyrics, artwork, or other media. Others might make deliberate references to queerness or feminist issues in their work. It may be there. It may not. Regardless of what we can read as queer or feminist about the performances and related arts themselves, I consider these as weak arguments for situating performers (and audiences) in queer feminist scenes. What constitutes a reference would, at times, be a matter of debate about intentionality or subjective readings.

Further, the highlighting of women's and queer perspectives does not necessarily arise by simply by gathering queers or women (or both) together in one place. Instead, we should look for the ways that the incorporation of women and queers, and queer feminist needs and perspectives, have been made intentional and integral to the activity. Intentional, in this case, is usually without room for debate and may often even be explicitly stated as something like *intentionally designed space,* or *safe(r) spaces*, as organizers of Not Enough festivals have called it.

For example, leadership in the scenes or for events will be intentional. Queer and women leaders will be appointed (by self or others), in part because they meet the identity criteria and are perceived as being in a position to carry that through into the event, contributing specifically to queer and feminist aspects of the events. I would expect this influence to vary by individual tastes but overall be reflected as some combination of the imagery, messaging, related workshops, bands that are brought in for concerts, and so on, as well as through the particular

queer and feminist networks such leadership taps into and draws upon. The perspectives of leaders, including factors like their sexual and gender identity, but also race, class, and ability, has a large impact on both the structure of events and, often, the audiences and specific local communities for which particular events speak. Queer feminist focus also becomes evident (heavily influenced by leaders) in the rules that are established for spaces (e.g., for male presence, as behavioral guidelines around sexual and gender violence), the ways that facilities are modified (e.g., neutralizing bathroom gender signs), and the types of accommodations that are made to address barriers faced by women (e.g., providing child care at events). Though there are nearly always explicit statements about the intended audiences for queer feminist events, these aspects contribute to a sense of the event being for queer and feminist audiences *by design.*

3) DIY: Why and How

As long as queer experiences are perceived to be excluded from the mainstream, all queer feminist music scenes will necessarily originate as do-it-yourself (DIY) type scenes. Nowadays, DIY seems to have a variety of meanings. On the one hand, there is a DIY ethos and aesthetic, which is based on a punk style and is most recognizable through unpolished audio, punk-genre song structures that tend toward basic (though not uninteresting or unmusical), and visuals with unrefined and cut-and-paste styles. On the other hand, there is a DIY based around non-professional status and the construction of workable solutions

from unlikely or underfunded resources. While both apply in many cases (e.g., Riot Grrrl and Ladyfest fall into both categories of DIY), it is the latter I feel that signals that something is contributing specifically to a queer feminist music scene. This is partly because a large component of the queer feminist music scene is that it addresses a need not currently being met by mainstream music scenes. It is also partly because the access to music resources—including physical resources like instruments and recording equipment, and non-physical resources like financial support, lessons, and the social capital required to maintain a musical presence— does not flow as easily to queers and women, nor as early in life, as it does to many male and non-queer people. Until the mainstream music industry achieves some feminist goals—ones that equalize access to pretty well every element that supports a musician's development and ability to actively participate in the music industry—queer feminist scenes will be DIY scenes constructed apart from, or only marginally participating in, mainstream scenes.

4) Politically oriented

The creation of queer feminist spaces, activities, arts, and music, are by nature political acts. The degree to which they are overtly political varies between events, places, and times but the act of creating such a space will always require at least some planning to take the activity or art into a queer feminist realm. As an element that contributes to our sense that something is part of a queer feminist scene, this point may seem analytically expedient: it is just plain easy to align

scenes with the politically-charged social philosophies of queerness and feminism. This makes them identifiable alongside familiar missions, values, actions, and so on. We know what to expect from them. Often, festival organizers will claim queer, feminist, or queer feminist (or queer feminist IPOC) labels for themselves or their work, making the intended connection explicit as a way to generate or intensify those expectations. Rather, a political positioning of queer feminist musical activities is more than just an analytical crutch but essential to differentiating queer scene activity from queer identities.

If the highlighting of queer and feminist perspectives is essential to a queer feminist music scene, then political positioning will necessarily occur. This is not to say that every time a queer or feminist need is met the action is inherently political but that the intentional design of queer and women's spaces and music is, currently and historically, inherently political. Is it, for example, a political action to have a music scene that (even problematically) excludes men, like the Michigan Women's Music Festival? Definitely. Is it a political action to have a scene that includes all genders but creates an environment conducive to women's taking leadership and other prominent roles, or to showcase their queer and women's work before or even on par with men's? Of course, since such things can only happen *by design* in the current climate. We can even extend this thinking to the logical end: what happens in the (far) future when queer feminist spaces no longer need to be designed, because we have achieved equality between

all humans? Well, I suppose there will no longer be queer feminist spaces. They will just be "spaces" that meet queer feminist ideals.

5) Translocal

The concept of translocality is integral to the queer feminist music scenes because it is the mode through which LGBTQ+ people and women are connected to the broader ideals to which their activities and performances are intentionally designed to contribute. Local scenes that are queer feminist politically, DIY, and music focused, simply do not exist in isolation today. Yes, we can imagine that one could develop—an isolated pocket of similarly oppressed queer women operating in a patriarchy that is also isolated from queer feminist challenges, and creating its own response to local oppression. In practice, queer feminist ideology is shared across space and maintains a variety of anti-oppressive ideas and practices over time. Queer feminist musical spaces are also influenced by, shared by, and developed through by being transferred—both physically and conceptually—between places. Unless we can imagine a queer feminist politics emerging isolated and untouched by translocal philosophies, queer feminist musical practice cannot be understood in isolation from the broader political sphere.

At the same time, the individual festivals are often driven by an ethos of local need, a sense of lack in the local community, a void which is filled by a particular activity or set of activities. While the need may, at the time, seem

localized, those needs that we can label "women's needs" or "queer needs" reach well beyond local spaces—related activities are either happening (and therefore contributing to translocal scenes) or needed in other places. Recognizing the need across geographical boundaries, and meeting that need in similar ways at a local level, allows participants in queer feminist activities to clearly position themselves within a translocal phenomenon while still shaping and inflecting that connected musical activity in ways unique to their specific communities and experiences.

Scene Elements, in Practice

The five elements above—music focus, highlighting women and queers, DIY, political orientation, and translocality—are evident in each of the festivals examined in this study. Each iteration brings new subtle differences. Taken chronologically, these subtle differences can be read as building on the previous iteration. But the elements are not dependent on this chronological reading. Here, I discuss the festival events in reverse chronological order to disrupt this tendency toward a narrative of progression and highlight the ways each festival independently articulates some of the key elements previously introduced. Later in this work (Chapter 5), I return to this framework in my discussion of my ethnographic work with Not Enough participants.

Ladyfest – Translocal, Highlighting Women & Queer Issues

Ladyfest is a worldwide series of music festivals created by and for women beginning in 2000. Through the use of the Ladyfest brand,[15] festival organizers signal their commitment to align with and therefore participate in the culture and conversation around the Ladyfest mission of giving a platform to women and queer musicians, as well as to the queer feminist music scene. The individual festivals are DIY events for musicians "not backed by the commercial music industry" (Chidgey, 2008), organized at a local level, led by individuals or small collectives, and intended for local audiences. There is no overarching organizational structure that formally directs Ladyfest activities[16] and the events

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[15] Ladyfest is sometimes thought of as a 'brand' by those writing about its festivals (e.g., Alexander, 2014; Evans, 2013). In a survey of Ladyfest participants, some organizers did write about their work contributing to the development of a Ladyfest "brand," as well (O'Shea, 2014). In festival materials, I have not noticed any reference to the word. I use it here to denote the larger collection of Ladyfests and their image, while also acknowledging that the reproduction of festival with the same names and themes builds something of a saleable identity.

[16] Something like an overarching structure has been discussed repeatedly by Ladyfest participants and organizers over the years, but with no real motion away from DIY toward this structure. For example, Maaike, an organizer from The Netherlands, described a conversation where some organizers said "Hey, there should be like this central [convention] or something, where every Ladyfest sends their representative and we should make this European manifesto." She went on to say the idea was that "If you had a really broad manifesto with a couple of key points that you should stick to if you wanna call yourself Ladyfest" (Chidgey, 2008). The idea brings to mind the Riot Grrrl manifesto that was so widely circulated during the 1990s, and which was ultimately ineffective for securing a firm definition for involvement in the movement.

are usually too small to attract serious attention from audiences outside the region. Yet the transfer of people and ideas via participants and the internet has created a (still ongoing) large network of events that span the globe: there have been festivals in Canada, South Africa, China, Brazil, Hungary, New Zealand, and Estonia, to name but a few. Because of the play between the local action and the global politics, Ladyfest events are often broadly infused with a queer and feminist politics that mingles at times with local needs to the point where participants have argued about the degree to which politics should be incorporated (more specific than queer and women's issues, or more broadly to address diverse needs) (Chidgey, 2008).

Ladyfest is occasionally summed up rather reductively as "the return of the Riot Grrrl" (Foster, 2001). Of all of the queer feminist activities I've contemplated, Ladyfest and Riot Grrrl are the only two that are regularly considered part of the same queer feminist music scene by other authors.[17] Certainly it is true that from the start Ladyfest both implicitly and explicitly connected itself to Riot Grrrl. Among the organizers for the first Ladyfest in Olympia in 2000 were prominent Riot Grrrls Allison Wolfe, lead singer for Bratmobile; Tobi Vail, drummer for Bikini Kill; and Carrie Brownstein, guitarist and vocalist for Sleater-Kinney. Much of the imagery (such as the cut-and-paste styled Ladyfest graphic that appears on the festival's first web page), as well as

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[17] Occasionally, authors will also combine Girls Rock Camp or Queer Rock Camp activities (e.g., O'Shea, 2014), but less consistently so.

the genres of music (a lot of punk), recalled Riot Grrrl's DIY aesthetic and sound. Yet despite our being able to draw a direct line from one movement to the other through citations of direct influence and the literal presence of iconic Riot Grrrls, Ladyfest has managed to carve out its own space within the larger queer feminist cycle, in part by way of a different approach to highlighting women's and queer issues.

As a network of events infused with intentional politics, Ladyfest (like many queer feminist activities) has a core set of (fairly) clearly articulated missions around which activity is oriented, but by no means limited. At the very centre of this are the various ways that gender identity and expression are treated in festival statements and activities, especially with regard to the prioritizing of women's roles, issues, and performances, and the proactive attention to issues and stances around transgender inclusivity.

Like other queer feminist music festivals, Ladyfest prioritized women. Men were permitted to volunteer and play in the bands, but women always had "first pick" of positions and organizers instructed that "women should be in the visible roles" (from notes by Lisa, in Dougher, Wolfe, & Brownstein, 2000). The festival made a conscious effort to promote discussion of women's issues at organizational meetings before the festival, including things like barriers to women in the music industry and the value of women's work (both traditional and musical). The first festival program was to include open debate on six women's issues (one page each), including an opinion and a dissenting opinion for each of

the topics (media, economics, feminism, art, fame and celebrity, and the objectification of women) (from notes by Lisa, in Dougher et al., 2000). Pre-festival activities also included instructionals for topics for which women often experience barriers, like PA systems, guitars, bass, and drums, and non-musical hobbies (like auto mechanics), as well as opportunities to explore women's themes intellectually through workshops on topics such as the women's movement or fat oppression (from notes by Rebecca, in Dougher et al., 2000)

Unlike some other queer feminist music festivals, explicit inclusive statements also opened up the Ladyfest spaces to all woman-identified individuals and highlighted the then under-acknowledged need for the proactive involvement of transgender people in music communities (or, really, any community). This statement, from the first Ladyfest in Olympia, was prioritized by organizers, appearing first among the coordinator meeting notes compiled as festival archive:

> Transgender inclusion. The coordinators at this meeting were under the impression that it had already been decided that Ladyfest will be COMPLETELY transgender inclusive. We considered this question: if a workshop/panel leader has a problem with inclusion or if the workshop/panel itself necessarily precludes the inclusion of transgendered persons, does Ladyfest2000 really want that leader, panel, or workshop to be part of the festival? The answer was unanimously "no"…There was also an agreement to include this policy of inclusion in printed materials such as press releases and the program. (Dougher et al., 2000)

In 2000, the explicit publication of transgender inclusion in festival material was otherwise rarely seen and, beyond queer communities, would have been groundbreaking queer action. At the time, the queer communities in which I

actively participated were still grappling with basic terminology: many terms now considered derogatory were still a part of even "trans-inclusive" vernacular. The *Act to Amend the Canadian Human Rights Act and the Criminal Code*, which adds gender identity and expression as protected grounds against discrimination, wasn't introduced until 2016. In the United States, protections are even fewer, with the prominent national organization Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays (PFLAG) only adopting transgender inclusive policies in 2012 (PFLAG, 2012). More recently, the US has taken significant action against the LGBTQ+ community, with the 45th president speaking at an anti-LGBTQ+ rally (Shugerman, 2017), and withdrawing recruitment plans and medical funding for transgender military personnel (Diamond, 2017). Suffice to say that in 2000, transgender rights and the active inclusion of trans people in everyday life would have hardly been blips on the US national radar (outside of, perhaps, academia).

These women-focused and trans-inclusive positions were carried forward, leading to the active involvement of women and queer people in other Ladyfests around the world. For example, organizers for Ladyfest Nürnberg (2006) put out calls for films and videos on the themes of gender, norms, and utopias. Ladyfest Bay Area (2002) openly spelled out its goals to boost the "visibility of women and trans-identified people," to provide "an open forum" for discussion by women, to "advocate pro-woman organizing efforts," provide a venue for diverse women to interact, and to "help foster, empower, and sustain the community of women and trans-identified people in and around the Bay Area" ("Ladyfest Bay Area," 2003).

Amid varying references to Riot Grrrl and diverse ways of addressing local political needs, preferred genres, organizational constraints and other challenges, these two threads of woman-focused and trans-inclusive missions served as foundations for the multi-faceted Ladyfest festival network.

Riot Grrrl – Politics

Riot Grrrl is usually described as a feminist punk movement brought to life in the early 1990s via a combination of punk ideology and reactionary attitudes toward the limits and abuses imposed on young women by patriarchal music industries and society. As such its story has already been demonstrated as one that is integrally political. The usual Riot Grrrl narrative begins with the formation of bands like Bikini Kill and Bratmobile, framed as the creative endeavors of a few young, white, American women, without regard to the (non-punk) musical or political forces that might have facilitated their mass musical and artistic rebellion (Marcus, 2010 is an influential example). Yet Riot Grrrl's relationship to both other forms of feminist musics and the feminist politics of its time are both essential to fully contextualizing and understanding Riot Grrrl both on its own and as part of a larger queer feminist music world. To date, two scholars I am aware of address this relationship with any depth. The first is Jodie Taylor (2012a), whose discussion most convincingly aligns queer Riot Grrrl with queercore (mostly men and uninterested in mainstream gay culture, but

chronologically well-aligned with Riot Grrrl).[18] Taylor's analysis acknowledges

connections between Riot Grrrl and women's music with regard to desire for

visibility. To support this connection, she notes some of the more recent homages

by Riot Grrrl-associated bands to female performers like kd lang and Indigo Girls

(e.g., those by electronic/ queercore band Lesbians on Ecstacy, formed in 2003)

(Taylor, 2012a, p. 158). The second scholar to address the relationship is Mary

Celeste Kearney (1995, 1997, 1998),[19] who writes that Riot Grrrl emerged from

young women's conversations about their "complicated relationship with

patriarchy, adultism, and heterocentrism perpetuated by dominant ideology and

often reproduced in the alternative cultures to which they belonged" (1995, p. 84).

Although Kearney is largely focused on the few overtly separatist elements and

individuals in Riot Grrrl and I feel misinterprets women's desire to be free of the

abuses of men as separatist desire aiming specifically for separatist environments,

I agree with her general assertion that Riot Grrrl marks a pivotal political turning

point for queer feminists looking to move away from or re-envision the second-

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[18] Queercore is a combination of queer politics with hardcore punk that began in
the 1980s as a rejection of "vanilla" mainstream gay club culture. It is distinct
from LGBTQ+ messaging, and specifically lesbian messaging found in Riot
Grrrl, although there is a good case for some crossover between the genres. The
distinction in many cases comes down to fine political and social lines. For more,
see DuPlessis and Chapman (DuPlessis & Chapman, 1997).
[19] Also, frequently cited by other scholars is Val C. Phoenix "From Womyn to
Grrrls: Finding Sisterhood in Girl Style Revolution," *Deneuve* (January/February
1994). Unfortunately, the journal is long out of print and I (and library services)
have been unable to locate a copy of this article.

wave women's music scene (explicitly or implicitly, as it may be). What's

missing for me is a closer look at the relationship between Riot Grrrl and its

contemporary queer politics, which I think play a larger role than is usually

credited (usual credit: almost none). If Riot Grrrl was born out of reactionary

attitudes toward an older generation's feminist music scene, one that deliberately

excluded women "who did not play acoustic instruments and soft types of music"

(Carson, Lewis, & Shaw, 2004, p. 100). However, part of its response was to

adopt the methods employed by radical queers of that same 1980s to early 1990s

period.

        In the first few years of the Riot Grrrl movement, queer women were

coming out of the HIV/AIDS battles of the 1980s. Death rates from AIDS in the

US were, in the early 1980s, reaching nearly 50% of reported cases. The illness

spread from a handful of reported cases in the late 1970s and early 1980s to 8-10

million people by 1990 (AVERT, 2017). Looking back on the queer music

production during this time, it seems as if the queer community was collectively

holding its breath—songs about acceptance and love from the 1970s turned into

albums filled with fear about life and death in the 1980s.[20] Throughout the 1980s,

queer women led the care of dying gay men, engaged not only because they had

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[20] See for examples of the latter, Automatic Pilots *Back from the Dead* (1984),
which features "Safe Livin' in a Dangerous Time." For a later work, see Michael
Callen's *Legacy* (1996), released after he died from AIDS, which features "They
are falling all around me," a track that features two of the best known lesbian
performers from the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, Holly Near and Cris
Williamson (Doyle, 2007).

been branded as "AIDS carriers" by the media and tended to be the dominant among employees at LGBTQ+ support organizations, but also because they felt a kinship through shared gay identity and they wanted to defend their communities against AIDS and the related assaults from the religious right (Gould, 2009, p. 66).

Queer women marched on in protest across the United States in an attempt to spark government interest in the decimation of queer communities across the country and participated in Citizens for Medical Justice, which advocated increased militancy in the face of what some viewed as government action parallel to that seen in pre-WWII Germany (Gould, 2009, pp. 127–128). By the time they arrived at their first Riot Grrrl meetings, some queer activists were "burned out on activism" from "facing death all the time, screaming, fuming, going to jail, and throwing shame at the opponent" (Marcus, 2010, p. 239). They were fed up from a lack of recognition in male-dominated AIDS organizations, where despite women's efforts to defend gay men against both the disease and the fallout from AIDS' association with homosexuality, queer women continued to be made invisible by their male counterparts (Gould, 2009, p. 343). But the tactics they learned through Queer Nation, and ACT UP, two radical queer rights organizations, and influenced by Guerrilla Girls, a group of radical feminist artists, stuck with Riot Grrrls as they sought ways to bring attention to feminist issues. In doing so, early Riot Grrrl leaders drew on both queer and feminist histories to cultivate a music scene to de-center feminist discussion around new

perspectives on women's issues. Riot Grrrl historian Sara Marcus briefly

acknowledged this connection:

> Throughout the '60s and '70s, women had been making their
> bodies into sites of art, bringing attention to the roles women's
> bodies had played throughout the history of art, and using their
> own bodies to look at how culture uses women. By the '80s, some
> feminist artists, such as Barbara Kruger and Jenny Holzer, were
> bringing language into their images, while members of the AIDS
> activist group ACT UP…created eye-catching visuals that placed
> their protests' message centrally and uncroppably in the frame.
> Kathleen [Hanna], by writing words on her body (SLUT on her
> stomach was the most common message…), was consciously
> merging these streams of feminist art and activist visuals…Soon
> the audiences at almost every Bikini Kill show included girls
> sporting words and shapes on their hands, arms, and stomachs.
> (Marcus, 2010, pp. 146–147)

Riot Grrrls combined feminist approaches like "breaking silence" (power by

vocalization) with tools they learned from ACT UP, like publicly shaming men

who were violent toward women (Marcus, 2010, p. 283) or communicating

deceptively simple, memorable messages. In the 1980s, it was "Silence = Death"

(Gould, 2009, p. 129), in Riot Grrrl, "SLUT."

By the 1990s, ACT UP was a huge organization, dominated by men.

While many Riot Grrrls attended ACT UP and Queer Nation meetings, the groups

political missions were not well suited to the needs of young women musicians

(Marcus, 2010, p. 290). As these young women distanced themselves from other

organizations, Riot Grrrl became more queer oriented as a movement. By 1993,

zines were full of queer messaging. *Girl Germs 3*, for example, contains a page

with "QUEER NATION" emblazoned across the bottom with a same-sex cartoon.

Above, there is a list of 15 points, "When you meet a lesbian: hints for the heterosexual women[21]" (by Molly Neuman and Allison Wolfe (c1992), reprinted in Darms, 2013, p. 178). Songs also contained increasing amounts of queer or, at the least, gender-neutral content. The 1995 Team Dresch album *Personal Best*, contained a song titled "Fagetarian and Dyke" (words which do not appear in the song itself), as well as a love song about a woman ("She's Amazing"). The 1994 self-titled album *Excuse Seventeen* includes a number of gender-neutral subject songs as well as a song where a female lead singer addresses an ex-lover, now someone else's bride: "On your wedding day, will you wear white? Will you tell them what you did to me? Will you tell them everything?... Don't think you can start again. You've got my insides all over your hands." However, at the same time that queer women were becoming more visible in Riot Grrrl, some found that queer politics impeded their music careers. In the end, bands sometimes branched out into queercore scenes, or found new avenues to market their music. For example, in response to these pressures The Butchies member Kaia Wilson, and

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[21] The first point is "Do not run screaming from the room—this is rude," followed by pointers about making assumptions about attraction, talking about lesbianism, flirting, and sexism (by Molly Neuman and Allison Wolfe (c1992), reprinted in Darms, 2013, p. 178). In another zine, *I (heart) Amy Carter 1*, an anonymous contributor detailed a "Typical Week and a Half," containing a series of sexual encounters and fantasies, such as, "Made love to a man with a vagina while I fantasized that I was dressed as a man making love to a woman," or "A woman made love to me. After, she told me that she was a man and hated queers. She never undressed" (by Tammy Rae Carland (1992), reprinted in Darms, 2013, p. 115).

her girlfriend zine editor Tammy Rae Carland, founded Mr. Lady Records (Carson et al., 2004, p. 112), which did not record any male musicians (ever, to my knowledge) and was in operation until 2004.

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival – DIY

The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival was a separatist folk music festival established in 1976 that is now a particularly well-known example from among the variety of activities undertaken as part of the women's music genre and US-wide movement that began in the 1970s. One of several festivals established at the time, the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival was an important site for the launching of women musicians' careers, for the development of lesbian feminism including separatist politics, and for the empowerment of women both as artists and in other aspects of life. Spanning four decades, the festival—which closed in 2015—saw musicians from a variety of genres, performing for audiences of women who travelled from across the United States to attend the event. Volunteer run, the festival might be called Do-It-Yourself (DIY), a concept which, for women's music, is more plainly bound up with ideas around genre, politics, and queer women's issues than the other festivals discussed here (e.g., Ladyfest, Not Enough Fest). Simply put, DIY becomes less challenging, more affordable, and a more accepted mode of production as technology advances. In the 1970s, a DIY ethic was something that would have been difficult to accomplish without the participation of a larger number of people

with varied skills and resources. Today, it is possible to record an album of comparable quality on a smartphone or tablet.

The women's music movement is not among those usually associated with DIY practice. There seems no good reason for this exclusion, except that DIY is more often associated with the women's music contemporary genre of punk, both in terms of its unpolished aesthetic and non-commercial approach to music and event production. However, the DIY ethic exists and has been applied by scholars in a variety of non-punk realms (e.g., Baker & Huber, 2013; Bennett, 2009; S. Cohen, 2015; Flinn, 2007). In music, the need for DIY queer feminist events was born out of systemic barriers experienced by women and queer people with regard to entering and engaging with the existing music industry. With the music industry controlled by men skeptical of women's technological and musical abilities, women who were interested in music recording would have little choice but to seek alternatives or, as many women did, use what resources they had available to create their own. (Really, this narrative is much like the punk narrative that saw musicians embrace the DIY ethic as an escape from the excesses of that very same music industry that rejected women from its stages and studios. The difference is, of course, that the industry does not seem to have been an openly hostile environment for men who were inclined to pursue those alternatives).

More than just creating their own systems to engage with music, this DIY ethic was the means by which the festival empowered women and delineated its

politics along lines of gender. Men were actively excluded from "The Land,"

creating a situation in which women could construct their environments according

to their own abilities and desires. Consider, for example, this 1982 excerpt from a

festival attendee:

> It is a place where each womon is treated with the dignity that she
> should be treated with but is commonly denied elsewhere. It is a
> place to grow and to share and to become one with wimin of like
> minds. There are no strangers at the festival. It is a going home. /
> As soon as a womon entered the gates and passed the protecting
> guardians she became a somebody. Her feelings, her emotions
> mattered. Wimin who couldn't walk were no longer "handicapped"
> but were thought of as "physically challenged." The accent was
> always on a womon's potential however much there was, not her
> "lacks" as established by the standards of the outside world. / I
> watched the night stage crew working, climbing scaffolding,
> running lights, giving directions. Other festival wimin drove nails,
> hauled trash, and serviced trucks. Their strength ran through the
> air. / Sunday night as I was listening to the last concert, I was
> overcome by a real sorrow knowing that these same powerful
> wimin would go home to their regular jobs where most of them
> would be denied the use of their full potential. We would return to
> being told that we were too stupid or too weak to produce
> important things. But we did! (Liz Michaelson, 1982)

This level of independence, at the time (and to some degree still today) was only

possible for women through DIY, had a profound impact on the women who

attended the festival.

The empowerment of women through DIY did not, however, allow the

festival to completely break away from the politics of gender. The ways that

gender politics reinserted itself almost immediately into the Michigan Womyn's

Music Festival's DIY approach reopened the age-old questions of who is

permitted to participate and what they were permitted to do so (musically, in particular). In terms of who could participate, the festival drew hard lines around women who were assigned female at birth, notoriously perpetuating systems hostile to transgender women, right up until the festival's closing. Many women from the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival were among those who signed the "Open Letter to Olivia Records" (Oliveira et al., 1977) which protested the presence of transgender sound engineer Sandy Stone in a women-only recording collective. The letter's authors misgendered Stone as a man, and, aligning themselves with the DIY ethic that facilitated women's engagement, stated, "We are aware of the unfortunate necessity to call upon male knowledge or skills on occasion, because women have been so excluded from certain fields. But we would like to trust that it is only used as a last resort, when there are no women available to do the job" (Oliveira et al., 1977). The core of the crime, as perceived by those concerned about Stone's presence, is that involving an individual who would (by some not particularly perceptive logic that views privilege as anatomical and not social) already have access to the music industry is a move that challenges women's ability to control their music production outside of the mainstream industry. At the simplest level, these gender rules delineate who can, and who cannot, access this particular DIY brand of women's music.

Beyond debates around who qualifies to participate, the DIY approach of women's music, shaped by festivals like the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival, also drew deliberate lines around what types of music were appropriate for

women. The women who seized the means of production at that time largely avoided the heavily synthesized, electric sounds that were so prevalent among "cock rock" men in the 1970s and 1980s (Frith, 1981). They instead created "an American folk tradition…performed for women, by women, produced by women, and usually with a feminist and/or lesbian voice" (Myers, 2009, p. 247). Close association to specific softer folk traditions, singer songwriter traditions, or, for black women, acapella and gospel traditions,[22] tended to reproduce the stereotypes for women in the music industry, where women are devalued as amateurs (Koskoff, 1995, p. 122) or perceived as "long-haired, pure-voiced, self-accompanied on acoustic guitar…[which] reinforced in rock the qualities traditionally linked with female singers—sensitivity, passivity, and sweetness" (Frith & McRobbie, 1978, p. 377). Rock for example, was perceived as masculine and women who used the sounds and instruments of rock music could be viewed as "confronting, borrowing, or protesting" the ways that men used the distinction to "limit, control, or coerce women," risking retaliation from men (Koskoff, 1995, p. 122). The DIY folk traditions created by women in the 1970s constructed, in a way, a world apart that protected women from abuses of men, but also allowed

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[22] These early boundaries discriminated against women of colour by restricting their musical expression. Musician Vicki Randle has noted the "intrinsic racism" of the early days of the women's music movement, where women of colour "playing loud dance music and rock, experimental jazz, were initially being told that their music was not affirming to women" (Carson et al., 2004, p. 100). Linda Tillery also reported that in the early movement she felt "alone as a black woman" (p. 100). Over time, more intersectional perspectives would be included despite these initial limitations.

men to retain the political and economic power of the industry. This would, ultimately (and as I describe further in Chapter 6), provide a space for those still facing barriers to create new DIY projects to address the need, resulting in an ongoing cycle of development in queer feminist DIY scenes, with each group of organizers reshaping the scene based on lessons from, and perceived faults in, previous approaches.

Intersectionality in Queer Feminist Scenes

People of colour have been excluded from some of the histories of queer feminist movements, further complicating narratives about how they have impacted and been impacted by queer feminist action. Despite decades of women of colour in particular challenging the whiteness of queer and women's spaces and politics, it is only more recently that white queer communities have taken real steps toward political intersectionality—and it has not been seamless. For example, uniformed police officers were banned from Toronto Pride at the request of that city's Black Lives Matter group. Black Lives Matter interrupted the Pride parade in 2017, speaking via megaphone in support of all kinds of intersectional identities (not just people of colour, but also Indigenous people, disabled people, deaf people, and more). Despite the eventual agreement between Black Lives Matter Toronto and Pride organizers, the queer community present for the protest was less than supportive. The disruption was met with cat calls and boos from confused and annoyed onlookers, to which the protesters repeatedly called, "Your

racism is showing" (cheatingthesystem21, 2016). Similarly, Queer Rock Camp,

(an Olympia, WA-based summer camp that could easily have been a major

example of queer feminist scenes for this work), was shut down in early 2016

because the collective felt that it was failing its people of colour and trans

individuals, unable to reconcile some of the racism and transmisogyny occurring

between young campers and in its organizational structures. The move was

considered sad, but a step toward accountability for supporting an anti-

discrimination position—the camp could not continue as a site for such violence.

In response to the closure, the nearby Seattle Queer Rock Camp created open

applications for its organizational leadership and began to design and enforce

explicit anti-racist and anti-transmisogyny guidelines (The Olympia Queer Rock

Camp Collective, 2016).

Michigan Women's Music Festival was cited by participants of colour as a

space that was "White-dominated," including with regard to the festival's most

famous intersectional politics around trans inclusion. Women of colour felt that

that, like all queer culture, the festival's anti-trans messages were dominated by

white (lesbian) voices (McConnell, Odahl-Ruan, Kozlowski, Shattell, & Todd,

2016, p. 20). The contributions of women of colour are not prioritized in other

narratives of the festival, either. Even though the festival was nominally an anti-

racist space, including diverse queer feminist performers and presenters, and

creating separatist spaces within the festival for women with intersectional

identities, the event was created and controlled by white, separatist, anti-trans

lesbians and women, which is reflected in its various histories, as well as in the festival politics. Similarly, popular histories of Riot Grrrl frame the movement as a predominately white, heterosexual, cisgender phenomenon largely because the best known faces of the movement, like Kathleen Hanna of Bikini Kill, fit that mold. Certainly this is true of the earliest years when only a handful of people identified with the less than one dozen self-identified Riot Grrrl bands (maybe 1989-1991). However, women of colour who made significant contributions to the movement for the following two and a half decades are all but absent from the record (Nguyen, 2012). Scholars have pointed to the necessary white privilege that allowed (and still allows) Riot Grrrls to rebel while also allowing them to ignore race as a factor in the experiences of women of colour (Kearney, 2006; Nguyen, 2012).

Since I am drawing on the existing literature, public archives, and extant media for the history of queer feminist movements and scenes, the history I have outlined here will be lacking the perspectives that have been erased from those resources. I chose the examples of Michigan Women's Music Festival, Riot Grrrl, and Ladyfest in part because they will be most familiar to readers, in part because they allow me to quickly span the eras I want to discuss, and in part because, although incomplete and sometimes misleading, these festivals are ones for which significant resources are readily available for analysis and discussion. Due to the erasure of intersectional perspectives and my drawing on the (flawed) popular history in this way—for the purpose of illustrating my primary goal to develop

and clarify one possible approach to understanding queer feminist communities, cultures, or histories—my discussion is woefully lacking in the contributions those as-yet unwritten histories would contain.

At times, especially when viewed as a chronological progression from one era to the next, whiteness in particular can seem a thread that is woven through queer feminist music history. This is an illusion. In this work, I am interested in the *idea* that politics are one of the elements that create the musical community, or drive musical events. While intersectionality plays a significant role in this politics, the particular articulations are not a central feature of my discussion. I hope to lay a groundwork for these future studies. New popular histories that include the diverse perspectives of the women who participated in these activities would create new narrative paths for illustrating this framework. Or, more dramatically and certainly to be welcomed, a wide availability of intersectional histories may in fact completely disrupt the framework I discuss here. A related consideration for this example is with regard to the time frame around which I have limited my discussion. Taking the narrative back chronologically would be a valuable follow-up to this initial exploration of possible approaches to reading queer feminist scenes through history, not only to show continuity for this topic, but also to explore other influences for the development of queer feminist music scenes (such as that the pioneers for queer feminist music were black blues women) and their implications for understanding more recent social and political positioning for queer feminist musics.

Chapter 5: Not Enough Festivals

In this chapter, I take a closer look at the twelve Not Enough festivals that were put on in four cities across North America (Portland, New Orleans, Winnipeg, and Edmonton). The material for this chapter is drawn from a variety of ethnographic, archival, and online resources. I attended Not Enough Fest Edmonton in 2016 as an observer, and at that time made copious notes about the festival and spoke informally with a variety of musicians and audience members. My other ethnographic material consists of interviews with one festival-founding organizer from Portland, Sheana Corbridge; one five-time organizer and six-time attendee from Portland, Joseph Bonnell; two festival-founding organizers from Edmonton, Stephanie Olsen and Kendra Cowley; and two musicians from Edmonton, Tasmia Nishat (2016 festival) and Jacqueline Ohm (2015 festival). Interviews were conducted in May and June of 2017, which is about six months after the Edmonton festival (the last-standing of the group) announced it would not be running in 2017. That much of the enthusiasm for and all involvement in the festival had diminished posed a challenge to finding knowledgeable research participants. However, this distance from the festival seemed to also provide an opportunity for participants to engage in a more critical reflection about the festival process and its overall impact on their lives and the local scenes than might have been possible in the festival moment.

Other sources that informed my perspectives and provided examples for discussion include material from online archives (generous provided by Edmonton organizers), extant festival websites, blogs and the websites of festival-associated music and arts collectives, YouTube, organizers' public personal websites, and dozens of interviews from newspapers and music websites (particularly for New Orleans where the many interviews and interview podcasts available with founding organizer Osa Atoe have been invaluable to supplement Atoe's own writing on the topic).

Music for the "New" Queer Politics

One of the key ways that Not Enough festival Edmonton adapted itself for local needs was by prioritizing queer politics. In October 2017, more than two years after the first Not Enough Edmonton, the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) was tentatively declaring LGBTQ+ people as engaging in a new civil rights movement, one in which identities have become multiple and intersectional (P. Kennedy, 2017). Not Enough Edmonton's mission and image were shaped by this emerging dialogue, captured (somewhat late) by the CBC: the "new" queer movement aimed to be inclusive, emphasizing thoughtful organizational structures that consider a wide variety of perspectives. From my experience, this often results in internal organizational struggles brought about by the effort of addressing the needs of a wide variety of sometimes conflicting queer and intersectional identities at once. There are many needs and few resources. In

the past, though not entirely excluded from the various activities, women and queer people who did not fit the core mold for a particular scene found themselves on the margins of even so-called inclusive spaces. This marginalization within the minority, although not necessarily deliberate, was one of the ways that such spaces were managed, reducing the disparity between needs and resources. One quite well known example of this is with regard to the marginalization of women of colour in the feminist movements: though women of colour were (usually) welcome to participate in feminist activities, they were much less likely to have the opportunity to introduce discussions of race to those spaces, even though women's experiences are inextricably linked to their experiences of race (as well as class, ability, and other intersections) (Frankenberg, 1993, pp. 85–86; Thompson, 2001, p. 168). Similarly, a focus on lesbian separatism has excluded transgender people from the women's music movement (most famously from Michigan Womyn's Music Festival).

The delineation of queer feminist spaces is more than just an ideological boundary about who qualifies as part of a movement: it also comes through in the aural and visual constructions of those spaces. Musically speaking, these spaces were marked in part by the specific genres associated with them. A clear example is in the way Riot Grrrls felt excluded or out of place in second-wave lesbian feminist scenes, whose space was defined largely by folk and pop sounds, and created a space came to be defined by punk music in response. Not Enough Fest Edmonton organizers strove to position the festival within the more intersectional

queer politics identified (somewhat late in the game) by the CBC: the new queer civil rights movement. In order to accomplish this, though, Not Enough festivals intentionally constructed their spaces to both align with queer feminist music scenes of the past and diverge from them by breaking down some of the social and political assumptions surrounding music festivals—in particular, the assumptions represented in messages about who should perform, in what genre, and with what style.

Festival Origins

Not Enough was created in 2009 in Portland, originally the brainchild of Sheana Corbridge with her bandmates from the band Forever. Corbridge was also trying to start a queer record label at the time, called Punk Start My Heart. It was "short lived," but the effort, along with some experience with booking shows, gave her some real perspective on the queer music scene in Portland at the time. Something seemed missing. The idea for the festival emerged in response to Corbridge and her friends' experiences of being "heavily involved in music scenes [in Portland] that were very straight" (Sheana Corbridge, personal communication, May 5, 2017). The band members felt as if their queer communities and their music communities were too separated and longed for a more integrated queer music scene. Yet there just weren't enough queer acts to form a scene at that time. Corbridge had some previous experience with building scenes for specific objectives. In 2000, she had worked in California with a

program called Soapbox, her first exposure to "an explicitly feminist kind of scene." Soapbox was a monthly event that included workshops and an open mic for performers to get stage experience in a non-threatening environment. Corbridge borrowed from this idea when considering how to boost the queer scene in Portland. She said,

> We were thinking one idea would be to have some kind of event where people had to form something new, in the hopes that it would get people to do something that maybe they would stick with after the festival. And then that would kind of add to the whole community experience and have new stuff going on. You know? New bands. New creative work. … So I put up a flyer and I met two of the other co-founders, through that flyer.

Osa Atoe carried the idea from Portland to New Orleans, where festivals were held in 2012 and 2013. Like Sheana, Osa was looking for ways to advance the local queer and women's scene. She noted that every time she started a new band with women or queers, they were beginners both in the scene and on their instruments (Ace Hotel, 2015). This can be discouraging for both experienced performers and new performers. Women's late entry to the music scenes was not due to a lack of interest in becoming musicians. Osa said,

> Women make up 50% of the population, they do not make up nearly 50% of the musicians [at] any of the shows I attend in this town. I am always hearing women expressing an interest in playing instruments or being in bands, but there still seems to be barriers in actually getting them to participate. (Pic, 2013)

Not Enough festivals were also held in Winnipeg (2013) and Edmonton (2015, 2016). These events picked up on these ideas, aiming to more closely integrate the

music and queer scenes in their cities, and to provide a low-pressure, barrier-reduced introduction to performing on stage to large crowds. Organizers for these festivals based the design and mission of their festivals on the various sources of information about Not Enough festival that they were able to access online, including the Portland Tumblr page, and through direct DIY instructionals, such as the one posted by Weird Canada after Winnipeg's festival (Passey, 2014). Each iteration of the festival shared the same core values around ensuring the festival was a safe space and providing barrier-free access to those participating in the queer music scene. Each festival was also a unique entity, drawing on and contributing to past and current local scenes in different ways.

Like so many DIY events, early Not Enough festivals were cobbled together from a combination of organizer resources and ingenuity. Organizers like Corbridge ventured outside of their comfort zones and worked with meagre resources to pull off the events. For example, in the second year of Portland's festival, Corbridge had $1,000 to use. Trying to secure a venue for the festival, she went to speak to a wealthy owner of a variety of artist warehouses located in the St. Johns neighborhood of Portland's northernmost region. "We were trying to

look for shady places, because we didn't have any money,"[23] she said. The warehouse owner asked her to come to visit him at an event in one of those "shady places," which turned out to be an opening for an art show. There was wine. And food. Corbridge felt out of place: "I just had no idea what to do with myself. And I probably was dressed, maybe not appropriate for the occasion…It was just weird." To make things more awkward, the owner of the facility they wanted to use wouldn't speak to her directly. She said, "…so I had to walk around and be like a weird art person looking, I don't know, and hob-knob or something...I had to do it in a, like, schmoozy way." She tried to offer her $1,000 for the venue and had her offer all but dismissed as insubstantial by the millionaire owner:

> I was just kind of scared, because I had just never had to deal or negotiate something like before, you know. And then to have somebody to be just like, "eh, whatever," like that. Because to me it was, "we have $1000! This is great!" …[but for] these two dudes that own all these buildings in town, so they're probably millionaires, billionaires, something like that…for me to be like, "hey, I have $1000 dollars," probably sounded stupid. (Sheana Corbridge, personal communication, May 5, 2017)

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[23] In 2010, the first festival was in a space that later became a laundromat, which Corbridge described as "a bougie laundromat, where you pay like a lot of money and get sandwiches brought to you and stuff," and, though at the time it was a sort of trendy place in a trendy neighbourhood, "it rained really hard one of the days and it flooded and we ended up having to take all the equipment and move it, because there was like water coming in, and getting on the electronics and stuff like that." It had no functional bathroom (they rented a port-a-potty), and the owners capitalized on the festival by selling food outside, but on the bright side, the space was free.

By the end of the evening, although "it felt kind of terrible to be in that environment," Corbridge had managed to secure the building as a temporary home for the festival. Despite her discomfort, the substantial effort and surprising success marked this experience as among Sheana's best memories of her time with Not Enough Queer Music and Arts Festival.

Once secured, the warehouse became a place to undertake a variety of more familiar DIY activities. The warehouse they ended up with was "a *giant* space with nothing in it," and was, at the time (2010), considered to be fairly "remote for most people." So, having overcome the first challenge of getting permission to use, and access to, the artist warehouse, there was then the question of how to stage a festival there and how to facilitate access to an area that could be a bit out of reach for some potential audience members. Corbridge stocked the warehouse by watching the free lists of online sales sites very closely. She found a lesbian bar that was closing down in Portland and scooped up their stage from Criagslist, along with some free couches to create a cozy seating area. Radio Sloane, guitarist for the popular queercore band The Need, brought in her professional sound system and did all the sound work for the festival, cutting a huge potential cost from the budget. To compensate for the remote location, Corbridge also recruited her mother to the cause. Together they made vegan macaroni and cheese that they served to audience members attending the festival, which was quite far from from local eateries. They even established a shuttle

system to run from the nearest bus stop to the "shady warehouse" to make up for the venue's lack of ideal transit accessibility.

Not Enough: direct references to queer feminist scenes

All of the Not Enough festivals reference other queer feminist activities—visually, aurally, and through their policies and practices. Some of the earliest promotional material created for Not Enough Queer Music and Arts Festival in Portland was so heavily laden with references to Riot Grrrl that, aside from the focus on new collaborative projects, it would have been difficult to separate the event from explicitly Riot Grrrl branded shows. For example, a video produced for the earliest years of the festival opened with a close-up shot of a VCR and VHS tape that has "NOSTALGIA" handwritten across the front, framed by two large pink hearts. After some brief video clips from the 1990s Riot Grrrl scene, a woman, played by Sheana Corbridge, appears and begins flipping through her local newspaper. She lands on the event listings and (we are to assume) is displeased to see that the musical listings are described as "Ex-girlfriend's band," "Straight," "Straight" (again), and "Hetero Smith and the Heterosexuals." When she turns to the following page, there is a two-page spread of Not Enough Festival's call for submissions. She immediately calls her gender non-conforming friend, who is pictured doing bicep curls in front of a poster for Riot Grrrl band Sleater Kinney, to the tune of Riot Grrrl band The CeBe Barns Band's "She's a Winner." The friends are then seen rocking out to queercore Kicking Giant's

"Fuck the Rules," the refrain of which becomes the first half of the caption that concludes the video: "fuck the rules. start a band" (*Not Enough!*, 2010).

Despite these and other Riot Grrrl laden materials used early on, Not Enough festival quickly grew into its own brand of festival, in Portland and the other cities where the festival has been mounted. Each festival takes some elements from previous work and recreates it to suit the current need in the community. In some ways, these are continuations of the queer feminist activities established by previous festivals. In other ways, they are reactions to those activities, or the ideals represented in those activities. From the current perspective—one contemporary with the queer civil rights movement that is so politically influential for Not Enough festivals, and where the long term impact of the festivals and similar music activities is yet unclear—Not Enough festivals seem to straddle older scenes and what can be imagined as the future of queer feminist scenes, its final "form" (e.g., women's music, Riot Grrrl, Ladyfest) seems not completely solidified. This is, in part, because in the larger cycle of queer feminist musical activity, Not Enough festival has been the space that most explicitly embraced the idea of a queer feminist scene that spans both time and space. The festival draws freely on punk, folk, and rock, alongside queer and feminist tropes, all delivered through a new framework of musical, social, and political expectations.

Musical References, Musical Departures

The punk style and punk music tends to predominate in Not Enough festivals and related events. More than half of all pre-festival shows promoted by Not Enough Fest Edmonton—such as fundraiser concerts held at venues around the city in the months prior to the festival event—were punk shows. Stephanie Olsen noted that the first Not Enough in Edmonton had a lot of punk influence. Both Olsen and her organizer counterpart Kendra Cowley perform in bands that lean toward the Riot Grrrl, punk, and grunge sounds of the 1990s. It was, in fact, one of the things for which the Edmonton festival was criticized (Stephanie Olsen, personal communication, May 15, 2017). Although the organizers had mixed feelings about the feedback, they also acknowledged the limitations created by an overemphasis on punk style. Olsen said,

> The second year, one of the pieces of feedback that we were trying
>
> to take to heart was that some participants felt it was a little bit, ya,
>
> that it did have too much of a punk orientation. And if you didn't
>
> have those sensibilities…it felt pretty intimidating to get involved
>
> in. (Stephanie Olsen, personal communication, May 15, 2017)

But punk was not dominant only in Edmonton. All of the organizers I spoke to acknowledged the influence that Riot Grrrl (and sometimes Ladyfest) had on them during their formative years. Edmonton organizer Kendra Cowley and Portland founding member Sheana Corbridge, one of the earliest festival organizers, were very involved in the punk music scenes in their respective cities.

As mentioned previously, Corbridge was working to start a record label (Punk Start My Heart) and performing in several punk bands (including Forever). During her early experience with organizing feminist open mics, she was under the mentorship of women who had identified as Riot Grrrls in the 1990s, and then in turn absorbed their teachings into her own musical work. Corbridge said that in Portland, the influence was wide-reaching: "I mean there's definitely a direct connection because Riot Grrrl impacted [Not Enough festival organizers]. I think mostly everyone who was an organizer was also into Riot Grrrl as a young person." New Orleans' primary organizer, Osa Atoe, was also heavily in the punk scenes in New Orleans, Portland, and Washington D.C.—although with an intersectional twist. She published a zine written by and intended for black punks, called *Shotgun Seamstress*, which has since been published as an anthology (Atoe, 2012).

On stage in Edmonton in both 2015 and 2016, punk was very common, and Riot Grrrl punk was frequently called to mind. Of the 15 songs on the album of 2015 Not Enough Fest Edmonton performers that was produced by the festival with Sweetie Pie Records in 2016, four have both the punk style and political messaging that at one time was synonymous with the 1990s movement. For example, the band Sister Sarcophagus performed (and recorded) their song "You Asked For It." The verses of the songs are comprised of a series of questions about people's behaviour, the types of things often credit as the cause or justification for rape, each punctuated by a shouted refrain "You asked for it!":

Did you spend your evening drinking in a bar?
You asked for it!
Did you walk down a dark alley to get to your car?
You asked for it!
Did you sign up to be an altar boy?
You asked for it!

In other verses, a wide range of excuses for sexual assault are reviewed, ranging from lesbianism to wearing make-up, and being in high-risk spaces. The chorus of the song takes the dismissal of sexual assault and moves it into an even more violent realm. Whereas in the verses we might envision "You asked for it" as a response to a victim reporting sexual assault, in the chorus the narrator becomes the aggressor, the perpetrator of violence, silencing the victim with shame:

You asked for it, you asked for it.
You're talking about your trauma
You're causing so much drama
You pretty little slut you better keep your mouth shut
You asked for it, you asked for it.

The topic of sexual violence was common in Riot Grrrl. Here, there is a notable update to the language in that the perpetrator is ungendered, and the gender of the victim varies (e.g., "pretty little slut" is used to address both the character most easily read as a female party-goer and the altar boy). Throughout, the narrator's voice is grating and distorted. It is set against a wall of bass guitar and drum sounds through which a repeating pattern of piano melody in octaves penetrates in a bright, clean, major key. I could imagine the piano tune of the verse fairly comfortably accompanying a children's show. Yet as the song progresses and the

violence of the lyrics mounts with an increasingly frantic delivery, the happy

piano phrase becomes irritating in its repetition. The sense of "nothing's wrong

here" that is juxtaposed with the aggressor's distorted voice begins to break down.

At the chorus, the piano shifts to frantic downward scales, making each return to

the happy tune (at each verse) more noticeable and challenging. The song ends

with repeated piano octaves slightly out of sync with the rest of the band. Without

either the happy melody or the complete downward scale, the effect is completely

unsatisfying musically. Recalling the musical sound of Babes in Toyland's

"Bruise Violet" (1992) off the album *Fontanelle* (minus the piano used by Sister

Sarcophagus), as well as that song's lyrical approach of accusations toward an

unnamed third party (Babes in Toyland calls the unnamed antagonist—thought by

fans to be Courtney Love—"Liar, liar, liar"), the song is firmly situated in the

Riot Grrrl musical domain.

When asked about the influence of Riot Grrrl on the festival, all the

organizers felt it had a significant influence, but the major impacts of the

movement were highlighted in areas outside of the girl-punk genre and DIY

aesthetic. Osa Atoe from New Orleans, for example, cited Riot Grrrl as

contributing to her ability to recontextualize her self-image and help her move

away from the idea of simply consuming music as a listener. She said,

> Before I found out about riot grrrl, I was more just a music fan and
> didn't really see myself as a potential participant. I didn't see a
> way to add anything to the opus of rock'n'roll at that point. I knew
> I couldn't really compete on a technical level with rock'n'roll
> giants that had already lived and died before I ever picked up a

guitar. So, riot grrrl and other experimental punk bands like The Raincoats and even Beat Happening, helped me figure out that you didn't have to be technically perfect, just unique. (Skolnick, 2015)

This thought was echoed by Stephanie Olsen in Edmonton. For her, Riot Grrrl didn't stand as starkly in contrast to the "giants," or show that beginner musicians needed to be different from what is already out there. For her, it was more about not worrying so much about the level of skill you have:

I feel like there's no denying that in the trajectory of feminist music initiatives, there's a connection between things like Riot Grrrl and things like Not Enough Fest. Absolutely. I think that something that Riot Grrrl modelled really well was like, just, like, grab an instrument and make some noise. And take up space. Don't worry about how it sounds. Kind of demystifying music as not having to be this like really technical experience thing, you know. (Stephanie Olsen, personal communication, May 15, 2017)

For Sheana Corbridge in Portland, Riot Grrrl was all about the queer feminist cultural space. She said she was into a few Riot Grrrl bands, and read a few zines, but because she lived in Arizona, a place largely missed by the Riot Grrrl tours, it was only a cursory interest. When she moved to California and became immersed in the supportive local music scene, she learned about Riot Grrrl culture and the types of community organizing that would contribute to her drive to do community building in her future queer music scenes.

Although Not Enough has significant and compelling connections to Riot Grrrl, for each participant who embraced Riot Grrrl, there was one or more who took a different musical approach. In Edmonton, there were several folk singer-songwriters over the two years of the festival. Although it is tempting to draw a

musical parallel to women's music, I have no ethnographic evidence from participants to support the claim of specific references to 1970s women's music (rather than simply to folk music). Several artists were musically and topically well-aligned with women's music, including Wish Fish, a solo artist who also played in Edmonton Not Enough band Elusive Moose with Tasmia Nishat. Both Wish Fish and Elusive Moose are musically akin to American folk-music revival greats like Joan Baez. Elusive Moose's harp and three-part harmony vocals often reproduced the sweet eerie style of Simon and Garfunkel's "The Sound of Silence" (1964) recording, but with queer and sexual assault themes that would resonate more clearly with the women and queer audiences for which it was intended.

Some performances by Edmonton bands included elements that were strongly suggestive of other iconic queer feminist bands. On the album of 2015 Not Enough Edmonton performers, *Not Enough! Fest YEG* (2016),[24] Monarchie, a grungy indie band, included both unison vocals and call and response between two extremely similar voices in their song "New World," making close parallels with the same techniques used in iconic queer duo Tegan and Sara's early album *The Con* (2007), combined with the unpolished, hesitant vocal approach of queer pop duo The Murmurs, who gained some popularity in the 2000s (despite recording in the early- and mid-1990s) because of band member Leisha Hailey's

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[24] The cover art that accompanied the cassette was the same as that on the 2016 festival poster pictured in Figure 7.

starring role on the hit lesbian television show *The L Word* (2004-2009). Layered over bass and bass-drum heavy grunge, touching on themes of sexual assault, and literally calling for social change ("We want! Revolution!") the song immediately signals its queerness while emphasizing a political anger not present in the music of Tegan and Sara or The Murmurs.

Pop and folk genres are more easily accessed by female performers than other genres. Punk, and to some degree rock music, has been embraced by both women and queers in sufficient force to have made a serious dent in those genres by way of Riot Grrrl, Ladyfest, and associated queercore and homocore genres. Where Not Enough Fest Edmonton begins to help performers break new musical ground is with regard to those genres that remain hostile to queers (and, to a lesser degree, women) without major movements backing women and queer participation. Specifically, Edmonton festivals included a variety of performances in metal (experimental doom; doom), hip hop, electronic, and screamo (aggressive emo) music genres. Some of these genres, particularly hip hop and metal, have historically been hostile to queers, and have only more recently become sites for radical queer expression (Clifford-Napoleone, 2015; Pabón & Smalls, 2014; Penney, 2012; Wilson, 2007).

Within this wide variety of genres that performers were able to experiment with and build collaborative projects for, many bands continued to address the same dominant themes seen elsewhere in the festival, namely personal traumas. Hip Hop artist PersuAsian and her band, for example, recorded the song "Do You

Ever" along with other 2015 Edmonton festival performers. The song reverses the narrative format from "You Asked For It," discussed above, in an alternating rap and melodic chorus structure, focusing on the victim's position, speaking back to the perpetrator. The first verse and chorus:

> Do you ever
> Do you ever look in the mirror and you hate yourself
> You reach out ahead but you don't take the hell but say fuck life
> And say it again
> Cause everything I do leads to disappointment
> I mean, I'm always letting someone down in the end
> Smile on my face, I mean, I'll just pretend
> Everything's alright
> And everything's ok
> PersuAsian she's strong, she'll be just fine
> But they don't know the everyday fight
> And they don't know what I go home to at night
> Every dark thought that crosses my mind
> Someone take me away from these lonely nights
> They say walk away, save your own life
> And I wish I could but I feel so weak
> I wish I could put my mind at ease
> But it ain't that easy
>
> Chorus:
> I bleed from the scars you left
> wounds that force my mind to regret
> Try to somehow resolve my distress
> But I'm unsettled by it
> But I cry
> Do you ever empathize
> or dare to see inside
> your victim's eyes?

Topically relevant to the queer feminist scene as much as any Riot Grrrl performance, PersuAsian's track ekes out new space both within hip hop and within the queer feminist scene. The early women's music, Riot Grrrl, and to some degree Ladyfest movements were all largely inclined toward a central musicological genre: folk, punk, and punk (again), respectively. By that very structure they conceptually barred some individuals from participating (that is, those whose interests were outside those genres). There are many racial and class implications in the delineation of scenes by genre in this way because musics like hip hop or country music have been so ideologically (although not always, in practice[25]) linked with the social and economic statuses of particular racial groups (black people or rural whites). Once the genre is defined as white, middle-class, as was the case for Riot Grrrl, it is challenging for those involved to see past their own oppression (as women and queers) to support others. Not Enough took deliberate steps to try to prevent such definitions from being established, thereby making their festival accessible, musically speaking, to a diverse group of people—although, as will be discussed in Chapter 6, not as perfectly as it perhaps seems from this discussion.

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[25] Consider, for example Nerdcore hip hop, through which I have previously explored the intersections of race and masculinity (Boucher, 2008a), and the enthusiastic appetite for hip hop among white audiences (Tanz, 2007). These examples defy generic expectations in terms of race, as well as class and gender.

Ethnographic Queerness, Experiential

Music festivals (especially indoor festivals) are often crowded, loud, and relatively impersonal spaces. Not Enough Edmonton had a completely different and much more relaxed feel to it. When I first arrived at the festival (without a friend in tow), a volunteer accepted my sliding-scale entry fee, drew a small heart on the back of my hand, pointed out the various amenities—washrooms there, childcare here, stage over there, 20 minutes until burritos would be available—and walked me the few paces to the performance hall. Several hundred people gathered in the brightly lit and relatively unadorned open area. I passed a few small crowds where spaces opened easily to welcome me to quiet conversations among the groups that were, more often than not, made up of mixed genders, styles, and ages. There were lots of punk styles of spiky hair and leather jackets covered in sewn patches. There were also a lot of Beyoncé t-shirts (she had performed in Edmonton the night before and the crowd was abuzz with accounts of her unseasonably cold and snowy, outdoor, half-frozen performance). I chose to get the lay of the land and finally settled to lean on a post and watch the crowd for a few minutes, but my plan to sit back and observe was foiled as volunteers and other audience loners spotted me and came to chat. Everything about the experience pointed me toward interacting with others, being myself, building community.

Figure 1: 2016 NEF Safe(r) Spaces Agreement.
The agreement was posted at the festival entrance.
© Lindsey Blais, 2016. Reprinted with permission.

Figure 2: 2016 Not Enough Fest Edmonton Audience awaits the next act.
© Karen Green, 2016. Reprinted with permission.

Considering my experience described above, it was clear to me that the expectations about how to be in this space were markedly different from the expectations I sensed in other festival spaces. My experiences with both queer and non-queer music events have been that people mostly move about the venue in small groups and interact largely through mediated activities, like workshops, if they are available and interesting (and even to workshops I would, more often than not, bring a friend rather than expect to speak with strangers). Interactions are often framed by attempts to appear *cool*. Joel Dinerstein (2017) describes

being cool in a variety of ways. A cool person is aloof, charismatic, and exudes a

sense of authentic artistic individuality with a tinge of rebellious dark side.

Coolness is projected via nonchalant attitudes, "subversive slang" (22), and

"emotional detachment" (22), all projected through a "relaxed intensity" (12) that

suggests a (perhaps unstated) resistance to dominant culture. Not Enough

Edmonton organizers pointed to this aspect as something that was not a wholly

positive aspect of their experiences with other music festivals in the region: "I

think some of those other festivals were very *cool* in their final manifestation.

You know. It's like, *cool*. That can definitely be alienating, as well" (Kendra

Cowley, personal communication, May 15, 2017). Instead, they aimed to

intentionally construct a space that would be more welcoming of people who

don't necessarily fit the current paradigm for coolness:

> Pretty much unanimous feedback we got about the festivals was
> that the community space felt so positive and welcoming and
> comforting for everyone. Like little kids running around. Ya, just
> people, people's parents, people's grandparents. It felt like a pretty
> inclusive, non-alienating space. (Kendra Cowley, personal
> communication, May 15, 2017)

For me, each of these elements alongside some less tangible modes of being in

and constructing shared space, each relatively inconsequential individually, come

together to create something that feels like a quintessentially queer space. It is a

type of space I have come to describe casually as "super queer." These are spaces

I recognize by intuition when I enter: I can relax more, I feel safer, and there is

something familiar and welcoming that is unlike other public or private spaces.

Challenging to pinpoint because no space is perfectly welcoming to everyone, a super queer space is for me made up in part by the presence of people whose attitudes and behaviours openly challenge discriminatory practices and systems (including those that might be prevalent in other LGBTQ+ spaces, such as misogyny in gay male spaces), and in part, through practices that intentionally construct space for diverse bodies and experiences.

This sort of welcoming environment was intentionally constructed and rooted in the festival's inclusive mission. Not Enough Edmonton's close attention to addressing social (e.g., class, family status) and physical (e.g., disability) accessibility in meaningful ways, along with the community's involvement in shaping these efforts via consultation and volunteer participation, created certain expectations about how participants should be treating others while using the festival space, both as performers and as audience members. These expectations were reinforced with lengthy introductions acknowledging the Indigenous lands

of the festival site, the various accommodations for accessibility,[26] and the vision for inclusive environment.

Expectations were outlined explicitly in a prominently-placed festival Safe(r) Spaces Agreement, and implicitly through the ways that the festival space was set up, with roped-off accessible seating (unheard of in one-room venues like the Ritchie Community Hall where the 2016 festival was held, though not uncommon at larger festivals), prominently placed free food, and open doors to the childcare area. Unlike the many festivals that prioritize marketing and sales material, sales tables at Not Enough Edmonton were tucked into the back of the venue. Along with artist materials, this area included a variety of fundraising activities, both for the festival and for communities in need (such as for an Indigenous community impacted by a massive wildfire that had burned for 15 months in the province).

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[26] The accommodations that I noted in the 2016 festival included: childcare and a children's play area, sliding-scale festival ticket prices (nobody turned away), roped-off seating areas, the provision of free earplugs, the provision of free bus tickets, the location of the venue along major public transit routes, all-ages access, a dry (no alcohol) venue, free vegan and gluten free meal options (meal-sized portions), free snacks, free beverages, a newly constructed ramp into the venue, a publicly posted safe(r) space agreement, mental health and safe(r) spaces support via volunteers who wore glow sticks so they could be easily identified, and ungendered bathroom facilities. Additionally, I later learned that many of the events leading up the festival were scheduled via voting about availability, and structured around easy-to-access venues both in terms of physical accessibility and central location. Accessibility was further facilitated via the provision of free jam space for bands and free loaner instruments for learning and participating the festival.

Figure 3: Not Enough Fest Edmonton organizer with baby carrot print fabric identification. Organizers and other festival volunteers wore DIY labels to identify themselves as organizers, as well as tags with names and pronouns.
© Cynthia Boucher, 2016

Although the organizers did not preview the music performed at the festival, and therefore would not have known exactly how each band or performance would take the stage, the political emphasis on inclusion seemed in many ways to extend into the programming for the festival stage. For example, the opening act of both the Saturday and Sunday shows of the 2016 Edmonton

festival were a testament to the diversity and inclusivity narrative pressed upon attendees in the media activity preceding the festival and in the opening speeches. On both days, the first featured ensemble was the one with the greatest number of people and the most diversity (due to numbers): a ukulele orchestra. The ensemble was led by Mel Lintott and Alexis Hillyard,[27] including diverse bodies of women, queers, trans, people of colour, and people of different abilities, many of whom had never before performed on stage, and many of whom had learned the ukulele only a few days or weeks prior. The group performed a medley of cover tunes, complete with vocal chorus in harmony, in a light pop style. It set a light-hearted, friendly tone that had the audience smiling and cheering at the transition to each new song of the medley. It also posed quite a contrast to the banner that shouted "REVOLUTION!!!!!" at the crowd alongside similar messages that both festival imagery and marketing seemed to champion. The sense of contrast was rooted in a clash between reality and expectations—ones shaped largely by references to queer feminist music scenes elsewhere and in the past and a reality shaped by modern expectations regarding queer feminist community needs and politics.

This inclusive demonstration was not simply the current brand of social justice organizing adapted to the queer music scene. It is also a carefully constructed response to previous queer feminist scenes, which many found to be

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[27] Host of a locally-produced YouTube-based vegan cooking show, *Stump Kitchen*.

exclusionary, either implicitly or explicitly. After discussing the many ways Riot

Grrrl influenced her approach to the festival, such as that the movement

encouraged women to pick up instruments, be loud, and experiment, Stephanie

Olsen said:

> I think we were pretty careful about how we explicitly reference
> Riot Grrrl. Like, that wasn't a thing that we wanted to be like,
> really, inextricably linked to the festival or anything. Just
> recognizing that Riot Grrrl did alienate a lot of people and didn't
> include a lot of identities. So ya, different time and space. But also
> recognizing that…it was a different starting place. (Stephanie
> Olsen, personal communication, May 15, 2017)

At the same time that the organizers of Not Enough festivals in various locations

each tried to be more inclusive, many were also skeptical of their ability to truly

achieve this goal. In Edmonton, for example, organizers held a debriefing in

which they addressed issues around team diversity, especially at among the

organizational crew. Reflecting on the approach to inclusivity in Portland, Sheana

Corbridge said,

> We were focusing on queer stuff, but I think you know, now, I
> think if we were to do something like that again, I would have
> expanded that a little bit more to be more trans inclusive, which we
> were, but we didn't, we weren't very mindful of how we
> approached that. You know? And that's something that now that
> I'm a little bit older and have more language around stuff like that,
> I think maybe I would approach it a little bit differently. (Sheana
> Corbridge, personal communication, May 5, 2017)

Corbridge's perspective was echoed by another Portland organizer, who said he

could never make the assumption that "people didn't feel excluded or that it

wasn't inaccessible to some people," even though the festival was framed and intentionally constructed as a "radically inclusive space" (Joseph Bonnell, personal communication, May 18, 2017). The degree to which inclusion was a focus of debriefing and of post-festival reflective practice for those involved is a sign that its importance to the ideology of Not Enough probably exceeds the observable aspects of the festival.

Aesthetic Patchwork

Genre is sometimes closely tied up with visual aesthetics and style, such as the relationship between punk and what Jesse Prinz identifies as artistic expressions that evoke irreverence for social norms, nihilism, or amateurism in punk sound and imagery (2014). It's unsurprising, then, considering the lack of rigid boundaries around genre for Not Enough festivals, that there is not consistency with regard to the non-musical aesthetic elements of the festival and related activities. Rather, visual elements tie loosely to the genres of individuals who bring those elements, but also interact with each order to create a patchwork of aesthetic references that at times clash because our expectations—from well-reinforced genres, and therefore stylistic boundaries, outside of the queer feminist scene—is that such elements are distinct and belong to something apart from one another.

Many visual elements for Not Enough Edmonton call to mind a Riot Grrrl or punk aesthetic simply because they are DIY objects and DIY has been so

closely linked with the various punk scenes aesthetically. The many banners posted at the 2015 and 2016 festivals, for example, were all old sheets with hand-painted phrases or pictures. Phrases like "Her Success is Not Your Failure," "Pizza rolls not Gender roles," or "They Can't Silence Us," are fairly generic queer and feminist statements. Hand-painted items, like signs, banners, or artwork, are also common at other queer and feminist activities in the city, unrelated specifically to music events.

At the same time as some of the DIY aesthetic connection to Riot Grrrl seem incidental, other visual elements of Not Enough festivals specifically reference the Riot Grrrl style. Like many who pursue queer feminist musical work, a number of the organizers had a strong affinity for the Riot Grrrl movement, resulting in more of an emphasis in this area than in other aesthetic domains. On stage, the punk bands often brought a simple punk style, some of which was very evocative of early 1990s Riot Grrrl, when Kathleen Hanna wore plain solid-colour t-shirts and jeans to the stage. In particular, the cut and paste style of posters, combined with the queer feminist imagery, is evocative of the 1990s zines. In Winnipeg, for example, the festival poster was a combination of hand-drawn elements with cut-and-paste elements, but even the hand-drawn elements were made to look cut and paste. Words that appear hand drawn in a digital environment were backed in dark, uneven rectangles of one or two words each, mimicking the block background colours of words cut by hand from

magazines,[28] visually referencing the cut and paste style now iconic of Riot Grrrl. The poster for the 2015 Edmonton festival was also hand-drawn. It featured an upside-down bat with a guitar, surrounded by text about the time, place, cost, and theme of the festival, all in varied fonts, akin to cut-and-paste style.[29] Edmonton organizers also sent a strong message about their connection with Riot Grrrl practices and style in their final "how to" account for future organizers. Instead of posting the information on the internet in a play web or blog form (such as Winnipeg did by publishing a "how to" article in Weird Canada, online), Edmonton organizers created a handmade zine and then posted high-quality scans of the zine online along with instructions about how to print and assemble the booklet format. In the 1990s, zines often carried information about shows, lessons on organization, encouragements to create one's own event, or recaps of Riot Grrrl events. Choosing a zine format, rather than other much more accessible web- and print-ready formats, was one way that that Edmonton organizers paid homage to the earlier queer feminist punk scenes in both style and content.

Not all the visual elements of Not Enough festival referenced Riot Grrrl directly. Other performers and organizers drew on their own backgrounds and interests to bring visual diversity to the festival. Despite many organizers' affinities for rock and punk, they were careful to ensure that the imagery for the

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[28] Access the Winnipeg 2013 poster here: https://weirdcanada.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/NEF-Poster-web.jpg
[29] Access the Edmonton 2015 poster here:
https://notenoughfestyeg.files.wordpress.com/2015/01/nef-feb-28th-poster-2.jpg

festival drew on a more diverse set of tastes. Advertising for bands in Edmonton was primarily in the form of (skilled, posed) photography, headshots and band biographies that showed the performers ready for the stage, with their own aesthetic, rather than one constructed for them by the festival. The result was that while direct references to Riot Grrrl could be seen in some design elements, these elements were often disrupted. Similarly, where performers brought singer-songwriter aesthetics reminiscent of women's music, that aesthetic would seem disrupted by punk, rock, or electric references. Altogether, organizers and performers seemed to announce that they were connected to these queer feminist movements, and at the same time declare, aesthetically, that they were creating something new and distinct from those queer feminist pasts. In the 2016 Edmonton festival, the mashup of aesthetic elements became a key feature of the festival advertising. Visually, festival organizers projected their inclusive mission quite literally as a combination of aesthetic elements from other queer feminist eras. The key festival-produced artwork for Edmonton's 2016 festival (Figure 7) was a carefully crafted mashup, a brightly coloured piece of digital art that depicted a guitarist who embodied the diversity of various music and queer identities. The character depicted in the poster manages to be, all at once in a single figure, a multi-gendered guitarist, with one high heel with fishnet stockings, one runner with rainbow sock, hair both long and short, arms both muscular and slim, in both a corset and a ripped t-shirt, with both a skirt and booty shorts. The shapes and colours are distinctly of those recent types that riff

on the 1980s fluorescent primary school shapes (triangles, squares, squiggles) but with a new edge brought about by the high contrast made possible through digital design techniques.

The contrast of visual materials only adds to the sense that Not Enough festivals both draw on existing queer feminist scene markers and expand on those cues in a way that signals change in the social and political structures. These visual elements establish the audience for the festival in the broadest possible queer terms, aligning the festival with contemporary politics and the rebirth of the queer civil rights movement in its newer extremely diverse configuration.

Figure 4: 2016 Not Enough Fest Edmonton Poster by Jill Stanton.
© Jill Stanton, 2016. http://jstanton.ca/ Reprinted with Permission.

DIY: Shifting the Meaning

Not Enough was a DIY event in every sense of the word. For the organizers, this was often cited as among the best things about the festival, integral to the experience of being a festival organizer. More than just mounting the final event, DIY for Not Enough festivals means problem solving over many months. Several organizers reported both the frustration and the immense satisfaction they got from trying to mount a serious music festival, and all of its associated workshops and fundraisers, with next to no experience in how to go about doing it.

The most unique DIY aspect of Not Enough festival is one only recently seen in queer communities—its emphasis on creating new collaborative projects for immediate performances with live audiences. The conversation around DIY music is one which focuses on the musicians taking a DIY approach to their aesthetic or method. In saying this we could be referring to a number of aspects, such as a decreased emphasis on professionalism in music (Oden, 2011), publishing music without the aid of record labels (O'Connor, 2008), cataloging and archiving sound (Baker & Huber, 2013), or talking about music through self-published work (Triggs, 2006). In music, this way of understanding DIY still has a powerful hold because it is so closely linked with our understandings of non-commercial popular musics, aesthetics in genres like punk rock, and certain unpolished sounds and unapologetic attitudes associated with independent recording and performance. As described above, Not Enough certainly meets the

DIY expectations in this regard. At the same time, the term is now also broadly applies to all sorts of activities led by individuals in the creation of their own artistic or musical works. Writing about the application of the DIY label to non-professional archival activities in music, Baker and Huber suggest that the term has largely broken away from its specific punk-aesthetic roots and now "seems to be a useful and recognizable signifier of the "bottom-up" activities of the community-based enterprises" (Baker & Huber, 2013, p. 515). Not Enough festival is one musical activity that emphasizes this latter conception of DIY and takes it one step further. Whereas festivals like Michigan Women's Music Festival and Ladyfest embraced the DIY attitude that saw them creating festivals for existing performers in their own communities where none existed, Not Enough festival attempts to engineer the environment or scene that would necessitate such space-making activities in the first place. Instead of providing a venue for the existing performers, it strives to "make" the performers.

The organizers of the festivals that I have examined in this study have framed the need for the construction of a queer feminist music community in two different ways: firstly, as a lack of access to the worlds of music for marginalized people; and secondly, as stigma with regard to lacking proficiency or professional status as a musician. In the first instance, the music festival was a way to break down barriers for women, queer, and trans people. A commonly cited perception among organizers is that women, and especially queer and trans people, face many barriers to learning the standard popular music instruments (guitar, bass,

drums) or technology at a young age. This likely stems from a perception of the male dominance in the popular music industry and a sensitivity to the stigma and discrimination associated with queer identity. They are less likely to have a community of musicians early on from which to draw expertise or with whom to experiment musically. Further, there is sensed reluctance in some scenes to give new women and queer musicians a chance to gain experience. Speaking about the challenges of getting gigs for her own band, TEETH, made up of women who were new performers, Stephanie Olsen said:

> If you stick us on a bill with other folks of that genre [doom metal], which is generally pretty male dominated, it's obvious that we have far less experience. Although I think that we bring other things to the table. I think we relate to the music very differently than folks who are coming at it from a technical place. But ya, there's almost like a coded-ness. Right? Like, "Oh…we want bands with folks of all genders, but we want the bands to be *good*." (Stephanie Olsen, personal communication, May 15, 2017)

In order to facilitate the internal production of musical culture, members need access and opportunity.

Similarly, the second way organizers have framed the need for dedicated queer feminist music festivals is with regard to a perceived stigma around being less experienced or having less developed technical skills. For many people, a lack of training that results in the lack of confidence needed to engage with more musically developed performers, means continuing to sit on the sidelines. Not Enough festivals provide a space for that sort of experimentation without any sort

of expectations around skill level, and with an emphasis on becoming the creators

of the music of queer culture, regardless of their level of expertise:

> Portland's festival focuses specifically on the development of new
> queer (or, as they also say, "GLBTQXYZ") music and arts,
> showing participants how to be "cultural creators" rather than
> consumers of music that do not reflect their experience. (Pic, 2013)

More than just breaking down barriers by providing access, the festivals also help

interested performers in overcoming the social stigma that can sometimes be

associated with being an amateur performer, especially in comparison to the many

skilled (male) bands that dominate every local music scene. Corbridge said, "We

were thinking about isolation. And like, how people can often feel isolated. Or left

out of artistic or creative communities because they feel like they don't have the

skills or the knowledge to do it" (Sheana Corbridge, personal communication,

May 5, 2017). Much of the effort in Portland was around just getting people to

talk to each other about projects and feel confident that what they brought to the

table would be sufficient to make something work. In more detail, when asked

why Not Enough Fest is important, New Orleans organizer Osa Atoe referenced a

need to return the Riot Grrrl attitude of playing according to what you have

available at the moment. She lamented that so few women have the opportunity to

learn when they are younger:

> I don't think it's just a challenge for women and queers. I think it's
> a challenge for everyone today…[When] I think about Riot Grrrl,
> this thing that happened in the '90s where somehow everyone just
> felt more comfortable starting from scratch in their punk scene
> even though punk was 20-something years old at that point. I think

it's important to make people feel comfortable being beginners all over again and I think that's something I'm not seeing a lot of in punk these days. I'm not seeing people who can't play super well, it seems like a place to show off and have a skilled hardcore band. It's not a space for women to play the two notes they know how to play in the most powerful way they know how and have that be respected. I feel like we are back at this place where people feel stupid for playing a two-note part even though a two-note part can be incredibly artistic and powerful. (Metrailer, 2013)

Even among those musicians who had been performing privately or on small stages, the idea of participating in the local scene could be intimidating. Jacqueline Ohm (stage name: Conjvr), a performer who broke out of the open mic scene through Not Enough festival, said that she felt very nervous about participating in the larger music scene in Edmonton. She was worried about getting onto a festival stage, saying,

I'm sure other artists have this. At some point someone's going to find me and be like [in a creepy voice] "You're not really even very good at this." Or "you're not qualified to be up on this stage," or something like that. I was sure that that was going to happen. Probably because I was self-taught. (Jacqueline Ohm, personal communication, June 20, 2017)

For her, even the limited experience of some Not Enough festival participants, like those who had been in other bands or had performed previously at a festival, made her hesitant about being able to fit in, musically and in terms of skill level (especially since she had many years' experience with being told her musical skills were not up to par).

The second way that organizers frame the need for intentional queer

feminist musical space is as a way to speed up or advance the quantity of queer or

feminist acts available for local audiences. Organizers in Portland originally

wanted to combine their passions for art and music with their queer communities

to create a queer music and arts scene. Edmonton organizers wanted to increase

the number of queer bands and saw their success most easily measured by the

numbers: 38 new bands in two years, with 100% women, queer, and trans

performers. That is an easy statistic to demonstrate their incredible impact,

especially since many of those bands are still performing one and two years after

their initial festival performances. Similarly, the lack of need in this area is the top

reason given for organizers to close the festival, and also the point at which they

most clearly articulated the ways that Not Enough met this need. In New Orleans,

the festival most clearly framed this goal when organizers decided not to run the

event for a third year. In an open letter, No More Fiction collective members said:

> There are tons more bands in New Orleans with women and queers
> in them at this point. Between the ones that already existed, the
> ones that formed for Not Enough and the ones that formed
> independently in the last couple of years, I think we're doing great
> as a scene. (No More Fiction, 2015)

Although they had a variety of reasons for terminating the Edmonton Not Enough

festival, Edmonton's organizers also viewed their impact as a success that

signaled their festival was no longer needed in the city in this form. Having

achieved their goals of increasing the sheer numbers of queer and women's bands

locally, both Edmonton and New Orleans organizers chose to pass the torch to other events.

Not Enough Festival Impacts

For now, all of the Not Enough festivals have cancelled future performances. The last event was the 2016 festival in Edmonton (in Portland, which last hosted the event in 2015, past organizers have been encouraging community members to adopt the festival as their own). So, any perspective on Not Enough is both far enough removed to see and articulate some early impacts, but close enough that the meaning of these activities is, for some, still hazy. Tasmia Nishat, bass player from Elusive Moose, for example, said she saw the impact in the bands that were still playing around the city—simply through their existence and persistence in the local music scene. Several musicians, particularly those who did not consider themselves to be musicians prior to the festival, said they had increased levels of confidence and were more willing to experiment musically—supported by dozens of learning opportunities before they hit the stage for the first time. Nishat's own band, for example, went on from the 2016 Not Enough festival to play at Edmonton's long-running Heart of the City Music and Arts Festival. That Not Enough did achieve this basic goal was reiterated by all the performers and organizers with whom I spoke. Bonnell, who organized with the New Orleans festival in some capacity every year, summarized both the attitude developed through Not Enough, and its local impact:

I think one impact was the like really obvious stated goal, or increasing the amount of queer bands, and queer artists…Like, fuck it, let's start a band, or learn to play an instrument. So I do feel it encouraged experimentation. This sounds trite, but I think the stated goals happened. I can think of quite a few bands that are still existing and formed at Not Enough. And quite a few like visual artists or collaborations that are going on, or projects that are still happening that are from Not Enough. I feel like sometimes I go to like queer events or queer shows and I'm like, "All this shit happened at Not Enough." (Joseph Bonnell, personal communication, May 18, 2017).

Not Enough organizers did not simply run the festival, provide the collaborative opportunity, and then hope the festival would impact the community. After watching the bands from the first New Orleans festival break up shortly after the event was completed, Osa Atoe deliberately took extra steps in the second year of her festival to ensure that bands that formed for the event were going to stick together for the longer-run. She had made herself available to them if they needed assistance with booking shows and would put effort into promoting bands formed for the festival when they secured gigs.

More than just impacting the community through the baseline goal of increasing participation in the queer feminist music scene, Not Enough had a number of more structural impacts on both the queer community and the local music scene. Firstly, Not Enough festival ideas have been transferred all over Canada and the United States. Edgar Fabian Frias, one of the three organizers from the first year of the Portland festival, cites the Not Enough Fest model as adopted in the four cities that ran Not Enough events, as well as other cities that

adopted their own brand for the event, including Detroit and Ottawa (Frias, 2015).

Others have cited Not Enough festival events running in Vancouver, Austin, and

Chicago (Williams, 2015). Calgary's Femme Wave, a feminist arts festival

including music, visual art, film and comedy, for women and queer people, was

created in consultation and through lots of "knowledge sharing" and "hangouts"

(Kendra Cowley, personal communication, May 15, 2017) with Not Enough

festival organizers from Edmonton. After checking in with the Edmonton crew,

Calgary organizers followed the Not Enough Edmonton model of designing the

festival based on community inputs gathered via a town hall. It seems that their

town hall pointed them in a different direction, and they chose to pursue a more

familiar festival model that provides space for queer and women performers

without the emphasis on new collaborative projects.

In Edmonton, Not Enough festival has also had an impact on the broader

local music scene, which has some festivals and promoters, like those at the Heart

of the City Music Festival or (before it closed for unrelated reasons) the Needle

Vinyl Tavern, working to make their events more inclusive and in turn draw a

larger queer crowd than they might otherwise, further enhancing the queer niches

in events not specifically targeting queer or feminist audiences. Stephanie Olsen

and Kendra Cowley of Edmonton both agreed that they could see the impacts

their festival has had on other events in their network. Olsen said,

> I would say that it's changed a lot actually. Not Enough Fest really
> did force the needle in a pretty short amount of time. In a way it
> made it sort of *not cool* to not have women or queer folk on your

bill… It's somewhat rare to see the promoters that are kind of from the scene that Not Enough Fest was more connected to, to put on shows without being at least somewhat conscious of gender diversity and support for queer artists and stuff like that. (Stephanie Olsen, personal communication, May 15, 2017)

Beyond that, they also felt that the more general conversation around safe spaces had become more common in Edmonton, especially among the networks more closely related to Not Enough Fest. Olsen felt this sort of conversation "entering the community's rhetoric" was really positive, even though "often it is lip-service" to draw a guaranteed queer crowd. Going forward, venues and promoters will have to focus more closely on the enforcement of those safe(r) spaces guidelines in order to create a space where ground rules about behaviour are actually meaningful. Both Edmonton organizers acknowledged their own politics influencing their willingness and ability to pursue the development of safe(r) space guidelines for the community, but also felt that the claim to lack of knowledge was just a lazy approach to organizing on the part of venues and promoters. With Not Enough guidelines so publicly available, these excuses become weak. The result is that venues and promoters have begun to respond. Some, like the Heart of the City Music and Arts Festival mentioned above, have been proactive, contacting Not Enough Fest Edmonton for guidance in working with and further developing their community guidelines to best suit all audiences, but especially queer people and women. Other festivals have been in touch to obtain copies of the guidelines developed for Not Enough Edmonton. Organizers have since posted all their festival materials online, to facilitate access. Cowley

said, "There have been other festivals outside of the city that have requested our safer spaces guidelines, …which is part of why we wanted to make it totally accessible to anybody like that. We put a lot of time and energy into that stuff and it's far from perfect, but people are free to take from it what they want."

Going forward, Sheana Corbridge, Stephanie Olsen, and Kendra Cowley all said that they were reluctant to see Not Enough Festival transformed into something else, and the Edmonton organizers in particular were reluctant to hand the project off, even as is, to other people. None wanted to see the festival take on a larger model, moving away from DIY. Corbridge said, "I would have preferred it to just let it die, at a certain point, because I think things get convoluted over time. And it's better in my mind, for someone to come and assess needs at the moment, and do something new." In Edmonton, organizers asked themselves, "do we just shut this down, and then in the ashes, *know*, something else is going to come of this? Because the need has been blown open. I mean it's clear, it's something that the community still wants." In the end, they decided not to pass the festival to others from the community. Despite that ending, Cowley and Olsen are both enthusiastically waiting to see what the longer term impact will come of their work. Cowley told me, "I think things have even like been influenced by it. Even, like, elsewhere in Edmonton. I think we're still waiting to see what will be the next Not Enough Fest."

Chapter 6: Scenes, Cycles, and the Ends of Eras

Of the four cities where Not Enough festivals have been staged, two have announced "official" festival closures (Edmonton and New Orleans), one quietly let its one-time festival stand alone (Winnipeg), and the last has been tentatively probing for new volunteers without success (Portland—the longest running; many of its organizers have moved on or away). But that isn't the end of the Not Enough festival story.

We often speak or write about events as things that have clear boundaries. When the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival ended in 2015, for example, hundreds of festival participants lamented the loss, and many declared it an end to an era (e.g., Cassell, 2015; Nicco, 2015; Pasipanodya, Anais, Benford, Foster, & Bliss, 2015). From a more practical perspective, this conclusion is a product of the way we think about festivals. They are planned; they have a start date, and a finish date. They are annual, or biannual, and are thought to be in existence so long as one or more stages of planning is ongoing. In a way, planning a festival in itself already forms the festival in our minds. That picture may be incomplete and not precisely comparable to the event itself, yet, we still have an idea of it. When a festival ends, we talk about it as if it no longer exists. Endings do not tend to take up time; things are either ongoing (through time) or stopped (a point in time). The ongoing parts of the festival are what dominates our thinking because these seem more plentiful and are the things that bring the festival to life. Driven to

highlight all the things that make something *work*, that *make it up*, or help it to *exist*—all things we must do to talk about an object, a concept, a place—it becomes easy to discount the significance of a thing's end and the factors contributing to its end. But at the same time as things are ongoing, they are also changing. Part of that change is always a movement toward that temporal stopping point, the point at which the festival no longer "exists" as an "object", that is, as we think of it within its boundaries of times and places.

A consideration of the ways that festivals decline in popularity or influence, and the ways that they come to their ends, is important to understand the larger picture of queer feminist music history. By this point in the discussion, the ways that queer feminist musical activities are connected in their politics and methods are, I believe, fairly clear. Conceptualizing the endings of festivals and points of passage between queer feminist activities is what creates our sense that they are all somehow connected, both via musical and visual references, and with regard to their underlying political and organizational approaches to music events. The shifting capacity of organizers, the changes in expectations among queer feminist audiences, and the influences of changing political climates all contribute to a larger cycle of queer feminist activity that spans at least the timeframe examined in this work (and surely longer). A cycle is made up of a series of events—in this discussion music festivals (but it could also be a discussion of bands, or labels, or lyrical themes, or concerts, or albums)—that are repeated over time with similar patterns of rise, decline, etc. We normally think of music

festival cycles as deliberate, like those of annual music festivals, with cycles based on planning, implementing, and debriefing time-bound and place-bound events: as above, these give the festival form. Yet taking a step back, there are also larger cycles that are created through the borrowing, reshaping, discarding, and recreating of festival material, such as has been discussed throughout this work. More than just taking ideas from one festival and implanting them whole or part into another festival, I think it is best to think of this larger festival cycle as an ongoing negotiation within the queer feminist community. As noted in Chapter 2, this is a community of widely variety experiences and perspectives: women, lesbians, queer women, trans women, and sometimes men, to which we can add a variety of intersectional social, ethnic, economic, or religious backgrounds, with different abilities, ages, and so on. Individuals working together to take on new queer feminist endeavors will necessarily incorporate their own unique perspectives. The negotiation among organizers, whether articulated or not, becomes one that centres on but is not necessarily restricted to discussions about how the community will undertake artistic, musical, and political projects in ways that are both productive (for their aims) and recognizable to the broader queer feminist world. At the highest level, this negotiation is about the definition and outward representation of queer feminist culture or identity.

Passing the Torch

Without knowing what specifically would come after, Not Enough organizers in Edmonton and Portland felt that their work would contribute, in some way, to the future of the queer feminist music scene in their regions. There are many unknowns: the content, the structure, the place, the people, and the exact nature of the work are all mysteries. Yet at the same time, organizers were confident that the queer feminist music scene would continue beyond the Not Enough events, and that future organizers would adopt and reshape their work into something new. Sheana Corbridge, who left Not Enough after three years and saw it picked up by others in the community, said she was happy to see it continue in someone else's control.[30] At the same time, she was hopeful that the festival would not grow too large or be too stubborn in the maintenance of its original mission. As previously mentioned, she expressed that she "would have preferred it to just die, at a certain point…it's better in my mind, for someone to come and assess needs at the moment, and do something new. Because needs change in a community, too" (Sheana Corbridge, personal communication, May 5, 2017). Similarly, in Edmonton, Kendra Cowley and Stephanie Olsen said they hoped that the idea would be adapted to meet new community needs:

> We contemplated being like, "Oh, do we try to hand this off to someone," and be like, "You do what you want with Not Enough Fest." Or do we just shut this down, and then in the ashes, *know*, something else is going to come of this. Because the need has been

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[30] Some other original organizers did stay involved after Sheana left but by the last festival, they had moved on.

> blown open. I mean it's clear, it's something that the community still wants. … So, ya, maybe there is something entirely new that people could take up that same mission, but do so in a different way. (Kendra Cowley, personal communication, May 15, 2017)

In Edmonton, similar missions have been picked up by other city collectives. Kendra and Stephanie were advocates for these parallel efforts as a way to address the gaps in Not Enough festival's community role. They sought ways to support parts of the community that they (and others) felt their event could not adequately address. Kendra, for example, "did lots of work with iHuman," an arts-based society that works with high-risk youth with histories of trauma. Not Enough festival also conducted fundraisers for Brown, Black, and Fierce, a collective "dedicated to creating a safe space and open dialogue for IPOC [Indigenous people, and people of colour], with an emphasis on queer, trans, gender diverse, and two-spirit communities" (The Establishment, 2015). Like Not Enough festivals, Brown, Black, and Fierce emphasizes community members creating art and music for their own community. Organizer Ruby Diaz Smith said,

> We have all had to swallow our pride one too many times…We have all had to cater to white fragility, and create art, music, and resistance for white consumption. We need this change to be inclusive for the complexities of our identities; we need this change for our survival (The Establishment, 2015).

Just as Not Enough transformed the queer feminist work of its predecessors, Brown, Black, and Fierce has transformed elements drawn from queer communities, Indigenous communities, and communities of colour to create something new and unique that aims to meet immediate needs. And importantly,

Brown, Black, and Fierce is, at the same time, influencing the events around it.

Brown, Black, and Fierce shared a number of members with Not Enough

Edmonton, including organizers, and the intersectional politics can be glimpsed

within some of the community discussions around race and inclusion.

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The idea of passing the torch, or, the scene, as it may be, from one festival

to another, from one community to another, has been a narrative adopted by other

queer feminist organizers, as well. This type of continuity is well understood as

essential to understanding both community and history for queer feminist musical

activity. Writing about Ladyfest, queer feminist activist Petra Davis said,

> Ladyfest is the product of the work, thought, activism,
> communication, resistance and organisation of thousands of
> women (and many men and transpeople) over the last 8 years. Its
> lineage stretches back through Riot Grrl into cutie,[31] queercore,
> punk, gay liberation, second-wave feminism, and the birth of
> identity politics.[32] Its impact extends out into academic discourse,
> popular artefact, cultural history, political activism, applied
> philosophy and ethics. (Davis, 2008)

Davis connects the festivals to both the musical movements and the political

movements to which they are so closely tied, stretching back in her imagination

about as far could be possible, with the "birth of identity politics," at the core.

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[31] Cutie (as it was known in the mid-1980s), usually called twee or twee pop
today, is a DIY subgenre of punk and indie rock that ran against the noise and
hardcore sensibilities of mainstream punk in the 1980s (Dale, 2012). The most
prominent women cutie musicians performed beginning in the 1990s, with The
Softies and Tiger Trap, two bands with the same vocalist.
[32] Commonly, the Women's Liberation Movement of the 1960s (Zaretsky, 1995).

In many ways we also know that once a festival reaches that end point the event continues to exert influence: on the participants, on the community, on the ideas, and as a reference against which future changes area measured. These are the specific elements that are used in the negotiation of queer feminist identity for future scenes. As time progresses forward, the way that we think about the past and the things we remember about it change. Through time, the way that things are remembered, the focus of conversation, the things written about the events can sometimes overpower the individual narratives.

Already when it closed, some people involved with Michigan Womyn's Music Festival were grappling with the ways the festival would be remembered by those who might recreate it for their own purposes, or by those who might use the scene as a foil against which they set themselves apart. For many, the conversation about the festival revolved around its "womyn-born-womyn" policy that saw transgender women excluded from the festival. Festival organizers refused to implement inclusive policies. In its final years, audience members and musicians, including prominent women's music Indigo Girls and the well-known comedian Lea DeLaria, publicly withdrew their participation from the festival. Although the festival had been protested for decades previously, with transgender people even maintaining an annual protest outside the festival gates known as "Camp Trans," the boycotting of the festival by queer icons refocused the conversation on diversity and inclusion. Instead of changing when faced with this refocus, the festival closed.

With that closure came almost immediate negotiation about the ways that the festival would be remembered. Holly Near, a prominent festival participant who was among the nine acts to perform at the first Michigan festival in 1976, most clearly articulated this concern when commenting on the announcement of closure:

> But forty years is a long time to keep a fire burning. And there are lots of ways to change the world. The next generation will decide what trees to plant. They will create their own festivals, their own cultural expressions of identity. I hope they can do so without diminishing ours. There is more room in the universe than anyone can possibly imagine. (Near, 2015)

Near suggests the festival had lost its political power—but that its emotional impact would continue. By contrast, Lisa Vogel wrote in her letter announcing the festival's last year, "For many of us this one week in the woods is the all too rare place and time where we experience validation for our female bodies, and where the female experience presides at the center of our community focus" (Vogel, 2015). For those willing to read a little between the lines, Vogel's language suggests an ongoing alignment of her views with the festival's womyn-born-womyn stance. She defines women biologically, and points to a female-bodied experience as the root of the festival's community. For Vogel, steadfastness on this issue is still politically relevant—though in a letter announcing the festival's end, it also reads a little bit like a political defeat.

Some Endings, and the Cycles They Produced

Negotiating Identity by Weighing Value

A passing on of the queer feminist DIY political festival event is not something that has a single cause or which can be wholly examined in retrospect (and an ethnographic study of such endings would require longitudinal examination or very lucky timing on the part of the researcher). By and far the most common reason given for the closing of Not Enough festivals is capacity.

Larger festivals tend to be well supported, both financially and in terms of volunteer numbers. The Edmonton Folk Music Festival, for example, is locally famous for its volunteer programming structure but is mostly made possible by large revenues and asset holdings. Over 2,500 volunteers working on more than 60 crews contribute a minimum of 20 hours each of festival work and a few extra hours during tear-down each year. In exchange, volunteers receive a free four-day festival pass, a free t-shirt, free in-house prepared high-quality meals daily, and access to a scholarship fund (Edmonton Folk Music Festival, 2017). Volunteers are supported by paid staff who lead the assembly of considerable temporary infrastructure, including seven stages, a kitchen, plumbing, electrical, and sites for vendors. In 2017, the Edmonton Folk Music Festival Society reported over $5 million in revenues, and nearly $2 million in assets (including $1.2 million in cash and short-term investments). Its revenues for 2017 included about $800,000 in funding from federal, provincial, and municipal governments (Government of

Canada, 2017), suggesting there is a local and national commitment to keeping the festival alive.

In stark contrast, DIY festivals also take many volunteers and hundreds of hours[33] of hard work to make happen, with little to no external resources. The budget for Not Enough Fest Edmonton 2016 was $5,610. With its model that includes months of workshops, training, the provision of jam space, and other supports, Not Enough festivals were particularly burdensome for organizers and their dedicated volunteer crews. One author summed the festival up as follows:

> The whole idea of the NEF is wildly aggressive. Logistics still need to be planned and scheduled as they would for a regular show or event, but now there is the added responsibility of organizing skill-shares, supplying gear and teaching some of the performers. From concept to execution the labor and time involved is tremendous. Not Enough Fest is not only teaching people how to fish, they are also digging the lake." (Falcone, 2013).

In addition to its very ambitious mission, Not Enough festivals (as we could guess for many other DIY music festival) also experienced significant turnover among both volunteers and organizers with each new year. This means that each year is

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[33] When I asked Joseph Bonnell, from Portland, to estimate his hours, he said that it was "maybe an hour" per week at the beginning, for meetings, accompanied by two or three hours of follow-up outside the meeting. But when it's closing in on the festival, it's impossible to measure. Putting up flyers takes for ever. Responding to emails can take hours. He described it as "like a fuck-ton of time. Like, whatever that metric is. It's hard for me to think about." Kendra Cowley, in Edmonton, was more diplomatic about it. She said she spent about 20 hours per week working on the festival organization, not counting all of the community engagement pieces, such managing feedback cycles and the community responses to organizational structures (discussed in more detail below).

almost like planning the festival from scratch, as each new person brings new perspectives, a new vision for the final event, and a different skill set for organizing events. For Not Enough organizers in Edmonton, the difference between the first year and the second year was something of a "culture shift" (Stephanie Olsen, personal communication, May 15, 2017). Whereas in the first year, they had a very socially close group of organizers who did much of their planning through social events (like out of town retreats), leading to a cohesive understanding of what the festival "ingredients" would include, the second year's festival required a complete redefinition of how organizers would work together cohesively. New people meant new ideas and new opinions. Combined with community feedback, the variety of inputs, changing skill sets, and changing knowledge all meant it was difficult for the festival to set up organizational shortcuts to relieve year-to-year strains on capacity.

Capacity and the shifting involvement of volunteers and organizers isn't just a matter of having enough people to do the work (that would be a rather banal point, no?). Rather, capacity is significant because the ability and willingness of organizers to put in the effort involved in creating and maintaining the festival is frequently framed in terms of the value and influence of the festival in contrast with the physical, emotional, and political challenges experienced organizationally, or as individuals. That is, when the burden appears to outweigh the benefit, the festival will cease to exist. Every detail of the festival weighs on this balance, one side or the other. The pros and cons of participation at an

individual level are fairly easy to weigh, and commonly cited as major considerations among volunteers and key organizers—each individual knows for themselves if the work has value and there is no incentive to continue when it does not. Those I spoke to, for example, struggled to balance the festival workload with other areas of their lives. When work (for Joseph Bonnell) or school (for Sheana Corbridge) become more demanding, the benefits seemed less attractive personally. Across all Not Enough festivals, the simplest example of organizers weighing this balance is with regard to market saturation and having achieved a noticeable impact in the number of queer music acts performing in the region. The Edmonton festival produced 38 new bands in the span of two years. In New Orleans, the festival boosted the local scene so far that, upon announcing the festival's close, organizers wrote "And if there were another one this year, could we accurately call it "Not Enough"?" (No More Fiction, 2015), implying that representation was now sufficient. The achievement of the goal to increase the number of performing queer and feminist acts in the local scene was itself a reason to discontinue the effort. With so many now performing regularly, the need seemed less pressing in both Edmonton and New Orleans.

Queer Organizing

Today's queer spaces have a tendency to seem socially and politically demanding to outsiders (or so I've been told).[34] These spaces, including music festivals, are the sites where queer feminist identity has been negotiated on an ongoing basis. As spaces where that group identity is on display, there is a constant back and forth regarding how that representation is going to happen. With regard to maximizing the value of DIY work, this representation must be viewed as having a value. Since a political stance is integral to a queer feminist music scene, a big part of that value will be in the way that political positions are represented and acted out in these spaces. My sense of the larger queer feminist cycle of music scenes is brought about in the ways that these expectations can create tension and then resolve for those whose expectations are met. At the same time this resolution may, depending on one's perspective, create a new set of expectations and therefore a new source of tensions.

Today, queer music festivals are *expected* to be thoughtful about safe(r) space policies and about the ways that people are intentionally included or excluded from those spaces. I would say that today it would be a challenge to read

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[34] This applies in many contexts. My non-queer friends feel uncomfortable in queer spaces, worried they do not understand "the rules." Similarly, social workers trained in LGBTQ+ cultural competency have reported to me that they feel ill-equipped to navigate the demands for language and cultural knowledge with queer clients. What non-queer people fail to recognize is that queer people can also find these elements challenging to their own habits or thinking. They are perhaps better socialized to accept and attempt to meet the challenge in intentional ways than those from other social environments.

a space as part of the queer (particularly youth) scene without finding some form of intentional shaping of the space through explicit statements and supports for those experiencing challenges. For example, Not Enough festival in Edmonton posted their safe(r) spaces guidelines right at the entryway to the festival. They took many steps to make the space physically accessible, and to provide mental health supports for both performers and audience members. They were prepared to enforce their policies and had ongoing discussions about what it means to develop and maintain such a space in a meaningful way. In Portland, Sheana Corbridge also noted the steps the festival took to meet these expectations:

> I think there were expectations of thoughtfulness around inclusivity and accommodation—this is pretty standard I think in queer organizing. There were a lot of norms we followed as far as explicitly laying out accessibility information and our intentions. In some ways, this helps code it as a 'safe(r) space', in addition to making explicit statements to that effect. (Sheana Corbridge, personal communication, May 5, 2017)

Here, the idea that you must make explicit statements is almost an afterthought to the newer norms, which see organizers making clear all the possible concerns (and whether accommodations exist), conducting comprehensive accessibility assessments (as was done in Edmonton), and literally reconstructing spaces to make accommodations (also undertaken by Edmonton organizers).

This is not to say that social or political expectations are new. The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival also made accommodations for diverse women throughout its 40 years. Riot Grrrls changed the story about which women could be included in the queer feminist music scene and often expressed

awareness of their own shortcomings with regard to race (and, to a lesser degree, class). The difference is in the ways that negotiations about inclusive or exclusive identity play out. For example, the Michigan festival built ramps to improve wheelchair access and had spaces accessible exclusively to women of colour. At the same time, the politics that created that space (lesbian separatism) simultaneously and intentionally created a notoriously hostile environment for transgender women. Through its policies, the festival made an outward display of what organizers felt was the "valid" queer feminist identity—women of colour and disabled women counted, transgender women did not. It also reinforced in its earlier 1970s and 1980s days (although not strictly) the boundaries of acceptable womanhood though its focus on folk genre and avoidance of acts associated with more masculine genres, like rock and punk. These negotiated choices about what constitutes a queer feminist identity in a particular music scene would, of course, create tensions for those excluded from those realms.

Riot Grrrl seems connected to the women's music movement because it renegotiates those same elements of identity, resolving some tensions with previous scenes (and creating new tensions for future scenes). Although this is often framed as a rejection of "stereotypes about the proper roles for women and femininity" (Schilt, 2003b, p. 81) and the assumption that women should be "well behaved and polite" (Schilt, 2003a, p. 11), it can also be viewed as a reinterpretation of what counts. In this context, Riot Grrrl was queers and feminists screaming that punk, hard-edged, and angry women count, *too*, and are

(therefore) entitled to their place. Importantly, this renegotiation was both one of identity and a musical one. To belong to the queer feminist music scene of the 1990s, the core of image and sound was in punk—women's music continued but had lost its radical edge. As Riot Grrrl participated in the burgeoning third-wave of feminism, the queer feminist identity in music shifted from radical separatist, one which saw women creating their own spaces, to radical confrontation, where raucous women confronted the world with messages about women's right, women's bodies, and women's experiences. But here, although loud and angry sounds and messages count as part of the queer and feminist identities that are "valid", Riot Grrrl has been widely criticized for not adequately addressing women's identity beyond the white middle-class focus of its core founders. Riot Grrrl's negotiated identity included some new groups of women, but once again excluded women of colour. Its focus on punk genres excluded any women who might have different musical tastes, or be off-putting in particular for those inclined towards folk music or acoustic music traditions.

Where Riot Grrrl failed to adequately address class, race, and other identity factors, Ladyfest festivals explicitly renegotiated the Riot Grrrl image into a multi-racial, international, transgender inclusive, lesbian-dominated and music- and arts-focused DIY festival. Schilt and Zobl identify Ladyfest as "a new phase in Riot Grrrl-related feminist activism." They note that

> …the festival name 'Ladyfest,' signaled two things: (1) a move
> away from the term Riot Grrrl, a label that had come to be seen as
> limiting by many; (2) a space for older feminists who felt they

were too old to be "grrrls" and thus adopted the tongue-in-cheek
usage of 'ladies' (2008, p. 176)

Schilt and Zobl found that Ladyfest participants were also vocal protesters of the

Michigan Womyn's Music Festival's womyn-born-womyn policy. In Ladyfest

scenes, there is a prominent focus on inclusivity, and "emphasis is put on process-

oriented, nonhierarchical, collective action" (2008, p. 178). The sharing of some

founding members between Riot Grrrl and Ladyfest makes the explicit connection

between these two festivals an easy one to make. At the same time, I would

suggest that considering Ladyfest as a "new phase" to Riot Grrrl that

demonstrates that women musicians and artists "still identify as feminists" (Schilt

& Zobl, 2008, p. 178) somewhat simplifies the radical transformation for queer

feminist identity on display between these two movements. I think Ladyfest reads

as a progressive form of Riot Grrrl because Ladyfest events emphasized punk

genres and styles alongside the DIY (including zines) that had featured

prominently in Riot Grrrl (discussed previously, as musical and visual references).

But ideologically the two feature quite different events. Ladyfest isn't just Riot

Grrrl all grown up—it is a completely transformed queer feminist punk scene with

its own unique—though slightly familiar—identity, negotiated from the best parts

of Riot Grrrl and women's music scenes (e.g., communities teaching and

supporting each other; music scenes centered on shared experiences with regard

to identity), but drawing in new pieces of that collective identity to suit current

community needs (e.g., progressive politics around diversity). The international

spread of Ladyfest also makes a direct comparison to the (largely) American Riot Grrrl a challenge. Whereas the identity that "counts" in Riot Grrrl has largely (but not necessarily intentionally) been a white, middle-class, US-born punk, international Ladyfests would have included altogether a more varied set of participants simply in terms of culture, never mind language, class, age, gender diversity, and so on.

One thing that Ladyfest retained from Riot Grrrl is the focus on punk music. Though musicians from other genres did perform at Ladyfests, as I previously mentioned, many Ladyfest festivals explicitly framed themselves as queer feminist punk festivals. This emphasis, because of its association historically with a more aggressive approach both musically and socially, contributed to the particular identity that the queer feminist scenes around Ladyfest projected. Not Enough festivals and other recent DIY endeavors focused on increasing the numbers of queer musicians in the local scenes (e.g., rock camps for women or queers), have drawn in an emphasis on diversity that parallels Ladyfest, but opened the doors to a wider variety of genres to create a queer feminist scene that really broadened the musicological scope of the queer feminist scene. Where punk has historically been a genre dominated by white people (though certainly there are also black punk scenes that were very popular), and folk music has also been dominated by white people, a de-emphasis on genre means a de-emphasis on genres with a lot of racial baggage. Yes, musicians still perform punk and folk, but since those elements are not central to the Not

Enough-style mission, barriers for artists interested in hip hop, electronic, or popular musics or influences from countries around the world (such as the Not Enough band Basic Spice Rack, whose diverse music includes rock versions of Chinese nursery rhymes) have been drastically reduced. The festival's achievement of a higher standard of safe(r) space was also significant, giving those willing to experiment outside the standard expectations for music festivals the leeway to do so with considerably less pressure than other performance opportunities. For example, Edmonton audience members in 2016, seated (packed in like sardines) on the hall's tiled floors, cheering on performers as they took the stage for the first time. Performers who faltered on stage were met with whistles and applause encouraging in nature. Although the audience was attentive and quiet, there also lacked a formality that often accompanies a quiet audience (think piano recital). The audience was relaxed and seemed to have few expectations. Like other festivals, the Not Enough scene is a renegotiation of queer and feminist identity; what I experienced of Not Enough was definitely a different queer feminist identity than I experienced at women's folk music festivals—yet both were explicitly queer feminist events. In its new Not Enough-type form, the queer feminist music scene is one defined by its stance of all bodies and all genres welcome in explicit, policy-enforced ways. The larger community identity is rooted in this broad acceptance and active promotion of difference, on display through musical activity.

Political Landscapes

Because political movements or political statements have been so
important for queer feminist music festivals, the ways that the political landscape
shifts over time can also impact the festivals in major ways. The first way is that
individuals who participate in the festival or who might be inclined to become
volunteer organizers, are going to choose their political action based on their
skills, interests, and importantly, and their sense of where their work will have the
most impact for the community. This means that when other more attractive, or
more pressing, areas of engagement arise, people will leave the festival.

One organizer from Not Enough Portland felt that the current political
landscape could be drawing organizers away from music- and arts- related work.
Despite major political and social advances for LGBTQ+ people around the
world, for some queer people, women, people of colour, and other minorities in
Trump-era United States the political landscape is looking bleak. In the LGBT
political realm alone, the country has seen a number of high profile regressive
political actions from leaders: the president announced a ban on transgender
people serving in the military (which has been temporarily halted by the courts as
of December 2017) (Reuters, 2017); the so-called Bathroom Bill (HB2 in North
Carolina), is a form of state-sanctioned discrimination that forces transgender
people to use facilities that correspond with their sex assigned at birth; forty-six

anti-LGBT bills were introduced in the United States in 2016 alone[35] (ACLU,

2017); and queers were the target in the Orlando shooting, a mass shooting that

killed 49 people and wounded 53 at a the Pulse nightclub, a queer venue, in June

2016 (Christodoulou & Pemberton, 2017). Bonnell struggled between his sense

that the festival was a worthwhile activity for the community and the knowledge

that despite it's worth, there may be more important work to be done to protect

queer communities, and especially queer communities of colour, in the United

States right now. After identifying capacity issues as the primary reason Not

Enough Queer Music and Arts Festival did not run in 2016, organizer Joseph

Bonnell admitted,

> I'm having this feeling of hesitancy because part of why I think the
> festival's not happening this year is because people have other
> priorities, which I think are also really valid and important. And I
> think it's hard to talk about it…Well, like fucking Trump, and the
> increased attacks on people of colour in our community, and I feel
> like people are also afraid and distracted. And I feel like kind of
> not knowing where to put their energy, because things are so bad.
> They're just bad. I think it's a loss and there's a lack [of music and
> arts opportunities]. Whether or not like organizing Not Enough is
> what people should spend their time on, as opposed to organizing
> against police violence, I don't know. It's all important. (Joseph
> Bonnell, personal communication, May 18, 2017)

Bonnell struggled between his sense that the festival was a worthwhile activity for

the community and the knowledge that despite its worth, there may be more

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[35] Most were defeated. Still, the sheer number of attacks at the government level
is a strong indicator that there is still a long way to go to achieving security for
queer people in the United States.

important work to be done to protect queer communities, and especially queer communities of colour, in the United States right now.

In Canada, rights for queer people are considerably more progressive. Explicit protections for gender expression and gender identity, the most recent protections demanded by transgender people and their allies, were added to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 2017. However systemic barriers still exist and do mean that organizers from the queer community will be faced with a similar choice, as above. Certainly this choice of where to put the effort is nothing new in the queer feminist music community. As participants shift their focus away from the music scene toward other activities, the music scene weakens—it has (perhaps temporarily) fewer voices, fewer actions—and loses some of its ability to make a powerful political statement. In the Women's Music scene, musician Margie Adam left the scene precisely because the redirection of efforts diminished the foundations she saw as essential for political change:

> In retrospect, she expressed a political concern that as women artists began to move away from women's music "as an artistic and political principle…the possibility for radical change with our music was proportionately lessened. The power of this women-loving organizing tool began to dissipate." (Lont, 1992, p. 248)

Similarly, as Riot Grrrl was co-opted by the media and became inundated with a fan culture that some felt watered down the radical feminist messaging, it lost its power as a vehicle to change the music industry (Marcus, 2010). Notably, once the message-diluting media hype of the late 1990s passed, Riot Grrrl experienced a resurgence that was once again rooted in an aggressive feminist politics for

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which it was originally known.

The second way that the political landscape impacts festival is when social and political climates create environments in which a particular festival cannot survive, or may seem irrelevant to those not already immersed in the festival scene. The politics of one festival may simply seem out of date or out of touch with future generations. Even before Riot Grrrl emerged in the early 1990s, some queer feminist performers already felt that the politics of women's music was out of date:

> In the 1990s, young lesbians, both performers and fans, reject[ed] much of the politics of women's music….Kathy Korniloff of 2 Nice Girls explains that although they love the early albums of [Meg] Christian's and [Holly] Near's, the entire women's scene is a "pre-punk experience…we've grown up in the post-punk world and our music is a reflection of that" (Lont, 1992, p. 251).

Not Enough Fest organizers and performers had a similar reaction to Riot Grrrl, demonstrating knowledge of the movement but also cautiously pointing to the ways that Riot Grrrl fell short of their expectations for the movement today.

At the same time, it is important to note that this sense of "progress" from one political stance to another "improved" position is a somewhat misleading narrative. Often, certain political issues are highlighted, set aside, and later reinjected into musical circles: their relevance is often circumstantial rather than a linear march of political progress. Our challenge is to recognize the same political issues in their new settings. Separatist politics that saw music festivals designated for women attendees only, for example, fell out of fashion in women's music

beginning in the 1980s. Many women's music festivals created in or modelled after those of the 1970s eventually moved to permit men to attend while retaining a focus on women performers and women volunteers (though, of course, some also remained as women-only spaces, like Michigan Womyn's Music Festival). Nowadays they are often marketed as women-focused but will often specify that everybody is welcomed.

And yet, discussion and implementation of separatist spaces at music festivals have recently been revived. After an extraordinary number of sexual assaults resulted in the cancellation the Swedish Bråvalla music festival (the country's largest), a group has completed fundraising to produce the festival in 2018, but only allow entrance to people who identify as non-men (cisgender women, transgender women, and non-binary people) (Beaumont-Thomas, 2017). This festival is poised to deploy a renegotiated version of the separatism practiced at many women-only festivals in the 1970s. In a similar example, we see an event that closely resembles Not Enough Fest (our chronologically most recent example) deploying a type of separatist politics. Summer 2016 saw the Glastonbury festival (organized as dozens of "areas" with various themes) open its first ever separate venue for women, The Sisterhood (Pollard, 2016). Supported by Glastonbury (and therefore not DIY), the area within the larger festival is otherwise a microcosm of independent queer festivals in mainstream music scenes: it is entirely organized and staffed by people who identify as women; it is explicitly intersectional, queer, transgender, and disability inclusive;

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it's political, offering workshops on inclusion and diversity as part of its annual program; and, its stage hosts an eclectic mix of women performing a variety of genres, including rap, hip-hop, alternative rock, punk, and pop (Cafolla, 2016). The description points to a contemporary politics—diversity education, trans inclusion, musical diversity—yet the separatist element remains focused on escaping patriarchy, a rehashing of a well-worn trope in the queer feminist cycle.

Achieving Expectations Leads to Decline

Each renegotiation of queer feminist festival identity intentionally or inadvertently alters the ideals to which the festival aims. And, although I focus on more recent examples here, I believe these types of renegotiations would emerge for any of the examples I discuss in this work. There are many barriers to achieving these goals. These expectations around implementing certain guidelines that are intended to ideologically open up spaces to a diverse group of people are complicated in a DIY environment because of expectations around DIY queer spaces as well as some of the practical limitations of working in a DIY project with (for later events) a collective approach to decision-making. These aspects, although inherently part of the queer music scene because, as I have argued the queer scene is inherently DIY, can also be found as challenges for other DIY events. Sheana, for example, has a background that includes organizing in DIY punk music scenes. She said she felt like the expectations in that scene mean that audiences expect to pay less, or even nothing, to attend events that may require

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considerable resources to put together. The DIY of an event, especially if it was

held in an unconventional space, like a house, often contributed to people's sense

that they didn't need to support the organizers financially:

> This was certainly true when we did house shows, getting people
> to give a few bucks for a band or to cover costs was often difficult,
> but you'd see the same people buying show tickets or drinks at a
> business, which is seen as normal and expected (thank you
> capitalism!). (Sheana Corbridge, personal communication,
> September, 2017)

Joseph Bonnell noted a similar problem with the DIY aspect of the queer music

scene and strongly connected this to the expectations of the queer community. He

noted that there was a conflict between the expectation "to make sure that having

a $5 cover to an event wouldn't be a barrier to someone," which at the same time

left the festival with very little money to cover the costs associated with spaces

that were physically accessible and all-ages. The organizers could have more

easily found a balance of costs and the functionality of the space if they could

hold an event "at a house that had stairs, where people with wheelchairs couldn't

go," or if they could use a bar, where minors were not allowed. Since the festival

was more committed to meeting its inclusivity mission than achieving this

balance between budget and function, they would have to put a lot more effort

into what would usually be basic organizational milestones. Bonnell said, "That's

why it was more work. That's why it was so much work to find any space! … It

would be months of searching for a space, and it would be so expensive, and it

would be months of raising money for a space" (Joseph Bonnell, personal

communication, May 18, 2017).

Although the specific accommodations associated with modern queer music scenes (and queer scenes in general) seem heightened compared to previous festivals, this is really just a matter of perspective. Compared to the 1970s, the accommodations made today seem over the top, when in fact they are really what the bare minimum looks like to modern queers and feminists (particularly in younger circles). But at each time in the history of queer feminist music, there has been an expectation to "exceed" the standards of the previous generation, or of the previous event. Even in the 1970s and 1980s as "women's music peaked, problems arose. Women's music audiences expected more from women's music performers than they did from their mainstream counterparts," both politically and in terms of the time invested and number of shows musicians performed (Lont, 1992, p. 248).

Unfortunately, one of the hazards of volunteer-run, low-budget, DIY work is that the success depends on individuals giving their time because they are engaged with and care about the project. In the face of such high expectations, burnout is almost always on the horizon for volunteer organizers. Fueled by intrinsic and community-generated motivations, festivals rely on high emotional (and often financial) investments from key individuals. For Not Enough Fest Edmonton, dueling concerns arose when organizers were perceived as failing to meet the expectations of the community. On the one hand, organizers invested in the needs of the community, striving to achieve what they can with limited

resources, may feel the criticism they received is, in some ways (not all) unfair or that the expectations are simply too high. This can damage their willingness to invest in the project. On the other hand, those expressing concerns about their exclusion from events in one way or another have justified complaints often rooted in a pervasive or systemic discrimination that impacts them constantly, an escape from which they hope will be provided from within their queer community.

Stephanie Olsen recalled her work trying to meet queer community expectations with regard to safe(r) spaces as, "in lots of a ways a very fulfilling piece of Not Enough Fest, to like have those accountability conversations and develop these guidelines and have that kind of consultation in the community." She also noted that "it was *exhausting*," and sometimes "ruffled a lot of feathers…and it just became really complicated to untangle all that stuff…and it didn't make us very popular." She acknowledges that the festival "wasn't perfect," and thinks that maybe the organizers spread themselves too thin in the two years the festival was running. Similarly, reflecting on her experience engaging the community for the development of the project, and in feedback sessions after the first year, Kendra Cowley was adamant that the feedback processes was essential to their developing a successful festival. It helped them shape the organizational structure and the content of the various events and the main festival, and she reiterated several times that the community input was vital to the outcome. Despite the immense value of what she gained from the process,

Kendra also noted that,

> …some of the feedback, we were so open and transparent to feedback, throughout the entire process. But there was definitely, I think, some folks who really weren't happy with us. And it was a lot of different reasons that that's true. Not all of them necessarily directly related to Not Enough Fest. But we did receive some feedback that was very pointed and very hurtful. And not even necessarily super constructive. (Kendra Cowley, personal communication, May 15, 2017)

Both Kendra and Stephanie felt that criticisms of a certain nature, especially those that were personal or directed at individuals, were a challenge to their self-esteem. Some comments had more to do with the ways that organizers were perceived as people than with how they enacted their visions for the festival or people's experiences at the event. Although admittedly, Kendra and Stephanie found the process "very hurtful," they said that the emotional impact was the most burdensome with regard to the extra work it created. That is, the emotional work of processing the feedback and controlling the fallout—it took time and valuable energy, contributing to burnout.

Speaking broadly, there are two factors at play that both lead to the festival achieving its aim while also leading to its demise. As organizers get closer to achieving their goals, the value of their input declines—there is simply less need for the radical politics that drive the initial queer feminist music initiative. At the same time, as organizers invest huge amounts of their emotional and physical energy, personal resources, and time, they may simply get tired, or life's other pressing needs may begin to pile up. So, the individual value that motivates them

to action may also decline. Considering these together, it's clear that the balance of value to effort will shift over time and organizers will be less likely to maintain the project. This leaves open the space for other engaged individuals to assemble new projects resolving unmet needs and reforming queer feminist communities to suit the (always still queer feminist) identities they wish to take on.

Chapter 7: Conclusions

Queer Topics in Ethnomusicology

From both my academic and my personal positions (although they are hardly distinct from one another), I am interested in a critical perspective on the ways that we write about and conduct research with queer communities. From an academic perspective, I believe this work has demonstrated that the gap in queer music scholarship—that is, research based in the field and engaging with diverse queer communities—has led to a misrepresentation of queerness in the academic literature, including about why queer subjects are lacking in music scholarship, the challenges of conducting fieldwork with queer people, and about how queerness is represented through musical activity, or through music itself. From a personal perspective, I want to see myself and my communities represented at least in part in the academic literature.

This project has been an opportunity to explore some of the ideas currently shaping my understanding of what ethnomusicological practice might mean for queer subjects. I began with a discussion of issues around what queer ethnomusicology might look like, in practice, framed around a critique of the limited available ethnomusicological thought on the topic, Cheng and Barz's "Ethnomusicology's Queer Silences" (Cheng & Barz, 2015). Using this short blog post as a foil to draw out my own thinking on the conceptual topic has been valuable for considering not only about how I might write about queer musicians,

but also about how that work would be situated within the larger discipline of ethnomusicology. I suggested that the lack of focus on queer topics in ethnomusicology emerged from a combination of factors. Firstly, as a discipline that focuses heavily on fieldwork-based studies, the lack of a clear queer music "field" for young researchers to engage is a clear limitation. Following that, much of the work in queer studies, led largely by queer theorists and focused heavily on conceptual categories of gender and sexuality—rather than lived experiences—has made the application of that theory to lived communities difficult. This critique poses a challenge to future scholarship: how can lived queer experiences inform the theories of queer music culture and music community, such that the vibrant diversity, complex history, and ongoing cultural negotiations are acknowledged and incorporated into understanding?

One of the things I wrestle with in the current approach to queer theory and scholarly discussions of queerness in music is that this body of work has a tendency to focus heavily on reading queerness through its difference from the normative. This keeps discussions of queerness focused solely on identity factors—subjective experiences and expressions—rather than on what I have referred to as queer communities and queer feminist music scenes. This focus on difference and resistance has also been a motif for scholarship in other disciplines, including cultural studies and popular music studies, in particular. For this reason, exploring options for breaking away from (or complementing) resistance narratives has implications for these fields, as well.

To address the challenge of my initial analysis, I chose to draw on popular music studies concept of *scenes*, including *translocal scenes*, extending this to a high level view, which I called *cycles*. This interdisciplinary approach focused heavily on the ways that drawing from popular music studies and cultural studies could open a path toward the ethnographic study of lived queer musical practice. I situated my work in ethnomusicology—it is where I am comfortable and it emphasizes the fieldwork-based approach to queer music, the methodology in which I am most interested. Yet, at the same time this work can also be viewed as encouraging the inclusion of ethnographic perspectives into popular music studies, calling on this related discipline to pay more attention to live experiences drawn from the field.

The Big Picture: scenes and cycles

My discussion of queer feminist music scenes attempted to conceptually shape the scene by what I see as the most significant non-musical elements. That is, that a queer feminist music scene would be focused (of course) on music and that it would highlight women and queer people through its organizational structure and through the performances. This focus could arise through any genre of music, therefore leaving the scene, as a whole, undefined by any one particular sound. Instead, the scene would be politically oriented—in some way focused on meeting the social and political needs of the local community, and it would be DIY. Although these elements each have, to some degree, a reactionary focus—

DIY, for example, can be read as a response to marginalization in the mainstream music industry—I argued that defining the scene through these elements permits researchers to embrace the variation between the local scenes while still conveying a sense of internally produced, inwardly focused, community intention: that is, music by and for queer people, women, and transgender people.

One constraint of my discussion from the outset has been that the events are time- and place-bound. In our usual mode of thinking, such events become objects, with clear boundaries. Yet, my perspective is that they are different iterations of the same, or at least an extremely similar, activity. They are part of the same scene. My exploration of Not Enough festival began with a plan to conduct an ethnography, an approach that had to be shifted once the festival ended. Yet my being at that exact moment in time was also a revelation. Participants and organizers alike were talking about what was to come next while lamenting their initial loss, clarifying for me that the connections between events were not only conceptual but also experienced by participants in tangible ways: they attended multiple sites, and imagined their work as contributing to a larger whole, connected also to a (not necessarily immediate) past. The endings became as significant as the beginnings, creating, as they do, a space for something new, freeing motivated community organizers to move in a new direction or pass the torch entirely: this became the basis for a cyclical approach to understanding the ebb and flow of events and scenes. At its core, this method of analysis advocates reading queer feminist scenes in two ways: in their place and time, but also

translocally and transtemporally. It positions queer feminist scenes as ones that grapple simultaneously with the immediate community needs and the broader, historically-informed and forward-looking negotiation of cultural or community identity. This work contributes a new perspective to ethnomusicology, but also has implications for other disciplines that take events as objects of study, including popular music studies and festival studies.

Other Limitations and Future Research

Like all research, this work has limitations, both in its content and its possible applications. More work will be needed to elaborate on what I have presented, and a big part of that will be to include a wider variety of perspectives, particularly with regard to the intersectional diversity of participants. Further, it is important to me to show the limitations of this work, not only because this reflexivity is part of research, but also because failing to do so after so much discussion about inclusivity would be, I think, somewhat myopic.

I chose to focus on festivals as a grounding element for queer feminist music scenes because they were accessible to me as a researcher and helped to give what could have been a formless project a manageable scope. For me, this particular scope was incredibly useful but also restrictive. The concept of scenes, although not limited to festivals, is much more clear when it is linked to definitive times and places. Yet at the same time, this has really forced me into a position of choosing a narrative for discussion. This narrative was intended as an illustration

but can easily be mistaken for a form of history writing; it gives the impression that a scene is something that stops and starts or something which progresses in a linear fashion. The queer feminist music scene is not a series of dots along a continuum, linked by mere reference and organizational approach. In between those dots there are flurries of activities, community negotiations, planning sessions, and many concerts, rehearsals, meet and greets, jams sessions, and more, that make up a dynamic musical network. One limitation of this work is the challenge of conveying this sense of non-linear meaning while still providing examples that are concrete enough for the reader to follow. Working with queer communities in ethnomusicology will continually pose this challenge.

Another major limitation of this work was the timing of the festival's closure. My initial plan was to capture the queerness of a single event without reference to history, endings, scenes, or cycles. While, as I previously mentioned, the (forced) reevaluation of my approach opened many doors in terms of the way that I was thinking about queer feminist musical activity, there is something lost with lack of opportunity to undertake a more robust ethnographic observation, including work in New Orleans, Winnipeg, and Portland, all places where the festival had closed even before my initial ethnography was planned. Such a study would certainly provide valuable insight into the interrelationship between scenes, providing an opportunity to capture immediate thoughts (rather than retrospectives, like those I captured here) about the ways that current queer feminist work draws on, or contributes to, other queer feminist musical activities.

I previously identified that my choice of subject matter is already a limiting factor with regard to accounting for the diversity of queer people. Relying on existing documents and festivals that were immediately accessible to me means that this work is lacking in a solid perspective from people of colour. Although some of my interviewees are people of colour, and this intersectionality is important to Not Enough festivals in particular (as well as other modern queer communities), I do not believe that the work here is sufficient to address or represent the entirety of queer experience (what work could possibly claim this feat?). To really create a robust sense of whether or not queer subjects can be approached this way in ethnomusicology, much more research will be needed, and that research will need to intentionally seek out a large variety of perspectives.

Rather than facilitate a clear definition of a queer music scene, I believe the preliminary concepts presented here—those around the ways that scenes and cycles are constructed based on familiar components—will necessarily be complicated by overlapping scenes and cycles that can constitute a larger (probably messy) set of relationships for queer music. There will certainly be value here, although it is beyond my current realm of knowledge to hypothesize how or what we will draw from it. However, I feel strongly that this is the most pressing area for future research. I would begin by repeating this study in communities of colour, such as via the black queer punk scene. I would also pursue similar work in other global communities, drawing wherever possible on

historical records, oral histories, and current practices to learn how queer people create their own worlds—by queer people for queer people—in different social and political environments around the world. The aim of this work would not be to create comparative ethnographies—each region will have specific elements and influences unique to its practice—but rather to contribute to a way of thinking about queer cultures that does not depend exclusively on their marginalization or difference from the mainstream of the dominant culture of which individuals are also a part. This work would have the added benefit of shifting the focus of "queer ethnomusicology" away from the dominant queer narratives (Euro-centric, middle class, cisgender), which tend to prioritize those (particularly gay and lesbian) communities with the privilege of safety that allows them to publicly express their queerness. Ethnomusicologists could lead the revival of queer topics by acknowledging this plurality of queer expressions and pursuing a better understanding of the role(s) of music in the construction and maintenance of queer identity, including group identities, around the world.

Limitations: author's agenda

As a queer-identified person, queer activist, active community based researcher, and musician, I am personally invested in the idea of the ethnomusicological study of queer musical activity. I do truly feel as if there is a unique quality to the queer approach to musical practice, even if at times I cannot articulate it clearly. Yet I also understand that such articulations will be

challenging. Even the queer community has difficulty describing itself in ways that encompass the variety therein—as I previously discussed with regard to my choice to use *queer* as an umbrella term throughout this work. So, while this positioning might make it seem, at first, like I am very invested in the successful launch of "queer ethnomusicology," I am still struggling to imagine what this work will look like, in practice. I am wary of tidy answers; I am equally wary of scholarship that points to queer topics as passé, or to queerness as external to the experience and practice of music. I am instead finding myself to be increasingly critical of what that sub-discipline would look like and open to the question of whether or not it is even desirable to approach queer practice in this way—a question that cannot be answered based on this work alone.

For me, the only answer is to pursue queer scholarship from the perspective of the *possibility* of queer musical activity having inherent recognizable features that bind it to an idea of queer music, queer musicianship, or queer musical networks that is held and practiced in the community. That is not a focus on gender or sexual difference, as I have made clear. Apart from that, I consider this work to be an initial engagement with the topic and look forward to the ways that our understanding of queer scenes evolves with further research.

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