Introduction
Heavy Metal (Re)Generation:
(Re)generating the Politics of Age, Race, and Identity in Metal Music Culture

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Heavy Metal Generations is the fourth volume in the series of papers drawn from the *Music, Metal and Politics* international conference, an annual event since 2008 that has attracted scholars from around the globe.[1] *MMP4: Heavy Metal Generations* was no exception, allowing scholars working within a diverse range of academic disciplines to converge in Prague, Czech Republic, for three days of panel presentations, debate and conjecture about the past, present and future of metal music studies.[2] Something of the flavour of diversity, synchronicity and inter-disciplinarity that characterised the event can be gauged from the selection of papers presented in this volume. In many ways it could be argued that the theme of the conference, Heavy Metal Generations, was highly appropriate in not only reflecting the age range of the delegates, from early and mid-career to more established scholars, but in addressing the generational significance of the heavy metal music genre, which was 42 years young when the conference convened. Not bad for a music genre that was initially dismissed as musically inept and derivative, not least because of the assumed lack of refined musical taste exhibited by the type of suburban mass-teenage audience to which the music appealed. Consequently, critics have pronounced heavy metal as deceased or in severe decline every decade since it first appeared. But, paraphrasing Nietzsche's old saw, 'what doesn't kill you makes you stronger', which in the case of heavy metal means that the genre thrives not only because of the music's capacity to renew and regenerate its DNA in striking and novel ways but because it accomplishes this periodic renewal *in spite of* critical dismissal and denigration. Each of metal's mutations, such as the New Wave of British Heavy Metal (NWOBHM), Doom metal, Speed metal, Thrash metal, Death metal, Black metal, Power metal, Progressive metal and so on, are striking because they clearly represent, at the time of their emergence, a generational break in the lineage of the genre, either through a revival of certain features or a rejection of others. These new sub-genre styles, often rejected or dismissed initially by older fans and musicians, eventually get absorbed into the larger whole once the noise of acrimony abates, often through acts of symbolic recognition or rapprochement.[3]

The capacity of heavy metal culture to be self-reflective or indeed *reflexive* about itself as a complex cultural formation, is certainly in large part due to its longevity: it has quite simply outlasted many other hard-rock genres like punk, grunge, and alt.rock - genres that were heralded as the voice of a new generation that would kill off backward-looking music like metal, once and for all. Yet each time metal seemed to pull off, as one critic put it, 'another Jesus Christ' move. Yet this view, voiced every ten years or so by perplexed *journalists*, is essentially the reverse face of a coin that has *always viewed heavy metal*, from its inception at the

end of the 1960s, *as backward-looking, ideologically vacuous or even dangerous*, *precisely because of its lack of an obvious youth counter-cultural message* beyond the sound of "electric guitars, filtered through an array of warping devices […] cranked several decibels past the pain threshold, loud enough to rebound of the walls of the biggest arenas anywhere".[4] Lester Bangs' obituary piece for *Rolling Stone* on heavy metal is important because it offers an image of the heavy metal audience as a generation. With the exception of Deena Weinstein and some recent writing on the inter-relationship between heavy metal and progressive rock,[5] there has been little academic exploration of the ways in which the emergence of hard rock and heavy metal articulated the concerns and identities of a previously disenfranchised youth group: male, white, suburban teens from mainly skilled-manual and lower-middle class households.[6] What is striking therefore when examining the accounts of this teenage audience in rock criticism from the period is the overwhelming sense that the heavy metal teen audience is *not* a generation in the sense of the Woodstock generation or the youth counter-culture. It is rather a *throwback* to the type of audiences that characterised the late 1950s, understood like the music itself, as a "living contradiction [.] to the theory of evolution".[7]

> Rock & roll has always been youth-oriented music, but heavy metal fandom is almost exclusively restricted to the teenage years. [As a result it] invariably gets left behind with memories of high-school dances, first cars, and first sex, a vestige of youth, part of a phase one is expected to outgrow.[8]

This notion of the endlessly repeated same - ironically echoing Amiri Baraka's "changing same"[9] – is taken to its logical conclusions in a piece from the aptly titled collection, *Rock of Ages,* called (rather ominously) 'Hard Rock on the Rise':

> Heavy metal, with its deafening volume and proud hostility to cultural and aesthetic niceties, is the primary music of teenage rebellion and, almost by definition, something a listener outgrows. As such, it is also an ideal commercial proposition […] In the world of heavy metal, a new set of teens is ever entering the marketplace, and with them arrives the latest set of outrageous stars, whose popularity lasts just about as long as its generation of teens.[10]

Ozzy Osbourne, along with Black Sabbath, was one of the "outrageous stars" listed, and this was some years before the unexpected global success of his reality TV show, *The Osbournes*. So it would be very interesting, if possible, to ask these critics to respond to the flurry of activity that spread across the blogosphere during the week of the 40th anniversary of the release of Black Sabbath's debut album or the band's induction into the Rock n Roll Hall of Fame - all signs of imminent, if not already conclusive, rock culture canonisation. But perhaps this is not necessary, as Tom Ewing writing in the *UK Guardian*, admitted, apparently on behalf of rock's critics in general: "How wrong we were about Black Sabbath."[11] This

belated acknowledgement of the profound cultural impact of heavy metal can also be found in a piece published in the left-leaning *New Statesman*, wherein Daniel Trilling writes, "Heavy metal was born in the West Midlands, and has developed a global following matched only in hip-hop. It's time to stop sneering and celebrate this proud cultural heritage."[12] In fact, Trilling's piece was provoked by a fan initiative to create an archive of memorabilia, *The Home of Metal* (2007), which was taken up and supported by West Midland's Capsule arts media (UK), resulting in a mini-symposium convened by academics and artists.[13] This was followed by the *Home of Metal Project* proper, a summer-long series of events and exhibitions, funded by the UK Lottery and Arts Council, taking place across a number of locations, including the Birmingham City museum and the Wolverhampton Light House Arts centre. The series included the personal involvement of prominent band members of Black Sabbath, Judas Priest and Napalm Death, as well as a number of art installations and sculpture produced by well-known artists inspired by the music and themes of heavy metal music. In fact, the series was extensively covered and debated in the UK quality press throughout 2011.[14]

We can point to other initiatives, events and productions in the media, the arts and in broader popular culture (computer game soundtracks, for example)[15]as well as in academia, concerning heavy metal, that has receive a markedly different kind of coverage in the arts and culture pages of the broadsheet or 'quality' press. To name a significant few: the critical and commercial success of the investigative documentary, *Metal: A Headbanger's Journey* (2005),[16] which enjoyed a widespread release and significant box office receipts; the publication of the book *Extreme Metal* (2007) by Keith Kahn-Harris, which not only received sympathetic reviews but also significant sales for an academic text; the convening of the *First Global Conference on Metal Music and Politics* (2008), in Salzburg, Austria, which received coverage in the UK *Guardian* newspaper and in the metal press;[17] the *Heavy Metal and Gender Congress*, held at the University of Cologne in 2009, which featured a roundtable discussion by prominent female metal performers in addition to more conventional academic presentations, which was filmed and extensively covered in the German magazine, *Metal Hammer*; and, finally, the Black metal theory symposium held in Brooklyn, New York, in 2009 and reported in the *New York Times*.[18]

Within academe, it would not be an exaggeration to argue that since 2000, there has been a discernible *acceleration* in research and publication concerned with metal music and culture. We have not only seen an increase in the number of research papers, chapters and monographs published but also a range of disciplinary areas and concerns addressed from within ethnomusicology, popular music and media studies, comparative literary, religious and cultural studies, art, and philosophy - to name but a few.[19] One way to express this might be to suggest that heavy metal music – after 40 years of persistent development and cross-fertilization – has begun to achieve, in Bourdieu's theoretical vocabulary,

legitimable status as both an art-culture object and a legitimate subject of academic enquiry.[20]

If, as Stuart Hall has argued, the cultural politics that configure the relationship between high and low cultural forms resembles that of an 'escalator'[21] in, one imagines, a post-modern department store in which the content on display perpetually changes, then metal's cultural capital is rising, floor by floor. However, we want to caution that while these moments or events announce a profound reorientation of the cultural value of heavy metal music and subculture, it should alert us to other genres' histories, in which the recognition from the academy and its 'gifting' of elite cultural legitimation signals a heightened likelihood of an increasingly anemic challenge by (formerly) *illegitimate* subcultural value systems. More specifically, the current struggle within the cultural and academic field is over the right to not only claim legitimacy for heavy metal culture but also to define at least the opening terms of its engagement with so-called legitimate culture.

Central to this process, we would argue, is the deepening relationship between heavy metal fandom and its reflection within the various critical practices that seek to make heavy metal music the legitimate subject of philosophical exegesis, empirical examination or theoretical analysis. Metal's journey from the garage through the club, arena and recording studio, to the classroom and the conference hall concludes at a number of often-contradictory destinations as metal's meanings, performances, and values are claimed and shaped by a critical listenership that includes music journalists, knowledgeable fans, academic scholars and the musicians themselves. It follows from this logic that this volume is itself implicated in this legitimation process!

Following the suggestive remarks of Mike Featherstone concerning the cultural politics of postmodernism –"one of the subversive strategies of outsider intellectuals and [.] new culture entrepreneurs is to seek to legitimate new fields to stand alongside and undermine the traditional restricted definitions of taste provided by the established intellectuals and embodied into high culture"[22] – a number of theorists have examined the process whereby formerly illegitimate 'commercially' defined forms of culture have attained *legitimable* status vis-à-vis high culture or art as the outcome of different symbolic strategies. Favoured examples in support of the cultural-escalator argument are: film noir, auteur-cinema, sci-fi and detective fiction, jazz, photography and rock music.[23]

Key to each of these examples has been the role of the cultural intermediary, the critic/academic or academic/critic, who has sought to raise the symbolic value of the cultural form in question by distinguishing it from the merely formulaic or commercial types of production aimed at a mass market. Crucial to this strategy of symbolic distinction has been the development of a distinctive language of criticism that was able to identify 'authenticity' and apply it to a limited range of artists, while dismissing others as fabricated, generic or commercially driven.

Hence the category of 'rock', which will be of key importance to our argument about heavy metal, was necessarily distinguished from commercial 'pop music' in the mid 60s. Or as Gestur Gudmundsson et al argue: "the construction of the field of rock music has been a process of legitimation, for which rock criticism is largely responsible. This ongoing process has caused a drastic rise in the cultural status of key artists in the field. If few people would claim that all rock […] is art, most would agree that some certainly is".[24] According to Motti Regev, the legitimising strategies of rock criticism were based on four key claims: that the music was subversive or at least "anti-hegemonic"; it was produced by autonomous authorial subjects; it allowed for the formation of a canon of important artists and their work; and, it was in possession of its own means of artistic expression. During the 1960s a semi-autonomous "apparatus of meaning production" emerged, which publicly interpreted and codified rock as a "serious" musical and cultural practice. In the 1970s, the group of writers that had been active in this process began to recapitulate, summarize and collate their interpretations in book form, including, collections of articles and reviews that had appeared in magazines; biographies of key musicians; rock encyclopedias; rock histories; record guides and polls. The narrative that emerged chronicled a series of eruptions of 'authentic' music making: several 'great artists' (individuals or groups) produce a number of 'masterpieces' (songs and albums) forming a canon of authentic/classic rock music. For rock fans, certain artists are assumed to be widely held as canonical and have achieved a certain kind of "street *legitimabil-ity*". As Regev notes, 'The cultural status of the music of the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, Bob Dylan and Jimi Hendrix […] might not equal that of Beethoven or Mozart's, but it is relatively high'.[25]

Despite the mention of Jimi Hendrix, whose pioneering experimentation with distortion and guitar technique paved the way for the distinctive sound of heavy metal,[26] no heavy metal artist, band or album features in the rock canon of authentic or classic rock music.[27] Given that heavy metal emerged in the 1970s, sharing its popular commercial success with the confessional singer-songwriter and progressive rock genres, it could be argued it simply came too late for inclusion within a canon that reflected the countercultural politics of the 1960s. Yet there is good evidence to suggest that the codification of rock aesthetics, to the extent that it is possible to claim there is a unified core, coalesced in the 1970s. Partly as a function of the changed musical values and climate from the previous decade, trends in the 1970s such as glam rock with its emphasis on politically empty spectacle (despite its gender troubling) or disco's unapologetic embrace of consumerist excess (despite an arguable "politics of pleasure") were interpreted by many US rock critics, in particular, as a failure of popular music to rise to the challenge of creating a permanent 'mythic community' that rock, at its best, could achieve. Hardly surprising then that the rock journalism of that decade contained a high degree of controversy and combative rhetoric, as writers sorted out, at an earnest emotional pitch, who were the legitimate heirs to the sixties-project while

busily denouncing false prophets or charlatans who appeared to challenge its core values.

Although the singer-songwriter "superstars" were roundly lambasted for elevating the artist above the audience, such criticism was mitigated to the extent that individual artists explored an alternative vision of authenticity in a roots-inspired folk-Americana project. The same cannot be said for progressive rock and heavy metal, two largely British imports, whose unprecedented commercial success on the newly emergent North American major stadium touring circuit saw them critically savaged by the music press on both sides of the Atlantic. While we can only explore this coverage in broad strokes here,[28] including the issue of which genre was attacked more vociferously,[29] the significance of negative critique is its usefulness in revealing, through the play of 'difference', that what lies at the core of the rock legitimation process is the question of how "rock should be intellectualised".[30] While it might seem invidious to position rock critics in socio-economic and cultural terms, it is hugely significant to the 'aesthetic' politics of rock criticism that its dominant fraction is composed of white, middle-class, college or university graduates in literature, creative-writing and the arts. Almost to a man[31] - and rock criticism remains largely a "boy's club"[32]– they "fell in love" or were deeply impressed with the "poetry and power" of a disreputable, low-cultural form (rock n roll) that seemed able to flow over both racial and class borders, offering up the possibility of a radical but popular-democratic "generational consciousness". In this respect, rock criticism was a "typical child of the sixties' generation gap", where a number of "new intellectuals, largely autodidacts" influenced by jazz and film criticism, rejected the academy and middle class respectability, in favour of the romance of rock music. As Gudmundsson et al suggest,

> the rise of [this] "petit-bourgeois" fraction bred a cultural egalitarianism that became particularly visible in the aesthetic field, where neo-avant-gardist experimentation, pop culture, and political revolt were opening dialogues, clashing and flowing together, and marked an era of happenings, camp, pop art, and countercultural utopianism[33]

But this meant that rock critics warmed to those musicians who took rock's working class and blues roots seriously but claimed this authenticity on behalf of rock artistry, particularly via lyrical "poetry" or ironic performance.[34] Or as Chris Macdonald has argued, rock critics "tended to praise rock that drew inspiration from avant-garde art and bohemian literary movements, with a special emphasis on deconstructionist, postmodern, and anti-art ideas".[35] However, being anti-art actually meant being "against the unmediated appropriation of mainstream art notions and their pretensions into popular music – the pieties of singer-songwriters, the virtuosic convulsions of some heavy metal, and the classical music quotationalism of British [progressive] rock".[36]

Thus, rock legitimacy rejected high-art pretensions and commercial success in-itself, since the former sought to appeal to an establishment that rock criticism defined itself *against*, while the latter was compromised by any value beyond that of the mechanism of the mass market. What this meant, in the context of the 1970s, was that the claims of progressive rock musicians to be modern 'composers' and instrumental virtuosos were dismissed as middle-brow pretentiousness. While the rock primitivism and guitar heroics of heavy metal not only lacked irony, they tended to encourage audiences to value low-brow *technical* professionalism for its own sake.

Although it could be argued that the legitimation struggles conducted by critics on behalf of rock artists were conducted within the existing rules of the cultural field, the strategy that was central to their success was their ability to establish legitimacy – and thus, authority for themselves – for marking aesthetic and categorical differentiation *within* the commercial genre field rather than between art and commerce. So although musical acts were still dismissed for being primarily concerned with commercial rather than aesthetic value, the relationship between high and low brow was increasingly re-drawn within the boundaries of rock music itself. What this means is that although some forms of rock music may have acquired art status, legitimacy within the field of rock music was no longer overdetermined by the academy and the art establishment, since rock developed its own internal canons and consecratory powers. In sum, there were parallel but by no means identical tracks of critical rock discourse: a senior discussion among professional journalists and writers and a younger disassembling of rock music by academics, scholars, and intellectuals. Ironically, it may be no one but these more recently-arrived discussants hold any interest at all in whether there is scholarly, or even broader, cultural legitimation – the young tail, perhaps, wagging an old dog that only wants to bark at the moon.[37]

Looking back over the field of heavy metal music since its inception in the 1970s, a number of things are clear. Heavy metal remains, for the most part, illegitimate culture. This is due to a number of reasons. First, although heavy metal has developed its own music press, spanning titles from the mainstream to the underground, it has remained largely subservient to the values of critical rock journalism.[38] We see this most pointedly in its *failure to challenge the political-aesthetic of rock culture* which, for the most part, means it has been content to celebrate a populist agenda that heavy metal is simply 'louder than the rest'. Second, despite developing an alternative array of legitimating bodies that consecrate metal artists for musical achievement, these events receive less exposure and garner less credibility from mainstream media, such as television and entertainment coverage.[39] Thirdly, the ability of heavy metal to regenerate itself via sub-genre specialization and new waves has been consistently parasitic on rock forms that it has either absorbed or neutralized, such as punk, hardcore and alt.rock. This, paradoxically, has led rock media to pursue a dual strategy of annexation of metal sub-genre artists, such as certain thrash and grindcore bands [40]

that meet the criteria of youth subcultural legitimacy, whilst criticizing the commercial but 'empty' success of metal as a music genre in general. Finally, heavy metal has failed to deal with two areas of social and ideological controversy, namely its musical origins in a white-boy appropriation of the African-American electric blues[41] and its identification, by the rock press in particular, as an unreconstructed expression of sexist-gender politics which privilege the uninhibited expression of masculine identities at the expense of women and racial and sexual minorities.[42]

Against this negative checklist we can point to a number of positive developments that anticipate the terms of heavy metal's cultural legitimation. First, the globalizing flow of heavy metal music's influence across Northern and Southern Europe, South East Asia, Latin America and, more recently, Eastern Europe, the Indian sub-continent, the Middle East and Northern-Africa. Although initially hewing to a Western media/cultural imperialist pattern of domination, by the 1990s, local metal scenes across the globe began to exhibit a counter-cultural flow of influence[43] and innovation that has elevated certain peripheral countries to major league influence in a global dynamic which foregrounds the prominence of Extreme metal genres.[44] Second, the foundation of global extreme metal scenes in the innovative underground practice of international tape-trading has been superseded by a burgeoning internet-based fandom that has established a widespread array of peer-reviewed canon formation media consisting, in part, of web-based encyclopedias, wikis and blogs that trade in an unofficial but significantly arcane depth of metal scholarship that lies just beyond the borders of academic recognition. Third, academic interventions, beginning with the pivotal contributions of Weinstein and Walser – which decisively reversed the negative perception toward research into heavy metal as simply the study of youth musical 'pathologies' – contested the illegitimate cultural status of heavy metal culture either through appeals to high cultural appropriation[45] or to a consistent defence of heavy metal's low-brow legitimacy.[46] We hope this collection contributes to the rising tide of academic work that serves to broaden and deepen heavy metal music studies' intellectual and aesthetic grounds, critical agenda and political value by undermining old certainties and suggesting new horizons in the context of current social conditions, politics and society. But on what terms that engagement occurs is always open to interpretation, analysis, and debate.

The diverse array of papers collected within this volume all address in their various ways the range of issues we have outlined. Leading off Andy Brown's 'The Speeding Bullet, the Smoking Gun: Tracing Metal Trajectories, from Sabbath to Satyricon', seeks to identify and critically interrogate three recurring narrative strategies - rockism or the ideology of rock music, popular musicology's efforts to discover continuity in shared musical practices, and "breaks" or avant-garde re-distillations of the genre - employed by heavy metal 'fans, musicians, journalists

and academics' to account for the historical persistence of the genre as a "changing same". Roderick Henry's paper takes its cue from fan and academic voices that have begun to question whether the received idea of the demographics of the typical metal head – white, male, blue-collar, youth - is accurate in relation to today's global fandom. Demonstrating how researchers can employ the features of contemporary social media, such as 'likes' on Facebook, his study is able to reveal patterns of gender in current metal fandom, as well as suggesting innovative ways in which internet research tools might be used in the future.

'Black Metal Soul Music' by Kevin Fellezs and 'Heavy Conditions: Power Metal in Madagascar' by Markus Verne bring a welcome focus in metal studies on the politics and economics of "race" in the production and performance of metal musical aesthetics. Fellezs' portrait of the only "black" metal band in the San Francisco thrash scene, *Stone Vengeance*, reveals through interview material how the band members are able to claim an African-American "metal" heritage for their music, in both rock and blues, while acknowledging the lack of fit of this image with music industry expectations that has restricted their exposure, over a long career, to a core of die-hard fans. Vernes' anthropological study explores how Madagascay "power metal" musicians struggle to realise their dreams of recording their music to a professional standard in the face of local "conditions" – the lack of quality instruments and the money to buy them and the limitations of studio equipment – key debilitating factors in replicating the power metal "sound", which even by metal's sound-obsessed standards, requires both high-end clarity and low-end distortion.

By contrast, Mark Deeks in 'Nordic Heavy Metal as a Representation of Place' and Ashley Walsh in "Viking Heritage: The Creation of a Personal and National Identity through History and Metal' explore the ways in which Nordic and Viking metal bands employ ideas of place and fictional "warrior" histories, to construct persuasive narratives of ancient "white" North European "heathen" identities. As Deeks persuasively demonstrates, the imagery and iconography of Viking metal bands, such as Tyr, offers an aesthetic of pan-Nordic identity and community that appeals beyond any actual 'placeness'. While Walsh's study of the anti-Christian, fearless-warrior aesthetics beloved of the Viking metal sub-genre, shows how the search for "authentic" Viking identities often ignores the historical record in favour of discredited myths and stories, themselves part of a contested history that has seen both Nordic nationalists and Nazi-organisations seeking to exploit similar mythologies.

In 'Too old to raise the Horns? Getting older on the Metal Scene and the Politics of Intentionality: A Case Study of Second Generation Norwegian BM bands' by Karl Spracklen and 'Wolves in The Throne Room: Time, Autochthony and Transcendence in Contemporary (post)-Black Metal' by Amelia-Roísín Seifert and Kevin Murray, the respective authors explore themes in black metal do with youth and aging, subcultural conformity and counter-cultural utopianism. Spracklen's paper investigates, via interview-coverage in the extreme metal press,

how aging black metal musicians seek to negotiate their allegiance to their once youthful, rebellious selves, in a genre that values the arrogance and harshness of revolt against aged-orthodoxy. Examining the often amusing discursive strategies the musicians employ, Spracklen suggests that dealing with the problem of aging is something we all have to "do" but for black metal musicians, the choices on offer are often extremely limited. Seifert and Murray, drawing on the lyrics and recorded comments of the post-black metal band, WITTR, explore their anti-modern poetics of nature, place and temporality and how they inform a vision of a self-regulating, agrarian utopia ("Cascadia" - a proposed semi-autonomous region of the Pacific Northwest) which, the authors argue, in stark contrast to the subcultural characterization of heavy metal and black metal, in particular, suggests a youthful, idealistic anti-modern "back to nature" utopianism that has more in common with the counter-culture politics of the 1960s.

The papers, 'Thumb-bangers: Exploring the Cultural Bond Between Video Games and Heavy Metal' by Louis-Martin Guay and Dominic Arsenault and 'Pleasure in Metal: What Women Fans like about Hard Rock and Metal Music' by Rosemary Lucy Hill, both address how heavy metal music can be a cultural resource for pleasure in identity, whether that is the pleasure of being a female heavy metal fan or a fan of video games and in so doing surprise us in what they find. Guay and Arsenault do so by revealing a long and mutually reinforcing shared history between game players ("thumb-bangers") and metal fans ("head-bangers") that has influenced game soundtracks but also how game soundtracks have influenced metal song composition. This increasing interaction has shaped the commerce of both industries as well as identifying them, similarly as targets of moral panics. Hill's paper tackles the received politics of gender and metal but does so through an exploration of the voices of female respondents talking about what they find pleasurable in metal music. She suggests that women's pleasure in metal is not a negation of female identity or a denial of difference but the possibility of transcendence through tolerance of the "believe that *gender does not matter*" and the aesthetic experience of a "genderlessness" in metal fandom.

Notes

[1] Other volumes published include, *The Metal Void: First Gatherings*, edited by Niall W.R. Scott & Imke Von Helden (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2009/10). *Heavy Fundametalisms: Music, Metal and Politics*, edited by Rosemary Hill and Karl Spracklen (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2010). *Can I Play with Madness? Metal, Dissonance, Madness and Alienation*, edited by Colin A. McKinnon et al (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2011).

[2] We would like to record our thanks to Rob Fisher and Niall Scott for providing the organisation and infrastructure to make this possible and to Niall, in particular, for being such a genial and supportive conference chair.

[3] The one exception to this rule, thus far, appears to be nu metal. Those bands and musicians who have gained acceptance within the wider metal community have done so either by successfully distancing themselves from the label or by forming or joining a more obviously "metal" sounding and looking, band.

[4] Lester Bangs, 'Heavy Metal' in *The Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock & Roll*, edited by Anthony DeCurtis et al (London: Plexus, 1992): 302-4. For a contrary view, take Deena Weinstein: "The essential sonic element in heavy metal is power, expressed as sheer volume. Loudness is meant to overwhelm, to sweep the listener into the sound, and then to lend the listener the sense of power that the sound provides […] The kind of power that loudness gives is a shot of youthful vitality, a power to withstand the onslaught of sound and to expand one's energy to respond to it with a physical and emotional thrust of one's own. Heavy metal's loudness is not deafening, irritating or painful (at least to the fan), but empowering". *Heavy Metal: The Music and Its Culture* (New York: Da Capo Press, 2000): 23.

[5] But see, in particular, Durrell S. Bowman "Let Them All Make Their Own Music" Individualism, Rush, and the Progressive/Hard Rock Alloy, 1976-77'. In Kevin Holm-Hudson ed. *Progressive Rock Reconsidered* (New York: Routledge, 2002): 21-42 and Chris Macdonald, *Rush, Rock Music, and the Middle Class* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2009).

[6] For an early, though flawed attempt, see Will Straw, 'Characterizing rock music culture: the case of Heavy Metal' *Canadian University Music Review*, No.5, 1984, 104-22.

[7] Phillip Bashe, *Heavy Metal Thunder* (London: Omnibus Press, 1985): 6.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Amiri Baraka uses the idea of a musical groove in which a steady, probably implied rather than stated rhythmic pulse provides the ground for counter- and contra-rhythms playing minute variations with and against each other – a sense of both stasis, provided by the slow or nonexistent harmonic movement (or by using a modal approach), and forward propulsion provided by the polyrhythmic and even polymetric interplay between parts – a changing same and its role in the construction of an African/Afrodiasporic groove. See Amiri Baraka, writing as LeRoi Jones, *Blues People: The Negro Experience in White America and the Music that Developed From It* (NY: William Morrow, 1963).

[10] Ken Tucker, 'Hard Rock on the Rise'. In *Rock of Ages: The Rolling Stone History of Rock and Roll*. Edited by Ed Ward et al (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1986): 486.

[11] Tom Ewing, "How wrong we were about Black Sabbath", *The Guardian*, February 18, 2010:

For an archetypical example, this excerpt from Barney Hoskins, writing for *Creem* in 1982, should suffice:

"From the first oafish gothic crash of 'Black Sabbath' it was clear this band was dumb. Really intensely dumb […] Their playing was so Neanderthal there was never an instant when you though they might be joking. Sabbath couldn't even pull off their horror show, far less believe in it […] Not that there wasn't *any* menace about Sabbath. They crawled into the light of day at that precise moment in the evolution of rock when the Sixties party, so to speak, was unraveling. Emerging from psychedelia as a no-frills working-class rock 'n' roll band, they were pale and greasy and ugly and suspicious in a combination only the English Midlands could produce. They were reared in the birth place of heavy metal – it's only here,

where the meadow meets the factory and the cows drink industrial sewage, here and in the American Midwest, that heavy metal really makes sense". "Where the Cows Drink Sewage: Black Sabbath in the British Heartland". In *Into the Void: Ozzy Osborne and Black Sabbath; A Rock's Backpages Reader* (London: Omnibus Press, 2004): 69-70.

[12] Daniel Trilling, "Rocking the world", *NewStatesman*, 26th July 2007:

[13] Louis Pattison, 'Birmingham: British rock's forgotten city?', *The Guardian Music Blog*, 2011. Relevant here is Lisa Meyer's (of Capsule) defence of the HoM project: "The first event at Wolverhampton art gallery had a real variety in terms of participants, from young kids who have been introduced to these bands through the likes of Guitar Hero to older fans with plastic bags full of hoarded ticket stubs and programmes."
http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/musicblog/2009/feb/05/birmingham-rock-metal

[14] See for example, Justin Quirk. 'Home Of Metal: a history of the heavy in seven objects', *The Guardian*, 9 July 2010: http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2011/jul/09/home-of-metal-black-sabbath; Stuart Jeffries. 'Home of Metal turns the Midlands up to 11'. *The Guardian*, Monday July 11 2011: http://www.guardian.co.uk/music/2011/jul/10/home-of-metal-mark-titchner; Billy Kenber 'Deconstructing Motorhead: Academia is getting heavy'. *The Times*, September 5, 2011.

[15] See Louis-Martin Guay and Dominic Arsenault this volume.

[16] Sam Dunn, Scot McFadyen and Jessica Joy Wise (dir). *Metal: A Headbanger's Journey* (Warner Bros., 2005). Also of note is the follow up, Scot McFayden and Sam Dunn (dir.) *Global Metal* (Warner Bros., 2007) and Rick Ernst (dir.) *Get Thrashed: The Story of Thrash Metal* (Warner Bros., 2008).

[17] Jessica Shepherd, 'World's first heavy metal conference hits Salzburg'. *The Guardian*, 29th October, 2008: http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2008/oct/29/research-music
and *Metal Hammer*, September 2008:

[18] Ben Ratliff. 'Thank You, Professor, That Was Putrid'. *The New York Times*, December 15th, 2009:

[19] Andy R. Brown 'Heavy Genealogy'. *Journal for Cultural Research*, vol.15 (3): 213-242.

[20] Pierre Bourdieu. *The Field of Cultural Production*. (Cambridge: Polity, 1995).

[21] Stuart Hall, 'Notes on Deconstructing 'The Popular', in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture*. Edited by John Storey (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2009): 514.

[22] Mike Featherstone. *Popular Culture and Postmodernism* (London: Sage, 2000 orig. 1991): 93. He goes on to assert: "Rock music, fashion, the cinema became canonized as *legitimate* intellectual areas for critics, interpreters and popularizers (italics added). As a revision of Bourdieu's ideas we feel that the usage of terms here is somewhat loose or over-stated. See below.

[23] There were efforts to claim cultural legitimacy for jazz since at least the so-called Jazz Age of the 1920s. George Gershwin's *Rhapsody in Blue* enjoyed its premiere at Carnegie Hall in 1924 with the Paul Whiteman orchestra. For more on the discursive construction of jazz from a vernacular tradition through mainstream popular music into an art form, see 'Constructing the Jazz Tradition'. *Black Music Research Journal,* 25.3 (1991): 525-560; and Paul Lopes, *The Rise of a Jazz Art World* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2002).

[24] Gestur Gudmundsson et al, 'Brit Crit: Turning Points in British Rock Criticism, 1960-1990'. In *Pop Music and the Press*. Edited by Steve Jones (Philadelphia: Temple University Press 2002): 42.
[25] Motti Regev, 'Producing Artistic Value: The Case of Rock Music', *The Sociological Quarterly* (1994) vol. 35(1): 85-102.
[26] Relevant here is how Jeremy Wells' piece: 'Blackness Scuzed: Jimi Hendrix's (In)visible Legacy in Heavy Metal' begins with an entry from Arnold Shaw's *Dictionary of American Pop/Rock*, for the guitarist, which reads: "see the "black Elvis"; heavy metal rock". In Judith Jackson Fossett and Jeffrey A. Tucker (eds) *Race Consciousness : African-American Studies for the New Century*. (New York, New York University Press, 1997): 50. See also note 40.
[27] For extensive evidence of the existence and persistence of a "rock canon" see: Carys Wyn Jones. *The Rock Canon: Canonical Values in the Reception of Rock Albums* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).
[28] But see also, Andy R. Brown, "The Importance of Being Metal", in *The Metal Void: First Gatherings*. Edited by Niall W.R. Scott & Imke Von Helden (Oxford: Inter-Disciplinary Press, 2009/10): 109-112; Andy R. Brown and Christine Griffin, "A Cockroach preserved in Amber: The significance of class in critics representations of heavy metal music and its fans". Paper presented to *BSA Annual Conference: The Challenge of Global Social Inquiry*, 16th-18th April 2009, Cardiff City Hall, Cardiff.
[29] A lively debate and defence of the cultural and musical legitimacy of the progressive rock genre has begun to develop in recent years, offering many insights that are relevant to the case of heavy metal. See, inter alia, Edward Macan, *Rocking the Classics: English Progressive Rock and the Counter Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997); Paul Stump, *The Music's All that Matters: A history of progressive rock* (Quartet, London, 1998); Bill Martin, *Listening to the Future: The time of progressive rock 1968-1978* (Open Court, Chicago, 1998) and John J. Sheinbaum 'Progressive rock and the Inversion of Music Values', in Kevin Holm-Hudson ed., 21-42. *Progressive Rock Reconsidered* (New York: Routledge, 2002). See also note 3.
[30] Macdonald, Ibid, p. 203.
[31] See Ulf Lindberg et al, *Rock Criticism From the Beginning* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005) for biographical portraits of many of the key writers.
[32] But see, for example, Evelyn McDonnell and Ann Powers (eds) *Rock She Wrote* (London: Plexus).
[33] Gudmundsson et al, Ibid, p. 43.
[34] The most obvious examples here would be Bob Dylan and the Rolling Stones. But Robert Christgau's admission about Led Zeppelin is instructive: "Most of us recognised what was obvious to Teen Planet – the irreducible whomp of "Whole Lotta Love" and "Immigrant Song" and *Led Zeppelin IV*. But we committed the pardonable error of not dreaming that the fools who created theses sounds might comprise the greatest band in the known universe. Partly this was our heedless appetite for content –defined in part (oh, the shame of it!) as *verbal* content. Partly it was our occupational resistance to pomp". 'Genius Dumb: Led Zeppelin'. *In Grown Up All Wrong* (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1998): 89.
[35] Macdonald, Ibid, p. 203.
[36] Bernard Gendron quoted by Macdonald, Ibid, p. 204.

[37] Rudi Laermans agrees, writing, "Alongside the general legitimate culture passed on by the educational system, there now are several "subcultural" forms of legitimacy" in 'The relative rightness of Pierre Bourdieu', *Cultural Studies*, vol. 6 (2) 1992: 259.
[38] See, for example, Andy R. Brown on the UK and US metal press,"Everything Louder than Everything Else": The Contemporary Metal Music Magazine and its Cultural Appeal' in T. Holmes (ed) *Mapping the Magazine: Comparative Studies in Magazine Journalism* (London: Routledge, 2008): 121-134, and "The Importance of Being Metal", Ibid.
[39] A recent reported incident of fans protesting the lack of inclusion of metal bands in the annual Mercury Music Prize, led to a lively debate. See for example, the Music Critic piece: 'Alexis Petridis on heavy metal and the Mercury prize' *The Guardian,* 22nd July: http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/2011/jul/22/alexis-petridis-metal-mercury-prize
The newspaper also ran a poll, worded: "The Mercury prize has been accused of shunning heavy metal in its bid to find this year's best British album. Why is this: prejudice, good taste or a dearth of quality metal?" The results were: prejudice (88%) good taste (4%) and dearth of quality metal (7%). The response rate was 1414:
http://www.guardian.co.uk/culture/poll/2011/jul/22/mercury-prize-shortlist-heavy-metal
[40] Such as, early Slayer and Napalm Death. See Brown and Griffin, ibid.
[41] See Robert Walser, *Running With the Devil: Power, Gender, and Madness in Heavy Metal Music* (Middletown Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1993): 8-9 and Kevin Fellezs' further discussion in "Black Metal Soul Music," this volume. See also, Charles Shaar Murray's savage indictment, 'What Have They Done to my Blues, Ma?' in C. Heylin ed. *The Penguin book of rock and roll writing* (Viking, London, 1992): 604-12. Or as Wells' notes, Ibid, p. 62: "race is implicated in the construction of heavy metal [via] metal's blues ancestry, especially [as] both have been depicted as the "devils music"; metal's laying claim to different forms of "darkness" and "power" during its formative years – in an era in which "Black Power" was a well-publicized ideological force whose advocates were fond of depicting "whiteness" as "sterile" and "vacuous"; the scarcity of mixed-race or all-black metal bands [prompting the formation of the Black Rock Coalition] and finally, the affinities between metal and rap during the late 1980s".
[42] Arguably, unlike "race", metal scholarship has sought to tackle the issue of gender but not in terms of the equality of women, as fans and musicians, as much as in attempting to explore the complexity (aesthetic, performative and ideological) of metal's "masculinity project". See Brown, 'Heavy Genealogy', p. 235.
[43] For this argument see Deena Weinstein. 'The Globalization of Metal'. In *Metal Rules the Globe*. Edited by Jeremy Wallach et al (Durham NC: Duke University Press): 34-59.
[44] For example, Sweden. See Keith Kahn-Harris, *Extreme Metal* (Oxford: Berg, 2007): 105-109.
[45] See Walser, Ibid, ch.3, 'Eruptions: Heavy Metal Appropriations of Classical Virtuosity': 57-107.
[46] For example, Weinstein proposes an "objective defence" of heavy metal music, against both left and right detractors, who fail to appreciate the genre for "what it is", bid, 239.

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