Creative Producers and Gender Relations:
A Field Analysis of Two Grassroots Music Scenes

by

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Abstract

This dissertation uses a comparative case study of two grassroots music scenes—the folk music and heavy metal scenes in Toronto—to examine gender relations among cultural producers. I collect data using semi-structured interviews with 63 field actors, 70 instances of participant-observation, and discourse analysis of key public texts. Building on Bourdieu’s field theory, I argue that gender organizes fields of cultural production, including (1) the field’s economy of symbolic capital (2) the connection between field and habitus and (3) the spaces where musicians develop the embodied cultural capital required for music careers.

The first paper shows that field organization impacts the extent to which field members’ gendered dispositions produce symbolic capital, or reputation. Two features of cultural fields shape whether symbolic capital is gendered: the degree to which symbolic capital is institutionalized, and the level of symbolic boundary-drawing in the field. The metal field’s low institutionalization of symbolic capital and high boundaries foreground gender as a basis of symbolic capital, while the folk field’s high institutionalization of symbolic capital and low boundary-drawing reduce the extent to which gender matters.
The second paper situates gender as central to relationship between field and habitus. Participants in the metal field develop a *metalhead habitus* that privileges gendered practices centered on individual dominance and status competition, while the *folkie habitus* encourages gendered practices centered on caring, emotionality, and community-building. These gendered habitus support different working conventions: volunteer-based non-profit organizations in folk, and individual entrepreneurship in metal. The gendered habitus also supports different stylistic conventions: guitar virtuosity in the metal field, and participatory music-making in folk.

The third paper finds gendered access to the learning spaces where musicians develop *performance capital*, a form of embodied cultural capital denoting the instrumental and interpersonal skills required to perform music. Folk’s learning spaces are largely public and do not require social networks for access, while heavy metal’s learning spaces are private and centered on male-dominated friendship networks from which women are often excluded. These different learning spaces create gendered patterns of access to the embodied cultural capital required to develop a music career.
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1.1. The problem

This dissertation is a comparative case study of two grassroots music scenes: the contemporary folk music scene and the heavy metal scene in Toronto, Canada. I use the comparison between these scenes to produce broader sociological insights about gender relations among cultural producers, and about power dynamics and social inequalities in creative industries. Specifically, I extend Pierre Bourdieu’s (1993) field theory to ask: how does gender organize fields of cultural production?

In the three papers that constitute this dissertation, I show how gender analysis improves our understanding of cultural fields by identifying how gender shapes: (1) the field’s economy of symbolic capital, or reputation, recognition, and prestige; (2) the connection between field structure and habitus, or individual dispositions; and, (3) the social spaces in which participants develop a particular form of embodied cultural capital that I call performance capital: the instrumental and interpersonal skills required to perform music.

Throughout this dissertation, I synthesize two separate literatures: (1) literature on cultural fields and creative occupations, and (2) literature on gender, occupations, and organizations. I show how literature on cultural fields and creative occupations would benefit from an explicitly gendered analysis, informed by literature on gender and organizations. Bourdieu does not view concepts such as symbolic capital (Chapter 2), field-specific habitus (Chapter 3), or embodied cultural capital (Chapter 4) as requiring
gender analysis. Yet, my findings build on previous feminist Bourdieusian scholarship (see Adkins and Skeggs 2004, Chambers 2005, Huppatz 2012, Silva 2005, Thorpe 2009, 2010) to show that gender is central to all of these concepts. Analyzing how gender is situated within the organization of a field produces a richer understanding of field theory.

Although my main conceptual contribution is better integrating gender analysis into Bourdieu’s field theory (rather than integrating gender into a single Bourdieusian concept such as cultural capital, as discussed below), this dissertation makes a number of other contributions to sociological literature. I highlight specific, unique attributes of artistic work that should be considered when literature on gender, occupations, and organizations is extended to cultural occupations, including musicians, but also dancers, novelists, painters, and more. These unique attributes include the importance of “buzz” or notoriety (Chapter 2), aesthetic or stylistic conventions (Chapter 3), and the social settings and networks within which artists learn their craft (Chapter 4). I also point out social dynamics, such as the institutionalization of symbolic capital (Chapter 2) and the openness or closedness of learning spaces (Chapter 4), that enrich our general understanding of fields of cultural production. Although I use these dynamics to analyze gender relations, they may have implications for our general understanding of power relations in cultural fields.

Bourdieu (1993) conceptualizes a cultural field as a competitive system of positions and relationships uniting individuals who are engaged in the same activity: the production, distribution, and appreciation of a cultural product, such as visual art, film, cuisine, or poetry. Fields of cultural production are sites of continual power struggles, as participants jockey for prestige and resources, attempting to win symbolic and material
advantages over each other.

Bourdieu’s understanding of cultural production is undoubtedly analytically powerful; he identifies key sites of sociological tension that organize multiple cultural fields, such as conflicts that arise systematically between people in different field positions, the need for continual innovation as new creative producers challenge established producers at the top of the field, and friction between art and commerce (Bourdieu 1993: 41-45). Yet, his framework is also flexible. Bourdieu analyzed specific fields, such as the literary field (Bourdieu 1996), while recognizing that the workings of other cultural fields would vary. His concepts were meant to be applied in an analytically flexible way that was sensitized to, rather than erased, nuance and variation between fields (Bourdieu 1993: 10-15). This analytical flexibility allows us to expand concepts like field, habitus, and capital to explain how gender organizes the work of cultural production.

1.2. The cases: folk and metal

The contemporary folk scene and the heavy metal scene in Toronto are both grassroots music communities where musicians struggle to reach audiences without the support of corporate record labels, mass media, or very much money. These fields are not anonymous music markets where professional musicians sell music to mass audiences; they are well-connected amateur and semi-professional music communities or “scene-based genres” (Lena and Peterson 2008), where fans, musicians, independent labels
owners, and festival directors, and critics form ongoing relationships. Both scenes are largely self-organized, relying on field members to produce and consume music, organize shows, create field-specific media like blogs and websites, and do many other tasks that would be accomplished by professionals in a music industry. Both the folk and metal fields develop their own styles, or modes of dress and slang that distinguish “metalheads” and “folkies”—that is, insiders—from outsiders.

Yet, differences between these fields are obvious before even one note of music is played, and many of these differences are rooted in different patterns of gendered reputations, gendered artistic career paths, and gendered organizations. The connection between heavy metal and masculinity is well documented (Hill 2011, Krenske and McKay 2000, Rafalovich 2006, Walser 1993, Weinstein 2000). Heavy metal subculture privileges exaggerated bravado and aggression, heavy drinking, and individual competition, all performed in a caricature of stereotypical, domineering masculinity. Folk, in contrast, conjures images of singing women with acoustic guitars, long skirts, and flower crowns, or maybe a wandering troubadour who sings stories in exchange for a meal and a bed. If metal privileges a youthful, hedonistic, individualistic form of masculinity, folk prioritizes gender performances centered on collectivity, caring, and nurturing.

These stereotypical images of folk and metal suggest that specific ways of “doing gender” (West and Zimmerman 1987) are valued and normalized in each field. Yet,

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1 Although the folk field is very close to an idealypical scene-based genre, it also has many elements of a “traditionalist genre” (Lena and Peterson 2008), including non-profit bureaucratic organizations and historical, preservationist societies.

2 “Folkie” and “metalhead” are field members’ preferred terms for insiders, which I adopt throughout this dissertation.
noting that heavy metal is symbolically masculinized while folk is more gender-neutral
only scratches the surface of a complex web of gender relations. Throughout this
dissertation, I document each field’s ongoing gendered practices and connect those
practices to the organizational characteristics of each field.

The configurations of gender relations described here are unique to this time and
place; however, all cultural fields contain some form of gender relations. Although it is
possible for a cultural field to contain visible gender differences that do not create gender
inequality (e.g. a hypothetical field where men and women artists typically do different
things, which are equally valued), most research on artistic fields consistently finds
gender inequalities, such as lower pay and prestige for women artists (Bielby and Bielby
1996, Tuchman and Fortin 1984), and fewer opportunities for women to become artists in
the first place (Parker and Polock 2013, Piirto 1991). These inequalities span multiple
fields, including visual art (Cowen 1996, Parker and Polock 2013), orchestral music
(Goldin and Rouse 2000), popular music (Harkness 2012, Leonard 2007), screenwriting
(Bielby and Bielby 1996), fashion design (Stokes 2013), literature (Tuchman and Fortin
1984), and more. The presence of inequality is, of course, what makes the study of
gender difference so compelling. Yet, there has been little theorizing about the
mechanisms underlying these inequalities, or what concepts we could use to compare
gender dynamics across creative fields. In analyzing the Toronto folk and metal fields, I
provide insight into gendered organizational dynamics—the gendered organization of
prestige (Chapter 2), how particular gendered dispositions support the organization of a
field (Chapter 3), and the gendering of capital-building opportunities (Chapter 4)—that
may also organize other creative fields. As the creative and cultural sector is growing
faster than most other parts of the North American economy (Currid 2007, Florida 2002, Patterson and Silver 2015), understanding inequalities among creative and artistic workers is not a trivial concern.

1.3. Bourdieu’s Field Theory

A “field of cultural production” (Bourdieu 1993) is a social space or arena of practice centered on a category of cultural product such as film, sculpture, or popular music, and the “game” or process by which it is produced and distributed (Bourdieu 1993: 46; 1998). In The Rules of Art (1996) Bourdieu analyzes the French literary field in the 19th century. Others have conceptualized Scottish visual art (Prior 2000), Greek hip-hop (Elafros 2013a, 2013b), German literature (Anheier, Gerhards and Romo 1995), modern jazz (Lopes 2000), and French gastronomy (Ferguson 1998) as fields of cultural production. A cultural field encompasses all people with a stake in the game, including artists but also support personnel, critics, and audiences. Fields of cultural production are semi-autonomous from the societies within which they are situated, neither completely disconnected from nor completely determined by broader, society-wide values and conventions (Bourdieu 1993).

Cultural fields are arenas of practice where people produce, distribute and appreciate art. Bourdieu views these people as occupying a series of positions, connected by objective relations (Bourdieu 1993). Bourdieu’s concept of “position” incorporates functional roles into a status hierarchy; for example, positions in a field centered on theatre would include actors, playwrights, directors, all differentiated by their degree of marginality or centrality to the field (Anheier, Gerhards and Romo 1995). Positions in a field centered on visual art would include gallery owners, museums, dealers, sculptors
and painters, similarly differentiated by status.

People in the same cultural field orient their actions toward one another, or engage in “mutual monitoring” (Kirshbaum 2006; Leschziner 2007), whether or not they are personally acquainted. Painters and gallery owners who specialize in abstract art may not know each other, but painters have incentives to be aware of what gallery owners are featuring and gallery owners have incentives to be aware of what painters are producing. In this sense, they mutually orient their actions toward each other.

Cultural fields are also sites of ongoing power struggles as participants contest what works will be valued, who will get access to what types of resources, what standards will organize aesthetic evaluations, and who can legitimately make aesthetic judgements (Bourdieu 1993). Field members collectively create meaningful symbolic distinctions between different types of people, practices, places, and objects—for example, established and emerging artists, legitimate and illegitimate art, or high-status and low-status performance venues. These distinctions function as “symbolic boundaries” (Lamont 1992), which are “conceptual distinctions made by actors to categorize objects, people, practices, and even time and space. They are tools by which individuals and groups struggle over and come to agree upon definitions of reality” (Lamont and Molnar 2002: 168). In cultural fields, symbolic struggles and boundaries have real consequences, as they often shape who receives access to funding, audiences, and support from institutions—that is, who becomes marginal or central within a field.

In the midst of these symbolic struggles, field participants deploy multiple types of capital, including social, cultural, and symbolic capital, to gain advantages over others. Cultural capital refers to skills, behaviours, knowledge, goods, and dispositions that field
participants use to distinguish themselves from others (Bourdieu 1984). Social capital refers to the useful aspects of one’s social networks (Thieme and Siegmann 2010) and can include informal social ties, or more formally recognized ones like kinship ties or membership in formal organizations. Symbolic capital describes an individual’s reputation or social prestige (Bourdieu 1993).

Because of the semi-autonomous nature of fields, the networks, dispositions, and skills that function as capital within a field may not be useful outside of it. In Bourdieu’s terms, “fields of restricted production” are fairly closed-off social worlds whose products and capitals are primarily exchanged within the field, while “fields of large-scale production” allow more interchange with mass audiences and society at large (Anheier, Gerhards, and Romo 1995, Elafros 2013b). The behaviours, knowledge, and dispositions that function as capital in a field of large-scale production are very likely valuable outside the field; however, capital from a field of restricted production may even be ineffective as capital, or even function as negative capital, elsewhere. Presenting oneself as embedded in urban street life signifies legitimacy and functions as cultural capital in the rap field, but might be ineffective or even stigmatized in other settings (Harkness 2012). The same is true of social capital: social ties to quilt makers might not be useful outside the field of quilting, but social ties to journalists at major publications might be useful outside the field of journalism.

Similarly, the forms of practice that are conventional in a field can either align with or reject the dominant logics of the broader society within which the field is situated. Cultural fields generate or privilege particular types of habitus. An individual’s habitus is a durable system of dispositions and orientations, shaped by one’s position within social
structures, which predisposes an individual toward particular ways of thinking and acting (Bourdieu 1984). Through participating in cultural fields, individuals’ habitus gradually adapt to the “rules of the game” being played in the field (Moi 1991). These field-adapted habitus also generate a practical, situated understanding, or an insider’s taken-for-granted knowledge about what kinds of things are allowable to say, think, and do in a given social space. A field-adapted habitus allows an individual to intuitively understand and play by the rules of the game. A competent participant in a cultural field instinctively knows what kinds of capital to deploy and when, for example, and has developed an appropriate habitus so that these practices do not require analysis and reflection, but occur as part of an ongoing, situated stream of activity.

As this discussion shows, cultural fields are complex, multidimensional entities. Bourdieu’s field theory includes individual-level practice (i.e. habitus), organizational structures (i.e. networks of positions, and relationships with resources and actors outside the field), resources (i.e. forms of capital), and strategies (i.e. symbolic boundary-drawing). A key advantage of field theory is the ability to analyze the interplay between these concepts.

1.3.1. Bourdieu’s writings on gender

Unfortunately, Bourdieu does not discuss gender in relation to fields of cultural production, which is the topic of this dissertation. Bourdieu’s most extensive treatments of gender dynamics were laid out in *Masculine Domination* (2001) and in discussions of the Kabyle (Bourdieu 1979, 1990). While some of Bourdieu’s work focuses on specific settings such as the academic field (Bourdieu 2000), the literary field (Bourdieu 1996) or the educational system (Bourdieu 1984), his main writings on gender focus on general
relations between men and women.

Bourdieu’s analysis of gender relations among the Kabyle focuses on a series of binary, symbolic oppositions. He notes that the Kabyle world is structured around multiple pairs of opposites, such as light/dark, fertilizing/fertile, high/low, outdoors/indoors, male/female, and Eastern/Western (Bourdieu 1979). These pairs are connected to each other; men are associated with light, fertilizing, and high places, while women are associated with darkness, fertility, and low spaces (Bourdieu 1979). For the Kabyle, women are associated with indoor spaces, but a man who spends too much time indoors is suspect (Bourdieu 1979: 276). These binary oppositions extend into different social values for men and women. Male honour, *nif*, is derived from “movement out into the world, risk-taking and self-projection,” while female honour, *h’urma*, is derived from “[nurturing], domesticity, and reserved respectability” (Lane 2000: 97).

Based on the structure of their society, Bourdieu argues that Kabyle men develop a habitus oriented toward domination while Kabyle women develop a habitus oriented toward submission (Bourdieu 1990). These different habitus are inscribed on men’s and women’s bodies. Women stoop and men walk upright. Women chew delicately using only the fronts of their mouths, while men chew whole-heartedly, with their entire mouths (Bourdieu 1990). Although Bourdieu states that these gender differences are a social construction that has become “naturalized” (Bourdieu 1979), feminist scholars such as Mottier (2001) argue that he implicitly treats gender differences as natural and universal by reducing them to the same fundamental mechanisms, which are thought to occur regardless of social context.

Bourdieu’s (2000) main argument in *Masculine Domination* echoes his analysis
of gender relations among the Kabyle—in fact, he begins his book with a discussion of the Kabyle, noting that this allows him to observe a “purer” version of the same gender relations that organize modern society (Bourdieu 2000: 6). Ultimately, he traces gender inequality back to symbolic oppositions, arguing that modern women experience “symbolic violence”; that is, they are taught to misrecognize their own interests and to accept domination by men as legitimate. Accordingly, women develop a “feminine habitus” oriented toward submission. A central feature of Bourdieu’s argument is that women are complicit in their own subordination.

As feminist scholars (Chambers 2005, Mottier 2001) have noted, Bourdieu’s argument in *Masculine Domination* is problematic for many reasons. First, he largely reduces gender to a binary sexual differentiation. Bourdieu assumes far too much homogeneity among men, and among women (Mottier 2001); all men, for example, are assumed to develop a habitus oriented toward domination and all women are assumed to develop a habitus oriented toward subordination, not only among the Kabyle but in modern society as well.

Second, Bourdieu treats gender ahistorically. Mottier (2001) argues that Bourdieu’s argument in *Masculine Domination* reduces gender inequality in modern Western society and among the Kabyle to the same basic mechanism: symbolic and ideological factors that condition women to accept their own subordination. Mottier (2001) further notes that if we accept that gender is a social construction, this raises serious questions about why we would find such similar gender dynamics in different societies. Indeed, feminist theorists argue that gender inequality in horticultural societies like the Kabyle is sustained by systems of kinship and marriage (Rubin 1975), while
gender inequality in capitalist societies is driven by the tension between paid and unpaid work (Armstrong and Armstrong 1987, Hartmann 1989). This insensitivity to historical context and treatment of gendered behaviour as largely fixed across time and across societies is highly questionable. Structurally different societies should develop different mechanisms for constructing, maintaining, and naturalizing gender differences; the fact that Bourdieu posits universal mechanisms of gendering implicitly treats gender difference as natural, rather than naturalized (Mottier 2001).

1.3.2. Feminist Extensions of Bourdieu

Despite conceptual problems with Bourdieu’s gender analysis, other portions of Bourdieu’s work hold promise for gender analysis. Feminist scholars have asked how Bourdieu’s general writings on culture and inequality, practice, social structure, and power might enrich our understanding of gender (Adkins and Skeggs 2004, Krais 2006, McCall 1992, McLeod 2005, Silva 2005, Thorpe 2009). Much of this research focuses on gendering a single concept such as cultural capital (Dumais 2002, Huppatz 2009, Silva 2005) or habitus (Chambers 2005). This scholarship lays the groundwork on which I build, along with others (McNay 1999 and Moi 1991), to integrate gender holistically into Bourdieu’s field theory.

An area of inquiry that has gained significant attention has been integrating gender analysis into Bourdieu’s work on cultural capital (Dumais 2002, Huppatz 2009, Silva 2005). This research outlines two broad ways in which cultural capital can be gendered (see Laberge 1995 on these two streams of research). First, cultural capital can be male- or female-dominated, if men and women on average develop or access it in different amounts. Research within this stream often investigates gender differences in
the cultural tastes, competencies, and lifestyle markers that Bourdieu treats as cultural capital (e.g. Bourdieu 1984). For example, girls are more likely to participate in extra-curricular art and music lessons than boys (Dumais 2002) and to participate in highbrow forms of culture such as museum visits, live theatre, opera, and classical music performance (Christin 2012, Lizardo 2006). We might therefore consider familiarity with and appreciation of highbrow arts and culture to be *female-dominated* forms of cultural capital.

Investigating whether men and women possess different average amounts of cultural capital is a logical extension of Bourdieu’s work. In *Distinction*, Bourdieu acknowledges that cultural capital might be distributed through social space in gendered ways—for example, women are particularly attentive to markers of symbolic and cultural capital, as they are generally held responsible for the family’s cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984: 104). Bourdieu’s comment that capital can be distributed on the basis of a “secondary characteristic” like race or gender (Laberge 1995) was a brief point in an analysis primarily devoted to class; however, it does suggest that the work noted above is theoretically consistent with his understanding of cultural capital.

Other gender scholars have conceptualized cultural capital as gendered in a second sense that Bourdieu did not anticipate: cultural capital can be symbolically masculinized or feminized if it draws on practices, discourses, or representations ideologically associated with either masculinity or femininity (Laberge 1995)³. Research

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³ These two streams of research are not mutually exclusive. Cultural capital can be both gender-dominated and symbolically gendered. For example, Erickson (1996) finds that talk about sports functions as embodied cultural capital in the security industry, as knowledge about sports helps lower-level workers network with managers and executives. Erickson also finds that men are
in this second stream analyzes practices that function as cultural capital in varied contexts such as workplaces and leisure settings—not only the domestic and family sphere—and outlines their symbolic associations with gender. For example, the skills, tastes, attitudes, and dispositions that function as cultural capital among professional snowboarders are symbolically masculinized, as they center on practices such as boasting and risk-taking that are associated with masculinity in Western culture (Thorpe 2010).

Viewing cultural capital as symbolically gendered has prompted researchers to conceptualize uniquely feminine forms of capital. Reay (2000) develops the concept of emotional capital, which is the ability to distance oneself from one's emotions enough to manage them, react appropriately for the situation, and influence others’ emotional responses. This ability is particularly gendered, as women have historically been tasked with managing their own and others’ emotions (Hochschild 1983). Reay argues that mothers, particularly middle-class and upper-class mothers, invest this emotional capital in their children’s educations. She conceptualizes mothers’ supervision, managing, and support of their children’s academic careers as an exchange of mothers’ emotional capital for their children’s cultural capital. Others treat the work involved in constructing traditionally feminine forms of appearance as “beauty capital” (Price 2008), which might later be exchangeable for marriage partners, higher wages, and useful social networks.

This second vein of research suggests that gendered dispositions can function as cultural capital, if enacting particular forms of masculinity or femininity produces advantages in a particular context (Fujimoto 2004, Huppatz 2009). For example, Huppatz
(2009) argues that paid care workers perform caring femininity, which she views as a form of “feminine capital”. In other contexts, particular masculine dispositions function as “masculine capital”—for example, performing competitive masculinity is useful in business negotiations (Huppatz and Goodwin 2013). However, Moi (1991) points out that treating particular forms of masculinity and femininity as distinct “masculine” or “feminine” forms of capital treats gender as if it might be relevant in some situations but not others, and cautions that gender is omni-relevant. Overall, there is debate about how, exactly, gender intersects with cultural capital; but, this research clearly offers rich possibilities for gender analysis.

Gender scholars have also interrogated links between gender and the habitus. Many argue that, according to Bourdieu’s own logic, the habitus is necessarily gendered because it is generated by one’s position within social structures, and gender is a fundamental element of most (if not all) social structures (Lovell 2000). Embodied, gendered dispositions must therefore be ingrained into the habitus alongside embodied, classed dispositions (Chambers 2005, Lovell 2000). Indeed, Bourdieu acknowledged the habitus as gendered (Bourdieu 1990, 72-74; 2001); but, as previously mentioned, his ‘masculine habitus’ and ‘feminine’ habitus homogenize men and women, rather than analyzing variation among women or men in different contexts or fields (Mottier 2001) or analyzing how gender intersects with other social locations in shaping the habitus. If, as Bourdieu argues, members of the working class are conditioned to accept subordination and men as an undifferentiated group are conditioned to dominate others (Bourdieu 2000), it is unclear how these competing dispositions would be resolved in the habitus of a working-class man.
Overall, while it is clearly necessary to theorize the habitus as gendered, Bourdieu’s discussion of the gendered habitus requires conceptual development. Other scholars have taken up this work and interrogated links between the habitus and gender using a more nuanced approach. Doucet (2008) argues that some differences in male and female primary caregivers’ parenting styles can be traced back to broad social expectations about how men and women should behave; but, she is also careful to point out that there are more points of similarity than difference in how men and women parent as primary caregivers, and a great deal of variation between individual men and individual women. Powell (2008) argues that negotiations of sexual consent among college students are difficult in part because of the habitual, gendered dispositions promoted by Western culture encourage men to seek out sexual conquest to affirm their masculinity and encourage women to make themselves sexually available; but, she also notes that many college-age students challenge and resist these expectations.

Some gender scholars who use Bourdieu’s concepts interrogate how we might understand the gendered elements of fields. McNay (1999) asks how different fields of power shape individual-level gendered practices. She argues that reflexivity about gendered practices (which can generate resistance) emerges unevenly among different groups of people who are situated within different power relationships in various fields; some field positions are more likely than others to create the sort of tension between field and habitus that Bourdieu views as encouraging reflexivity and change in one’s habitual dispositions. Moi (1991) similarly theorizes intersections between fields and gender. She cautions against conceptualizing a separate “field of gender”; instead, she argues that gender is a potentially constitutive element of all cultural fields. This echoes Bourdieu’s
belief that there is no distinct ‘field of class relations’; rather, social class organizes multiple fields. In the field of education, for example, cultural capital is structured to advantage people who are already middle-class and upper-class (Bourdieu 1984).

Bourdieu’s field analysis in *The Rules of Art* (1996) similarly shows that the field of 19th-century literature was organized around a boundary drawn between aristocracy and the new bourgeois middle class. Class thus organizes cultural fields rather than functioning as a field on its own, and Moi (1991) encourages us to treat gender in the same way. In this dissertation, I develop these nascent theoretical approaches and apply them to the empirical cases of folk and metal music.

These gender-focused extensions of Bourdieu’s work provide important foundations on which this dissertation builds. I integrate the more fully developed areas of feminist Bourdieusian scholarship (specifically, work on gender and cultural capital and gender and habitus) into a less developed area (work on gender and field), and bring all of these concepts—field, habitus, and capital—together to analyze the cases of folk and metal.

**1.3.3. Gender at the Individual and Organizational Levels**

Throughout this dissertation, I also draw on literature from the sociology of gender—not only feminist extensions of Bourdieu, but also scholarship on broad, theoretical topics such as gendered practice (e.g. West and Zimmerman 1987) and gendered organizations (e.g. Acker 1990, Britton 2000). I use this literature to draw connections between gendered practice at the individual level, and the organizational characteristics of cultural fields.

At the individual level, I conceptualize gender as form of situated, embodied
practice. I draw heavily on West and Zimmerman’s (1987) theory of “doing gender.” West and Zimmerman argue that gender is not a quality that individual possess; rather, it is an activity or practice in which they engage. We do not “have” a gender; we “do” gender, continually and often with minimal intentionality, as gendered behaviours and practices become naturalized over time. Importantly, West and Zimmerman stress that individuals are active and agentic in how they do gender. Although gendered practice is often constrained by social context (e.g. women may wear makeup in the workplace due to social pressure to maintain a ‘professional’ appearance – see Dellinger and Williams, 1997), individuals can always resist gender norms and do gender in atypical or unpredictable ways (e.g. women might insist on speaking up and claiming credit for their ideas during meetings, even though this is normally a masculine-coded behaviour – see Rudman and Glick, 2001). Much of this dissertation asks how field members come to “do gender” in some ways rather than others, how those doings of gender are valued within particular fields’ aesthetic logics (Chapter 2), and how the “doing” of gender is situated within and reproduces fields’ organizational characteristics (Chapter 3).

Yet, gender does not only exist at the individual level; as feminist scholars argue, gender is also embedded into organizations and institutions, in the sense that some organizations foster and depend on particular gendered practices (Acker 1990, Britton 2000). Acker (1990) argues that the 9-5 workplace assumes a male worker who can exit the private sphere of social-reproductive tasks for the majority of the day, ignore his body and sexuality while at work (and not have his body read as sexualized by coworkers or managers, as women might), and prioritize the job above family and personal responsibilities, e.g. with long hours and travel. Although cultural fields are not usually
full-time workplaces and few artistic jobs keep 9-5 hours (Caves 2000), cultural fields do still have organizational and structural characteristics that may reward some gendered practices while discouraging others. In this dissertation, I draw on the general approach of Acker, Britton, and others—analyzing how a social setting is organized, and connecting that organization to gendered practices—but apply this theoretical approach to the informal conventions and behavioural patterns that organize grassroots fields of cultural production (e.g. typical ways of organizing shows, communicating with audiences, and teaching the next generation of musicians), rather than more formal rules that govern workplaces (e.g. workplace policies, written job descriptions, disciplinary procedures, and relevant legislation).

1.4. Dissertation Outline and Format

To fully capture the complex, multidimensional nature of cultural fields, and to build on existing knowledge about Bourdieu and gender, the three papers that constitute this dissertation address multiple aspects of cultural fields. Chapter 2 traces the economy of symbolic capital within the folk and metal fields. Chapter 3 explains how each field produces differently gendered habitus that prime individuals to engage in either volunteerism for formal organizations, or individual entrepreneurship. And Chapter 4 traces how the presence or absence of formal organizations shapes gendered access to the social settings in which field members develop a particular form of embodied cultural capital.

None of these chapters alone address the entirety of Bourdieu’s field theory, but taken together, they provide a robust account of how we can use and extend Bourdieu’s major concepts—field, habitus, cultural and symbolic capital—to understand how gender
organizes fields of cultural production. The framework presented here is not an exhaustive account of how gender might be relevant to fields of cultural production; however, it provides a practical starting point for future gendered field analyses of other creative scenes and industries.

This dissertation is written as three journal articles. These articles are published or publishable independently of each other, each asking a different research question and making separate contributions to cultural sociology and sociology of gender. However, these articles all address different aspects of the same underlying question: how can we use Bourdieu’s (1993) field theory to better understand gender relations in cultural fields? Due to this article-based format, there is some repetition in each chapter’s content, specifically in the methods sections and the background information provided about the two fields.

1.5. Methods

In this research, I draw on data collected using three qualitative methods: participant-observation, semi-structured interviews, and discourse analysis of publicly available texts such as CD reviews, blog posts offering advice to musicians, promotional materials (e.g. show flyers, biographies posted on artists’ web pages), and textual materials collected from concerts, festivals, and other events (e.g. programmes for a folk festival or industry conference). Triangulation via multi-method research was necessary because my research objective was to understand each field holistically, which required simultaneously understanding the spaces people inhabited and how they interacted there (which I observed through fieldwork), how people understood and made sense of their positions and interactions (which I observed through interviews) and the values, beliefs,
and status hierarchies stabilized within the artefacts and textual materials that field participants produced (which I observed through discourse analysis). Each of my three main methods provided slightly different information and allowed me to verify data from different sources against each other.

I begin this section with some reflections about the standpoint from which I conducted this research, then outline my methods in detail.

1.5.1. Research standpoint

I conducted this research from different standpoints within the folk and metal fields. My fieldwork experiences among folkies closely resemble the “textbook” model of participant observation (see Sanger 1996), with identifiable stages: entry, rapport-building, observation, and exit. I entered the folk field in January 2012, and began by attending publicly advertised folk concerts. Through striking up conversations with musicians and audience members I slowly developed a rapport with many insiders, which led to interview opportunities, invitations to house concerts, tips about blogs and magazines to read, and suggestions regarding events and industry conferences to attend. I remained active in the folk field for approximately 1.5 years, until June 2013 when I exited the field.

The folk scene might be one of the few fieldwork sites where this "textbook" fieldwork experience is possible. Folk music is not a hidden or deviant activity; if anything, folk fans and musicians wish that outsiders paid more attention to their music scene. My social background as a white middle-class woman meant that I was demographically similar to most folkies, although at 28-30 years old I was somewhat younger than most folk fans, who are usually in their 40s or older. As described in
Chapter 3, folkies are also characteristically open, friendly, and welcoming. Accordingly, I experienced minimal problems with access in the folk field. Interviewees and fieldwork participants were enthusiastic to talk about their music careers, likes and dislikes regarding music, and typical consumption habits. Folkies were also eager to describe what happened in private spaces to which I did not have access, such as private music lessons.

In the folk field, my main challenge regarding access was that I behaved and was generally perceived as a fan. Accordingly, I more easily received invitations to private spaces designed for fans or low-skill, amateur musicians, rather than working musicians. For example, I was invited to house concerts in private homes, and to song circles with fairly low standards for participation. As I did not attempt to pass as an aspiring musician, I was not invited into jam sessions in private homes; unlike song circles, which are geared toward purely recreational, amateur performance, jam sessions are normally gatherings of relatively skilled musicians who are active on the local performing circuit. I attempted to minimize these problems of access by, first, interviewing working musicians about what happened in jam sessions in other people's living rooms and, second, attending jam sessions in public or otherwise accessible spaces such as folk clubs and folk festivals, and especially in spaces geared toward practicing musicians such as industry folk conferences.

My experience in the metal field did not follow the standard trajectory of entry, rapport-building, observation, and exit. My partner is a drummer who works within a number of underground metal genres, particularly death metal and slam metal, but also doom metal and black metal. I had attended many small-time, local metal shows long
before I decided to conduct a gendered field analysis or identified the local metal scene as a potential research site. Furthermore, I conducted two earlier research projects on the metal field, one as part of a course in my first year as a PhD student, and the second through a research practicum in my second year. Both of these projects focused on aesthetic legitimacy in the metal field; that is, how metalheads categorize music as art or not-art. Due to my personal connection to the metal field and my early research within it—which I later came to consider “pilot projects” for this dissertation⁴—I cannot pinpoint when I truly entered the metal field. I can only identify the date of the first interview I conducted with a metalhead, and the date I first took field notes on the experiences that I was having. Both occurred in the first week of March, 2009.

I collected data for these early course-based projects for approximately 10 months, between March 2009 and January 2010. I then ceased formal data collection while attending to other doctoral program requirements, and later returned to data collection after defending my dissertation proposal in December 2011. However, in the intervening 2 years I did not truly exit the metal field; I continued to attend concerts and socialize with metalheads and, as my ethics approval was still active, even took field notes at approximately 6 concerts, which were immensely helpful in writing my proposal. I still attend metal shows and socialize with metalheads, even though my formal data collection is completed. And, even during data collection, I went to shows and had conversations with metalheads without taking notes or treating those experiences as data, especially in settings of a particularly personal nature (e.g. a birthday party for one of my

⁴ Data from these pilot projects are also included in this dissertation research, although I did go back and conduct re-interviews with early interviewees as the nature of my questions and analytical focus changed
partner’s bandmates, where many metalheads including some of my interviewees were present). The boundary between personal experience and research is also ambiguous because some metalheads that I interviewed or met during fieldwork were casual acquaintances at the time, but have since become close friends—and the research process (i.e. interviewing these individuals, and attending concerts where they were present) contributed immensely to solidifying those friendships. My experiences in the folk field developed along clear boundaries between research and personal life, but in the metal field the lines between friend and research participant and between data and personal experience are blurred.

In the folk field, I was a sympathetic outsider (Harrington 2003). I was clearly recognized as researcher rather than a folkie (although I do enjoy folk music), but one who was generally supportive of folkies’ goals and ways of doing things. In the metal field, I believe I began as a sympathetic outsider. Early on, many metalheads commented approvingly on my consistent presence at shows with my partner; they told me I was “cool” for being supportive despite not being much of a metal fan, and indicated that many wives and girlfriends would not do the same. But, by the end of my research I had experienced a subtle but noticeable shift in my position. Metalheads started asking me what bands I liked, and assuming that I knew about metal; I was even asked to write for two different metal-focused publications, although I ended up writing for neither. I made real friends. I developed a taste for some metal music, and began to experience it as an insider. I was no longer a sympathetic outsider, but an “observant participant” (Mears 2011); part of the social world that I was studying, but still invested in analyzing that world through a sociological lens and capable of stepping back and approaching my
personal experience with a critical eye.

At first, this insider-ness concerned me, and I worked hard to move beyond my personal networks. I sought out conversations with strangers at shows, and searched online for promoters, musicians, and critics with whom I had no personal connection. Sometimes, this was effective and I met new people. More often it was not; I discovered that an apparent stranger was actually a friend-of-a-friend, or someone I or my partner had met in a dimly lit bar, years prior. Although this was methodologically frustrating, it also produced useful data. It helped me understand the interconnectedness of metal field and, in fact, provided empirical evidence for my belief that the metal field was actually a field in the Bourdieusian sense; that is, a network of people who are aware of and orient their actions toward one another (Leschziner 2007), rather than atomized individuals who all happen to engage separately in the same activity.

By the end of data collection, I had accepted my standpoint as an insider or observant participant, and tried to recognize and benefit from the analytical advantages it provided. However, I also recognized points at which my subject position could become problematic. Specifically, my partner’s band and our personal networks are rooted in the underground or “extreme” (Kahn-Harris 2007) portions of the metal field centered on subgenres like black metal, death metal, slam, and grindcore. Recognizing this, I made dedicated efforts to attend shows and interview participants in the less extreme or “mainstream” metal subgenres, such as thrash metal, power metal, and classic metal.

1.5.2. Participant-Observation

In the folk field, I deliberately began my data collection with participant-observation, in order to develop a practical familiarity with the folk field before
conducting any interviews. This allowed me to tailor my interview guide with examples I had observed in the field, avoid asking obvious and simplistic questions, and add questions about issues that I had not anticipated but that emerged through fieldwork. In the metal field, I began fieldwork and interviews at approximately the same time, as I had already developed a practical familiarity with the field through my personal experiences.

I conducted participant-observation at events including concerts, festivals, DJ nights, open mic nights, and industry conferences. I attended 32 heavy metal events and 40 folk events, in sessions ranging from 1.5 to 8 hours and averaging roughly 3.5 hours. Overall, I spent approximately 130 hours in the folk field and 100 hours in the metal field. I sampled field sites for breadth, which aligned with my theoretical goal of understanding each field holistically. Using the logic of maximum variation sampling (Patton 2001), I attended shows and events that spanned all available music sub-genres in each field; for example, thrash metal, black metal, slam, grindcore, death metal, and more in the metal field, and bluegrass, contemporary singer-songwriter, folk revival, country-folk, and more in the folk field. I also attended concerts in a variety of different types of spaces (e.g. for-profit bars and non-profit folk clubs; large and small concerts; urban and suburban concerts) and at different levels of professionalism (e.g. I went to shows with 5 audience members where audiences and musicians interacted, and major professional shows where musicians were inaccessible to audiences). The types of spaces in which I conducted fieldwork are outlined in Appendix A. I spent more time as a participant-observer in the folk field because there are multiple types of structurally different spaces in the folk scene, including open stages, festivals, jam sessions, song circles, and more (see Chapter 4), while the primary type of space in the metal field is a stand-alone
During fieldwork I behaved primarily as an audience member, but also formally volunteered at four folk festivals, three metal shows, and two folk-oriented industry conferences. In the metal field, I also provided informal assistance to field members; I drove audience members home from shows, staffed various bands’ merchandise tables, and occasionally watched the door for a promoter or ticket-taker who needed to temporarily leave their post. I conducted my research overtly; I disclosed my status as a researcher at the earliest socially appropriate opportunity, and was generally known to participants in both fields as a field researcher. Participants in both fields generally responded to my project with interest, enthusiasm, polite inquiries, and unsolicited offers of assistance.

In the field, I also deliberately asked frequent in situ questions. Sometimes, I asked questions in response to theoretically interesting remarks; for example, in response to a comment like ‘I really like this next performer,’ I would ask ‘what do you like about them?’ to better understand the standards on which field members based their evaluations. At other times, when doing so was within the norms and conventions of the field, I asked unsolicited questions. For example, when volunteering at a folk festival I often asked other volunteers “so, how did you end up volunteering here?” as we worked, or waited to be assigned tasks; this was normal conversation, but also produced theoretically useful information (e.g. what volunteers’ motivations were, and how they found out about volunteer opportunities).

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5 Volunteers are not normally officially solicited for most metal concerts; however, these three concerts were charity fundraisers.
1.5.3. Interviews

I conducted interviews with men and women musicians, fans, support personnel, and critics in both fields. I conducted 35 interviews in the metal field, 18 with men and 17 with women, and 28 interviews in the folk field, 12 with men and 16 with women. I met 42 of 65 interviewees through fieldwork, and was referred to another 15 interviewees. I located and approached the remaining 8 interviewees based on publicly available contact information; for example, I identified critics by reading local folk-oriented and metal-oriented publications and contacted them via the email addresses listed in those publications, and booking agents by contacting promoters or promotions companies listed on concert flyers.

I deliberately over-sampled women to understand their perspectives on and experiences in the field in general, and with gender-based discrimination where appropriate. I sampled more women than men in folk (a field where there are roughly equal numbers of men and women) and sampling approximately equal numbers of men and women in metal (a field where men outnumber women). Appendix B contains a list of interviewees in each field, including their pseudonyms, basic demographic information (sex, race, and approximate age), and position within the field. To avoid repetition, I do not include information on the age, sex, race, or field position of each interviewee, each time I quote or mention them throughout this dissertation; however, such information can be easily obtained by referring back to Appendix B.

Interviews focused on a range of topics, including the participants’ transitions into the folk or metal scene, current roles within the scene, level of participation, opinions on what makes quality music, and more. I created four versions of my interview guide with
questions tailored to the experiences and perspectives of (1) musicians of all levels, from amateur to professional (2) support personnel, including promoters, bookers, publicists, sound technicians, festival directors, and more (3) critics, including review writers, music journalists, and radio hosts, and (4) fans who did not also participate in the folk or metal scene as a musician, support personnel, or critic.

Interviews were conducted on a scheduled basis, outside of fieldwork. They lasted between 45 minutes and 2.5 hours, with most lasting about 90 minutes. 38 interviews were conducted in public places such as coffee shops, 13 were conducted in private spaces, such as respondents’ homes or workplaces, and 12 interviews were conducted over the phone. 14 respondents were interviewed twice, as my initial interviews with them had occurred early in my research process and I contacted them to obtain updated information as my research questions changed.

1.5.4. Textual Analysis

I conducted discourse analysis of publicly available texts in each field, including blog posts, published interviews with musicians, artists’ biographies, show listings, and festival programs. I initially intended to take a large, random sample of album and live concert reviews and code them to understand the aesthetic standards that folkies and metalheads use to evaluate music (the analytical focus of my earlier pilot projects); but, this method became less useful as my analytical focus moved toward a holistic, gendered analysis of each field and its social relations. Instead, I analyzed approximately 30 substantive texts from each field of approximately 200-1000 words each, which I sampled purposively (Patton 2001). I focused on key texts that discussed issues of theoretical relevance to this dissertation, such as how the work of music production is
accomplished (e.g. how booking agents choose bands, how bands use social media), common challenges that musicians and support personnel face, and the experiences of women in each scene. To ensure that I analyzed texts relevant to the Toronto folk and metal fields, I included only web sites and other publications that were either based in Toronto, focused on the folk and metal scenes in Southern Ontario, or were frequently mentioned by Toronto field members. Key web sites and texts on which I focused are outlined in Appendix C. In analysis, I treated and coded these texts as analogous to interview data, applying the same coding scheme.

Where relevant, I also collected count data from online festival programs, listings of award winners, and listings of conference attendees. These count data were primarily compiled from online, web-searchable sources (outlined in Appendix D), but I occasionally compiled count data from printed sources, such as listings of attendees printed in conference programmes.

1.5.5. Confidentiality and pseudonyms

All interview and fieldwork data in this dissertation is presented using pseudonyms for reasons of confidentiality. However, I do not change any names, of either individual performers of bands, on the infrequent occasions when I refer to or republish portions of publicly available texts (e.g. CD or concert reviews, blog posts, conference programmes, artists’ online biographies)\(^6\). I do this for two reasons. First, pseudonyms serve no purpose when presenting information that is already publicly available. Second, using pseudonyms in texts that are published elsewhere using real

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\(^6\) For example, figures 2.1 and 2.2 refer to the actual names of a metal band, and folk artists.
names could jeopardize the confidentiality of interview and fieldwork data; if I quoted an interview with “Amber” and later included information from the biography on “Amber’s” website, readers could identify Amber by finding the original website and thus attach her confidential interview data to her actual identity. Although the risk of exposure might be minimal for print texts with limited availability (e.g. conference programmes), it is significant for online and web-searchable information (e.g. online reviews, cached versions of artists’ websites). It is therefore possible, although not necessarily the case, that some field members named in publicly available texts also appear under pseudonyms in fieldwork or interview data.

1.6. Contributions to cultural sociology

This dissertation contributes to cultural sociology by situating gender as an integral element of Bourdieu’s field theory. Unfortunately, Bourdieu’s original field theory is insensitive to gender dynamics. This is a significant omission, because gender inequality among cultural producers is well documented (Bielby and Bielby 1996, Goldin and Rouse 2000, Parker and Pollock 2013, Tuchman and Fortin 1984). Bourdieu’s field theory eloquently explains power and inequality in cultural fields, but ignores a crucial type of power relations: gender relations. A major contribution of this dissertation is synthesizing Bourdieu’s and others’ analyses of cultural fields, existing feminist Bourdieusian scholarship, and scholarship on gender, organizations, and occupations to build a holistic understanding of gender relations in fields of cultural production.

Gendering field theory provides a conceptual toolkit for analyzing an empirical phenomenon documented in multiple artistic fields: the underrepresentation and
devaluation of women artists (Goldin and Rouse 2000, Parker and Pollock 2013, Stokes 2013, Tuchman and Fortin 1984). Yet, incorporating gendered power relations into field theory also improves our general understanding of power relations in fields of cultural production, and can lay the groundwork for theorizing how cultural fields are affected by other social inequalities, such as ethnicity, religion, sexuality, and disability.

This dissertation also contributes to cultural sociology by identifying specific organizational features of cultural work and creative fields that produce or mitigate inequality. Throughout the three papers that comprise this dissertation, I show that formal organizations and structures affect the way that creative producers interact with each other, and with audiences. Formal organizations help to systematize aesthetic evaluations, and focus judgements of artistic quality on the work itself rather than personal characteristics of content creators; in other words, they help to generate different economies of symbolic capital (Chapter 2). The presence or absence of formal organizations in a cultural field can also shape the gendered forms of habitus that are required to render the fields sustainable. In the metal field, I find a connection between loose, unorganized social networks and forms of habitus oriented toward individual status-seeking and entrepreneurial labour. In the folk field, I find a connection between formal organizations and forms of habitus oriented toward volunteerism and collectivity (Chapter 3). Formal organizations also shape the learning spaces where creative producers develop embodied cultural capital. In the folk field, many learning spaces are hosted by formal organizations, and are largely open to any interested participants. In the metal field’s informal networks, learning spaces are open primarily to participants with the ‘right’ social networks (Chapter 4).
1.7. Contributions to the sociology of gender, organizations, and occupations

This dissertation’s main contribution to the sociology of gender, organizations and occupations is to join with others (Clawson 1999, Stokes 2013) who apply gender analysis to a new empirical case (creative workers). However, my findings also draw researchers’ attention to outcomes that are understudied in literature on gender, work and organizations. The gender and work literature often focuses on material outcomes like hiring (Gorman 2005) or wages (England 2005, Fuller 2005). Hiring and wages are undoubtedly important. But, in cultural occupations symbolic outcomes may be equally relevant, particularly buzz, recognition, and media attention (i.e. symbolic capital). Treating gender differences in symbolic capital as an outcome is particularly relevant to cultural occupations, where many cultural workers are freelancers and many more are hobbyists or amateurs. But, symbolic capital is likely relevant for non-cultural occupations as well—occupations such as stock trading (Levin 2001) and software development (Cooper 2000) depend heavily on reputation and credibility. As more workers are interns, freelancers, or entrepreneurs, it is important to have ways of theorizing gender inequalities in non-monetary advantages and outcomes.

This dissertation also contributes to the gender and organizations literature by using cultural concepts (symbolic capital, habitus, and embodied cultural capital) to analyze dynamics that are well established in literature on gendered workplaces. For example, my analysis of differently gendered economies of symbolic capital in Chapter 2 uses cultural language to understand gender-based devaluation (Pierce 1995, Rose 1993), and points to specific organizational characteristics (institutionalization of evaluative standards, and the typical level of symbolic-boundary drawing in a field) that affect the
extent to which this devaluation occurs. Using the concepts of cultural and symbolic capital to understand devaluation can provide deeper and more detailed insights into when and how women workers and women’s work are devalued, and identify and explain cases where devaluation does not systematically occur—for example, by analyzing when gendered dispositions are exchangeable for symbolic capital, as I do in Chapter 2. Other gender scholars have started to do this work; Huppatz (2009, 2012) uses the concepts of masculine capital and feminine capital (which are forms of embodied cultural capital) to understand when masculine and feminine dispositions provide advantages in particular occupations, and the extent to which both women and men can access both masculine and feminine capital. The concepts of cultural and symbolic capital have much potential value for literature on gender and work, and this dissertation enriches that conversation.
Chapter 2

Symbolic Capital and Gender: Evidence from Two Cultural Fields

Although sociologists have begun to integrate gender scholarship into Bourdieu’s (1984, 1993) foundational works on culture and inequality (Adkins and Skeggs 2005, Krais 2006, McLeod 2005, Thorpe 2009), Bourdieu’s concept of symbolic capital has not yet benefited from sustained gender analysis. Symbolic capital refers to an individual’s reputation, honour or prestige within a social space (Bourdieu 1993). This concept analytically transforms our reputations into resources that afford access to other resources: for example, a high profile or well-established reputation can facilitate access to work opportunities or media attention.

Yet, symbolic capital requires a gendered analysis that has so far been absent. Reputation, honour and esteem—the core components of symbolic capital—are based on individuals’ perceptions and judgments of each other. We do not evaluate each other as abstract, genderless beings, but as men and women (West and Zimmerman 1987); consequently, these evaluations are patterned by beliefs about gender (Eagly et al. 1992, Nieva and Gutek 1980, Ridgeway 2011, Williams 1992). A gender-free view of symbolic capital risks overlooking an important dynamic underlying this important currency in fields of cultural production.

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7 A version of this chapter is published as: Miller, Diana L. 2014. “Symbolic Capital and Gender: Evidence from Two Cultural Fields.” Cultural Sociology 8(4): 462-482.
This gendered analysis of reputation contributes to cultural sociology by
describing a key organizing principle of symbolic capital, improving our understanding
of how cultural fields operate. This analysis also contributes to gender scholarship by
connecting numerous empirical findings on the discrediting of women in cultural
vocations (Leonard 2007; Bayton 1998; Bielby and Bielby 1996; Goldin and Rouse 2000;
Stokes 2013) to a theoretical framework that explains the underlying processes at work.

I illustrate the gendering of symbolic capital by comparing two cultural fields: the
heavy metal music scene and the contemporary folk/roots music scene in Toronto,
Canada. Folk musicians’ reputations are patterned by gender, in that they frequently align
with pervasive stereotypes about masculinity and femininity. However, folkies value both
masculine and feminine dispositions. These gendered dispositions function as embodied
forms of capital—“masculine capital” and “feminine capital” (Huppatz 2009), both of
which generate symbolic capital. The gendered patterning of reputation therefore
produces minimal inequality among folk musicians. In contrast, reputations in the metal
field are highly gendered, and disadvantage women. Femininity is constructed as a
marker of low status, while masculinity is a signifier of belonging and authority, leaving
women with less “right to speak” (Jarvinen and Gundelach 2007) for and about the metal
field. In the metal field, masculine capital is valuable and exchangeable for symbolic
capital; feminine capital is not.

Two elements of these fields heighten the gendering of symbolic capital in metal,
and diminish it in folk: the institutionalization of symbolic capital and the level of
boundary-drawing around people and music that belong in these fields. I show that in the
folk field, institutionalized or officially recognized markers of symbolic capital (e.g.
awards, government grants) are based on explicitly stated criteria, and thus less susceptible to unexamined gender bias. In the metal field, many markers of symbolic capital are uninstitutionalized, like word-of-mouth, and are based on implicit standards. This creates opportunities for metalheads to draw on familiar, unexamined criteria, like gender stereotypes, for evaluating each other.

The level of symbolic boundary-drawing (Gieryn 1983) in each field also impacts the gendered patterning of reputation. Metalheads are deeply invested in boundary-drawing: they regularly dismiss people and bands as “not metal enough.” Folkies engage in minimal boundary-drawing, and even pride themselves on inclusiveness. Metalheads’ boundary-drawing does not always directly reference gender, but the importance of boundary-drawing creates a conflict-oriented atmosphere in which feminized embodiments, as forms of capital, are effective tools to discredit others.

2.1. Bourdieu, Reputation, and Gender

Symbolic capital is the “degree of accumulated prestige, celebrity, consecration, or honor” (Bourdieu 1993:7) that a person possesses within a social space, usually a cultural field; it is the reputation of a participant in a field, among other field members. Like all forms of capital, symbolic capital is exchangeable for other resources like performance or work opportunities, social support, or media attention.

Symbolic capital is a particularly sought-after resource because it affords individuals the ability to “consecrate” people, objects and practices as aesthetically legitimate (Bourdieu 1993:15). Tastemakers, and those who are highly regarded by others (i.e. those who possess symbolic capital), have more of a “right to speak and be heard” (Jarvinen and Gundelach 2007). They can influence what counts as good or bad art and
what criteria should underlie those judgments. Symbolic capital is also a medium through which other forms of capital are exchanged. When cultural, social, or economic capital is recognized as legitimate, it becomes prestige or symbolic capital, which permits access to other resources (Bourdieu 1990; Jarvinen and Gundelach 2007). Displaying refined tastes (a type of cultural capital) only affords access to work opportunities or better social networks when one acquires a \textit{reputation} as having refined taste—that is, when cultural capital becomes symbolic capital.

Bourdieu began to theorize how gender relates to symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1984:107-108; Bourdieu 2001; Bourdieu 1990), but his ideas remain underdeveloped. He views women as crucial to the intergenerational reproduction of taste and prestige. Women oversee their families’ symbolic and cultural capital by purchasing status-laden goods, passing tastes onto their children, and organizing the family’s cultural activities (Bourdieu 2001:99-100). However, this treats women as stewards of their husbands’ and families’ cultural and symbolic capital rather than capital-accumulating subjects (Lovell 2000) and ignores how women accumulate and benefit from prestige in their own right. As women participate in cultural fields primarily as individuals, not wives and mothers, this is a significant gap.

In his most developed gender analysis in \textit{Masculine Domination}, Bourdieu (2001) conceptualizes gender relations as a dominant/dominated relationship, with men dominating women as the upper classes dominate the lower. He argues that this domination is maintained through symbolic violence; it is misrecognized as legitimate and therefore less susceptible to contestation (Bourdieu 2001). This argument has been thoroughly critiqued by feminist scholars for treating men and women in simplistic,
binary terms, reducing gender to sexual differentiation, and treating gender as ahistorical (Adkins and Skeggs 2004; Mottier 2001; Silva 2005; Thorpe 2009). However, it provides at least two insights into how gender structures symbolic capital. First, Bourdieu implicitly recognizes that evaluation can be shaped by gender: his argument that we view male domination and female submission as legitimate, and the reverse as illegitimate, describes how cultural beliefs about gender organize perception and evaluation. Conceptualizing reputation as gendered is therefore arguably consistent with Bourdieu’s understanding of domination. Second, and more importantly, symbolic violence is the mechanism through which the tastes and dispositions of dominant groups become valuable as cultural capital. We might therefore expect that masculine dispositions (which Huppatz (2009) views as *masculine capital*) will be more easily exchangeable for symbolic capital in more contexts than feminine dispositions. Notably, however, Bourdieu’s work on symbolic violence describes relations between men and women *as groups*, and ignores how gender shapes individual men’s and women’s ability to accumulate and use cultural and symbolic capital.

Bourdieu’s description of games of honour among the Kabyle (Bourdieu 1990), implicitly describes how gender structures symbolic capital among individuals. Bourdieu shows that honour is central to Kabyle men’s daily lives, with important implications attached to how men eat and walk and how much time they spend working or at home. Notably, Bourdieu analyzes honour primarily among men, merely hinting at the dynamics underlying women’s reputation. He notes that the Kabyle value different traits in women (e.g. modesty, restriction) and men (e.g. activity, strength), and argues that men and women occupy separate social spheres. This implies a separate, feminine
economy of symbolic capital, with different qualities conferring prestige and perhaps even different mechanisms of exchange. However, Bourdieu does not develop this possibility, so it is unclear whether this feminine economy of symbolic capital existed.

In modern society where men and women do not occupy separate spheres, but largely participate in the same occupational and cultural fields, theorizing a separate feminine economy of symbolic capital may be problematic. Instead, sociologists have looked for gender differences in individuals’ ability to accumulate and exchange prestige, and theorized gendered dispositions as forms of capital. Dumais (2002) notes that children accumulate cultural capital in gendered ways; girls participate in more cultural activities (e.g. music and art lessons) than boys. Yet, in professional fields men generally possess more cultural and symbolic capital, and benefit more from it. Stokes (2015) notes that in the field of fashion, most designers are women; yet, gay men achieve more recognition and esteem.

Other feminist Bourdieusian scholars have argued that embodied, gendered dispositions can function as capital. Thorpe (2009) shows that in the field of competitive snowboarding, cultural and symbolic capital are based on masculine dispositions like risk-taking and physical prowess. Huppatz (2012) similarly conceptualizes benefits derived from a masculine or feminine disposition as “masculine capital,” and “feminine capital,” respectively. She contrasts these to male and female capital, which are benefits derived from having a male or female body. Huppatz argues that women can enact masculine capital (i.e. a masculine disposition) and men can enact feminine capital (i.e. a feminine disposition), but notes that using cross-gender capital is often risky. Women in male-dominated occupations often adopt masculine dispositions, but others might not
find those dispositions credible (Huppatz 2009). Men can access feminine capital—for example, a male nurse who emphasizes his caregiving abilities—but may experience social stigma as a result (Huppatz and Goodwin 2013). Notably, the field within which action is situated affects how embodied, gendered forms of capital are valued. In nursing, social work, hairdressing, and exotic dancing, feminine capital is useful (Huppatz 2012); in male-dominated fields like snowboarding (Thorpe 2010), masculine capital is more valuable. This work provides a useful vocabulary with which to integrate embodied, gendered capital into Bourdieu’s work. Here, I extend Thorpe’s (2009) and Huppatz’s (2009, 2012) work by interrogating the mechanisms through which gendered dispositions are exchangeable for symbolic capital.

Empirical evidence from different fields of cultural production already suggests that gender structures the mechanisms by which skills, knowledge, and dispositions become symbolic capital. Women are frequently marginalized as cultural producers across fields, including visual arts (Finney 1993; Cowen 1996), classical music (Goldin and Rouse 2000), fashion design (Stokes 2013) and screenwriting (Bielby and Bielby 1996). Collectively, such findings suggest a broader underlying dynamic: that field actors’ evaluations of each other are patterned by gender. Linking these findings to the concept of symbolic capital facilitates comparisons across cultural fields, and between cultural fields and other settings such as workplaces. Integrating gender analysis into symbolic and cultural capital also allows us to identify key junctures at which gender matters: for example, whether women are disadvantaged in acquiring cultural capital, converting cultural capital into symbolic capital, converting symbolic capital into other resources, or some combination of all of these. Importantly, we should expect the
gendered structure of symbolic capital to vary across cultural fields. As the contrast between Huppatz’s (2009) and Thorpe’s (2009) work shows, different fields value different gendered embodiments as forms of capital. Although I highlight the institutionalization of symbolic capital and boundary-drawing as important features here, other structural features might shape the gendered economy of symbolic capital in other fields.

### 2.2. Two Music Scenes

The folk and heavy metal music scenes are both grassroots music scenes, as opposed to music industries (see Lena (2012) on scenes vs. industries). Each scene centers on a community of people who collaborate to write, perform, and appreciate music on an unpaid or poorly paid basis. Most field participants, including musicians and support personnel, maintain sources of income outside of the fields and do music-related work on a freelance basis. Other characteristics shared by scene-based music genres include resource scarcity, a lack of corporate organizations (e.g. major record labels), minimal coverage by mass media, and dress and slang that distinguish insiders from outsiders (Lena 2012).

Rather than conceptualizing folkies and metalheads as part of a broader ‘field of music,’ I view each scene as a separate field. For Bourdieu (1993), field members have stakes in the same game and orient their actions toward each other (Leschziner 2007). And, there is little, if any, crossover between resources, institutions, or actors in the folk and metal scenes. Metalheads are generally unaware of and unconcerned with who is popular among folkies, and vice versa. Folkies and metalheads do not share social networks, venues, resources, or institutions; folk festivals, performers’ associations, and
industry conferences focus on *folk music*, not music in general. These two scenes are therefore best viewed as separate domains of action; that is, separate fields of cultural production.

The Toronto folk and metal fields are ideal sites to understand the gendered structure of symbolic capital because, as grassroots music scenes, they are structurally similar; however, gender relations in these fields differ markedly. By holding constant as many aspects of field structure as possible (e.g. resource scarcity, a lack of corporate organizations, a lack of mass media coverage), it is easier to pinpoint differences that matter for gender relations. Grassroots music scenes are also particularly appropriate for studying the gendered structure of symbolic capital, as they are informal networks of people who constantly evaluate each other. Musicians evaluate other musicians when deciding who to play with, booking agents evaluate musicians when deciding who to hire, and critics evaluate musicians when deciding which artists to review and how to frame their music. As these fields, like most cultural fields, are characterized by uncertainty, past success or reputation becomes an important standard in these decisions. Musicians and support personnel in grassroots music scenes have incentives to display markers of their good reputations as prominently as possible. Both the criteria on which symbolic capital are based and its consequences should be highly visible and amenable to study.

Importantly, the folk and metal scenes differ in their level of organization. Virtually all metal-focused record labels, recording studios, and promotions companies are casual, part-time operations run by an individual freelancer without employees. Although part-time freelance support personnel are also common in the folk scene, there
they coexist with formal, bureaucratic organizations. Most folk festivals are run by standing, bureaucratic, registered non-profit organizations (e.g. Mariposa Folk Festival in Orillia, Ontario is run by the Mariposa Folk Foundation) with elected boards of directors. The folk field also includes professional associations analogous to the American Sociological Association (e.g. Folk Music Ontario, Folk Music Canada).

These two fields also differ demographically. Men outnumber women in all roles in the metal scene: approximately 15-35% of most audiences, 10-20% of support personnel, and fewer than 5% of musicians are women. Among folkies, women are a slight majority of audiences (approximately 50-65%), and almost half of performers and support personnel (approximately 40%-50%). Heavy metal audiences and performers are generally in their early twenties to mid forties; folk audiences and performers span all age groups, although most audience members tend to be 50 and older. In both scenes, most participants are white.

2.3. Methods

I draw on data collected using participant-observation, semi-structured interviews, and discourse analysis of publicly available texts such as CD reviews, blog posts offering advice to musicians, and promotional materials. I conducted participant-observation at

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8 These estimates are based on my field observations, interview data and, where available, official statistics. I recorded detailed demographic information as part of my routine field observations. I checked these observations against members’ perceptions by asking interview participants to estimate the balance of men and women artists, audiences, support personnel, critics. I also checked my estimates against documented statistics when possible, e.g. information published by folk festivals about their audiences, which was generally posted to attract sponsors; information provided by professional musicians’ associations; and published lists of conference attendees. Fieldwork and interview data were readily available in both fields; official statistics were available in the folk field, and scarce (but still occasionally present) in the metal field.
events including concerts, festivals, DJ nights, open mic nights, and industry conferences. I attended 32 heavy metal events and 40 folk events, in sessions ranging from 1.5 to 8 hours and averaging 3.5 hours. I spent approximately 130 hours in the folk field and 100 hours in the metal field. I attended shows and events that spanned all available music sub-genres in each field; for example, thrash, black, death metal, and more in the metal field, and bluegrass, contemporary singer-songwriter, folk revival, and more in the folk field.

During fieldwork I behaved primarily as an audience member, and but also formally volunteered at four folk festivals, three metal shows, and two industry conferences. I also frequently asked in situ questions to explore theoretically interesting remarks; for example, in response to a comment like ‘I really like this next performer,’ I would ask ‘what do you like about them?’ to better understand the standards on which field members based their evaluations. I disclosed my status as a researcher at the earliest socially appropriate opportunity, and field members generally responded with interest, enthusiasm, polite inquiries, and unsolicited offers of assistance.

I conducted interviews with men and women musicians, fans, support personnel, and critics. I conducted 35 interviews in the metal field, 18 with men and 17 with women, and 28 interviews in the folk field, 12 with men and 16 with women. I met 42 of 65 interviewees through fieldwork, and was referred to another 15 interviewees. I located and approached the remaining 8 interviewees based on publicly available contact information; for example, I identified critics by reading local folk-oriented and metal-oriented publications and contacted them via the email addresses listed in those publications, and booking agents by contacting promoters or promotions companies listed on concert flyers.
I conducted discourse analysis of publicly available texts such as album and concert reviews, blog posts, artists’ biographies, and other promotional materials. I analyzed approximately 30 texts from each field, of approximately 200-1000 words each. In analyzing fieldwork, interview, and textual data, I focused on people’s praises and critiques of each other, which revealed the evaluative standards on which field members base symbolic capital.

2.4. Findings: Symbolic Capital in Two Grassroots Music Scenes

Two aspects of field structure shape how symbolic capital is gendered in the folk and metal fields: the availability of institutionalized markers of symbolic capital, and the level of symbolic boundary-drawing around people and music that belong in each field. High institutionalization and low boundary-drawing in the folk field reduce the extent to which symbolic capital is structured by gender, while low institutionalization and high boundary-drawing in the metal field have the opposite effect.

These field characteristics produce different gender dynamics. In metal, male capital and masculine capital—advantages derived from having a male body and from enacting a masculine disposition, respectively (Huppatz 2009)—are valuable currencies that easily produce prestige. Conversely, having a female body or enacting a feminine disposition has minimal value; female and feminine capital actually diminish metalheads’ reputations and produce negative symbolic capital. In the folk field, there are no significant advantages or disadvantages associated with having either a male or female body; accordingly, male and female capital do not really function as capital. However, both masculine and feminine dispositions are exchangeable for symbolic capital. These two gendered patterns of capital exchange contribute to gender inequality in the metal
field, and equality in the folk field.

2.4.1 Institutionalization of Symbolic Capital

Bourdieu (1997) argued that cultural capital could exist in institutionalized form. He considered educational credentials an *institutionalized* form of cultural capital because a degree is an official recognition of valuable knowledge, skills, and dispositions. When reputation or esteem is officially recognized, as in winning an award or another juried prize, we can similarly view it as *institutionalized symbolic capital*. Table 2.1 outlines the most common markers of symbolic capital in the folk and metal fields, and the extent to which we can view them as institutionalized.

**Table 2.1: Symbolic capital in grassroots music scenes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Institutionalization</th>
<th>Markers/Signals</th>
<th>Organizational Affiliation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Awards; government grants; festival performances; other juried honors or performance opportunities</td>
<td>Major organizations, e.g. government granting agencies, non-profit festival foundations, or musicians’ associations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Being booked for gigs regularly; playing with major/professional artists; coverage in scene-specific media</td>
<td>Informal organizations, e.g. independent media outlets, freelance concert promoters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak</td>
<td>Buzz/word of mouth; having ones music shared via social media</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The most strongly institutionalized forms of symbolic capital are awards, government grants, and juried performance opportunities. These honours are relatively official recognition of esteem because they are typically allocated by committees of practicing musicians, critics and support personnel acting on behalf of major
organizations such as non-profit festival foundations or government granting agencies.

Symbolic capital in the folk field is often strongly institutionalized. Folk artists regularly compete for major cross-genre awards like Junos, and genre-specific awards like Canadian Folk Music Awards (CFMAs). There are over 30 folk festivals each summer in Ontario alone, and hundreds in North America, most of which are governed by standing non-profit foundations with artistic selection committees. Folk artists also regularly apply for federal, provincial, and municipal grants. In their promotional material, folk artists commonly mention awards and grants they have received and festivals at which they have performed because they know that other field members attend to this information.

The metal field offers few strongly institutionalized markers of symbolic capital. No metal musicians that I interviewed or encountered in fieldwork mentioned applying for grants. There is no metal-focused genre-specific award equivalent to the CFMAs, and Toronto metal artists rarely compete for cross-genre awards like Junos—in fact, the Junos’ “metal and hard music” category was only revived in 2012, and combines heavy metal with other genres like punk and hard rock. Furthermore, juried competitions (e.g. a battle-of-the-bands contest for a prestigious performance opportunity) in the metal scene are rare, occurring once per year or less. Although winning a Juno or juried competition certainly boosts a metal band’s prestige, these opportunities are the exception rather than the rule.

Moderately institutionalized forms of symbolic capital indicate the less-official approval of small-time organizations. Being regularly booked for gigs and being featured in scene-based media (i.e. publications produced by and for field members) signal esteem
among independent media outlets and freelance concert promoters. These moderately institutionalized forms of symbolic capital signal that a musician is well-liked by a few booking agents and critics, but do not suggest the official endorsement of a major organization. Moderately institutionalized markers of symbolic capital—being booked regularly for gigs, and featured in scene-based media—are common in both scenes, as they are routine practices in scene-based music genres (Lena 2012).

The least institutionalized form of symbolic capital is “buzz” or word-of-mouth. Buzz reflects the opinion of individual field members, usually fans with no organizational affiliation. Buzz can spread through literal word-of-mouth, as people attend events and hear which artists their friends are talking about. Buzz can also spread online, as field members share audio and video recordings of artists through social media. In the metal scene, buzz is quite important, and metal fans described many local bands that had become popular through word-of-mouth. Conversely, in the folk scene buzz is only one of many signals of esteem, and folkies are generally not as oriented toward buzz as metalheads.

Importantly, moderately institutionalized forms of symbolic capital tend to reproduce other forms of symbolic capital. When choosing artists to feature, booking agents and critics consider which artists will draw audiences to their shows or visitors to their websites; that is, they gauge how much symbolic capital artists have accumulated, assessing available indicators like who has won awards, and who is being buzzed-about. Derek, a freelance metal concert promoter, says that:

I’m also actively searching bands online. I’m always up to date with what’s going on on Facebook. I’m always adding as many people that are into metal as possible. And when they post bands, I listen to them. I get a general feeling, if a lot of people
are talking about a band from Montreal, then it’s more enticing [to book them].

Derek is deliberately attentive to word-of-mouth. Although buzz is subjective and fleeting, and a very unstable standard on which to base business decisions, it is one of the only available indicators of metal artists’ reputations and so he uses it. A moderately institutionalized form of symbolic capital—being booked for gigs—is influenced by the weakly institutionalized “buzz.”

In folk, local media mentions and gig bookings are easily forthcoming for artists with institutionalized symbolic capital like awards or festival performances. Before a music award ceremony or prestigious festival, folk DJs often present themed shows dedicated to award nominees or festival performers. And, many performers mentioned that “breaking into the festival circuit” had secured them access to more gigs. Instead of tempering the fact that symbolic capital is more strongly institutionalized in folk than in metal, moderately institutionalized symbolic capital actually exaggerates this tendency.

The lack of institutionalized symbolic capital in the metal field disadvantages women. Buzz is subjective and unquantifiable, and without explicit evaluative criteria people often draw on familiar, unexamined standards like gender stereotypes (Ridgeway 2011). This is why detailed job descriptions decrease gender inequality in hiring (Britton and Logan 2008), and laying out clear standards by which jobs are classified as “skilled” or “unskilled” reduces the undervaluation of feminine-typed jobs (Steinberg 1990). Jurors in the folk scene who allocate awards and grants often use structured scoring systems, evaluating artists on stated criteria like technical skill, creativity, and stage presence. This structured process reduces the opportunity for gender bias by forcing jurors to reflect on the reasoning behind their judgments. Structured scoring also draws jurors’ attention
toward specific qualities of the music and away from the performers themselves, reducing the opportunity for their judgments to be implicitly based on male, female, masculine, or feminine capital. In contrast, metalheads do not deliberately attend to their evaluative criteria before mentioning a band to a friend or sharing media online, leaving the weakly-institutionalized “buzz” highly susceptible to gender bias and to influence by fans’ perceptions of the musicians in addition to the music.

Although institutionalized symbolic capital reduces gender bias in folk, it does not produce perfect gender equality. Approximately 40-45% of musicians at folk music industry conferences in Ontario in 2012-2013 were women. Based on a count of publicly available online information, I found that roughly 30% of Ontario folk festival performers and 35% of award nominees in the same period were women. Assuming that musicians at industry conferences are a reasonable approximation of the musicians who are actively producing music and looking for performance opportunities, this suggests that women folk performers win awards and festival performance slots at slightly lower rates than men. Women musicians can clearly achieve recognition, but there remains a gender gap in the allocation of institutionalized symbolic capital.

The most common form of symbolic capital among metalheads, the weakly institutionalized word-of-mouth, is highly gendered. In everyday interaction, evaluations of musicians by fans, critics, and support personnel draw on gender-laden standards. Field participants praise musicians for displaying stereotypically masculine attributes like toughness and domination, and for producing music that is “brutal,” “crushing,” and “aggressive.” A masculine disposition, or masculine capital (Huppatz 2009), effectively produces esteem or symbolic capital.
Conversely, both female bodies and traditionally feminine dispositions—female and feminine capital—are generally evaluated disfavourably and function as negative symbolic capital. Metalheads critique both people and bands for displaying emotion, a feminine-typed disposition. Luke, a white fan in his 30s, describes disliking “whiny” or “pansy” metal. Furthermore, simply having a woman member can negatively impact a band’s reputation. Metal bands with women members are frequently criticized for (supposedly) drawing attention to their women members rather than the quality of their music. James, a metal vocalist, echoes a common belief that “there’s a lot bands that are female-fronted that rely solely on [the female vocalist] and the guitarists take a holiday and play something really boring.” Others referred to women performers as “gimmicks.” In this context a female body, or female capital, produces negative symbolic capital for women performers, and potentially their bandmates as well.

The easy conversion of feminine dispositions and female bodies into negative symbolic capital is facilitated by the subjective, uninstitutionalized nature of buzz. Critiques of bands with women members—that they were gimmicky, or untalented—spread through word-of-mouth or casual conversation. Unlike folk jurors who attend to the reasoning behind their evaluations, metalheads’ in-the-moment judgments of bands as “pansy metal” or performers as “gimmicky” are fairly unreflexive. Consequently, these evaluations are easily coloured by gender stereotypes. Importantly, I found no evidence that women metal performers actually attempt to trade on their appearances, or draw attention to their femininity, as James and others suggest. Women more often minimize their femininity to avoid the potential loss of reputation that comes with a female body. At one show I observed a woman performer who
has long, wavy blonde hair that she doesn’t seem to have styled in any way. She wears a shapeless black band t-shirt and baggy jeans, and no makeup...and shows a distinct lack of attention to her appearance. Her physical movements on stage are similar to her male bandmates; she moves fairly little, but when she does it’s in a lumbering, masculine way. It’s almost like she’s trying to ‘pass’ for a guy. She often lets her hair fall in front of her so that it covers her face, and does not make eye contact with the audience. (field notes, 5 April 2012).

This performer carefully avoids using either female or feminine capital. She minimizes her female body by hiding it under baggy clothes and cultivates a decidedly un-feminine disposition. Neither female nor feminine capital is valuable currency in this space, so she attempts to access masculine capital instead, adopting a masculine appearance and disposition to position herself as a credible metal performer. This is a common self-presentation among woman metal performers. Of course, many other women musicians wear visibly feminine clothing, makeup, and hairstyles; however, even performers with feminine appearances tend to adopt masculine dispositions on stage. They swear, drink heavily, and stomp around the stage with deliberate, confident movements. This is a strategic attempt to offset the risks of female capital, or having a visibly feminine body, by accessing masculine capital.

In summary, the availability of institutionalized symbolic capital shapes gender relations among folkies and metalheads by affecting how gendered embodiments produce symbolic capital. The formal processes through which institutionalized symbolic capital is allocated in the folk field draw jurors’ attention away from Huppatz’s (2009) four forms of gender capital, and encourage jurors to focus on other standards such as instrumental skill or originality in songwriting. However, in the metal field word-of-mouth is often based on implicit, unexamined standards, and is highly susceptible to
gender bias. Metal performers are positively evaluated for their performances of masculinity in addition to the quality of their music. Masculine capital, but not feminine capital, produces prestige in the metal field.

2.4.2 Symbolic boundary-drawing

The gendered elements of symbolic capital are also affected by the level of symbolic boundary-drawing (Gieryn 1983) in each field. Symbolic boundaries are conceptual distinctions between people, practices, and objects that symbolically distance some things from others (Lamont and Molnar 2002). When individuals define themselves in opposition to some real or imagined group, they do boundary work (Gieryn 1983).

Metalheads are deeply invested in boundary work, and in determining what is “metal” and “not metal enough.” Compare figures 2.1 and 2.2:
Figure 2.1: an iron-on patch sold by local metal band Skull Fist

Figure 2.2: A promotional poster for a local folk show

Figure 2.1 shows a typical example of symbolic boundary-drawing in the metal field: an iron-on patch with a band name and the words “no false metal.” This patch calls on metalheads to distinguish between “real” and “false” metal, and to reject or exclude “false” metal. Of course, the boundary separating “real” from “false” metal is highly subjective and contested; still, most metalheads are certain that this boundary exists.

In contrast, there is hardly any boundary-drawing around genres that do not belong in the folk scene. Figure 2.2 shows one of the few examples of symbolic boundary drawing in folk: a show poster asking “where have all the folk songs gone?” Compared to the proclamation that “false metal” should be rejected, the boundary work done in this poster is quite mild. Folkies are hesitant to exclude any genre from the folk umbrella, often preferring the more inclusive term “roots” music, and defining folk music as one
genre within the roots stream. Maynard, a musician and festival director, explained that
roots music is:

music that sort of evolved out of the ground. Like in the southern USA blues music came from the slaves chanting. ...every culture in the world has some sort of music that just came out of their being, out of their circumstances. To me, that’s roots music. So, out of roots music can come blues, bluegrass, mountain music, folk music…I’m not a rap fan but to me that, roots music, like when you live, I think it came out of Manhattan, is where it originated. And that’s the type of music that comes out of people that are on the street.

While metalheads who seek to exclude “false” metal, folkies symbolically expand their field to encompass rappers and hip-hop artists. Another Ontario festival director who booked a hip-hop artist defended her decision with a similar argument: that rap, like folk, is written by ordinary people negotiating their everyday lives through music. This inclusive view of folk and roots music is exemplified in a quote, usually attributed to Louis Armstrong, which I frequently heard from folkies and even saw in conference and festivals programmes: “all music is folk music. I ain’t never heard a horse sing it.” In this symbolic positioning, any genre of music written by “regular folk” rather than manufactured by a commercial music industry is acceptable folk music.

The Wee Folk Club, a weekly concert series in Toronto, presents one of the few examples of explicit boundary-drawing in the folk field in the ‘about’ section of its web page:

The wee folk club in Toronto is a recreation of what was best in British folk clubs: A small room in a pub where singers sang songs with stories in them. You know – FOLK Songs. Singers who write and sing about themselves are not encouraged to apply.

This description clearly suggests that contemporary, introspective singer-songwriter music is not authentic folk music. However, this example of boundary-
drawing is the exception to the rule. During fieldwork, I occasionally heard folkies
mention “traditionalists” who had high standards for real folk music; however, I did not
actually encounter such people. Traditionalists were an imagined rather than real
presence in the Toronto folk scene.

Notably, symbolic boundaries against contemporary singer-songwriters are also
not embedded into the structure of the folk field. Despite the Wee Folk Club’s rejection
of introspective singer-songwriters as folk music, the same musicians critiqued here are
still booked at folk festivals and folk-oriented venues. Although the history of folk music
includes some debates over whether musicians like Peter, Paul and Mary were authentic
folk musicians or commercial sellouts (Cohen 2006), such boundary-drawing is not
widespread in the contemporary Toronto folk field, or its institutions.

Because of the overall weak nature of symbolic boundary-drawing in the folk
field, a show asking “Where Have All the Folk Songs Gone” takes on a different tone
than a patch symbolically excluding “false metal.” This show does not differentiate “real”
from “false” folk music. It celebrates a specific genre within the folk/roots umbrella—
folk revival—without excluding other genres; there is no suggestion that folk revival is
“real folk” while bluegrass is “not folk enough.” In fact, the concept of music being “not
folk enough” was hardly present in the folk scene.

Boundary-drawing in the metal field does not always explicitly reference gender,
although non-metal genres are occasionally symbolically positioned as lacking positive
masculine-typed qualities like brutality and aggression. However, even when this
boundary-drawing does not reference gender, it still disadvantages women. The emphasis
on separating “real” from “false” metal reinforces the overall importance of symbolic
boundaries among metalheads. It creates a competitive, conflict-oriented atmosphere in which metalheads continually seek to position their music as “real metal” or themselves as “real metalheads,” and others music and people as “false”. Because this boundary-drawing exists in a context where masculine capital is valued, and feminine and female capital are devalued, gender becomes a particularly effective tool with which to discredit others.

Metalheads draw boundaries against people in addition to genres; specifically, many metalheads symbolically position women as false or inferior metal fans. Women in the metal scene are assumed to be ignorant of metal music and history. As Summer, a white 24-year-old fan, explains:

being a woman into metal, you have to prove yourself twice as hard. You need to go to twice as many shows, read up on the bands twice as hard, listen to them twice as hard. It’s a predominantly male genre. So when a girl comes in, you know, hey boobs and blonde hair, oh fuck, it’s somebody’s girlfriend. And you sit them down and take them to school. It’s awesome. [laughs].
A few things are notable about Summer’s explanation. First, metalheads not only draw boundaries around legitimate producers of metal, but also around who is a legitimate metal fan. These boundaries are also drawn along specifically gendered lines. Second, note that Summer does not describe one or two isolated moments where her right to speak was challenged, but an ongoing reality. She has so often encountered skepticism about her metal fandom that she simply generalizes about her experiences. This dismissive attitude toward women is stabilized and reproduced through texts, such as the one in figure 3:

Figure 2.3 shows the title and lead photo of a satirical blog post on women in metal.

Figure 2.3 shows the title and lead photo of a satirical blog post on women in metal.
belief is repeated frequently and publicly, it reproduces the long-standing association of female and feminine capital with negative symbolic capital and affects women’s ability to develop reputations as credible metal fans and performers.

While having a female body or a feminine disposition produces negative symbolic capital in the metal field, a male body or masculine disposition has the opposite effect, signifying belonging, rightness, and authority. Catherine, a white music journalist in her mid-20s, argues that the ideal-typical metalhead is male:

If you conjure the idea of who’s a metalhead in your head, it’s a dude. It’s a dude who probably has long hair, they’re probably wearing an unreadable shirt. They may have a beard. You know, they like beer a lot. There’s sort of that stereotype, right? And the stereotypical metalhead is a dude, for sure.

Catherine’s comments indicate that having a male appearance (long, unkempt hair and a beard) and a masculine disposition (an affinity for beer) indicates one’s “metalness.” These signifiers indicate that one belongs in the metal field, and can legitimately speak about it and for it. In contrast, being a woman is “not metal.” Women metalheads must prove that they belong despite their femininity, while men are assumed to belong because of their masculinity. Metalheads draw symbolic boundaries that include male bodies and masculine dispositions, and exclude female bodies and feminine dispositions.

Because of this belief that femininity is “not metal,” women can have their authority questioned at any time. Catherine further describes a consequence of women’s difficulty accumulating symbolic capital: a recurring interaction colloquially known as the “pop quiz”:

the pop quiz is always very interesting. It’s, often part of any first-time interaction I have with just about any metalhead is that they always
have to test you to figure out if you actually know what you’re talking about or not. So, like one of my favorite things is that somebody I don’t know will come up to me and be like, ‘I really like your shirt.’ ‘Oh thanks.’ ‘What’s your favorite album by them?’…it’s because you want to see if I have an answer, not because you’re curious what the answer is.

Like Summer, Catherine frequently encounters people who assume that she is not knowledgeable about metal, even though she writes about metal music professionally. Also like Summer, Catherine does not describe a specific incident where someone was condescending to her; she generalizes about a common experience.

Of course, many metalheads reject these stereotypes. Craig, a venue owner and booker, says that

There’s so many groups with female members that have totally earned the respect of their peers…I mean, one local band, there’s a girl Helen who…can play circles around just about anybody in this city. And you know, people, men are always like, oh wow, a good looking girl has got a guitar. You know? And then she plays and they’re just like, wow, amazing. And that’s a typical example of people not expecting anything, and just being like sort of blown away.

Irena, a promoter, similarly rejects this stereotype:

I wouldn’t say that [woman are] taken less seriously, no. Um, I am personally a huge fan of women who take the time to put themselves out there and you know play metal or whatever. And I think that if anything they should be taken a little more seriously…some people probably do [believe gender stereotypes]. But I think in the most part, people are finally realizing that hey, chicks like this shit too. And it’s time to appreciate that.

Craig and Irena personally reject the idea that female bodies and feminine dispositions should produce negative symbolic capital. Yet, they simultaneously acknowledge that others do make this association by holding stereotypes and low expectations of women in metal. Otherwise, audiences would not be “blown away” by
Helen’s talent and they would not have to “finally realize” that women like metal; these things would already be assumed.

Because of the minimal boundary-drawing in the folk field, different types of gendered dispositions function as capital among folkies. Both masculine and feminine dispositions produce good reputations, as shown by Maynard’s praise of two women folk performers:

Liz, her ability to write, she’ll walk her kid to kindergarten on the first day. She’ll stop and she’ll write a three-minute song about one second in time that most people just miss, you know?...Rita, she’s an amazing singer. She astounds me....when I met Rita, it struck me from the first second that she was a palliative care nurse. Every day she went up to work with people who knew they were dying. …And she keeps smiling all the time and she writes about it and she just, whatever she does, she has that magical skill. (Maynard, folk musician and festival organizer)

Here, Maynard praises two women musicians for stereotypically feminine qualities. He links Liz and Rita’s appeal as performers to their nurturing roles, and to their ability to connect emotionally to an audience. In valuing these qualities, he treats their feminine dispositions as bases for symbolic capital. Aiden, a white male folk performer in his late 20s, praises another folk musician for masculine traits:

What I love about Bethany...on stage, she’s a freight train. She’s an absolute freight train. You can go up there and turn your amp to 12 and play a wrong note over and over and over again, and it wouldn’t phase her. She’d just keep playing her song...And I mean, there’s times that she messes up, but it’s never a weak mess-up. It’s always a very strong mess-up. So you know instantly what’s happened. It’s just kind of like she hops tracks...and now she’s on this track. It’s like, oh, I’m now there too. That’s great.

Bethany has developed a reputation in the folk scene as a strong bandleader, and a highly competent and established performer, and Aiden highlights some stereotypically masculine characteristics that underlie this reputation: a commanding presence,
leadership abilities, and an ability to quickly and confidently recover from mistakes without apology or even acknowledgement. These are all traits more commonly associated with men, particularly business leaders, than women. And yet, Bethany effectively uses these masculine dispositions (i.e. masculine capital) to achieve prestige in the folk field.

Because of the general emphasis on inclusiveness in the folk field, neither male nor female bodies (i.e. male or female capital) confer any particular advantages on performers. Many folk festivals and venues have formal hiring policies outlining a mandate to seek out both men and women performers and directing booking agents to create varied lineups that include both men and women, span sub-genres within the folk/roots scene, and alternate between solo performers, duos, and bands. Even venues without hiring policies tend to regularly hire both men and women because the emphasis on inclusiveness and variety has become conventional; bookers view lineups with both women and men as more varied and more interesting to audiences than single-gender lineups. For these reasons, neither male nor female capital really functions as capital in the folk field.

2.5. Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper, I have argued that symbolic capital requires gender analysis. We do not evaluate each other as abstract, genderless human beings, but as men and women. Consequently, we must ask how gender organizes perception, evaluation, and reputation—that is, symbolic capital—in various cultural fields. This gendered analysis of symbolic capital improves our understanding of how cultural fields operate in general, and how capital exchange occurs within fields in particular. By linking the concept of
symbolic capital with Huppatz’s (2009) concepts of male, female, masculine, and feminine capital, we can develop a theoretical framework that facilitates comparison of gendered patterns of capital exchange in different cultural fields. We can also begin to recognize patterns in a number of already-published works on women’s marginalization as cultural producers.

I have also argued that a gendered analysis of capital exchange must be linked to an analysis of field structure. I have highlighted two structural features of the folk and metal fields that shape the extent to which gendered, embodied dispositions produce symbolic capital: the institutionalization of symbolic capital and the level of symbolic boundary-drawing around people and genres that belong in each field. In the metal field, the lack of institutionalized symbolic capital and the high level of boundary drawing facilitate the valuing of male and masculine capital, and the devaluing of female and feminine capital; in these fields, women often experience difficulty accessing symbolic capital. In the folk field, officially recognized and systematically allocated markers of symbolic capital, along with low boundary-drawing and a generally inclusive ethic, create an environment where neither male nor female capital are particularly useful, and both masculine and feminine capital are. As non-economic forms of capital are deeply rooted in specific fields, this linking of gendered symbolic capital to field structure is crucial.

A logical next step would be to compare fields with different combinations of symbolic boundary-drawing and institutionalization. Here, I have compared a field with high institutionalization and low boundary-drawing to one with low institutionalization and high boundary-drawing. Yet, from this we cannot be sure what gendered symbolic
capital would look like in a field with high institutionalization and high symbolic boundaries, or a field with low institutionalization and low boundaries. Furthermore, as I have noted, different aspects of field structure may heighten or reduce the importance of gender in other cultural fields. Both music scenes studied here are grassroots music scenes, which raises the question of how gendered patterns of capital exchange might differ in experimental avant-garde genres (Lena 2012), or corporate music industries. These structural differences between fields point to the importance of mapping out the exchange of cultural and symbolic capital in multiple cultural fields, to better understand what role embodied, gendered dispositions play in generating honour and esteem.

In this paper, I have focused on markers of symbolic capital, and the standards on which symbolic capital is based. To a lesser extent, I have touched on the gendered strategies that individuals use to accumulate and exchange symbolic capital. Another useful project would be a more thorough analysis of gendered strategies of capital accumulation. Particularly in fields that offer multiple, flexible standards on which esteem can be based, we may find that men and women strategically build qualitatively different types of reputations, or that different types of reputation are exchangeable for different social resources.

Still, the present paper has accomplished quite a lot. By extending previous Boudieusian feminist work that conceptualizes embodied, gendered dispositions as forms of capital (Huppatz 2009, Thorpe 2009), I have illustrated a key mechanism structuring gendered patterns of recognition and esteem among folkies and metalheads, and also provided a theoretical framework that can serve as a roadmap for future analyses of the gendered elements of symbolic capital in multiple fields of cultural production.
Chapter 3

Gender, field, and habitus: How gendered dispositions reproduce fields of cultural production

How do gendered dispositions reproduce fields of cultural production? We know that cultural and artistic fields depend on numerous individuals behaving in predictable, mutually understood ways, organized by “conventions” (Becker 1982) or shared assumptions about ‘the way things are done’. Creative fields also depend on particular kinds of participants: people with the skills and dispositions needed to sustain the fields and their conventions. Bourdieu calls these dispositions a “specific habitus” (Bourdieu 1984, 2000). But, when and how do creative fields depend on people with gendered dispositions, or a gendered specific habitus? And, on what kinds of gendered dispositions do different cultural fields depend?

This paper extends Bourdieu’s work to explain how gender shapes the field-habitus relationship in two fields of cultural production: the heavy metal scene and the contemporary folk music scene in Toronto. The habitus is a set of internalized, embodied ways of thinking, feeling and acting shaped by social structures (Bourdieu 1984, 1990), including the occupational, cultural, or leisure fields that individuals enter as adults (Bourdieu 2000). The habitus also reproduces social structures by producing “individuals with the dispositions needed to make them work” (Bourdieu 1990: 67). The field-habitus

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relationship is thus mutually constitutive; fields shape individuals’ habitus, which reproduce fields.

Using qualitative interviews and ethnographic observation, I show that the folk and metal fields’ specific habitus encourage particular ways of “doing gender” (West and Zimmerman 1987). Metalheads conventionally do gender through exaggerated performances of masculinity, including active heterosexuality and individual status competition. Folkies do gender in multiple ways, but central to their sense of “folkieness” is forging emotional relations with others, or “doing gender” in ways commonly associated with femininity (Ridgeway 2011).

As folkies and metalheads enact these gendered, field-specific habitus, they reproduce the fields’ behavioral conventions, or typical modes of action. They also sustain aspects of the fields’ organization that are seemingly unrelated to gender, including the fields’ working conventions, or ways of organizing cultural production, and stylistic conventions, or shared expectations regarding the characteristics of cultural works. My findings situate gender as integral to the relationship between field and habitus, showing both how fields produce gendered habitus and how gendered habitus reproduce fields.

This paper contributes to cultural sociology by explaining how cultural fields depend on participants who do gender in particular ways. My argument also extends scholarship on gender and music scenes, which shows that music subcultures produce unique configurations of gendered practices (Harkness 2012, Leblanc 1999, Nash 2012, Walser 1993, Whitely 2000), by showing that these gendered practices actively reproduce music scenes’ working and stylistic conventions. Connecting findings from different
music scenes to a theorization of gender, field, and habitus facilitates comparisons between music scenes, and clarifies the underlying processes at work. Understanding how gender textures the field-habitus relationship can also shed light on women’s representation or underrepresentation in different fields of music; women are heavily underrepresented in the metal scene, which privileges exaggeratedly masculine ways of doing gender, but make up roughly half of participants in the folk scene.

3.1. Bourdieu, field, and the gendered habitus

Bourdieu’s concept of habitus encompasses habitual ways of thinking, acting, and being (Bourdieu 1984, 1990). As individuals move through social settings like home, school, and work, they learn attitudes and behaviors appropriate for those spaces; they acquire classed, gendered, and racialized dispositions, which shape how they perceive and respond to the world. These dispositions are largely intuitive rather than deliberative, allowing individuals to navigate the social world without conscious reflection (Bourdieu 1984, 2000).

Bourdieu usefully distinguishes between original and specific habitus (Bourdieu 2000). The original habitus, formed in childhood, is based on experiences in the family and early schooling and shapes one’s behavior across multiple contexts. The specific habitus (Bourdieu 2000) is a set of specialized worldviews and orientations shaped by a particular field, usually an occupational, cultural, or leisure field that one enters in adulthood. For example, the “scientific habitus” includes taken-for-granted beliefs about what constitutes acceptable knowledge (Bourdieu 2000), and the “nursing habitus” (Huppatz 2012) includes embodied interactional styles appropriate for different audiences—a caring demeanor with patients, and a professional demeanor with doctors.
As these examples suggest, habitus is closely related to cultural capital—specifically, *embodied cultural capital* (Bourdieu 1997), or skills, knowledge, mannerisms, and interactional styles that create advantages or signal belonging in particular contexts. When a nurse successfully interacts with patients and doctors, her nursing habitus signals that her dispositions align with that setting and functions as embodied cultural capital.

Fields of action draw in new members whose original habitus resonates with the fields’ specific habitus. Fields are particularly attractive to individuals with “a habitus that is practically compatible, or sufficiently close, and above all malleable and capable of being converted into the required habitus” (Bourdieu 2000: 99-100). Individuals with an amenable original habitus experience a sense of fit with some fields, which both draws them in and signals their appropriate dispositions to gatekeepers. Huppatz (2012) develops this insight to argue that a *gendered* original habitus draws women into occupational fields like social work, nursing, and hairstyling: it both motivates women to enter these fields, and signals to gatekeepers that they are “malleable.” As field members develop an appropriate specific habitus, they acquire insiders’ dispositions and learn to navigate the field. The continual acting out of these dispositions also reproduces the fields’ structure and logics of practice (Costa, 2006). Habitus and field thus exist in a reciprocal relationship (Bourdieu, 1990).

Bourdieu sees the habitus as deeply classed, particularly as he explains how working-class and middle-class children develop different dispositions that are unequally rewarded by the education system (Bourdieu 1984). Yet, unlike Bourdieu’s nuanced explanation of how the classed habitus interacts with the education system (Bourdieu 1984), or how the specific habitus interacts with particular fields of action (Bourdieu
2000), he does not explain how the *gendered* habitus interacts with specific fields (Chambers 2005). In *Masculine Domination*, Bourdieu states that the gendered habitus is formed by Western culture’s “system of dichotomies” (Bourdieu 2000: 24), and argues that women accept domination by men because of their feminine dispositions. This problematically reduces gender to sexual differentiation; all women are thought to have the same feminine habitus. Bourdieu also treats gender ahistorically, assuming that gender relations are invariant over time and across cultures (Chambers 2005, Thorpe 2009) and treating gender relations among the Kabyle as “purer” versions of modern gender relations (Bourdieu 2000:6).

Bourdieu views the habitus as subtly adapting to particular fields of action. Yet, his analysis of the *gendered* habitus (Bourdieu 1996, 2000) assumes fixed, feminine characteristics that do not interact with specific fields of action. His treatment of gender is not logically consistent with his general understanding of the field-habitus relationship. Understanding how gender interacts with field and habitus therefore requires integrating a more nuanced understanding of gender into Bourdieu’s work—not analyzing a static masculine or feminine habitus, but asking how fields’ conventions draw on different ways of doing gender.

### 3.2. Doing gender and the gendered habitus

Following West and Zimmerman (1987), I view gender as an ongoing practice. Individuals accomplish gender by subtly, continually creating interactional differences between men and women—differences that are not inherent or biological. Rather than expressing natural differences between men and women, gendered practices actively *create* those differences. Although individuals continually do gender, they do not
necessarily attribute gendered motivations to their behavior. Unlike work on “sex roles,” which assumes that these roles exist independently of people who inhabit them and predefines particular traits as “masculine” or “feminine” (Connell 1987: 47-54), the doing gender perspective centers individuals’ actual, situated practices and acknowledges multiple ways of “doing” both masculinity and femininity.

West and Zimmerman (1987) argue that people do gender because they are “accountable” to others’ expectations. Although individuals do not always meet these expectations, they can be called to account for their gendered behavior at almost any time, as when men are told to “man up” (Pascoe 2011) or when women are criticized for being aggressive or unladylike (Ridgeway 2011)—critiques that can occur almost any context.

West and Zimmerman’s (1987) perspective also usefully recognizes multiple ways of doing gender. Masculinity is generally associated with toughness, physical aggression, and control of one’s emotions (Connell 2005, Ridgeway 2011), and some masculinities scholars argue that men learn to do gender through dominating women, and other men (Connell 2005, Kimmel 2005). Competitive doings of masculinity are often expressed in social situations such as competitive workplaces (Cooper 2000) and locker-room banter (Pascoe 2011). But, as masculinities scholars note (e.g. Kimmel 2005), there are multiple masculinities, many of which are associated with particular class positions. For example, “meterosexuality” is a way of doing masculinity through consumption of luxury, branded clothing and expensive personal care items. As this requires significant financial capital, and distance from physical labor to maintain a refined image, meterosexuality is a situated, *classed* way of doing masculinity associated with upper- or
upper-middle class status (Gardiner 2000, Kimmel 2005).

In Western culture, “femininity” often signifies a culturally recognizable set of practices such as nurturing, emotionality, concern with one’s appearance, and expressive rather than instrumental relations (Connell 2005, Ridgeway 2011, West and Zimmerman 1987). But, we can also theorize multiple classed ways of doing femininity. Women in the early industrial era who engaged in the “cult of domesticity” (Hays 1998) performed both femininity and middle-class status; by devoting themselves to home and family, rather than working, they achieved a socially acceptable form of femininity and outwardly proclaimed their family’s class position. Fox (2009) similarly argues that intensive mothering is a middle-class way of doing femininity, as it requires the time and financial resources to constantly prioritize the baby’s needs. And, some gendered practices become “pariah femininities” because they oppose and reject these middle-class femininities, such as the “slut/bad girl” which signifies opposition to social structures such as the education system, job market, and legal system (Finley 2010). Analyses of gendered practices within specific cultural fields should therefore be sensitized to different gendered practices, situated with respect to race, class, and sexuality, and other social locations.

3.3. Gender relations in folk and metal

Research on gender and music scenes describes unique gender dynamics that develop in different music subcultures, including hip-hop (Harkness 2012), punk (Leblanc 1999) and even barbershop singing (Nash 2012). This literature finds many music scenes that encourage all participants, both men and women, to construct a tough, aggressive persona, such as punk, rap, and hardcore scenes where participants
conventionally adopt a streetwise and anti-establishment demeanor (Harkness 2012, Hendricks 2013, Whiteley 2013). This demeanor is rooted in a specific social location; here, toughness functions as a form of “protest masculinity” (Walker 2006), where men who lack privilege vis-à-vis class (and, in the case of rap, their ethnicity) express alienation through physical aggression.

Yet, different music scenes develop different patterns of gender relations. In particular, folk and metal have differently gendered histories. Heavy metal is a heavily masculinized genre. Men outnumber women in most metal scenes (Hill 2011, Walser 1993), and metalheads generally adopt tough, aggressive interactional styles (Weinstein 2000, Krenske and McKay 2000). The lyrics and symbolism surrounding heavy metal culture generally center on masculine-coded themes, such as chaos, domination, and individual triumph over adversity (Rafalovich 2006). Metalheads also explicitly devalue weakness of any kind, including anything deemed too ‘sissy’ or ‘feminine’ (Hill 2011). Women metalheads are allowed—and often pressured—to adopt aggressive or antisocial behaviors and styles of dress, like wearing combat boots and maintaining a deliberately disheveled appearance (Leblanc 1999, Krenske & McKay 2000). These aggressive, countercultural interpersonal styles align with the protest masculinity previously described, rooted in youth and a subordinated class position. As most metalheads are white men in their late teens to late 20s, who are not yet well established in the labor market, this adoption of a class-subordinated masculinity is unsurprising.

In contrast, American folk music traditions have historically accepted and encouraged women’s participation (Cohen 2008, Lankford 2005). Accordingly, folk music is not strongly symbolically associated with either men or women, and there is
little or no literature suggesting that participants in folk music scenes are expected to adopt any particular gendered practices. Music scholars and critics do label some folk music as “female-centered music” (Grieg 2013), and the “female folksinger” archetype is highly recognizable (Leonard 2007). But, shared cultural understandings of the ideal-typical folksinger might also suggest a lone, wandering troubadour or a protest singer at a union march, images with more masculine connotations. Overall, there is far less literature on how gender is constructed in folk music than in heavy metal; but, the available evidence suggests a plurality of acceptable ways to do gender in folk, while literature on heavy metal suggests an aggressive form of masculinity stemming from a subordinated class position.

Folk, of course, also has historical working-class associations through its focus on rural music. American folk music is often equated with vernacular music (Cohen 2006, 2008)—that is, music played by amateurs, developed outside of the music industry. But, the image of the ideal-typical folkie as a poor, rural amateur musician-savant is a fiction. Most people who have historically collected folk songs, and organized, promoted and disseminated folk music are white, middle-class individuals who “fabricate authenticity” (Peterson 1997) by constructing an image of folk music and folk musicians centered on simplicity, rurality, and poverty (Cohen 2006, Roy 2010). Even in the early days of folk music, it was primarily white, middle-class volunteers, folk historians, and cultural entrepreneurs who symbolically positioned American vernacular music traditions as under threat from the emerging music industry, and created a specific organizational form—the folk festival as a non-profit entity—to preserve it (Cohen 2008). Of course, many canonical folk figures such as Woodie Guthrie did genuinely come from rural,
class-disadvantaged backgrounds. Still, despite its symbolic associations with rurality and poverty, many North American folk scenes remain solidly middle class spaces.

3.4. Methods

I collected data using participant-observation and semi-structured interviews in the Toronto folk and metal fields. I selected these fields because they are organizationally similar (but not identical, as I will show), and yet provide a sharp contrast in conventional gendered practices. These fields’ similarities as self-organized, grassroots music scenes make points of contrast particularly visible, and facilitate linking differences in gendered practice to differences in organizational structure. I occupied an insider/outsider position in the heavy metal field; my partner is a metal drummer and we have many friends who participate in heavy metal, so in some ways I experience heavy metal as an insider and continue to attend metal concerts outside of formal research. But, I do not identify as a metalhead, or identify as one only ambivalently, and many field members recognized and treated me as an outsider (albeit, a knowledgeable and sympathetic one). In the folk field, I was a complete outsider; I had no personal contacts in or knowledge of the field before beginning research, and followed a fairly linear trajectory of entering the field, making contacts, collecting data, and exiting the field. But, in many ways I felt more at home in folk than in metal, as my habitual styles of dress, interaction, and self-presentation more closely resemble a middle-class folkie than a metalhead.

My general sampling strategy was *maximum variation sampling* (Patton 2001). As my theoretical objective was to understand each field holistically, I collected data on the widest possible range of locations and positions in each field and selected fieldwork settings and interview participants for breadth. I attended large and small festivals and
shows, shows at different types of venues (e.g. at for-profit bars and cafés, and non-profit folk clubs in private homes, churches and community spaces) shows that spanned different subgenres of folk and metal, and non-concert settings (e.g. conferences, workshops, informal jam sessions). I also sought out as interviewees both men and women, older and younger field members, and people in different functional roles including musician, festival director, critic, radio host, and fans.

I conducted participant-observation at events including concerts, festivals, open stages, and industry conferences. I attended 30 heavy metal events and 40 folk events, in sessions ranging from 1.5 to 8 hours and averaging 3.5 hours. I spent approximately 130 hours in the folk field and 100 hours in the metal field. During fieldwork I behaved primarily as an audience member, but also formally volunteered at four folk festivals and two folk-oriented industry conferences and volunteered informally (e.g. hauling equipment, or watching the door while someone needed to use the washroom) at a number of metal shows. I disclosed my researcher status at the earliest socially appropriate opportunity. Field members generally responded with interest, enthusiasm, polite inquiries, and unsolicited offers of assistance.

I conducted 63 semi-structured interviews with musicians, fans, support personnel, and critics. I conducted 35 interviews with metalheads, 18 with men and 17 with women, and 28 interviews with folkies, 12 with men and 16 with women. Interviews were conducted on a scheduled basis, outside of fieldwork. 38 interviews were conducted in public places such as coffee shops, 13 were conducted in private spaces, such as respondents’ homes or workplaces, and 12 interviews were conducted via telephone. They lasted between 45 minutes and 2.5 hours, with most lasting 90 minutes.
I used four interview guides tailored to different functional roles: musician, support personnel, critic, and fan. Each guide covered the respondent’s entry into the folk or metal field, likes and dislikes regarding folk or metal music, routine practices (e.g. how fans selected which shows to attend, how musicians normally booked shows and promoted themselves online, how critics decided which albums to review), the respondent’s perception of gender relations in the field and, where relevant, respondents’ experiences of gender-based discrimination. Interviews usefully allowed me to compare my perceptions of conventional folkie or metalhead dispositions to field members’ perceptions.

I coded interview transcripts and field notes as I generated them, while still collecting data. I developed coding categories both inductively and deductively, working simultaneously ‘up’ from the data and ‘down’ from the literature. I developed some categories (e.g. *folkie habitus* and *metalhead habitus*) deductively; I drew the concept of *habitus* from Bourdieu’s writing, and applied it where relevant. I developed other codes inductively by seeking emergent patterns in the data; for example, codes such as *participatory music-making, formal volunteering, and entrepreneurial labor* emerged from the data, rather than previous literature. I gauged that I had reached theoretical saturation (Glaser and Strauss 2009: 111-112), and therefore stopped data collection, when new data consistently fit into existing categories without adding new insights.

Because the doing gender perspective centers situated practice, rather than predefining particular traits as masculine or feminine (West and Zimmerman 1987), recognizing practices as “doing gender” can be conceptually difficult (Deutsch 2007). To address this, I used both inductive and deductive analysis to characterize field members’
practices as gendered. Inductively, I considered issues such as whether field members attribute gendered meanings to their practices, and which practices they view as gendered. I also considered whether the sanctions that field members used to enforce behavioral expectations drew on an implicitly gendered logic; for example, metalheads frequently criticize each other for being ‘sissy,’ which has clear gendered connotations. Of course, individuals are often unaware of the gendered connotations or underpinnings of their behaviors (Martin 2006, West and Zimmerman 1987). Accordingly, I also use deductive logic to characterize practices as gendered; that is, I recognize behavior as gendered when it resonates with sociological literature on gendered practice.

3.5. The Toronto folk and metal fields

The Toronto folk and metal fields are grassroots music scenes centered on amateur and semi-professional musicians who perform at local bars and small-time venues, making little money at music. Both folk and metal performers produce original music, although folk musicians also perform traditional folksongs. Both fields are well-connected music communities where members self-organize to book and publicize concerts and festivals. However, the folk scene is generally more professionalized than metal. The folk field contains larger and better-funded organizations, like folk festivals which are supported by public arts grants, and more paid performance opportunities. Some Toronto folk musicians support themselves from music, although this is still difficult; virtually no Toronto metal musicians do.

These fields differ demographically. My fieldwork observations, which include systematic observations of the demographic composition of audiences, echo previous findings that most metalheads are white, working class men (Kahn-Harris 2007,
Weinstein 2000). Fans, musicians, and support personnel in heavy metal are primarily white men in their late teens to late twenties, with some participants in their 30s and few, if any, over 40. Women make up roughly one-quarter to one-third of most Toronto metal audiences, but less than 5% of Toronto metal musicians are women. In contrast, participants in the folk field tend to be somewhat older, with a near-equal balance between men and women. My fieldwork observations suggests that folkies range from mid-20s and older, with most in their 40s or 50s. I estimate that about 40% of folk musicians and support personnel are women. Folkies, particularly folk audiences, also typically present as middle-class.

These grassroots music scenes are ideal sites for understanding how gender impacts the connection between field and habitus because many aspects of cultural production occur in plain view. Backstage work—stuffing orientation kits at an industry conference, preparing food for performers at a festival, setting up equipment at a concert—is not swept out of sight as it might be in a corporate music industry, but relatively visible to anyone who cares to look for it or, as I did, volunteer to assist with it.

I view folk and metal as separate fields rather than two parts of a broader ‘field of

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2 I base this estimate on my own fieldwork observations and count data from public listings of metal bands’ members (e.g. www.metal-archives.com)

3 I base this estimate on my field observations and publicly available count data (e.g. public listings of folk performers, lists of attendees at folk-identified industry conferences).

4 I base this assessment on my fieldwork observations, interview data, and post-festival audience surveys. Most interviewees and folkies with whom I spoke during fieldwork were either engaged in or retired from middle-class occupations (e.g. teacher, web developer, electrical engineer, civil servant, social worker). Furthermore, 4 Ontario folk festivals post audience analyses on their websites, or include audience data in their annual report. All 4 of these sources reported a median income of around $60,000-$80,000 for festival attendees, suggesting middle-class status. The main exception to this generalization is that many folk musicians are not easily classified as middle-class, especially those in their 20s or early 30s who are precariously employed (e.g. in part-time retail or food service jobs) as they try to build a paid music career.
music’ because in practice they are distinct domains of action. Folk performers are generally unaware of and unconcerned with who is popular among metalheads, and vice versa. Folkies and metalheads interact with different support personnel, venues, and media outlets. Conventions in one scene are irrelevant in the other, and folkies and metalheads use different standards to evaluate music. Bourdieu (1993) argues that field members have stakes in the same game; as folkies and metalhead have stakes in two different games, I view folk and metal as separate fields.

3.6. Findings

Three types of conventions—behavioral conventions, working conventions, and stylistic conventions—interact with gendered field-specific habitus in the folk and metal fields. Differences between these conventions are summarized in Table 3.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Behavioral Conventions</th>
<th>Working Conventions</th>
<th>Stylistic Conventions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Definition</strong></td>
<td>Shared expectations regarding how field members will interact, without reference to a specific social setting or occupational role</td>
<td>Shared expectations about how cultural production will be accomplished, i.e. what roles are involved, what tasks each person will do, and how they will coordinate their activities</td>
<td>Shared expectations regarding the content or characteristics of cultural works produced within a genre.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Examples</strong></td>
<td>Swearing and crude humor are normal and acceptable in virtually all social settings in the metal field, even when meeting someone for the first time. These same behaviors would be widely considered</td>
<td>Most metal concerts are held in a public space (e.g. a bar) and organized by a freelance promoter who promises to pay the venue and bands, assumes financial liability for the event, and potentially earns a profit. Many folk concerts are organized in</td>
<td>Metal songs normally use electric (rather than acoustic) guitars and bass guitars, which are filtered through a distortion pedal. Folk songs often use a repeated chorus with simple</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Behavioral conventions in each field encourage participants to develop a gendered specific habitus: a “folkie habitus” or “metalhead habitus” adapted to the field, including the field’s normal ways of doing gender. The gendered elements of these habitus then help to reproduce the field’s stylistic and working conventions.

3.6.1. The Metalhead Habitus and Competitive Masculinity

Metalheads develop an appropriately gendered habitus through two processes. First, fields are attractive to—that is, they draw in—individuals whose original habitus aligns with the field’s gendered behavioral conventions. Second, fields’ behavioral conventions encourage specific gendered practices. Through both of these processes, the metal field rewards a habitus oriented toward alcohol consumption, friendly aggression, competitive status displays and generally hedonistic and countercultural doings of masculinity.

Heavy metal scenes privilege performances of masculinity centered on violence, aggression, individuality, and domination (Hill 2011, Krenske and McKay 2000, Walser

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5As cultural sociologists note, boundaries around music genres are fluid, contested, and not inherent in any qualities of the music itself (Lena and Peterson 2008). The stylistic conventions mentioned here are not definitions of folk or metal, but are examples of stylistic elements that folk and metal songs often (but not always) contain.
1993, Weinstein 2000). The Toronto metal scene is no exception. Phillip⁶, a white male metal musician in his late 20s, describes metal as requiring “guts. Aggression. Testicular fortitude, whatever you like to call it...it’s a colloquialism that metal is the genre of testosterone” (Interview). In informal conversation after a show, Phillip further explains that “metal is fucking women, and drinking beer, and growing beards, and eating meat and all sorts of other manly things” (field notes, 6 October 2012). As Phillip suggests, heavy metal’s behavioral norms are circumscribed by gender, class, and sexuality. “Metal-ness” is symbolically associated with a youthful, heterosexual, working-class masculinity; the beer, unkempt facial hair, and red meat that Phillip references suggest a construction worker, rather than an accountant. Gendered practices in heavy metal thus resonate with “protest masculinity”, or physically aggressive doings of masculinity stemming from a subordinated class position (Walker 2006).

Doing gender appropriately in the metal field often means performing symbolic domination and exaggerated aggression for audiences of other men. Masculinities scholars argue that homosocial competition and repudiation of anything coded ‘weak’ or ‘feminine’ are constructed as key components of men’s gender identities (Cooper 2000, Grazian 2007, Kimmel 1994, Pascoe 2011). The “metalhead habitus” provides a quintessential example of these dynamics. Friendly, but unmistakably competitive, status displays are an important part of this environment. Metalheads frequently display their knowledge about and taste in metal music as a means to symbolically dominate each other. Paul, a white male musician in his early 20s, says:

⁶ All given names are pseudonyms
I’m going to be hypocritical saying this because I’m like this sometimes too, but there’s this prevailing thing where everybody tries to one-up each other a lot of time with, oh I know these bands that you don’t (Interview)

To “one-up” someone means gaining a status advantage through friendly dominance, such as winning an argument about which band is ‘better’ or displaying superior knowledge about metal music and history. In this instance, the metalhead habitus functions as embodied cultural capital; metalheads earn status by having the ‘right’ dispositions for the field—dispositions that are heavily gendered. These status competitions are routine among metalheads as Abbey, a white metal fan in her mid-20s, notes:

There are people, their entire lives are dedicated to it...they shit on you if you’re not at their caliber of metal fandom...I’ve seen people have arguments at shows because you know, someone’s more metaller-than-thou. (Interview)

These playful status displays have serious undertones, as Abbey suggests, and evoke gender scholarship on how men construct masculinity for audiences of other men. Technology workers in Silicon Valley do masculinity by seeing who can code faster and better (Cooper 2000), boys in high school do masculinity by lobbing homophobic epithets at each other (Pascoe 2011), and young men in the nightclub scene do masculinity through a “girl hunt” (Grazian 2007). The same dynamic underlies these competitions over who is “metaller-than-thou”: metalheads do masculinity through status games. The metalhead habitus fosters a tendency to engage in these status performances, and acceptance of the illusio (Bourdieu 1993: 72) that they are important.

The metal field’s behavioral conventions also devalue femininity (Krenske and McKay 2000). Women (and men) with visibly feminine dispositions lose credibility and
status. Ian, a musician in his mid-20s, observes:

[Metahead women] are kind of tomboyish...almost as if a woman is trying to be a man, if that makes any sense. It’s like, women will become as grungy looking, and will wear the same kind of leather jacket as the guys will wear...and like, drink heavily with the guys, you know? They may as well be one of the guys...they want to be accepted by the guys. And because the predominant image in metal is the highly masculinized male, I think they see that as...what it means to be into metal. (Interview)

Ian’s perceptions resonate with my fieldwork observations. Many metalhead women drink heavily at shows, discuss sex openly, make crude jokes, and forcefully slam their bodies into other people in mosh pits. In short, they behave just like male metalheads. Importantly, Ian identifies women’s motivations for “tomboyish” behavior: credibility and status in metal culture depend on performing masculinity. Summer, a white 24-year-old metal fan, describes the social cost of lacking an appropriately masculine disposition:

Metal girls are really, really tough...and I’m like a great big mushbag. I smile and hug everybody. My friend called me the heavy metal cheerleader. Fuck, that’s awesome, but at the same time...it takes a lot of hard work, I guess, when you come into a predominantly male [environment]...when you come in all bubbly and happy, they’re like, who the fuck is this? But I grew on them. (Interview)

As this quote suggests, men are often assumed to belong in the metal scene, while women—particularly women with emotive, visibly feminine dispositions like Summer—must prove that they belong.

Women’s ‘doings’ of gender in the aggressive, competitive ways privileged by the metal field occurs somewhere in the space between freedom and constraint. It is not entirely voluntary, as this form of embodied cultural capital can be vital for credibility and acceptance. But, many metalhead women also experience fit between the metalhead
habitus and their original habitus. 12 of 17 women metalheads I interviewed described aggressive or masculine tendencies predating their metal fandom—that is, an amenable original habitus. Darrah, a metal fan in her early 20s, describes herself as fairly masculine and works in male-dominated jobs such as manufacturing and skilled trades. Irena, a fan and occasional promoter in her late 20s, says that she enjoys metal culture because she has “never been a girly-girl anyway” (Interview).

While research on women in male-dominated occupations outlines women’s difficulties adapting to masculine behavioral norms (Ong 2005; Paap 2006), many women metalheads seem to relish the opportunity to do gender differently. In general, women’s behavior is still more strictly regulated than men’s—women are often expected to constrain their bodies, speak quietly, be pleasantly accommodating and sexually available, and avoid aggression (Martin, 1998; Ridgeway, 2011). Heavy metal culture allows and encourages women metalheads to reject gender norms to which they might be held elsewhere. Yet, women’s performances of masculinity also suggest constraint; women adopt masculine behaviors not only because of their individual preferences (although those certainly matter too), but also because aggressive, competitive practices function as embodied cultural capital in this space.

Men are, of course, also drawn into heavy metal by a fit between field and habitus. Metalheads, particularly teenage boys, are often drawn to themes of alienation, aggression, and “masculine individualism” (Rafalovich 2006) in heavy metal. Unsurprisingly, 12 of 18 male interviewees described themselves as aggressive or angry when they first encountered heavy metal. Some were doing poorly in or feeling disconnected from school and the labor market. Virtually all of these men described a
sense of rightness and belonging when they encountered heavy metal. This fit between field and habitus is precisely what Bourdieu (2000) predicts; but, he overlooks that “fit” depends on individuals with *gendered* dispositions that resonate with how gender is done within the field. Not *all* women or men are drawn to metal culture, but primarily those whose “doings” of gender already tend toward aggression and competitiveness—and, of course, this gendered fit likely explains why more men than women participate in metal.

In addition to attracting individuals with an amenable original habitus, heavy metal’s behavioral conventions encourage participants to develop an appropriate specific habitus. James, a metal vocalist in his mid-20s, illustrates this. While we were discussing anger in metal music, I used the word “emotional” which James had not specifically used. He responded by rejecting the word “emotion”:

A: I don’t like to throw the word emotion in there because it’s metal and there’s no room in metal for emotion.

Q: Really. [pause]

A: Well, maybe, yes there is but guys, metal guys are supposed to be tough. And we’re not supposed to classify those aggressive feelings as emotions, if that makes sense, for some reason. It’s a silly kind of thing.

Q: Hmm, that’s really interesting. Because I just think of anger as an emotion so…

A: [interrupting] Oh, it is. But guys are stubborn, and they’re not supposed to be [pause; makes air quotes with his fingers] supposed to be emotional. But they totally, that’s what it is. We just don’t say it like that…I’m just trying to play the role of the metal guy who doesn’t talk about his emotions because we’re too macho and too stupid for that sort of thing. *(Interview)*

Notice the tension between James’ beliefs, and his perception of others’ expectations. James states that metalheads should behave in an exaggeratedly masculine way. Hence, he declines to label the anger, passion, and other visibly expressive aspects
of heavy metal performance as “emotional”. Yet, he positions himself as weakly committed to this expectation, and distances himself from the other “too macho” men that he perceives to hold this expectation in earnest. Still, he instinctively holds himself to these standards before pausing to reflect on his attitude. In James’ experience, we can see the metal field shaping participants’ habitus so that they internalize and act on the ‘right’ dispositions—at least, until something (in this case, my mild surprise and confusion) prompts critical reflexivity.

3.6.2. The Folkie Habitus and Middle-Class Femininity

While the metalhead habitus encourages a narrow range of exaggeratedly masculine traits, there is a broader (but not unlimited) range of acceptable way to “do” folkieness. Behavioral conventions in folk largely resemble routinely acceptable behaviors in a middle-class office setting, centered on polite friendliness. Unacceptable behaviors include practices that upset this polite friendliness, such as public profanity (which is perfectly acceptable among metalheads) or overtly antagonistic behavior (such as metalheads’ competitive status displays). Failures to maintain friendly relations usually prompt the small interactional graces that Goffman (1955) calls “facework,” such as uncomfortable laughter and attempts to repair the situation.

This generic expectation of polite friendliness allows folkies to engage in practices with multiple gendered connotations. Bringing home-baked cookies to a songwriting session (which would likely be ‘read’ as feminine) and adopting a stoic, outdoorsy “singing cowboy” (Peterson 1997) persona on stage (which would likely be ‘read’ as masculine) are both equally routine and acceptable among folkies. We might therefore view the folkie habitus as somewhat less gendered than the metalhead habitus,
as metalheads subtly but systematically enforce gendered practices (e.g. by mocking people who are ‘sissy’ or too feminine), while folkies do not (e.g. baking cookies and adopting a ‘singing cowboy’ stage persona have different gendered connotations, but neither would prompt mockery or criticism). Still, as I will argue, the folkie habitus is not ungendered; behavioral conventions in the folk field prompt people to engage in practices with connotations of middle-class femininity.

Folkies single out some behavioral practices as particularly salient to their sense of folkieness, and those practices suggest femininity: they center on community-building and forging caring, emotional relationships, which we culturally code as feminine (Ridgeway 2011). Folkies view dispositions such as friendliness, generosity, helpfulness, and community-mindedness, as typically folkie. Bill, a white radio host in his 50s, says that,

There’s this really warm, earthy arts scene here…I didn’t realize how warm people were until I started getting to know these singer-songwriters. I thought they were down-to-earth, easygoing, humble people who were just out there to get their art heard and seen. I started falling in love with roots music…and so I started promoting their scene wherever I could. (Interview)

Many characteristics that Bill highlights suggest sensitivity and concern for others; a “warm, earthy” disposition suggests nurturing, openness, and support. And, his description of “humble” folkies suggests a worldview that treats others’ interests and needs as important. Rather than pursuing self-interest, Bill views folkies as humbly working for the collective good. These traits resonate with culturally shared understandings of femininity, and particularly motherhood, that center nurturing, self-sacrifice, and putting others’ needs before one’s own (Hays 1998).

The caring relationships that folkies prioritize are often developed through
attending house concerts together, or through doing volunteer work together. A volunteer
at a folk conference for musicians and industry workers articulates this:

[Steve] tells me that…what he loves about [the folk scene] is that
it’s a real community. He points to a group of about 20 people in
the room who are figuring out how to organize boxes filled with
promotional material and says, ‘look, everyone in society is
getting more and more withdrawn, but these people are creating a
real community. They’re helping each other out, and coming
together.’ (field notes, 19 February 2013)

Interestingly, when describing the folk scene, Steve does not mention the music;
he describes participants’ behaviors. The centrality of warmth, helpfulness, and
community-building to Bill’s and Steve’s sense of folkieness positions these sensibilities
as part of the folkie habitus.

Bourdieu notes that new participants are drawn into fields by a fit between their
original habitus and the field’s conventional practices. This process makes the folk field
attractive to individuals whose original habitus include dispositions toward sensitivity
and emotionality. Hannah, a folk fan in her 50s, describes being drawn to the opportunity
to connect with other folkies at house concerts in other people’s living rooms:

Once people...hear music in these really intimate, cozy personal
venues, it’s kind of addictive, you know? And I find that the
people who are into this scene are my kind of people. Like,
they’re kind people, they’re nice, they’re like people who have a
social conscience. (Interview)

Hannah’s characterization of house concerts as an “addictive” space filled with
“my kind of people” suggests a fit between habitus and field. Bill’s experience similarly
demonstrates this fit: he “fell in love,” or felt that his sensibilities resonated with the
field, and quickly started promoting musicians and hosting a radio show. Interestingly,
before entering the folk field Bill worked in corporate management. He left that industry
in part because he disliked a hyper-competitive culture filled with “vapid guy-talk” on
golf courses and in boardrooms, and spoke of a desire to forge real, emotional
connections with other men in the folk scene. A pre-existing disposition toward
sensitivity and emotionality drew Bill into the folk scene.

As these examples show, folkies do gender much differently than metalheads do. By systematically orienting folkies toward community-building and emotional relations, the folk field prompts doings of gender that suggest middle-class femininity. We socially code caring, emotionality, and a relational rather than instrumental orientation toward others as feminine (Connell 2005, Martin 1998, Ridgeway 2011). Notably, the way that caring relations are often expressed in the folk field suggests a middle-class femininity. Community-building requires the leisure time to volunteer for a folk festival or conference, and the financial means to transport oneself to a rural festival site. Hosting or attending house concerts requires either a large suburban home or private transportation to drive oneself to the suburbs to attend such concerts. And, the general expectation of polite friendliness in folk resonates with practices common in middle-class institutions like university classrooms and professional workplaces. Also, 20 of 28 folkie interviewees were either employed in or retired from middle-class occupations (e.g. government/public service workers, teachers, IT professionals), suggesting that the field-habitus fit is both gendered and classed.

These gendered behavioral conventions encourage men as well as women to express emotion and caring. Stewart, a sound technician, notes that “there’s an entirely different vibe with people who come from the rock side and people who come from the folk side…Folk is far, far more cooperative and touchy-feely.” This ‘cooperative, touchy-
feely’ sensibility might provoke social sanctions against men in other environments like software firms (Cooper 2000) or nightclubs (Grazian 2007)—or the heavy metal field. If the metal field eases pressure on women to be pleasantly accommodating, the folk scene eases pressure on men to do masculinity through toughness and domination and offers men a small respite from the unattainable and potentially harmful standards of masculinity to which men are often held (Connell 2005, Pascoe 2011).

As gendered practices are less rigidly policed in the folk scene than in metal, multiple gendered practices are certainly routine and acceptable as well. Yet, these practices are not central to folkies’ self-understanding. Still, in some setting folkies have incentives to be assertive rather than cooperative and caring. Jam sessions are one such space. During jams, amateur and professional musicians engage in spontaneous, collective music-making, with different people taking turns leading each song. Jam sessions are friendly environments, but require musicians to assert themselves in order to lead a song:

> These jams, jeez, you know, it does take a lot. If you’re the girl, you gotta get in there and just be loud and say ‘I’m here, I’m singing, it’s my turn.’ And then once you do one, they want you to do more. It’s tough though. And a lot of girls are very intimidated by that...I think I can really be one of the guys, you know? (Naomi, Interview)

“Getting in there” and leading a song requires assertiveness, which is typically coded as masculine. Although women often experience stronger social sanctions than men for assertiveness (Martin 1998, Ridgeway 2011), in this instance Naomi is actually rewarded with an invitation to lead more songs. In addition to easing pressure on men to suppress their emotions, the folk scene also eases general social pressure on women—particularly women musicians—to avoid assertiveness. Despite a shared understanding of
‘touchy-feely’ relations as quintessentially folkie, both men and women regularly engage in behaviors with different gendered connotations.

Overall, folkies’ routine gendered practices are quite flexible relative to gendered practices in heavy metal. In folk, both men and women can “do” both masculinity and femininity, as long as they maintain norms of polite friendliness. Folkies—both men and women—express caring and emotionality, but also assert themselves when necessary. Still, folkies only identify some gendered practices as central to their sense of folkieness; those centered on caring, emotionality, and social responsibility. Folk musicians like Naomi certainly engage in assertive behavior, but do not connect this assertiveness to their sense of folkieness.

3.6.3. Gender and working conventions

Folk and metal are both self-organized grassroots music scenes with key organizational similarities. Both rely on media outlets produced by and for field participants (e.g. blogs, magazines, and podcasts produced and consumed within the field), rather than mass media. Both scenes center on independent musicians who self-manage tasks like writing music, booking shows, and doing publicity work, unaided by professional songwriters, corporate record labels, or publicists. Both folk and metal are self-organized, member-driven scenes, but they produce different modes of self-organization. Folkies often self-organize through formal organizations, usually registered non-profit entities, while metalheads self-organize through entrepreneurship. Those differences rely on support personnel such as promoters, festival organizers, and volunteers, with the gendered forms of habitus fostered by the fields.

Folk’s working conventions, centered on formal organizations, require significant
volunteer labor. Most folk festivals are produced by non-profit organizations with elected boards of directors and bureaucratic structures. Although some folk concerts are organized by a single musician or entrepreneurial promoter, many concerts are organized by historical societies, volunteer-led committees, or other non-profit associations. All of these modes of organization require many volunteers. For example, the website for Mariposa Folk Festival, Ontario’s largest folk festival, lists 45 different volunteer teams responsible for tasks including monitoring the parking lots, cooking and serving food for performers and staff, selling tickets, and setting up and tearing down the festival site. Folk festivals rely so heavily on unpaid labor that volunteers often outnumber paid staff. At one festival that I attended, the executive director estimated that there were 80 performers, 120 paid staff, and 250 volunteers on site (field notes, 24 August 2012). Other folk-oriented organizations, such as conferences, folk shows on community radio, and house concert series in private homes, similarly exist only because volunteers organize and promote them.

Volunteer-driven folk organizations, like all structural elements of cultural fields, depend on individuals with dispositions that sustain those structures. These necessary dispositions are deeply entwined with the middle-class doings of femininity that the folkie habitus encourages. Volunteering is associated with many attitudes prevalent in the folk scene, such as valuing helping others and community-building over other goals such as making money (Wuthnow 1994). Women are also more likely than men to formally volunteer, and may even achieve a feminine identify through volunteering (Warburton and McLaughlin 2006). This resonates with Caroline’s experience; as the executive director of a folk festival, she believes that women are more likely than men to volunteer:
80% [of people on folk boards of directors] are women, and 80% of the ones that do the grunt work. Even in our organization, we’re pretty balanced um [pause] gender-wise on that board, as far as men and women, but it’s the women who are more administratively uh, functional…design the website or the correspondence. Phone calls. Administration. Minutes and organizing stuff, it’s all done primarily by women. (Interview)

As Caroline describes, routine volunteer or “grunt work” in the folk scene often falls to women, much like “grunt work” in the home—the daily grind of making dinner, cleaning toilets, and other unglamorous but necessary work (Fox 2009).

Notably, volunteering in the folk scene is a particularly classed way of doing femininity. Volunteering for formal organizations is a middle-class pursuit; members of the working class are more likely to help each other informally, outside of non-profit organizations (Rotolo and Wilson 2006). Volunteering for a folk festival presupposes leisure time, the financial resources pay for transportation to and lodging at festival sites (which are often in rural areas) and, sometimes, middle-class interpersonal dispositions, as when volunteers in performer hospitality need to adopt a professional interactional style with VIPs like musicians and festival organizers.

In short, the field requires precisely the habitual dispositions that folkies recognize as central to their folkie-ness: middle-class polite friendliness, caring, and willingness to help others—through volunteer labor if necessary. The gendered sense of fit between the folkie habitus and the folk field thus draws on particular, situated, classed ways of doing gender. And, this fit reproduces volunteer-driven organizational forms such as folk festivals, community radio, and house concerts, which would become unsustainable without significant volunteer labor.

The metal scene is similarly self-organized. Metalheads do extensive unpaid or
low-paid work to keep the field running, like producing fanzines, starting independent record labels, organizing “distros” (independent CD distributors who sell underground metal albums not stocked in record stores), and fan-based online promotion (Hill 2011, Kahn-Harris 2007). But, this work is generally done by individual entrepreneurs, rather than people volunteering for a formal organization. Metal shows are normally organized by a promoter who rents a venue, hires bands, and sells tickets at the door to, ideally, earn a profit. As Ethan, a musician and promoter in his mid-20s, says “[metal] promoters, like, 95% of them are not registered businesses. They’re just guys putting on [shows]” (Interview). Metal promoters emphasize their devotion to the music, like Derek, a promoter in his mid-20s who stressed that “I would do this for free” (Interview).

However, metal promoters also speak openly about their desire to earn a profit, often criticizing other promoters for poorly organized, unprofitable shows. Other forms of self-organization in heavy metal are similarly entrepreneurial; distros and record labels, for example, are unambiguously for-profit rather than non-profit ventures.

Nevertheless, it is extremely difficult to earn money as a local metal musician, promoter, or independent label or distro owner. Despite a large global demand for heavy metal, local metal scenes are largely unprofitable (Miller 2013, Kahn-Harris 2007). However, metalhead support personnel generally intend to earn a profit and sometimes cease their ventures when those ambitions are not realized. Of course, some folkie volunteers also intend to build a profitable, freelance music career as a promoter or publicist; however, this is the exception among folkies. Most folk festival volunteers that I encountered were fans with no intention of professionalizing, but who often volunteered at the same festival every year. Yet, in the metal field, I rarely met support personnel who
intended to contribute to the scene on a long-term volunteer basis.

Entrepreneurial labor in the metal scene is supported by the metalhead habitus. Becoming a promoter, distro owner, or even a metal musician creates a tension between belief and action; metalheads know and regularly verbalize that there is “no money in metal” (Miller 2013). Yet, they still form bands, write music, put on shows, and create music magazines, often with openly entrepreneurial intentions. This willingness to compete in a cultural marketplace with minimal odds of financial success is supported by the metalhead habitus, which promotes individual status-seeking and friendly social competition. These dispositions support individual entrepreneurship, and help motivate metalheads to create fanzines, bands, distros, and independent record labels even when those ventures are unprofitable. Succeeding (i.e. earning money) as a metal promoter, musician, distro owner, or journalist is a source of esteem or symbolic capital (Bourdieu 1993) in the metal field’s status games. But, even a financially unprofitable venture signifies some degree of belonging and credibility in the individual status games to which metalheads are systematically oriented.

Success as a folk or metal musician also requires individuals with particular gendered dispositions. As most aspects of music careers in these scenes are self-organized, both folk and metal musicians must act as entrepreneurs. Musicians need to actively promote their music, seek attention from others, and solicit opportunities like gig bookings and media coverage. They need assertiveness, leadership, and confidence to perform in public, and risk public embarrassment if those performances fall flat. All of these practices are still broadly more associated with masculinity rather than femininity (Connell 2005, Ridgeway 2011).
The dispositions necessary for success as a musician are tied to the dispositions fostered by each field’s habitus. In metal, musicians’ entrepreneurial practices resemble entrepreneurship among support personnel; these practices are supported by the individualistic, competitive tendencies fostered in the metal field. Competence in playing heavy metal and building recognition as a metal musician (i.e. doing the entrepreneurial work necessary to book shows and obtain a public following) produces status, even if it produces no money. As metalheads are systematically oriented toward competitive status games, this is a valuable form of capital.

Although folkies are not systematically oriented toward individual competition in the same way that metalheads are, the flexibility of the folkie habitus—for example, the fact that assertiveness is acceptable and routine, even if it is not a sign of ‘folkieness’—means that many folkies develop the right dispositions to function as folk musicians. Here, the ‘right’ dispositions include the ability to shift between habitual practices as required in different situations: caring, emotional relations most of the time, and entrepreneurial assertiveness when necessary. A successful folk musician can create emotional connections with fans and present themselves as generous, helpful people in backstage settings to build a reputation as someone who is easy to work with (e.g. by doing small favors for other musicians, or being kind to promoters and sound technicians), and still assert themselves when necessary (e.g. by “getting in there” to lead a song in jam sessions, by assertively pursuing and asking for performance or networking opportunities). As these examples show, the way that habitus reproduces field—that is, how the folkie habitus and metalhead habitus support particular working conventions and organizational structures—has a gendered texture.
3.6.4. Gender and stylistic conventions

The gendered habitus also enables each cultural field’s stylistic conventions, or shared expectations regarding how music should sound and be performed. The folk field includes several genres, including bluegrass, American folk revival, blues, Cajun music, Cape Breton fiddling, and more. Participatory music-making, a stylistic convention common to many of these genres (Cohen 2006: 2-3), is supported by the folkie habitus. In metal, stylistic conventions centered on individual guitar virtuosity are similarly supported by the metalhead habitus.

Many stylistic conventions in heavy metal require performances of toughness and domination. This is particularly visible in performances where musicians symbolically dominate audiences by issuing orders to fans—moves up, jump around, get excited, form a mosh pit:

[The] singer says “cheers, who the fuck’s drinking tonight?...Seriously, let’s get this fucking place warmed up. Get some fucking movement, throw each other around, hurt each other, you know. We’re friends, but friends that hurt each other” (field notes, 3 November 2011)

This musician does gender by foregrounding aggression, intoxication, thrill-seeking, and physical violence. He encourages fans to drink alcohol and to “mosh,” or violently slam their bodies into each other, and exercises symbolic power over fans by telling them how to move their bodies. Notably, he has no formal power over the audience. His only authority is whatever he can muster by ‘doing metalness’ appropriately.

The gendered metalhead habitus supports and reproduces heavy metal’s technical complexity. Playing metal requires advanced skill, as musicians are expected to be
“virtuosos” (Walser 1993). Matthew, a musician in his late 20s, says,

> In metal, you’re kind of expected to show your technical prowess on your instrument, as opposed to, you know making something commercially viable for someone to listen to. I find more metal is music for musicians. People that actually play music and appreciate the hard work that it would take to play that particular thing (*Interview*)

Music in some genres is supposed to be simple enough that anyone can play along; this is a core part of punk’s DIY ethos (Leblanc 1999), and a belief organizing many folk music genres (Brooks 2013, Cohen 2006: 2-3). But, as Matthew observes, metal musicians are expected to display exceptional instrumental skill.

The gendered metalhead habitus supports individual virtuosity by motivating metal performers to compete in feats of musicianship. Like they playfully compete over who is ‘metaller-than-thou’, metalheads perform masculinity by outdoing each other in virtuosic guitar work, both during concerts and in ‘noodling’ or casual playing in informal settings. Virtuosic playing functions as *embodied cultural capital* in the metal field’s status games; it signals belonging and prestige. This competitive, masculine one-up-man-ship encourages aspiring performers to learn the challenging stylistic conventions of metal.

Status competition is certainly not the only motivation underlying guitar virtuosity. Metalheads might also hope to professionalize, like Ian, who originally pursued a paid music career but later realized “that reality did not support my grandiose vision” (*Interview*). Virtuosic metal musicians might also be motivated by pure enjoyment, either of the music itself or of the pride they take in self-development. But, these motivations are not mutually exclusive. Even if metal performers hope to professionalize or intrinsically enjoy honing their musical skill, competitive status games
still support these stylistic conventions by producing field members with the right
gendered dispositions to participate in them.

Similarly, the gendered folkie habitus supports participatory music-making. While
metal musicians perform for audiences who are clearly not part of the performance, many
folk-identified traditions and spaces blur the performer-audience distinction. Folk
festivals regularly include campfire-style jam sessions and song circles, where all
participants become performers. In these spaces, all manner of folkies—including
professional and amateur musicians, and non-musicians who can sing along with folk
standards—play music together, without rehearsal.

Jams and song circles are established traditions within the folk field. They are
included in most folk festival schedules and occur spontaneously (but predictably) in the
festival’s camping area, lasting until the early morning. Local bars and folk clubs also
hold regular jam sessions and song circles throughout the year. And, Toronto is home to a
weekly song circle that has been running in private homes for more than 20 years. In all
of these spaces, the line between performer and audience disappears; all participants are
both musician and listener.

The singalong chorus is another stylistic convention in folk that encourages
participatory music-making. The choruses of folk songs are often structured around major
chords and simple melody lines that allow others to easily sing along and harmonize.
Some folk musicians will pause before playing a song to teach the chorus to the audience
and encourage them to sing along. Other performers use non-verbal signals to encourage
audience participation:

The audience is clearly expected to sing along. During the chorus
[the performer] raises her right hand in the same way, at the same
line every time it’s repeated, signaling the audience to join in (Field Notes, 2 November 2011)

Notably, this performer does not actually need to ask the audience to sing along, or explain the meaning of a potentially ambiguous gesture (a raised hand). Because folkies often attend concerts expecting to sing along, the meaning of a raised hand in this context is intuitively clear to the audience. The singalong chorus is so common that folk audiences sometimes begin singing even if not specifically invited to do so.

Jam sessions, song circles, and singalong songs blur the boundary between performer and audience, and convey that everyone can and should participate in music-making. These spaces shift the focus away from individual virtuosity or technical competence, and toward the actual experience of making music. This can provide a heightened sense of emotionality and connection with other folkies—a sort of collective effervescence (Durkheim 1912 [1996]) that draws participants further into the experience, as Janice explains, “You get these moments…where it’s just like an orgasm. Like, everybody in the room just had this moment, and nobody could speak because it’s that good” (Interview).

The folkie habitus supports this participatory music-making. By prioritizing gendered practices that emphasize caring emotional relations, the field orients folkies toward situations such as song circles, which provide specific opportunities for collective emotional experiences. Of course, not all folk music is participatory. There are folkie guitar virtuosos and some folk-identified spaces that clearly separate performer and audience, such as a folk festival performance where a headliner performs to a sizeable crowd. Still, participatory music-making is an important performance convention grounded in folk music traditions spanning multiple sub-genres of folk music (Cohen
2006: 2), and that convention is supported by the gendered folkie habitus.

Overall, gendered elements of both the folkie and metalhead habitus support
genre-specific stylistic conventions; as folkies and metalheads learn to do gender
appropriately, the dispositions that they develop resonate with their fields’ stylistic
conventions. Aggressive stage performances and individual virtuosic soloing resonate
with metalheads in part because of the aggressive, individualistic tendencies fostered by
the metal field. Collective singalongs resonate with folkies in part because they
foreground the community-centered, emotionally driven interpersonal relationships that
folkies understand as central to their folkieness.

3.7. Discussion: Gender, field and habitus in other music scenes

The gendered link between field and habitus likely exists in other cultural fields
beyond the folk and metal scenes. Bourdieu posits the link between field and habitus as a
general proposition, not one specific to any empirical case (Bourdieu 1993, 1996, 2000).
Given the centrality of gender to the habitus (Chambers 2005, Thorpe 2009), it is entirely
reasonable to expect that the gendered habitus is both constituted by and constitutive of
other cultural fields.

Indeed, literature in the sociology of music already hints at this connection. Punk
fans and musicians adopt aggressive, counter-cultural dispositions similar to metalheads’
routine practices (Leblanc 1999). Punks also rely heavily on a do-it-yourself (DIY) ethic
that centers informal, self-organized ways of producing music and organizing shows
(Gifford 2011). A field analysis of the punk scene might reveal gendered connections
between field and habitus that resemble those in the metal scene, where individualistic
attitudes, aggression, and status competitions motivate people to participate in DIY
Yet, punk is also famously participatory. Punks are not expected to be virtuosos. Punk music is stylistically simple, so that anyone can make music (Leblanc 1999). Punk scenes also birthed the Riot Grrrl movement, which explicitly encourages women to produce their own cultural content (Giffort 2011). And, punk women routinely play with femininity and sexuality as a form of countercultural rebellion (Leblanc 1999). Despite behavioral similarities between punks and metalheads, the “punk habitus” may foster different gendered practices—perhaps “alternative feminities” or “pariah femininities” (Finley 2010)—with an explicitly political orientation that is absent among metalheads. How are these doings of femininity located with respect to race, class, and sexuality? And how do they relate to the stylistic and working conventions of punk music scenes, or the Riot Grrrl movement? These are important questions for future research to answer.

Blues music scenes offer similarly rich analytical possibilities. Grazian (2005) argues that “authenticity” in the Chicago blues scene is heavily associated with the black, working-class men that white, tourist audiences expect to find as performers. Developing a “blues musician’s habitus” likely requires learning to do gender through a particular form of masculinity, circumscribed by race and class. But, what about blues audiences? Blues fans are often white, educated tourists who claim to appreciate blues music rather than simply listening to it. How is a “blues fan habitus” located with respect to race, class, and gender? How might such a habitus reproduce the organization of the blues field? Answering these questions, and similar questions about other music scenes, can help scholars recognize common patterns in the gendered relationships between field and habitus, and improve our understanding of how music scenes and fields of cultural
production work.

3.8. Conclusion

My purpose in this paper is to show how the link between field and habitus, which Bourdieu theorized, is textured by gender. I have argued that developing an appropriate folkie habitus or metalhead habitus means learning to do gender in ways that sustain each field’s working and stylistic conventions. The folkie habitus prioritizes doings of gender centered on caring, emotional relations, such that volunteering at folk festivals and collective music-making rituals resonate with folkies’ dispositions and expectations. The metalhead habitus prioritizes gendered practices centered on aggression and competitive status displays, which motivates field members to do entrepreneurial labor that sustains the field’s working conventions, and to meet metal’s high standards of instrumental mastery.

This paper contributes to cultural sociology by showing how the habitus links gendered individual dispositions and motivations to the structure of cultural fields. The gendered habitus renders fields’ working and stylistic conventions sustainable, reproducing their structure and organization. Gendered behavioral conventions are not a secondary or unimportant aspect of cultural fields; they sustain core conventions surrounding what music will sound like, and how it will be produced and distributed. Recognizing gender as a key element of the habitus-field connection improves our general understanding of how cultural fields work.

This paper contributes to the sociology of music by providing a theoretical framework that can connect numerous studies of individual music scenes. Music scenes produce unique configurations of gender dynamics (Harkness 2012, Leblanc 1999, Nash
Analyzing how a gendered metalhead and folkie habitus (or punk habitus, or hip-hop habitus, or jazz habitus) reproduces specific fields of music can help us identify similarities and differences across music scenes, and begin to theorize how music scenes’ gender relations are similar to or different from gender relations in other types of cultural industries. Interrogating gendered links between field and habitus can also shed light on why particular people enter particular cultural fields; the metal field’s heavy over-representation of men and the folk field’s near-equal representation of men and women are likely supported by the gendered dimensions of the habitus that each field privileges, and the types of people that those habitus attract.

Overall, interrogating how gender textures the connection between field and habitus raises a new set of questions that are broadly applicable to multiple music scenes, and cultural fields in general. How do cultural fields depend on people with particular gendered dispositions? How are those gendered dispositions positioned with respect to race, class, sexuality, and other locations in social space? How does the gendered habitus draw in field participants with particular demographic characteristics, or from particular social backgrounds? The answers to these questions promise to improve our understanding of how fields of cultural production work.
Chapter 4

Getting your chops up: Learning spaces, gender, and performance capital

Why are there so many women in some artistic careers, and so few in others? Many authors and poets (VIDA Women in Literary Arts, 2015) and fashion designers (Stokes 2013) are women. Yet, women are outnumbered as grassroots musicians (Bielby 2004), composers (Gates 2006), and visual artists (Cowen 1996, Pollock and Parker 2013). There are many women comedians (Mizejewski 2014), but proportionally fewer screenwriters and filmmakers (Lauzen 2015).

In this paper, I ask how different cultural fields (Bourdieu 1993) come to offer such different opportunities for women to embark on artistic careers. Based on a comparative case study of two grassroots music scenes, I posit that fields of cultural production (Bourdieu 1993) contain differently organized learning spaces where potential artists develop cultural capital (Bourdieu 1984, 1997)—that is, the tastes, dispositions, knowledge, and skills necessary for success. Organizational differences can render these learning spaces, and by extension the capital developed therein, more or less accessible to women. Whether cultural capital is accessible can in turn shape whether a music career is accessible.

I use this framework to analyze the Toronto fields of heavy metal music, where women are extremely underrepresented as musicians, and contemporary folk music, where almost half of musicians are women. I find that aspiring folk and metal musicians
move through differently organized learning spaces to develop the instrumental and interpersonal skills required to perform music. These learning spaces encourage women to become folk musicians, and discourage women from becoming metal musicians. The folk field contains a number of non-profit cultural organizations, which host learning spaces such as workshops and open stages that are available to all aspiring musicians. Men and women participate in these spaces in roughly equal numbers. Folk’s learning spaces also encourage interaction between different types of people—not just men and women, but also older and younger musicians, experienced and inexperienced players, and musicians from different subgenres. In contrast, the metal field lacks non-profit cultural organizations to host open learning spaces, so learning is pushed into private and heavily male-dominated informal spaces. These informal spaces, such as private garages and rented practice rooms, also prioritize interaction within existing social networks, rather than bringing together diverse groups of people. I argue that these learning and capital-building spaces contribute to the scarcity of women metal musicians (who are largely excluded from the metal field’s main learning spaces), and the prevalence of women folk musicians (who have systematic access to the folk field’s learning spaces)\textsuperscript{1}.

\textsuperscript{1}Differently organized learning spaces are not the only reason that many folk musicians, but few metal musicians, are women. Other factors also contribute to this gender disparity—for example, the fact that metal audiences are male-dominated while folk audiences are more gender-balanced, and that heavy metal is deeply symbolically masculinized (Hill 2011, Rafalovich 2006, Walser 1993), while folk music’s symbolism is neither clearly masculinized nor feminized. Still, as I will argue, these factors cannot fully explain either women’s extreme underrepresentation as metal musicians when up to one-third of musicians are women in related genres such as punk or hardcore (Leblanc 1999), or the near-equal presence of women as folk musicians when musicians in related genres such as independent and alternative music are still primarily men (Bayton 1998, Leonard 2007). My analysis of learning spaces does not supplant these other explanations, but fills the empty spaces around them.
In addition to clarifying how gender differences in artistic careers are reproduced, my argument improves our understanding of social interaction in cultural fields. Bourdieu’s discussion of a field’s social network focuses on abstract relations between field positions, and minimizes the importance of direct, situated interaction (Bottero and Crossley 2011, Kirschbaum 2006). Yet, my analysis shows that focusing on situated interactions between actual people provides a clearer understanding of capital development than is possible when considering only abstract relationships between categories of actors.

This paper makes multiple contributes to the sociology of culture. First, I highlight an important dynamic that shapes women’s access to artistic careers—the accessibility of a field’s learning spaces—which may also organize women’s access to creative careers in other fields. I thus suggest a specific juncture at which women’s artistic careers may be easily derailed: when they are still building the capital necessary for an artistic career. Second, I improve our understanding of how cultural capital works within fields of cultural production. As Bourdieu (1993) notes, cultural capital facilitates access to high-status field positions. But, we know little about the social spaces where creative producers develop field-specific cultural capital, or the gendered consequences of how those spaces are organized. Finally, I highlight the importance of studying the forms of interaction that a field facilitates. By focusing on direct interaction between actual people, rather than treating a field as a system of abstract relationships, I join a growing body of literature (Bottero and Crossley 2011, Kirschbaum 2006) that clarifies the role that social interactions play in cultural fields.

4.1. Women Musicians and Underrepresentation
Most local, grassroots fields of music are *male-dominated*: that is, they contain more men than women (Bielby 2004; Leonard 2007). Local music communities often center on “garage bands,” which are grounded in social networks between men, including musicians, sound technicians, booking agents, and club owners (Bielby 2004; Cohen 2013). Many (but not all) music genres are also symbolically *masculinized*: they draw on discourses, ideologies, and representations that center stereotypical notions of masculinity\(^2\). For example, heavy metal (Hill 2011; Walser 1993), punk (Berkers 2012; Leblanc 1999), rap, hip-hop (Harkness 2012), and rock (Straw 2013, Waksman 1996) all draw on masculine imagery that foregrounds toughness, exaggerated bravado, and heterosexual prowess. In these genres, a woman musician “breaks the established cultural code” (Coates 2013: 16) of the music.

Many explanations for the *male-dominated* nature of local fields—that is, women’s underrepresentation as musicians—focus on individual behaviour. Women are pushed out of grassroots music careers because of others’ skepticism or perhaps overt discrimination; literature on women musicians documents their unending struggle for legitimacy, as they are called on to ‘prove themselves’ to other musicians, audiences, support workers, critics, and even clerks in instrument stores (Groce and Cooper 1990, Leonard 2007, Sargent 2009). Other research suggests that women are not as confident as men in their musical abilities (Giffort 2011, Wehr-Flowers 2006), or that women are not fully comfortable in the male-dominated, after-hours drinking spaces like bars and pubs around which most local music scenes revolve (Cohen 2013).

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\(^2\) This discussion draws on Britton’s (2000) useful distinction between *male-dominated* and *masculinized* organizations.
However, individual-level explanations for women’s underrepresentation as musicians ignore organizational dissimilarities between music scenes. Both punk and rap are largely produced outside of formal organizations, in repurposed spaces such as warehouses and street corners where participants self-organize with little organizational support (Leblanc 1999; Lee 2009). In contrast, folk music is organized through formal non-profit cultural organizations, such as folk festivals, volunteer-run community folk clubs, and even academic departments and archives (Cohen 2008; Cohen 2006). And, the Chicago blues music scene is heavily intertwined with for-profit bars, clubs, restaurants, and tourist organizations that systematically connect local musicians with non-local audiences (Grazian 2005). These different forms of organization facilitate different sorts of social networks and interactions. Some of these interactions are mediated by formal non-profit or for-profit organizations, which provide spaces, institutions, and resources for the field’s ongoing activities. Other interactions occur through informal friendship ties, where field participants must take more individual initiative to make music happen (see Chapter 3 of this volume). Some forms of organization may systematically bring together a wide range of people from across the field; others may focus on strengthening or maintaining existing social ties.

Some previous literature suggests that grassroots music scenes’ dependence on informal ties may disadvantage women (Bielby 2004, Cohen 2013). This hints at a potential social dynamic underlying the folk and metal scenes’ sharply divergent proportions of women in music careers—greater reliance on formal organizations in the folk scene, and on informal networks in the metal scene. Formal organizations provide official channels for producing and performing music that are open to anyone (e.g. folk
festivals with formal, stated application procedures, workshops and open stages that anyone can attend), while heavy metal’s reliance on male-dominated friendship networks means that shows are often produced among groups of friends, with minimal opportunity for newcomers (including women) to participate. In this paper, I extend previous literature to analyze how the presence or absence of formally organizations that host open learning spaces produces gendered consequences, and also consider other differences in patterns of interaction in both fields, including whether these interactions systematically bring together a diverse range of people, and whether these interactions foster new social ties.

4.2. Bourdieu, Field Structure, and Networks

Bourdieu (1993) conceptualizes a field of cultural production as a series of “positions” which are tied to each other and to the field’s resources by “objective relations” (Bourdieu 1993, 1996). For example, the position of ‘established musician’ suggests ties to important field actors (e.g. established booking agents, critics, publicists) and resources (e.g. audience attention, public arts funding, insider knowledge of upcoming opportunities). Importantly, in Bourdieu’s view positions and relations are not social ties between actual, identifiable people. Kirschbaum (2006) argues that Bourdieu implicitly treats direct interactions between field members as largely unimportant, as he views their “mutual monitoring” or arms-length awareness of what other field members were doing as sufficient for them to orient their action toward each other. For Bourdieu, positions and relations are abstract ties between categories of actors, such as hypothetical ‘marginal musicians’ and ‘established booking agents’ who are aware of and act toward each other, without necessarily interacting directly.
Bourdieu’s concept of “position” blends multiple ideas into one concept:

- a *functional role*, i.e. whether one is a musician, booking agent, critic, or other field actor
- a *location within a field’s “objective relations”*, i.e. whether one’s ties to other field actors render one central or marginal
- the *access to capital* afforded by one’s location

Notably, Bourdieu’s understanding of relations and capital are deeply intertwined (Elafros 2013a). Bourdieu distinguishes between ‘established’ and ‘marginal’ field participants based on the capital and resources they are afforded. A musician with the ‘right’ skills, dispositions and insider knowledge (cultural capital), social ties to important actors (social capital), and the ability to command attention and respect (symbolic capital) is, by definition, a ‘central’ or ‘established’ musician. However, others have argued that this view “mistake[s] effects for causes” (Bottero and Crossley 2011, p. 101) because Bourdieu infers field members’ social networks and relations (i.e. their centrality or marginality) based on the sorts of capital they have (Bottero and Crossley 2011, Kirschbaum 2006). This precludes the question of whether different structures of social networks and forms of interaction might produce different patterns of capital distribution.

My view of a field’s structure differs from Bourdieu in two key ways. First, I ask how different forms of interaction between people lead to different outcomes, rather than focusing on whether hypothetical “objective relations” render particular field positions central or marginal. Second, I ask how these social relations between actual people (i.e. not between abstract categories of positions) generate different patterns of access to cultural capital. I use this framework to analyze the gendered distribution of a particular
type of capital in the folk and metal fields: *performance capital*, which is a field-specific form of embodied cultural capital.

Other studies of networks and capital in cultural fields have focused on the structure of interactions within which capitals are exchanged. Scott (2012) argues that grassroots and DIY musicians develop “alternative capitals” such as social, symbolic and cultural capital by trading on their friendship networks. Musicians then exchange these alternative capitals for economic capital through interactions with gatekeepers such as booking agents. Hartmann (2012) makes a similar argument: she notes that grassroots musicians trade heavily on their friendship networks to draw audiences, and conceptualizes this as an exchange of musicians’ social capital for economic capital. Hartmann also notes that musicians must be careful not to exhaust their social capital. Foster, Borgatti, and Jones (2011) find that booking agents in two different positions develop different forms of networked search strategies; those who book primarily original bands search more widely within their networks and share information about acts more broadly, while those who book cover acts tend to book the same bands repeatedly, and are less attuned to sharing information. Original clubs are also more attuned to a particular form of cultural capital, originality, while cover clubs are more attuned to social capital, or how locally well known a band is and the size of audiences they can draw. In this paper, I build on this previous research on networks, interaction and capital; however, instead of analyzing the social interactions within which capitals are exchanged, I examine how different structures of social interaction provide different opportunities for field members to develop field-specific forms of cultural capital.

Bourdieu does not specifically address how gender fits into his understanding of
field structure and capital exchange. However, he does implicitly acknowledge that cultural capital might be distributed unevenly on the basis of a “secondary characteristic” like race or gender (Laberge 1995)—that is, men or women might systematically have greater access to some forms of capital. This is precisely what I argue: in the metal field, performance capital is distributed unevenly on the basis of gender (i.e. women have less access to it), while in the folk field its distribution is more gender-neutral. Because Bourdieu defines a field actor’s centrality or marginality based on the amount and kind of capital she possesses, these gender differences in performance capital would suggest that women are more likely to occupy marginal positions in metal, and central positions in folk.

Notably, Bourdieu’s concept of “position” can suggest whether women musicians are central or marginal within particular fields, but not whether women in those fields are likely to become musicians in the first place. By conflating a functional role, a series of relations, and a pattern of access to capital, Bourdieu’s definition of “position” renders it difficult to analyze the relationship between those elements—for example, he assumes that the same functional role within the same set of abstract relations will produce the same pattern of access to capital, rather than empirically investigating different possible relations between these elements. Here, I ask how patterns of access to capital (here, performance capital) affect one’s ability to occupy a functional role (here, the role of “musician”).

Furthermore, Bourdieu assumes that the individual who inhabits a position is relatively unimportant. His analysis foregrounds the structural characteristics of a position (i.e. the abstract ties associated with that position, its centrality or marginality,
and the access to capital it affords), which he assumes are unchanged by the personality, gender, ethnicity, or other characteristics of the individual in that position. Yet, scholarship on gender and social networks reveals that gender can impact how people are referred for jobs, which may have parallels with how people are referred for opportunities in cultural fields, a key mechanism through which cultural work is allocated (Caves 2000, Currid 2007). Overall, this literature finds that individuals often, but not always, make homophilous referrals of people who are similar to themselves—women are more likely to refer women, men to refer men, people to refer others of the same ethnicity, and so on (McPherson, Smith-Lovin and Cook 2001, Taber and Hendricks 2003). Analytically applying this literature to field theory suggests that the person inhabiting a position does, in fact, matter because this can affect with whom he develops ties, and what sorts of resources and information flow through those ties.

Notably, homophilous referrals for jobs do not determine the gender composition of those jobs. Demand-side factors are also important, such as hiring managers’ biases, and whether jobs are generally perceived as suitable for men or women (Fernandez and Sosa 2002, Rubineau and Fernandez 2015). Additionally, referrals may be more or less common in different occupations. Within the fields of music under study here, we therefore need to consider both (1) how heavily the fields rely on referrals into capital-building spaces, (2) whether men or women are making those referrals and (3) whether referrers are recommending men or women.

I build on all of this literature—Bourdieu’s conceptualization of networks and

\[\text{I do not focus on demand-side factors in this paper, because of my focus on how potential musicians build embodied cultural capital. Demand-side factors (e.g. booking agents’, record labels’, and audiences’ preferences) occur at a later point in the trajectory of a music career.}\]
capital exchange within fields, critiques and extensions of Bourdieu, and literature on gender and social networks—to ask how systematic differences in access to capital initially emerge within cultural fields. My analysis foregrounds the situated interactions that are facilitated by a field’s structure, and asks how those interactions inform the relationship between capital and access to creative careers.

4.3. Embodied Cultural Capital and Gender

To become successful musicians, aspiring performers must develop appropriate forms of cultural capital. Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital asserts that skills, knowledge, dispositions, worldviews, interactional styles, and other cultural competencies are exchangeable resources that can lead to money or work opportunities (economic capital), valuable social networks (social capital), and prestige (symbolic capital) (Bourdieu 1984). Bourdieu (1997) outlines three types of cultural capital. 

*Objectified* cultural capital refers to material goods like the clothing, art, home décor, music, and books through which individuals display their tastes. *Institutionalized* cultural capital refers to formal accreditations like education, awards, and certifications. 

*Embodied* cultural capital refers to skills, knowledge, behaviours, dispositions, and modes of interaction. Becoming a musician requires a particular form of embodied cultural capital⁴; musicians must develop technical competence on their instruments or in vocal performance (an embodied skill), fluency in genre conventions (a form of knowledge), and appropriate self-presentations on stage (a disposition or mode of

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⁴ Although this is not the focus of this paper, a music career arguably also requires other forms of cultural capital, such as instruments, equipment, and appropriate stage apparel, which are forms of objectified cultural capital (Scarborough 2012).
interaction). I call this form of embodied cultural capital *performance capital*. I view performance capital as a field-specific form of embodied cultural capital that exists in all fields of music (and perhaps other performative fields, such as dance or stand-up comedy), and is subtly adapted to each field; for example, the particular skills and dispositions that are valuable as performance capital likely differ in hip-hop and country music.

Bourdieu acknowledges that men and women can possess different amounts of cultural capital (Laberge 1995). For example, he argues that women—especially middle-class women—are primarily responsible for accumulating cultural capital by organizing the family’s cultural activities and outward displays of distinction through purchasing home décor, clothing, and other cultural goods (Bourdieu 2001:99-100). Bourdieu’s argument assumes that women are particularly invested in *objectified* cultural capital. However, Bourdieu says little about gender differences in *embodied* cultural capital. He also says little about how gender differences in capital access emerge in the first place, which I analyze in this paper.

4.4. Methods

*Data Collection.* This paper draws on data from participant-observation, semi-structured interviews, and discourse analysis of key texts in the Toronto folk and metal fields. I conducted participant-observation at events including concerts, festivals, open stages, song circles, and industry conferences. I attended 32 heavy metal events and 40 folk events, in sessions ranging from 1.5 to 8 hours and averaging 3.5 hours. I spent approximately 130 hours in the folk field and 100 hours in the metal field. When speaking with field members, I disclosed my status as a researcher at the earliest socially
appropriate opportunity. This was generally met with interest, enthusiasm, polite
inquiries, and unsolicited offers of assistance.

During participant-observation in the folk field, I witnessed capital-building
trajectories in progress, by attending open stages, song circles, jam sessions, and other
spaces centred on emerging performers. I also frequently asked *in situ* questions to elicit
theoretically relevant information in a conversational manner; for example, by asking
musicians questions like, ‘how did you get started playing music?’ or by talking with
audience members—many of whom were amateur or semi-professional musicians
themselves—about how they had started playing, the kinds of spaces in which they
played, and their aspirations for the future.

As a woman, I was not generally invited into private, networked spaces in the
metal field, such as band rehearsals in garages or basements, and so did not conduct
systematic fieldwork there. My knowledge of what happens in private learning spaces
comes from two sources. First, as my partner is a heavy metal drummer, I have attended
approximately 20 such rehearsals with 4 different bands over about 6 years. I did not take
field notes on these experiences or think of them as data at the time; they were of a
personal, social nature. Still, my recollections of key aspects of these experiences (e.g.
the fact that I was usually the only woman present or invited; the fact that these
invitations were extended infrequently, and to band members’ non-musician partners
rather than to women musicians from the local field) provided useful context that
informed my analysis of my more formal fieldwork and interview data. My second
source of knowledge about heavy metal’s private learning spaces is interviews. Many
interviewees described self-directed learning and experimentation, band rehearsals, and
other aspects of their learning trajectories.

I conducted 63 semi-structured interviews with men and women musicians, fans, support personnel, and critics, including 35 interviews in the metal field and 28 in the folk field. In this paper, I focus primarily on 31 interviews with musicians, including amateur and established performers: 7 men folk musicians, 9 women folk musicians, 8 men metal musicians, and 5 women metal musicians. I also draw insight from interviews with other field members when relevant. All names given in this paper are pseudonyms.

Interviews were conducted on a scheduled basis outside of fieldwork, with 38 conducted in public locations such as coffee shops, 13 conducted in respondents’ homes or workplaces and, 12 conducted over the phone. Interviews ranged from 45 minutes to 3 hours, with most lasting approximately 90 minutes. Interview questions focused on how participants entered the folk and metal fields and on the day-to-day workings of those fields, such as how musicians found other musicians with whom to jam and collaborate. These questions produced valuable information both about how musicians developed embodied cultural capital.

Analytic Strategy. I began analysis with topic-focused coding, where I first collected every instance where a performer discussed learning to play music, or developing the interpersonal skills involved in performing and becoming comfortable on stage. In a second round of coding, I coded for the different types of spaces in which this learning occurred (e.g. jam sessions, open stages, private homes, music lessons). After listing all the spaces in which musicians mentioned developing performance capital, I sought out systematic differences in the nature and organization of those learning spaces, and analytically related those types of spaces to the organization of each field by asking
how they were embedded within each field’s institutions (e.g. local folk clubs, folk festivals) and what kinds of social ties and interactions those learning spaces facilitated. This analytical strategy resulted in the conceptual distinctions outlined in the findings section, particularly in Tables 1 and 2.

The Toronto folk and metal scenes provide the ideal site to study gender differences in embodied cultural capital because they produce vastly different gendered outcomes: women are heavily underrepresented as metal musicians, but well represented as folk musicians. Based on publicly available count data and my fieldwork observations, which include a systematic count of the gender and ethnicity of performers, I estimate that less than 5% of active heavy metal musicians and approximately 40–45% of active folk musicians are women⁵. Performance capital in the heavy metal scene is therefore male-dominated; men significantly outnumber women as metal musicians, which indicates that more men than women routinely access and deploy performance capital. In the folk scene, performance capital is not systematically dominated by either men or women, as both men and women routinely develop and use this capital. Comparing these two fields can therefore highlight the differences that matter for women’s access to performance capital.

4.5. Findings

Performance capital is a situated form of embodied cultural capital that centers on

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⁵ I obtained count data in the folk field through published lists of attendees at two major folk industry conferences, which are central to the fields’ ongoing activity and provide a reasonable approximation of the population of folk musicians who are actively seeking work. I obtained count data in the metal field through an online, user-generated encyclopedia of metal bands: www.metal-archives.com. This encyclopedia is extensive, actively updated, and heavily moderated to ensure accuracy, similar to Wikipedia.
the embodied technical and interpersonal skills required to perform music. To be successful, musicians require general skill in playing, and sometimes reading, music. They must also be fluent in their genre’s performance conventions for peers and audiences to recognize their work as acceptable (Becker 1982). As Bourdieu describes, cultural capital is always situated in a specific field, where actors develop localized logics governing what skills, dispositions and practices are valuable (Bourdieu 1984, 1993). Becker (1982) would call these logics “conventions,” or shared assumptions about the way things are done. As Bourdieu might predict, folk and metal require different instrumental and interpersonal skills as forms of performance capital—that is, they have different conventions. Folkies value semi-improvised music and a friendly, welcoming stage demeanor, while metalheads value highly complex rehearsed music, and an aggressive stage persona.

4.5.1. Performance capital in the folk and metal scenes

In heavy metal, instrumental skill focuses on speed and accuracy, and metal guitarists regularly perform feats of virtuosity (Walser 1993). Building performance capital in heavy metal requires extensive practice of pre-arranged music, similar to classical music (Miller 2015). Jenna, a metal fan and critic in her early 20s, makes the comparison with classical music explicit:

The great composers, they pretty much used the same structure [as metal bands] and everything…if you really look at a [metal] riff, like how complex and fast it is, that’s the same thing as

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6 These instrumental and interpersonal skills are closely related to the dispositions described in Chapter 3, which are valued as part of the folkie habitus and metalhead habitus. There are, of course, close connections between habitus and embodied cultural capital; we might argue that developing an appropriate folkie or metalhead habitus allows one to enact the right form of embodied cultural capital.
Building performance capital in heavy metal thus means learning to arrange, rehearse and perform complex music. Kristen, a metal drummer in her mid-20s, describes working with a musician who lacked performance capital:

Our other guitar player was kind of, a metal fan but maybe less of a musician. So things were kind of getting hard. You know, we had to sit down with him and say, like ok, we’re going to learn triplets today, and we’re going to learn scales today, and like...educate him. And I think he realized ‘this is not what I want to do right now,’ so he left.

This guitarist’s lack of skill in arranging and rehearsing complex music—his lack of performance capital and unwillingness to develop it—was significant enough for him to leave the band.

Folk music is usually stylistically simpler than metal, and is not necessarily driven by virtuosity (although some individual folk musicians, of course, become extremely proficient instrumentalists). Unlike metal musicians, folk musicians “jam” or play spontaneously, which requires musicians capable of joining music-in-progress (Cohen 2006); for example, in a campfire-style singalong at a folk festival. Folk musicians even improvise during live performances. Many musicians generally know how a song should be played, but leave room for soloing and improvisation rather than arranging every note ahead of time. This less-choreographed playing style requires numerous skills: familiarity with standard chord progressions, the ability to improvise and anticipate chord changes, and non-verbal communication with other performers during ongoing music (Becker 2000). Ella, a folk musician and bandleader, describes these skills:

I have a rotating cast of musicians…and [onstage communication] is so important. Communication, eye contact …I’m sure it’s
visible to people who are looking for it. And I do sometimes look for it [at other musicians’ shows], just to see if I can see it going on.

As Ella describes, reading and responding to subtle signals on stage—eye contact that signals someone’s turn to play a solo, a nodded head to indicate an upcoming key change—is an important part of performance capital in the folk scene.

Both folk and metal musicians also require interpersonal skills to hold a crowd’s attention, and fluency in conventional forms of self-presentation on stage. In folk music, interpersonal skill on stage normally requires a friendly, funny demeanour.

[John] thanks everyone for coming out to the show. He pauses, looks out at the audience as if he's seeing them for the first time, and says in tone of a voice that suggests wonder or astonishment: “you’re all here. [pause] I feel like I threw a party in my back yard, and I don’t have enough potato salad.” The crowd laughs. “So now I’ve got to whip up some potato salad. I’m going to try to do that.” (field notes, 24 January 2011)

John has cultivated a personable stage demeanour centred on an affable humility.

Other folk musicians engage audiences by learning to tell personal stories on stage; they might introduce a song by telling the audience about the people and places that it references, or describe what was happening in their lives when they wrote it. Storytelling and oral history is a well-established folk convention (Cohen 2006, Miller 2015), and building performance capital in folk music often means learning to tell ‘the story behind the song’.

Heavy metal requires different forms of self-presentation on stage. Heavy metal performers generally project an angry, intense, or tough persona, or they try to create a performance centered on drinking, partying, and fun.

Toward the end of the set, [the lead singer] leads the crowd in a call-and response chant. He yells “Fuck!” and the crowd yells
“Fuck!” back in response. He then repeats this with a few other words, each followed by a pause so that the crowd can repeat the word back to him. He yells “Shit! [pause/echo] Puke! Piss! Beer! Beer! More Beer!” When he yells “Beer!” for the first time, the crowd starts to laugh a bit as they repeat the word back to him; they laugh a bit louder the second time he yells “beer!” and when he yells “More beer!” the crowd laughs loudly and erupts into cheers, and the call-and-response ends…The lead singer of the next band… gives the audience multiple commands, such as “move the fuck up!” or “I want to see everybody here crushing each other in the pit.” (field notes, 24 May 2012)

Heavy metal’s stage performances clearly require interpersonal skill, albeit a different form than required in folk. Musicians must be able to engage and command a crowd, and to create a lighthearted, party-oriented atmosphere. Notably, an appropriate stage presence in heavy metal draws on stereotypically masculine forms of self-presentation, such as aggression, domination, and heterosexual prowess. This aspect of performance capital is thus symbolically gendered (i.e. masculinized).

Overall, performance capital in folk music centres on semi-improvisational playing, and a warm, engaging, friendly stage presence. Performance capital in heavy metal centers on learning to arrange and play technically complex music, and on creating an aggressive stage presence. These different forms of performance capital have differently gendered symbolic associations, which may shape the proportion of men and women who are interested in becoming musicians in each genre. However, these gendered symbolic associations cannot fully explain different rates of men’s and women’s participation as musicians. Other masculinized music genres have higher proportions of women musicians, such as punk music (Leblanc 1999). We must therefore consider other factors too, such as the organization of learning spaces in each field, and the opportunities for interaction and capital-building that each affords.
4.5.2. How do musicians develop performance capital?

The two dimensions of performance capital that I highlight—technical, instrumental skill and interpersonal skill on stage—are learned through slightly different methods. Aspiring musicians learn technical skill in many settings, including formal instruction (e.g. a workshop at a folk festival, private music lessons), self-teaching (e.g. with an instructional book or video), or through conversation with other players about their techniques. Instrumental skill also requires dedicated practice; regardless of how they learn playing techniques, musicians must rehearse until they have mastered them. Instrumental skill is also learned fairly consciously; aspiring musicians deliberately practice playing techniques.

Interpersonal skill, however, is likely learned on a less conscious level. Much like middle-class children unwittingly acquire middle-class cultural capital at home (Bourdieu 1984), aspiring musicians observe more experienced musicians to learn conventional forms of stage demeanour, and subtly adapt their own behaviour without necessarily intending to do so (Becker 1982). While it is difficult to learn a new playing technique without conscious reflection, interpersonal skills are easily learned unwittingly.

Although musicians may learn interpersonal and instrumental skills through different processes, both types of learning largely occur within the same types of spaces. When a budding musician attends a folk festival workshop, or practices with his friends, he learns both playing techniques and acceptable forms of self-presentation.

The types of spaces where musicians develop performance capital have systematic differences in folk and metal. In folk, many learning spaces are hosted by non-profit cultural organizations such as folk clubs. These spaces are public and do not
require networks for access. The relatively open-access nature of these spaces systematically brings together diverse groups of musicians (e.g. of different ages, levels of experience, and genres), and helps performers build new social networks. In metal, most learning spaces are private, and require pre-existing social networks for access; because these learning spaces are largely restricted to people who already know each other, they do not systematically help potential performers build new networks. These are the key differences on which I elaborate in the remainder of this paper.

4.5.3. Pathways to Folk Performance

The folk field contains multiple public or semi-public learning spaces that do not require social networks for access, and which allow emerging performers to develop performance capital. Many of these spaces are hosted by non-profit cultural organizations, like open stages and jam sessions hosted at non-profit folk clubs, and are accessible to newcomers. These occur in public spaces that anyone (or, sometimes, anyone of legal drinking age) can enter, such as bars, church basements, or local folk clubs. Some spaces, such as folk conferences and festivals, are technically private; but, they are still accessible to anyone who pays admission. In other words, access to these spaces is not network-dependent as it does not depend on pre-existing social networks for information or a referral. Anyone who sees an advertisement for a folk festival, open stage, or jam session can attend.

Many of these public, non-network-dependent spaces also help emerging musicians develop social networks, which facilitate future access to network-based learning spaces. Aspiring folk musicians commonly begin attending the most easily accessible learning spaces, such as open stages and workshops at local folk clubs, where
they meet new people and develop social ties. Through sustained participation in these spaces, many folk musicians eventually receive invitations to network-based learning spaces, such as a jam session in someone’s home.

Almost all folk musicians participate in public, non-network-dependent learning spaces early in their careers. 14 of 16 folk musicians that I interviewed, and many more that I encountered in the field, mentioned playing at open stages or jam sessions. Deb explains that “we’ve been to many [open stages] over the years, and it’s a way for an artist, to sign up and play like, 2 or 3 songs, and try new things. Um, or just to get your chops up.”

Folk music’s key learning spaces are also low-stakes environments where developing musicians can feel comfortable learning and experimenting, and thus build their confidence as performers. Mistakes made at an open stage or song circle, such as missing a few notes or stage banter that falls flat, are collectively excused as part of musicians’ learning process. Audiences understand and expect that the quality of performances will vary. Margaret, who runs a well-established open stage at a local bar, explains that “everybody needs to start somewhere.” Accordingly, open stage hosts are reluctant to exclude anyone. I asked Margaret whether she would prevent a subpar musician from performing. She responded, “If somebody is really bad? No, not usually.” This open, inclusive attitude is echoed at an open stage at a festival:

Ellen [the performer] sings the lead part of the song (a folk standard), never figuring out what key it’s in. Her voice is breathy and shaky...Another woman, who has just performed, joins in

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The only exceptions were one musician who self-identifies as a folk-pop crossover artist, and one musician who rearranges traditional folk music for an *a cappella* quartet. Both of these musicians’ career trajectories were atypical in ways besides their lack of participation in jam sessions and open stages.
during the chorus, singing the correct notes. She sings the melody line loudly and deliberately, as if she’s trying to help Ellen get back in to the correct key. It doesn’t work, and Ellen continues singing the wrong notes for the rest of the song…the audience applauds politely afterward; no one gives any visible indication that they disliked her performance (Field notes, Aug. 26th 2012).

In this example, Ellen encounters a supportive environment where she receives polite feedback on her performance, i.e. the subtle correction to her off-key singing. Interestingly, this feedback is couched in social niceties. In folk music, the singalong chorus is an established convention (Brooks 2013; Cohen 2006); when musicians perform well-known songs from the folk repertoire, audiences often add harmonies on the chorus, even without being invited to do so. This incident is a clear instance of gentle correction, particularly because the second woman continued to sing despite being the only audience member to do so, and sang the main melody line rather than adding harmonies. The older and more experienced folksinger offered the struggling performer feedback and assistance on her technical skills (i.e. her singing technique), and simultaneously modeled appropriate stage demeanour (i.e. maintaining a friendly, pleasant attitude rather than an aggressive one—which would be perfectly normal in the metal field).

Jam sessions and song circles also provide a supportive learning environment. In these spaces, each person takes a turn “calling” a song (i.e. choosing a song to play and sing together, often a folk standard) and leading the song by singing the melody while everyone else sings along on the chorus. As with open stages, behavioural norms in jam sessions and song circles emphasize inclusion and acceptance. Sophie, a regular participant at a weekly song circle in Toronto, says that “the range is so huge. I mean, some people are amazing. And they sit through some people like me who are totally off
key, and who can’t even harmonize...yet everybody goes around and does their thing.”

Janice’s experience illustrates how song circles can help amateur folk musicians transition from amateur to more professionalized performance. Janice became a folksinger after discovering song circles following a divorce in mid-life. She says, “I’ve been a singer, my whole lifetime. I’ve been in every choir within 20 miles of me.” Yet, despite her vocal talent and love of singing, she did not consider herself a potential singer-songwriter until a transformative experience at her first song circle left her “hooked...just, 5 minutes in the room, it was like, I don’t want to do anything else.”

Motivated by the desire to participate more fully in song circles, Janice soon developed a new skill: she learned to play the guitar.

I got involved in the song circle community, and I thought, well it’s not enough to sing. If you want to lead the song, you’ve got to have an instrument. So then, I guess this was about 10 years ago, I took a guitar. And there were people in this community who are teachers. So I learned some guitar, and then I took some lessons on banjo and mandolin.

Although she maintains a full-time job outside of music, Janice has developed a stable, local-level folk career. She performs regularly at local folk clubs and house concerts in private home. She has also written and recorded an album, with friends from her song circle providing backup instrumentation, production, and graphic design—a very common way for DIY musicians to mobilize capital (Scott 2012). Notably, the friends that Janice identified were both men and women, because the spaces where she developed those friendships were fairly gender-balanced.

Janice’s experience also highlights how learning spaces can help aspiring musicians develop self-confidence, which is crucial to the interpersonal aspect of performance capital. As she developed her instrumental skills, Janice also developed
interpersonal skills: the confidence to view herself as a singer-songwriter, and to present herself as such to an audience of peers at her song circle. Confidence, of course, is systematically gendered. Men rate their own abilities more highly than women on average, and are less systematically penalized for self-assuredness (Eagly et al. 1992, Ridgeway 2011, Rudman and Glick 2001). And, women musicians are on average less confident in their abilities than men (Giffort 2011, Wehr-Flowers 2006), suggesting that confidence-building in folk’s public learning spaces addresses a real underlying problem for many women musicians.

The folk field’s varied and relatively accessible learning spaces make opportunities for learning and mentorship systematically available to all emerging musicians, regardless of gender. Song circles, open stages, and campfire-style jam sessions at folk festivals facilitate direct interaction between musicians of all levels of experience and ability. They allow less experienced musicians to develop performance capital by observing, imitating, and learning from more experienced musicians. These spaces also provide a forum for aspiring musicians to develop new social networks that facilitate access to private or network-based learning spaces, such as jam sessions in private homes. Folk’s key learning spaces also help women develop confidence in their performance abilities. The structure of learning spaces in the folk scene thus provides both men and women with access to the spaces, interactions, and social networks that help emerging musicians learn instrumental and interpersonal skills.

4.5.4 Pathways to Metal Performance

Learning spaces in heavy metal are largely private, and are much more dependent on social networks for access than learning spaces in folk. Metal festivals do not include
open stages or skill-building workshops, and there are no local ‘metal clubs’ analogous to local folk clubs that might host open stages or jam sessions. There are no public song circles or open jam sessions for metalheads in Toronto, as the stylistic conventions of heavy metal are focused on rehearsed, complex arrangements unsuited to unrehearsed playing (Miller 2015). How, then, do people learn to play heavy metal?

Metalheads typically develop performance capital through self-directed learning and experimentation. Much of this learning occurs in private spaces. Potential performers, usually teenage boys, listen to metal in their bedrooms and gradually teach themselves to play along to recorded music, sometimes using instructional books or online video tutorials. Dwayne, a metal musician, describes this process as “just messing around, figuring it out. Eventually you get good at it [playing].” Potential performers then jam informally with friends in garages and basements. Notice that this requires pre-existing social networks, as aspiring musicians generally play with friends rather than strangers. Additionally, playing with friends does not help aspiring musicians build new social networks; unlike folk musicians who meet new people at local folk clubs, metal musicians do not routinely meet new people while rehearsing in their friends’ garages.

Ethan’s learning trajectory illustrates a typical learning process in metal:

I didn’t really know anyone that played guitar that I could jam with until I moved...then one of my friends that I met there introduced me to...another friend who played guitar too...we started jamming and hanging out, playing guitar, listening to the same music, and eventually you just end up playing guitar together...You play covers, then you have fun doing that, and then at one point you decide maybe I can write my own songs. Or you just fiddle around by yourself and then, finally have enough confidence to show it to somebody.

The reliance on private learning spaces creates gender differences in access to
performance capital. First, notice that aspiring musicians require extensive self-confidence to “mess around” and “figure it out” in the absence of supportive learning environments. The fact that self-directed experimentation is the main method through which metalheads learn to play therefore privileges men, who generally have higher confidence and risk tolerance in their creative endeavours (Giffort 2011, Wehr-Flowers 2006). Also notice that whether aspiring musicians are invited into these private learning spaces depends heavily on social networks formed in male-dominated and alcohol-fueled settings, particularly the dimly lit bars, clubs, and warehouses in which metal shows are held. Consider how Paul, a metal musician, met his bandmates:

I went, there was this really underground show…I met these 2 guys there and I talked to them. But I didn’t really know anybody. Then there was this other show a couple of weeks later, I met this guy Mike who put on that show and I said hi and I started talking to him and shit. And then we went and hung out a couple times…and, so I went up there to party with him and he was friends with [current bandmates]. So all those guys were there partying and that’s where I met them. And then I used to hang out with them at their jams … basically, I went to shows and I met my buddy and all these other guys. Yeah, so I met them through that guy through this show. It’s funny to look in retrospect, like how this shit happened. And now I’m playing a band with them.

Notice that everyone Paul talks about connecting with is a “guy.” This is normal for local music scenes centred in bars and nightlife (Grazian 2005), such as the metal scene. Cohen (2013), for example, argues that bars and after-hours drinking places are socially coded male, and social ties developed there revolve around men’s friendship networks. Paul was invited into learning spaces, such as a rented jam room, because he was integrated into male-dominated social networks. The importance of networks in the metal scene, combined with the fact that men dominate this scene, advantage men in getting access to learning spaces. Contrast this with the folk scene, where anyone has
direct access to learning spaces such as jam sessions held at local folk clubs.

Some women successfully build networks in the metal scene, and receive invitations into private learning spaces. Kristen’s experience, however, is more common:

None of my friends were into [metal]. I was a loner in that sense I guess. …looking online for Toronto bands, I found this band and they said they were looking for a drummer. And they had some demos up on Myspace, which was still big then….I was like, holy crap, I have to try out, I don’t care if I get rejected…So I called up the singer…he was really polite on the phone, and he was like, ok, yeah, sure, if you want to come down we can jam. So I went down, and of course he was really polite obviously, because I was a chick. If I was a guy, he probably would have like punched me on the arm or whatever….so we started practicing…halfway through the first, like, minute and a half, he started laughing. And I stopped. And he said, “what are you doing, keep playing!” And I was like, ok, it’s a good laugh. So it was kind of like, he can’t believe that it was happening, almost.

Notice the difference between Paul’s and Kristen’s experiences. Paul almost fell into a music career unintentionally; an opportunity to play in a band emerged organically out of his friendship networks. But, Kristen had to seek out her band by responding to a public posting for a drummer, and overcome the guitarist’s initial skepticism about her abilities. Notably, many opportunities to play with metal bands are never posted publicly. Metal bands often fill openings from their own social networks and post opportunities only when their networks fail, such as when Paul’s friends invited him to join their band rather than advertising for a musician. In contrast, Kristen initially lacked social networks in the metal scene, and the metal scene provides no public learning spaces where she could develop them; she was thus at a significant disadvantage. Her success in finding and responding to a public “drummer wanted” listing was quite fortunate. 100% (8 of 8) male metal musicians initially found their bands through networks, while only 60% (3 of 5) women musicians found their bands through networks. Furthermore, 2 of those
women’s networks included a boyfriend or a brother, in addition to friends. These are closer ties than men normally use to find bands.

Summer’s experience illustrates what happens when women metal musicians lack systematic opportunities to build performance capital, confidence, and social networks. Summer, a metal fan in her early 20s, began on the path of informal, self-directed learning that Ethan described; her music education “was pretty much self-taught. I’d just look up tabs on the internet and learn how to play them”. Unlike Ethan, Summer did not continue on her instrument:

I played a lot in high school and I just, I don’t know why, maybe I was, I started working a lot. I didn’t have enough time. I started going to school and I just kind of gave up….I wish that I kept my chops up because I would absolutely fucking love to be in a band. I was in a small band in high school, like my brother, some friends of ours. We played the talent show...I get really, really gun shy. I can’t play in front of people anymore because I’m really self-conscious…Maybe I’ll pick it back up.

Summer displays a fascinating, contradictory attitude toward metal performance. She clearly loves metal, and wants to play it. She also has enough instrumental skill that she could, at one point, perform publicly with a band. Yet, she “gave up” for reasons she cannot fully articulate. This seems largely related to gendered issues of self-confidence; without receiving systematic support and feedback, she was not confident enough to continue developing her skills. There were no open stages, public jam sessions, or skill-building workshops in the metal scene where she could meet and learn from more experienced musicians, which would have allowed her to develop her interpersonal skills and become comfortable on stage. These are precisely the problems addressed by learning spaces in the folk field. Interestingly, although Summer and her brother had similar networks, Summer’s brother continued to play in metal bands while Summer did
not. Echoing literature on gender and social networks (Fernandez and Sosa 2005), this suggests that gendered networks may intersect with demand-side factors such as beliefs about who ‘belongs’ in the field, or in a particular role.

The contrast between Janice’s and Summer’s trajectories is also instructive. Janice had no strong desire to be a folksinger when she began attending song circles. Yet, as she was supported in developing instrumental and interpersonal skills, she cultivated the desire for a music career. In contrast, Summer initially had the desire for a music career, but lacked avenues to develop performance capital, confidence, and networks; accordingly, her motivation waned. This suggests that individual motivation to pursue a music career is insufficient, if one is not situated in a local field of music with systematically available learning spaces.

Women metal performers who stayed on a musical career path generally found or created their own supportive learning spaces. Rebecca, a metal vocalist in her early 20s, found such a space with her boyfriend (who was a guitarist in her band) and their close friends:

It was when I was 17 years old, and my friends said, let’s play music...That was when I started to discover my voice. The funny thing is, though, I would stand in the corner, my face facing the corner, like ‘don’t look at me, don’t look at me,’ because I’m really shy. I hadn’t quite come out of my shell yet. But that’s how it all started. It was fun...Of course I sucked at first. But I still, there was something there, and I guess the people who pushed me knew that and supported it...And so I kept working on it.

The support and feedback that Rebecca received in the early, fragile stages of her learning process seem essential to her ability to develop performance capital. Her friends helped her develop both vocal techniques (e.g. screaming and growling) and interpersonal skills (e.g. stage banter, feeling confident enough to stop hiding in the
Notably, Rebecca’s self-created learning space was fairly ad hoc and unsystematic. Men who want to play metal generally invite other men to jam with them, not women. Without friends to validate and encourage her vocal abilities, Rebecca may well have ended up like Summer: abandoning a music career that she loved, for reasons she could not fully articulate. The private learning spaces in which she developed performance capital are not systematically available to potential women performers. They depend heavily on individual women’s friendship and kinship ties. The folk scene makes low-stakes, supportive learning opportunities systematically and widely available, but in the metal scene such learning opportunities and nurturing spaces are available primarily to women who find or create such spaces for themselves.

4.6. Discussion and Conclusion

In this paper, I have compared two music scenes where musicians interact in differently organized learning spaces to build performance capital, a field-specific form of embodied cultural capital. These two spaces encourage different structures of interaction between aspiring musicians. The folk field’s learning spaces are public and do not require an invitation or referral from pre-existing social networks. These spaces facilitate gender-equal access to performance capital because all aspiring musicians have direct access to the spaces where performers develop interpersonal and instrumental skills. These learning spaces also systematically bring together new people, helping aspiring musicians develop social networks and gain access to private, network-dependent learning spaces, such as jam sessions in private homes.

Metal musicians generally develop performance capital in private, network-dependent learning spaces such as garages, basements, and rented practice rooms. Access
to these private learning spaces requires an invitation. For metal musicians, acquiring performance capital thus depends on male-dominated social networks developed in bars, clubs, and other after-hours drinking places. The gender-dominated nature of social networks in the metal field, combined with the reliance on social networks to develop performance capital, creates difficulties for aspiring women musicians. Women are not usually invited into the spaces where metal musicians interact, play together, and build performance capital.

Based on the data presented in this paper, it is not entirely clear which differences in these learning spaces matter most. Are women excluded from garages, basements, and rented practice rooms because those spaces are male-dominated or because they are private? Conceptually, the gender balance of a space and its reliance on referrals for access are separate issues that suggests separate mechanisms of exclusion; however, in the case of heavy metal they are difficult to empirically disentangle. Similarly, are women welcomed into folk’s jam sessions, workshops, and song circles because those spaces are public, or because there are already plenty of women there?

This analysis provides some clues regarding whether the public/private or gender-dominated nature of a space is more important; specifically, we see an example of private but gender-balanced spaces in the folk field, where song circles and jam sessions held in private homes do not systematically exclude women. This suggests that private spaces do not inherently exclude women, but that the gender dynamics discussed in the metal scene may arise specifically when spaces are both private and male-dominated. Furthermore, the mechanisms by which gender-imbalanced spaces are reproduced are likely different in private male-dominated and private female-dominated spaces. When a space is male-
dominated, men often exclude women; this occurs in both workplaces (Creese 1998, Rose 1993), and music industries (Leblanc 1999, Leonard 2007). However, occupations and social spaces often become female-dominated not because women exclude men, but because men avoid those spaces. Men often construct their masculinity through rejection of anything feminine (Kimmel 1994, Pascoe 2011), and so may actively avoid female-dominated or feminine-coded spaces such as knitting clubs, choirs, or other leisure spaces associated with women.

Still, future research could make systematic comparisons with other scenes to further disentangle these issues, which are deeply intertwined in the folk and metal scenes. For example, we might analyze private learning spaces where both men and women are systematically present (e.g. rehearsals in garages and basements, in genres like indie and alternative rock with higher proportions of women), and with public, male-dominated learning spaces (e.g. streetcorner rap battles) to better understand how those spaces facilitate gendered or de-gendered access to embodied cultural capital.

Despite this limitation, this paper makes important contributions to cultural sociology. First, I show how the structure of cultural fields can produce gendered access to creative careers. By contrasting a case where women are extremely underrepresented as cultural producers with an unusually gender-egalitarian case, I identify a set of social relations that fosters gender equality: relatively open learning spaces, which allow both men and women direct access to many of the spaces where people developed embodied cultural capital, compared to male dominated and network-dependent spaces that exclude women from the capital-building necessary for a music career. This paper thus moves beyond other literature that explains women’s underrepresentation as musicians via
individual-level factors such as discrimination and others’ skepticism of women’s abilities (e.g. Leonard 2007, Sargent 2009), and argues that the organization of a cultural field can either provide or close off opportunities for women to embark on creative careers.

Applying this framework to other fields—that is, asking whether there are gender differences in how potential cultural producers accumulate capital—can help us identify specific junctures at which women’s artistic careers are derailed. Other literature already hints at the importance of access (or lack of access) to learning spaces. For example, Parker and Pollock (2013) argue that women were underrepresented among Renaissance artists because teaching occurred through private instruction and mentoring from which women were largely excluded. In the terminology used here, Renaissance art was taught in private, male-dominated learnings spaces, more comparable to heavy metal’s garages and basements than folk music’s open stages.

Other fields might also have learning spaces and gendered patterns of capital-building other than those described here. This paper has focused on informal learning; but, many forms of art, literature, and music are learned through formal instruction. How might the presence of educational programs in classical music, creative writing, and fine arts change the dynamics of capital-building? Such programs might facilitate gender-equal access to learning and capital building opportunities, due formal admissions policies designed to ensure fairness in admittance to these programs. In that case, gender differences in access to creative careers might be created later in artists’ career trajectories, such as when they graduate and enter the field, and must convert their formal instruction into situated, embodied cultural capital—for example, the right tastes and
dispositions, insider knowledge about how the field works, and other forms of cultural capital not taught in school. This paper has focused on gender differences in how cultural producers develop capital, but the question of whether there are gender differences in how they exchange capital is also worthy of study.

This paper also contributes to cultural sociology by enriching our understanding of how cultural capital functions within cultural fields. I build on literature on capital exchange within cultural fields (Hartman 2012, Scott 2012), and show that the organization of a cultural field also affects capital development. I show that the presence or absence of formal, non-profit cultural organizations makes available different kinds of spaces for capital development. Formal organizations like non-profit folk clubs and folk festival foundations host open-access spaces like open stages and workshops, while the lack of organizations to host these events pushes learning and capital-building into private spaces. My findings thus show that embodied cultural capital is developed within specific learning spaces, and that the nature of those learning spaces shapes the distribution of the capital developed therein.

Finally, my argument enriches our understanding of interaction within Bourdieu’s field theory by shifting the focus from abstract relationships to direct interaction between individuals. My findings demonstrate the need to study how opportunities for situated social interaction are afforded by differently organized spaces within these fields. By foregrounding interactions between people rather than abstract relations between positions—that is, by looking at how folk musicians routinely interact with many other musicians of both sexes, and how metal musicians interact primarily with small groups of friends of the same sex—we arrive at a clearer understanding of how the distribution of
performance capital emerges in these two fields.

I also highlight the importance of nuancing our understanding of interactions and social ties within cultural fields; rather than assuming *a priori* that cultural fields depend heavily on social ties for access to information and resources (Caves 2000, Currid 2007), my findings show that we should be attentive to the fact that some spaces that are more or less network-dependent, and that some spaces prioritize different kinds of networks. In the same way that gatekeepers use different forms of networks to seek original vs. cover bands (Borgatti, Foster and Jones 2011), I find that folk and metal musicians use different forms of networks to learn and transmit cultural capital—and the openness or closedness of those networks can advantage or disadvantage potential women musicians. Focusing on networks and interaction within cultural fields raises a host of interesting questions for future research to answer. When are referrals more or less important for access to resources? How are gendered patterns of referral within cultural fields similar to or different from gendered patterns of referral within workplaces (see Rubineau and Fernandez, 2015)? What consequences do gendered patterns of referral create? Comparing the answers to these questions across different fields will allow us to build general principles about how gendered networks operate within cultural fields.

Overall, Bourdieu’s concepts of field structure and position are well suited to answering some questions—for example, how resources, information, and opportunities flow through cultural producers’ ties to each other, and how field participants become central or marginal. However, we must move beyond Bourdieu’s field theory to adequately explain other issues, particularly those that require an understanding of interaction between actual people, rather than a formal structure of ties between positions.
Focusing on interaction rather than structure allows us to more clearly explain how gender inequalities emerge in the distribution of embodied cultural capital, and how different forms of interaction can either facilitate or hinder women’s access to artistic careers.
Chapter 5

Conclusion

In this dissertation, I have used a comparative case study of the Toronto folk and metal scenes to analyze how gender relations are embedded in two local fields of music. In asking how gender organizes these two fields, I show how Bourdieu’s (1993) field theory can be adapted to analyze gender relations among creative producers.

In Chapter 2, I show how gender organizes evaluations of aesthetic quality. I expand on findings that women are more susceptible to negative evaluations than men, particularly when evaluations are less standardized (Eagly et al. 1992, Nieva and Gutek 1980, Ridgeway 2011, Steinberg 1990). I show that similar dynamics organize collective judgments about artistic quality. I also draw on scholarship showing that organizations and institutions can have gendered qualities or require gendered practices (Acker 1990, Britton 2000) to highlight two organizational features—the extent to which a field’s symbolic capital is institutionalized, and the strength of a field’s symbolic boundaries—that can exacerbate or reduce gender bias in aesthetic evaluation.

In Chapter 3, I demonstrate that a field’s typical ways of “doing gender” (West and Zimmerman 1987) are integrated into the specific habitus fostered by a field. Furthermore, the ways of doing gender that the folkie habitus or metalhead habitus prioritize are crucial to reproducing the organizational structure of a field. Bourdieu argues that fields produce participants with “the dispositions needed to make them work” (Bourdieu 1990: 67); he posits a “fit” between field and habitus. My analysis of the folk
and metal fields supports this assertion; however, I also show that this sense of “fit” is
gendered in the sense that a field’s specific habitus contain prescriptions about
appropriate ways to do masculinity and femininity. Those gendered dispositions both
draw people with an amenable original habitus into the field, and render a field’s
organizations and characteristics modes of operation (volunteerism in the folk field, and
entrepreneurship in the metal field) sustainable.

Finally, in Chapter 4 I argue that differently organized learning spaces in the folk
and metal scenes underlie differently gendered learning opportunities and capital-
accumulating trajectories. Musicians developed embodied cultural capital in differently
organized spaces in the folk and metal fields. When those spaces are relatively accessible
to any field member—that is, when they occur in public spaces, and do not require social
networks for access—women have direct access to learning and capital building spaces,
which provides greater opportunities to embark on music careers. When learning spaces
are relatively closed off—for example, learning occurs in private spaces and requires an
invitation, or integration into male-dominated social networks—women can easily be
excluded from capital-building opportunities, which reduces their ability to build a music
career.

5.1. Lessons for field theory

Taken together, the three papers that comprise this dissertation show how scholars
might integrate gender analysis into Bourdieu’s (1993) field theory. I show that gender
analysis enriches all three of Bourdieu’s main concepts: field, capital, and habitus.

Field. My findings show that field structure can create gendered opportunities and
constraints. For example, the organization of social ties and opportunities for interaction within a cultural field has gendered implications. Chapters 2 and 3 suggest that formal organizations in the folk field reduce the salience of gender as an organizing principle of the field’s ongoing activity. While some feminist scholars argue that bureaucracy is inherently problematic for women because it is based on the male experience of rationality and distance from the social-reproductive sphere (Acker 1990, Savage and Witz 1993), others argue that formal organizations can reduce gender inequality by providing institutional resources such as formal hiring criteria and non-discrimination policies that enable workers to identify and challenge gender bias (Britton 2000, Britton and Logan 2008). My findings support the latter position; in the folk and metal scenes, formal organizations and policies generally benefit women. In formally organized spaces in the folk scene (e.g. festival’s hiring committees, award selection committees) collective evaluations of aesthetic quality and the organization of work are only weakly organized by gender. In contrast, informal social ties between men reproduce gender inequality; metalheads’ informal friendship networks privilege gender-biased aesthetic evaluations, and modes of cultural production like individual entrepreneurship that draw on symbolically masculine practices. Chapter 4 suggests that a field structure with formal organizations that systematically provide opportunities for emerging artists to interact with experienced artists increases women’s ability to develop embodied cultural capital, while a field structure that prioritizes interactions within existing social networks—when those networks are male-dominated, as they are in the metal field—diminishes women’s ability to access embodied cultural capital, and embark on creative careers.

To what extent are my findings about formal vs. informal organization
generalizable beyond these two specific fields? Presently, it remains unclear. Some fields of cultural production are organized through formal organizations, but are still heavily male-dominated. For example, fields of blues and jazz music (Grazian 2005, Lopes 2000) contain formal, non-profit organizations like festivals, historical and preservationist associations, and volunteer-run appreciation societies; yet, women make up a much smaller proportion of jazz and blues musicians than folk musicians. This suggests that the next logical question is about not simply the presence or absence of formal organizations, but what kind of formal organizations exist in a field—how they view their mandate, what they do, and the kinds of opportunities that these organizations afford women or other underrepresented groups.

This dissertation also contributes to field theory by clarifying the consequences of different patterns of social interaction within fields of cultural production. Bourdieu has been criticized for ignoring situated interaction between actual field members, and instead equating field structure with an abstract, rigid system of positions (Bottero and Crossley 2011). But, we arrive at a richer understanding of both field structure and gender relations within a field by foregrounding how individuals actually interact with each other. Chapter 3 focuses on how field members interact with each other on a day-to-day basis, and finds that the gendered habitus formed through those interactions supports the organizational structure of each field. Chapter 4 shows that differently structured spaces and institutions within each field provide opportunities for different kinds of interaction—among a wide range of field participants in some cases, and among existing friendships networks in others. In both of these chapters, I view the organization of a field not as an abstract network of roles and positions but rather a constellation of actual
people who do entrepreneurial labour, volunteer for cultural organizations, practice music at home with friends, and go to open jam sessions. This richer view of social ties opens up questions that are difficult to ask in Bourdieu’s original field theory. Bourdieu’s view of a field as a system of “positions” connected by abstract “relations” (Bourdieu 1993) foregrounds questions about how particular relations afford access to capital, and therefore render a position central or marginal within the field. But, by looking at dynamic interactions rather than static relations, we can ask new and valuable questions—for example, we can focus on the actual, interactive processes through which field members learn to “do gender” (West and Zimmerman 1987) appropriately for the field and form an appropriate specific habitus, and through which they learn from each other to develop embodied cultural capital.

*Capital.* In Chapter 2, I show that the structure of cultural fields creates differently gendered distributions of symbolic and cultural capital. Folkies are far more willing than metalheads to recognize women musicians’ talents and achievements; that is, to attribute symbolic capital to them. These differently gendered economies of symbolic capital can be traced back to structural differences in the folk and metal fields: less rigid symbolic boundaries and more formal organizations (which provide institutionalized forms of symbolic capital) in folk, and more emphasis on symbolic boundaries and virtually no formal organizations (and therefore no opportunity for institutionalized symbolic capital) in heavy metal. This analysis connects Britton’s (2000) work on how formal organizational structures can reduce gender inequality to cultural literature on symbolic capital and aesthetic evaluation. This analysis also expands on findings that perception and evaluation are structured by gender (Eagly et al. 1992, Ridgeway 2011,
Rudman and Glick 2001), and connects this insight to a key cultural concept—symbolic capital—that facilitates comparisons between different cultural fields, and between cultural fields and occupational fields.

In Chapter 4, I identify gender differences in access to performance capital, a field-specific form of embodied cultural capital. Importantly, this chapter goes beyond simply documenting that embodied cultural capital is gender-dominated in some fields and less gender-dominated in others, but also points to mechanisms underlying these different, field-specific patterns of capital distribution. Specifically, I suggest that spaces that are accessible to a broad range of participants and that systematically facilitate interaction between loosely connected field participants facilitate a more gender-balanced distribution of cultural and symbolic capital.

Habitus. In this dissertation, I also analyze gendered dimensions of the habitus. In particular, in Chapter 2 I argue that *masculine capital* and *feminine capital* (which denote gendered dispositions or habitus, when they produce advantages) are exchangeable for symbolic capital. My argument thus connects conceptualizes particular ways of “doing gender,” which can be integrated into the habitus, as exchangeable resources and points toward useful ways that the literature on doing gender and on embodied cultural capital can be synthesized and advanced. In Chapter 3, I expand on Bourdieu’s argument that field and habitus are connected, in that fields both produce and depend on particular forms of habitus. I find that the field-habitus link is textured by gender; fields’ behavioural norms encourage particular *gendered* forms of habitus, on which the fields’ organizational structures depend. And, although Chapter 4 uses the language of performance capital rather than habitus, my explanation of how aspiring musicians
develop performance capital also explains how they develop a ‘musicians’ habitus’: aspiring musicians observe, interact with, and learn from other people within particular spaces where they gradually develop the appropriate dispositions, attitudes, and interactional styles—that is, a musician’s habitus. Yet, as I show, the opportunity to develop a musician’s habitus is structured by gender, in that the spaces where folk musicians develop a musician’s habitus are accessible to women while the spaces where metal musicians develop a musician’s habitus are not. This dissertation therefore outlines multiple ways that work on the habitus can benefit from systematic gender analysis. I show that a specific habitus that enables an individual to “do” gender appropriately can be a form of capital (Chapter 2), that specific gendered forms of habitus are needed to sustain particular organizational structures (Chapter 3), and that the potential for field members to develop an appropriate habitus can be constrained by gendered opportunities (Chapter 4).

5.2. Advantages of a field approach

Many studies of gender inequality in creative fields centre on concepts from the gender and work literature, such as the gender wage gap and cumulative disadvantage (Bielby and Bielby 1996), queuing theory (Clawson 1999), the devaluation of women’s work, and the symbolic gendering of the ideal-typical creative worker (Harris and Giuffre 2015, Stokes 2013). These are important and necessary explanations of gender inequality in creative careers. But, in this dissertation I take a different approach. Instead of applying concepts from the gender and work literature to cultural work, I begin with a conceptual repertoire that is firmly centered in cultural sociology—Bourdieu’s (1993) field theory—and ask how we can gender it, using a conceptual toolkit that draw on both
Bourdiesian feminism and literature on gender and organizations.

Approaching gender inequalities in creative careers from a field perspective provides multiple conceptual advantages. Bourdieu’s field theory offers a remarkably adept understanding of power, structure, and agency in creative and artistic careers. Of course, many scholars have made important extensions and refinements to Bourdieu’s field theory (Anheier et al 1995, Leschziner and Green 2013). But, his fundamental understanding of how fields of cultural production operate remains unmatched in its theoretical sophistication and analytical power. Field theory helps us understand how artists wage material and symbolic power struggles over multiple types of resources and networks. Integrating gender analysis into this framework allows us to analyze gender relations across both the meso/structural and micro/individual levels, and to analyze the interplay between the resources or capitals individuals possess, the organizations within which they are situated, and the dispositions that they develop to navigate the fields. This builds on feminist scholars’ insight that we must analyze gendered power relations at both the individual and structural levels (Acker 1990, Britton 2000, Lorber 1994), and also adds new conceptual tools by which we can accomplish this—particularly, the idea of capital.

Working with concepts from cultural sociology also foregrounds analytical concerns that are important to culture scholars, but have been overlooked in scholarship on creative careers conducted from a gender and work perspective. In particular, we need better ways of theorizing gender inequalities in symbolic, rather than material, rewards. Symbolic rewards such as reputation, esteem, and recognition—that is, symbolic capital—are crucial to creative careers (Bourdieu 1993, Caves 2000, Lang and Lang
1989, Leschziner 2007), but are undertheorized in the gender and work literature. By gendering core cultural concepts like symbolic capital, this dissertation helps better analyze gender inequalities in artistic fields. But, this analysis can also enrich literature on gender and occupations. By focusing on reputation and esteem, we might better understand gendered power dynamics in non-creative jobs where reputation is important—for example, stock brokerage, real estate, or public relations. Using cultural concepts like (gendered) symbolic capital to analyze non-cultural careers can specify how reputation functions as a resource, and analyze how and when it is exchanged for other resources.

A field-centered analysis of gender inequality among artists also allows scholars to consider a wider range of actors than are typically included in analyses of creative labour. Much scholarly work focuses only on professional artists and creative workers: professional screenwriters (Bielby and Bielby 1996), chefs (Harris and Giuffre 2015), fashion designers (Stokes 2013), musicians (Goldin and Rouse 2000, Leonard 2007), and novelists (Tuchman and Fortin 1984). But, not all creative producers are professionals, or even aspiring professionals (Finnegan 1989). Creative industries require extensive volunteer labour (Caves 2000, Orr 2006), and many people who produce art and music consider themselves long-term hobbyists (Finney 1993, Lena and Lindemann 2014). A gendered field analysis allows us to analyze gender inequality among volunteers, amateurs, and hobbyists alongside professionals and aspiring professionals. Indeed, I have analyzed everyday gendered practices among folk festival volunteers and amateur music promoters in Chapter 3, and gendered learning processes among amateur musicians in Chapter 4 and found that their experiences are structured by gender.
Volunteers and amateur support personnel require specific, gendered traits to succeed in their work; and, women amateur musicians in the folk and metal fields find vastly different opportunities available to them, because of the organization of learning spaces in those fields. These dynamics would be invisible in a study of professional creative work.

Finally, gendering Bourdieu’s field theory facilitates systematic comparisons across multiple cultural fields. By applying the same concepts and analyses to multiple fields, we can start to develop general principles about how artistic reputation and recognition is organized by gender (as in Chapter 2), how gendered practices facilitate particular modes of creative production (as in Chapter 3), and how gender differences in access to embodied cultural capital emerge (as in Chapter 4). Although I have focused on the empirical case of musicians, all cultural production involves symbolic struggles, field-specific forms of habitus, and symbolic and cultural capital. Cross-field comparisons and generalizeable principles thus stand to produce much broader knowledge about gender inequality in creative careers. I hypothesize about what some of these cross-field comparisons might look like below.

5.3. Gender relations in other music genres

My findings suggest many possibilities for how gendered power relations might operate in other fields of music. Notably, folk and metal are both grassroots music scenes, focused on local, small-time production. In Lena and Peterson’s (2008) typology, folk and metal are both scene-based genres, where music is largely funded and organized by and for participants in the local music community, without commercial record labels or mass media. Folk also has some elements of a traditionalist music genre; folkies’ non-
profit cultural associations, preservationist societies, and archives are characteristic of traditionalist genres (Lena and Peterson 2008, Lena 2012). My findings are therefore most directly comparable to other grassroots, scene-based and traditionalist music genres, and may require separate, dedicated analyses to adequately describe gender relations in commercial *industry-based* genres (e.g. pop music), or emerging and experimental *avante-garde* music genres.

Still, this dissertation can inform analyses of gender relations in other scene-based and traditionalist music genres. In particular, the presence of formal, non-profit cultural organizations in folk and their absence in metal underlies all three substantive chapters. Folk’s formal organizations allow symbolic capital to become institutionalized (Chapter 2), create the demand for extensive volunteer labour that is linked to the folkie habitus (Chapter 3), and provide the public, non-networked learning spaces that allow potential women musicians systematic access to performance capital (Chapter 4). These findings might lead us to predict more gender equality in scene-based and traditionalist music genres that are centered on formal organizations—for example, swing music or Christian rock, which are embedded in non-profit organizations such as churches, community centres, local music appreciation societies, and festivals.

We might also predict a more gender-biased distribution of capital in scene-based genres like hip-hop, rap, and punk, which are not traditionally produced within formal organizational structures (Harkness 2012, Leblanc 1999, Lee 2009, Lena 2013). These fields require extensive individual entrepreneurship which, as described in Chapter 3, privileges a masculine, competitive, individualist habitus. We might therefore expect that the “hip-hop habitus”, “rap habitus,” and “punk habitus” promote performances of
masculinity, or the valuing of masculine dispositions as forms of capital (Harkness 2012, Leblanc 1999, Lee 2009).

It is more difficult to theorize what gender relations would look like in other music scenes. For example, jazz and blues might resemble the folk field, as they are traditionalist genres with formal organizations like professional musicians associations, preservationist societies, and festivals. But, jazz and blues also have key differences from folk. In particular, both jazz and blues are organized around strong symbolic boundaries separating “real” from “fake” or “authentic” from “inauthentic” music (Grazian 2005, Scarborough 2013) a boundary with minimal salience among Toronto folkies. As I found that patterns of symbolic boundary-drawing affect the gendered organization symbolic capital in the cases of metal and folk, we might see more gender inequality in blues and jazz than in the Toronto folk field. Alternatively, we might find that the presence of formal organizations prevents these symbolic boundaries from becoming gendered—it is, of course, possible that symbolic boundaries can be strong without being gendered. Understanding how fields of jazz and blues music are gendered might therefore aid us in developing general principles about how gender operates in fields of cultural production.

5.4. Gender relations in other cultural fields

The lessons from this dissertation might also apply to other, non-musical cultural genres. For example, recognition and esteem—that is, symbolic capital—are clearly gendered in other cultural fields. Harris and Giuffre (2015) note that food writers use different and subtly less flattering framing strategies when discussing women chefs. Similarly, women novelists (Tuchman and Fortin 1984), painters (Parker and Pollock 2013), and etchers (Lang and Lang 1989) experience systematic barriers in achieving the
same recognition as their male peers. The fields of gastronomy, visual art, and literature are structurally different than the local fields of music described here. Gastronomy, for example, is far more commercially oriented than other creative fields. As Harris and Giuffre (2015) observe, painters and musicians often produce art without direct payment, but even the most artistically minded chefs cannot generally open or cook in restaurants for free. While painters and musicians may accumulate more symbolic capital for eschewing economic motivations, symbolic capital among chefs may be closely intertwined with economic success. Given that women chefs are still, on average, lower paid and less likely to open their own restaurants (Harris and Guiffre 2015), symbolic capital among chefs may be organized by different gendered dynamics than the ones I have outlined in Chapter 2.

Gendered evaluations of aesthetic quality may also differ from my findings here in other genres like literature, photography, and visual art where the finished product can be distributed and appreciated separately from the artist. Indeed, many women novelists have historically hidden their gender to avoid negative evaluations—for example, J.K. Rowling published *Harry Potter* under her initials to disguise her gender, and the Bronte sisters initially published as Currer, Ellis, and Acton Bell. There are no comparably high-profile cases of musicians disguising their gender. In grassroots music scenes, musicians’ gendered bodies—their voices, their movements on stage, their images in a music video—are often deeply intertwined with the music itself. Accordingly, musicians’ gender may be constantly foregrounded while the gender identities of a novelist or painter might not. We might tentatively expect that this difference—the fact that writers’ and painters’ gendered bodies are not constantly foregrounded in evaluations of their
work—would allow more gender equality in reputation among writers and visual artists. Yet, empirical findings on writers and visual artists (Lang and Lang 1990, Tuchman and Fortin 1984) suggests that this is not the case. What, then, are the underlying mechanisms producing gender-biased evaluations of aesthetic quality in these fields, and do they differ from the ones identified in this dissertation? Applying the concept of *symbolic capital* to other fields with a gendered lens would produce useful comparative analyses of gendered patterns of reputation and recognition.

The link between field and habitus is likely also gendered in other cultural genres. For example, Harris and Giuffre (2015) draw on Joan Acker’s (1980) work to argue that the ideal chef is gendered male as he competes for individual recognition, holds authority over the rest of the kitchen staff, prioritizes work over his personal life, and takes risks by proposing new and boundary-pushing dishes. In other words, a “chef’s habitus” requires particular masculine dispositions. Drawing on my findings in Chapter 3, we might expect that a masculine chef’s habitus supports typical work arrangements in the field of cuisine, such as hierarchical authority in the kitchen and irregular working schedules that are difficult to manage with family life. Other creative fields might require a habitus that draws on both masculine and feminine elements. For example, workers in the field of fashion are required to engage in both masculine-coded practices (e.g. prioritizing work above all else) and feminine-coded practices (e.g. frequent attendance at social functions, extensive aesthetic labour and beauty work) (Stokes 2013). In what way, then, do the gendered elements of a “fashion worker’s habitus” support the organization of the field of fashion? Answering these questions can produce new knowledge about how gender shapes the link between field and habitus.
Chapter 4 raises questions about how women receive training in other creative and artistic fields. Some scholars have speculated that the historical lack of women visual artists is due in part to women’s exclusion from networks of mentors; the few lucky women who learned to paint and sculpt had artists as fathers, husbands, or family friends, and thus accessed knowledge that was unavailable to most women (Cowen 1996, Parker and Pollock 2013). These dynamics, of course, resemble my argument in Chapter 4 that many women who break into male-dominated learning spaces do so because of their friendship and kinship ties. Future research should compare typical capital-building pathways in folk and metal to capital-building pathways in fields such as fashion, where post-secondary education and other formal training programs are common (Stokes 2013). These pathways were largely absent in the folk and metal fields, but might have important gendered implications.

Interestingly, post-secondary arts education programs seem like they should reduce gendered barriers to capital accumulation due to formal admissions procedures, equity policies, and non-discrimination legislation (e.g. Title IX in the United States). Yet, a recent survey of graduates of arts institutions found multiple gender inequalities. Women arts graduates are 10% less likely than men to work in the arts, report less satisfaction with their opportunities to network, and earn less than men graduating from comparable programs (Strategic National Arts Alumni Project 2013). What, specifically, are the gendered barriers to the accumulation and recognition of embodied cultural capital among artists who train through post-secondary education?

5.5. New conceptual directions
The findings of this dissertation could also be expanded in new conceptual directions. Many such directions were not feasible with the data collected here, but should be developed in future research. One question that remains unanswered is how gender intersects with fields of restricted and large-scale production. Both folk and metal are fields of restricted production (Bourdieu 1993) that produce primarily for small, niche audiences that are connected to the field. In contrast, fields of large-scale production are mass media and culture industries whose products are distributed widely, beyond the field and social networks within which producers interact—for example, Hollywood film, where products are created within an identifiable field or social network, but are distributed worldwide. Bourdieu (1993) argues that producers in fields of restricted production have more opportunity to reject or oppose broader social conventions because they are less immediately tied to the demands of markets, mass production systems, and for-profit cultural industries. For example, producers in restricted fields are freer to produce art that is motivated by artistic or political rather than financial concerns, but producers in large-scale fields are constrained by reliance on institutions and resources from mainstream society.

In theory, producers in restricted fields of production should be freer to develop their own “gender rules” (Moi 1991). In a restricted field, participants might subvert areas of sexism that are common within the broader society, such as the goth music scene that allows women fans considerable sexual autonomy and freedom from harassment (Wilkins 2004), or barbershop music sung in community choirs, which provides a

\[\text{\textsuperscript{1}}\text{Notably, there are some specific areas within the folk field (particularly summer folk festivals) that systematically connect folk musicians with larger audiences from outside the field, and thus function more like large-scale fields of production.}\]
protected space where men can express emotionality for which they might be sanctioned elsewhere (Nash 2009). Conversely, restricted fields of production might develop conventions that actually entrench more sexism than is common in mainstream society; for example, some genres of extreme metal that focus on themes of misogynistic violence (Kahn-Harris 2007). Overall, we might expect that gender relations in fields of large-scale production would more closely resemble gender relations that are common to mainstream, middle-class society, while gender relations in fields of restricted production\(^2\) might be polarized in either an egalitarian or inegalitarian direction. However, much future research is needed in this area.

Another productive future question would be how gender intersects with symbolic distinctions between highbrow vs. lowbrow art, or fine art vs. craft. This analysis was not possible here because both folk and metal are forms of popular art, rather than fine art. Folkies and metalheads certainly draw symbolic boundaries (although, as I have argued, to different extents) around subgenres that should be included in and excluded from their respective fields. However, neither folkies nor metalheads are particularly oriented toward distinctions between art vs. not-art, or highbrow vs. lowbrow art. On a day-to-day basis, neither folkies nor metalheads use the language of art or aesthetic legitimacy to understand their daily practice.

Some initial evidence suggests that women fare better in popular arts (Schmutz 2009) or craft/folk art fields (Parker and Pollock 2013) than fine arts fields. And, gender may affect how categories of cultural production are classified as fine art or folk art to

\(^2\) Or, within restricted sub-fields or segments of fields; see Childress (2015) for a discussion of the North American field of literature, which is overall a field of large-scale production but contains segments that function as fields of restricted production.
begin with; scholars have argue that textile art, pottery, and jewellery-making are classified as craft rather than art because they are associated with women (Peterson 2003). Still, more research is needed to understand the interplay between gender, and boundaries between fine and popular arts. Within cultural fields, are women systematically segregated into popular rather than fine art? For example, is there a greater proportion of women musicians in pop music, compared to classical music? Are women photographers more likely to become commercial photographers or journalists who sell their work to magazines and newspapers, rather than fine arts photographers who display their work in galleries? When and how do women artists in craft genres like pottery and textile art mobilize to legitimate their work as fine art? Future research should further explore these and other questions to better understand how gender intersects with symbolic boundaries between fine and popular art.

Creative and artistic workers are an important and growing part of the North American economy (Currid 2007, Florida 2002). And, many occupations are becoming more driven by creativity, and adopting the flexibility, autonomy, and innovation-driven work ethic (and, unfortunately, many of the freelance and precarious work arrangements) of creative fields—for example, journalism (Berglez 2012), software development (Cooper 2000), architecture (Lipstadt 2003), and advertising (Windels and Lee 2012). Many of these occupations either have or are developing dynamics such as those described in Bourdieu’s (1993) field theory, including continual symbolic struggles where innovators attempt to unseat established actors at the top of the field, institutionalized standards for aesthetic quality, and official recognition of those standards in awards and competitions (e.g. see Lipstadt 2003 on the field of architecture).
A gendered field theory thus has the potential to describe gendered power dynamics among more workers than only the artists to whom field analysis is normally applied.

Empirically, this dissertation is about how gender organizes fields of cultural production, and relations between creative producers. However, understanding how gender organizes field, capital, and habitus may also have implications for understanding how gender inequalities are produced and maintained in fast-paced, flexible post-bureaucratic work environments that are driven by creativity.

5.6. Concluding Thoughts

In this dissertation, I have argued that Bourdieu’s (1993) field theory requires gender analysis. Using a comparative case study of two grassroots music scenes, I have also demonstrated how that analysis might be accomplished and used these two empirical cases to integrate gender analysis Bourdieu’s main concepts of field, capital, and habitus. Throughout this comparison, I have highlighted key organizational differences between these scenes that enable these different patterns of gender relations—particularly, the presence or absence of formal organizations. I have also pointed out many ways that scholarship on fields of cultural production can be enriched by literature on gender, occupations and organizations, and by Bourdieusian feminism. And, I have outlined how my empirical findings might inform analysis of other music scenes, other fields of cultural production, and other creative occupations with nascent field-like properties. Overall, this dissertation contributes to the discipline of sociology by synthesizing work on cultural production with work on gender and organizations to better understand a persistent, but understudied, empirical phenomenon: women’s underrepresentation and devaluation as creative producers.
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Appendix A: Fieldwork Observations

This section provides background information on the types of shows that I attended. Because folk and metal have slight organizational differences—for example, the presence of multiple types of shows and events in the folk field (e.g. concerts, festivals, jam sessions, conferences) but only one type of event in the metal field (concerts)—I provide slightly different background information on each field.

Metal Fieldwork

Total shows attended: 32

By subgenre*:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extreme/Underground Metal Genres</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Black Metal</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death Metal</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grindcore</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Light/Mainstream Metal Genres</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Power Metal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thrash/Classic Metal</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other 'light' metal (e.g. progressive metal, punk metal)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Other</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Folk Metal</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multi-genre shows (e.g. festivals, tribute shows, fundraisers)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*does not add up to 32 because some shows were double-counted, i.e. if a show had 4 bands, 2 of which were black metal bands and 2 of which were death metal bands, then I counted it as both genres

By level of professionalism:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Underground (i.e. amateur bands without label representation or a significant local following)</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small-time established (i.e. local bands, usually with independent label representation, multiple albums, and name recognition in the local scene)</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-range (i.e. non-local, internationally known bands with a following among metalheads but with poor name recognition outside of the metal community, generally with day jobs; or, local bands that have achieved international recognition but still do not do music full-time)</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional (i.e. internationally well-known full-time musicians)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Cross-level shows** (e.g. tribute shows or fundraisers, usually with 1 professional or mid-range headliner and multiple small-time established bands as supporting acts)

Note that I have categorized each show based on the professionalism of the headlining band, which is generally the most professionalized band. However, shows often included less professional bands as opening acts. For example, mid-range bands from out of town would often arrange for local, small-time established bands to open at their shows.

**By Geographic Origin**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Geographic Origin</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Local (Toronto)</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional (Southern Ontario or Quebec)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International (Europe/Asia/Middle East)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that I have categorized each show based on the location of the headlining band, which is generally the band that travelled the farthest distance. However, shows often included local bands as opening acts. For example, both professional and mid-range bands from out of town would often arrange for local bands to open at their shows. In fact, it is quite rare for a heavy metal show to occur in Toronto without at least one Toronto-based band performing.

**By type of space**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Space</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated Concert Venue (i.e. where the only people present had purchased admission to the concert)</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed-use Space (i.e. A bar that allowed metal bands to perform on their stage, but maintained normal operations and admitted non-concertgoers)</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Folk Fieldwork**

Total Shows Attended: 40

**By Type of Event**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Event</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public ticketed concert (i.e. where admission was limited to paying attendees)</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House concert (i.e. a ticketed concert in a private home)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-ticketed concert (i.e. an informal or 'pass-the-hat' style performance, where attendees were patrons of a bar or restaurant)</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festival</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory music-making setting (i.e. song circle, open jam session)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Stage</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note that open stages and participatory music-making settings are often included in festivals and conferences; I actually observed more than 3 of each of these types of events.
### Appendix B: Interviewees

**Interviewees in the heavy metal field**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pseudonym</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Sex and race</th>
<th>Position in the field</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Abbey</td>
<td>mid-20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>fan, former worker for various promoters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Catherine</td>
<td>late 20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>journalist and review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connie</td>
<td>mid-20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craig</td>
<td>mid-30s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>venue owner and booker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Darrah</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dean</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derek</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>Promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dwayne</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>musician, promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eddie</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>radio host</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>sound technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethan</td>
<td>mid-20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>musician, concert promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garret</td>
<td>early 30s</td>
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<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grace</td>
<td>late 30s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>concert promoter, publicist, and review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greg</td>
<td>mid-20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>fan, former musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>late 20s</td>
<td>female, non-white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ian</td>
<td>mid-20s</td>
<td>male, non-white</td>
<td>musician, former radio host</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irena</td>
<td>late 20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>fan, formerly worked for various promoters and bands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jamie</td>
<td>early 30s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>musician, former review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janice</td>
<td>early 30s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>promoter, organizer of a professional association</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jenna</td>
<td>late teens</td>
<td>female, mixed-race</td>
<td>fan, review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse</td>
<td>mid-30s</td>
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<td>review writer</td>
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<td>Jonah</td>
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<td>fan, former musician</td>
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<td>Kristen</td>
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<td>Musician</td>
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<td>Lisa</td>
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<td>fan, former musician</td>
</tr>
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<td>Luke</td>
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<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew</td>
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<td>Musician</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mortimer</td>
<td>mid-20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>fan, former concert promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paul</td>
<td>mid-20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phillip</td>
<td>late 20s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>early 20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tamara</td>
<td>late 30s</td>
<td>female, non-white</td>
<td>journalist and review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taylor</td>
<td>late 20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>fan, former review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>late 30s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>Fan</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pseudonym</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Sex and race</td>
<td>Position in the field</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aiden</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alex</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bethany</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>musician, former promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bill</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>radio host</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caroline</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>festival organizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carter</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>publicist, emcee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Debbie</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diane</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ella</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliott</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>radio host</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gabriel</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>publicist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hannah</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>fan, house concert organizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jack</td>
<td>40s</td>
<td>male, non-white</td>
<td>musician, sound technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jeff</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>radio host</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leslie</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>fan, festival volunteer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lily</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>venue owner and promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maynard</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>musician, festival organizer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Naomi</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>musician, publicist, occasional promoter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nikki</td>
<td>30s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pauline</td>
<td>20s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>musician, review writer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sherry</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Fan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophie</td>
<td>70s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>promoter (volunteer, non-profit concert series)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewart</td>
<td>60s</td>
<td>male, white</td>
<td>sound technician</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>50s</td>
<td>female, white</td>
<td>Musician</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Interview Schedules

Interview Schedule – Fans

How did you get involved in heavy metal/folk?

Probe: About how old were you at the time? What was happening in your life?
Probe: Were most of your friends at the time into heavy metal/folk as well, or not?
Probe: What about most of your friends now? Are they into heavy metal/folk too, or not?

How would you describe the folk/metal scene in general?

Probe: What makes heavy metal/folk different from other music genres?
Probe: For example, is it a more cooperative/competitive place? Welcoming or elitist?

Aesthetic Logics/Symbolic Capital

What makes good folk/metal music?

What are some of your favourite bands or songs? What do you like or dislike about them?

Are there any specific subgenres of heavy metal/folk that you prefer? Any that you dislike?

Probe: What is it about those subgenres that you like? Dislike?

Do you listen to any other kinds of music? What kinds? How often?

Probe: What do you like or dislike about those genres?

How do you normally find new musicians to listen to? (e.g. internet searching, word of mouth, social media, recommendations from friends, or more formal venues like FAI or OCFF?)

Is there anything that functions as a marker of cachet or status in the folk/metal scene, e.g. an award they’ve won, a producer/promoter they’ve worked with, a venue they’ve played at?

Routine Practices within the Field

How often do you go to shows? How do you decide which shows to go to?

Are there any kinds of shows that you prefer over others? (e.g. underground vs.
professional; house shows vs. shows at a bar; festivals vs. one-off concerts)? Why?

What else do you do in the heavy metal/folk scene? (e.g. volunteer for a festival; attend the Canadian Folk Music Awards or an Ontario Council of Folk Festivals or Folk Alliance International conference; participate in song circles; travel, e.g. to Maryland Deathfest or 70000 tons of metal; go to the Braveboard BBQ).

Have you ever thought about playing music yourself or not? How about getting involved in some other way, like promoting a show – have you thought about this or not?

Probe: What is appealing or unappealing to you about playing music/getting involved in the production side?

Do you know a lot of musicians? Is getting to know musicians personally important to you, or not really?

**Gender in the Field – for everybody**

Do you think that it’s easier to be a man or woman in the folk/heavy metal scene, or would you say that there’s more gender equality?

Probe: Are most musicians that you see/listen to/work with men or women? Do you find that men/women musicians are taken more or less seriously, or is gender not really relevant there?

Probe: What about behind the scenes people, like promoters, managers, and sound technicians? Are they mostly men or women, or is it pretty evenly split?

Have you ever noticed that men and women behave differently in the folk/heavy metal scene, or not really? Can you think of an example?

Probe: what about men/women in certain jobs? For example, is there anything a woman musician (reviewer, sound tech, promoter, fan) would do that a man wouldn’t, or vice versa?

Probe: would there be any subgenres that men/women listen to more/less frequently?

In the folk/heavy metal scene, have you ever felt that you were treated a certain way because of your gender, or not really?

Probe: Could you tell me about a situation where that happened to you? (if R asks for an example) For example, I’ve heard women musicians say that people assume they don’t know a lot about sound equipment even when they do.

Probe: who was it that treated you that way (e.g. a fan, musician, reviewer, etc.)?

Probe: How did you respond?

Have you ever noticed that men and women treat you differently, or not really?

Probe: could you tell me about a situation where that happened to you? How did
you respond?

Probe: would you say that men and women promoters/fans/musicans/reviewers treat you differently, or not really?

Closing/Demographic Information – for everybody

How old are you?

What kind of education do you have?

What is your marital status?

Were you born in Canada, or elsewhere?

Is there anything else you’d like to tell me? Can you recommend anyone else I should talk to?

Interview Schedule - Musicians

How did you get involved in heavy metal/folk?

Probe: About how old were you at the time?

Probe: What was happening in your life at the time? Were you in school? Working?

Probe: Were most of your friends at the time into heavy metal/folk as well, or not?

Probe: What about most of your friends now? Are they into heavy metal/folk too, or not?

How did you make the transition from being a fan to playing music/playing in a band?

Probe: what are the advantages or disadvantages to being a performer?

How did you join your current band? Have you played in any other bands in the past?

How would you describe the folk/metal scene in general?

Probe: What makes heavy metal/folk different from other music genres?

Probe: Would you describe heavy metal/folk music as particularly masculine or feminine? Why/why not?

Aesthetic Logics/Symbolic Capital

What makes good folk/metal music?

How do you normally find new musicians to listen to? (e.g. through internet searching,
through word of mouth, etc.)

Are there any particular musicians that you’d like to be like, or that have influenced your playing? What it is about them that you like/dislike?

Are there any specific subgenres of heavy metal/folk that you prefer? Any that you dislike?

Do you listen to any other kinds of music? What kinds? How often?

Is there anything that functions as a marker of cachet or status in the folk/metal scene, e.g. an award they’ve won, a producer/promoter they’ve worked with, a venue they’ve played at?

Is there anything you’ve achieved as a musician that you’re particularly proud of? What are you hoping to achieve at this point in your music career?

**Processes of Production**

Are there any types of bands that you are particularly interested in playing with or working with in some other way? Any types of bands that you would not want to work with?

Can you tell me about a particularly good or bad experience that you’ve had playing a show?

When you’re on stage, is there anything that you’re trying to convey to the audience, or a particular image or message that you’re trying to project?

How do you normally connect with people to work with, e.g. how do you find a band looking for a musician, or a promoter looking for someone to book for a show?

I understand that producing a CD and playing music involves a lot of start-up costs. Do you normally make that money back, or not?

Do you have another occupation outside of playing music/promoting shows/recording CDs? What is it, and about how much time do you spend doing that?

How much do you make from music? Is it relatively stable income, or does it vary a lot from month to month? How much do you make from your other job(s) that aren’t related to music?
**Gender in the Field – for everybody**

Do you think that it’s easier to be a man or woman in the folk/heavy metal scene, or would you say that there’s more gender equality?

*Probe*: Are most musicians that you see/listen to/work with men or women? Do you find that men/women musicians are taken more or less seriously, or is gender not really relevant there?

*Probe*: What about most people that you hang out with in the scene – are they men or women, or is it pretty equally divided?

*Probe*: (for musicians/producers) What about all of the people that you work with, like promoters, managers, and sound technicians? Would you say that most of them are men or women, or that it’s pretty evenly split?

Have you ever noticed that men and women behave differently in the folk/heavy metal scene, or not really? Can you think of an example?

*Probe*: what about men/women in certain jobs? For example, is there anything a woman musician (reviewer, sound tech, promoter, fan) would do that a man wouldn’t, or vice versa?

*Probe*: would there be any subgenres that men/women listen to more/less frequently?

In the folk/heavy metal scene, have you ever felt that you were treated a certain way because of your gender, or not really?

*Probe*: Could you tell me about a situation where that happened to you? (if R asks for an example) For example, I’ve heard women musicians say that people assume they don’t know a lot about sound equipment even when they do.

*Probe*: who was it that treated you that way (e.g. a fan, musician, reviewer, etc.)?

*Probe*: How did you respond?

Have you ever noticed that men and women treat you differently, or not really?

*Probe*: could you tell me about a situation where that happened to you? How did you respond?

*Probe*: would you say that men and women promoters/fans/musicians/reviewers treat you differently, or not really?

**Closing/Demographic Information – for everybody**

How old are you?

What kind of education do you have?

What is your marital status?
Were you born in Canada, or elsewhere?

Is there anything else you’d like to tell me?

Can you recommend anyone else I should talk to?
Interview Schedule – Critics

How did you get involved in heavy metal/folk?
  Probe: About how old were you at the time?
  Probe: What was happening in your life at the time? Were you in school? Working?
  Probe: Were most of your friends at the time into heavy metal/folk as well, or not?
  Probe: What about most of your friends now? Are they into heavy metal/folk too, or not?

How did you make the transition from being a fan to a journalist/radio host?

What is your current involvement in the metal/folk scene - i.e. do you write reviews, host a radio show? For what publications? How long have you been doing that?
  Probe: What do you do as paid activities? What about unpaid activities?
  Probe: Do you have an official/titled position, or do you do this on a more casual basis?

How else have you been involved in the folk/metal scene in the past?

How would you describe the folk/metal scene in general?
  Probe: What makes heavy metal/folk different from other music genres?
  Probe: Would you describe heavy metal/folk music as particularly masculine or feminine? Why/why not?

_Aesthetic Logics/Symbolic Capital_

This is a difficult and possibly overly broad question, but it’s one that I imagine you think about a lot as a music journalist: what makes good metal/folk music?

When you write a review of an album or a live show, what are you trying to communicate to your readers? What aspects of the show do you try to highlight?

How do you normally find the albums or live shows that you’re going to review? (e.g. is it your job to gauge what albums readers want to hear about, or does an editor select albums/shows)?
  Probe: e.g., do artists approach you, or submit albums for consideration? Do you approach them? Do you survey the scene and decide independently what you want to highlight?
  Probe: Obviously, there are more albums being released and more shows being put on than it would be possible to write about. So how do you (or your editors)
decide which albums or shows will get reviewed, and which won’t?

Thinking about your own personal tastes now, what kind of music is your favourite?
   Probe: Are there any specific subgenres of heavy metal/folk that you particularly like or dislike?
   Probe: What is it about those subgenres that you like? Dislike?
   Probe: Do you listen to any other kinds of music? What kinds? How often?
   Probe: What do you like or dislike about those genres?

Do you find that your personal tastes ever get in the way of writing reviews, or are they actually an asset? What strategies have you developed for staying true to your own tastes, but writing reviews for an audience that may or may not share those tastes?
   Probe: Are there any types of bands that you wouldn’t want to review, or that you’d refuse?
   Probe: For example, a band like Lividity that sings about sexual violence toward women, or a band like Arghoslent that has racist lyrics?

Is there anything that functions as a marker of cachet or status in the folk/metal scene, or that would make you give an album a little extra consideration, e.g. an award they’ve won, a producer/promoter they’ve worked with, a venue they’ve played at?

**Routine Practices/Processes of Production**

It’s pretty cliché by now that folk/metal bands don’t earn a lot of money. Do you think that there are any subgenres of metal that are particularly profitable, or unprofitable?
   Probe: for example, thrash seems to be more popular (and more successful) than death metal or black metal. Do you have any insights about why that might be?

Have you ever thought about playing music yourself or not? How about getting involved in some other way, like promoting a show – have you thought about this or not?
   Probe: What is appealing or unappealing to you about playing music/getting involved in the production side?

**(if R has ever played/produced/promoted)**

Can you walk me through the process of playing/putting on a show/recording a CD?
   Probe: How many people are involved in putting on a show/recording a CD? What kinds of people, and what do they do?
   Probe: How do all of these people get into contact with each other and decide to work together? For example, is it more common that you would contact a promoter/band/sound engineer, or that they would contact you?

I know that for musicians and promoters, producing music means putting out their own money upfront, and often never making it back. As a critic, do you ever have any sort of
similar up-front costs?

Do you have another occupation outside of writing about music/hosting a radio show? What is it, and about how much time do you spend doing that?

Probe: Do you work in any other genres of music, or just folk/metal?

May I ask how much you make as a music journalist? Is it relatively stable income, or does it vary a lot from month to month? How much do you make from your other job(s) that aren’t related to music?

**Gender in the Field – for everybody**

Do you think that it’s easier to be a man or woman in the folk/heavy metal scene, or would you say that there’s more gender equality?

Probe: Are most musicians that you see/listen to/work with men or women? Do you find that men/women musicians are taken more or less seriously, or is gender not really relevant there?

Probe: What about most people that you hang out with in the scene – are they men or women, or is it pretty equally divided?

Probe: (for musicians/producers) What about all of the people that you work with, like promoters, managers, and sound technicians? Would you say that most of them are men or women, or that it’s pretty evenly split?

Have you ever noticed that men and women behave differently in the folk/heavy metal scene, or not really? Can you think of an example?

Probe: what about men/women in certain jobs? For example, is there anything a woman musician (reviewer, sound tech, promoter, fan) would do that a man wouldn’t, or vice versa?

Probe: would there be any subgenres that men/women listen to more/less frequently?

In the folk/heavy metal scene, have you ever felt that you were treated a certain way because of your gender, or not really?

Probe: Could you tell me about a situation where that happened to you? (if R asks for an example) For example, I’ve heard women musicians say that people assume they don’t know a lot about sound equipment even when they do.

Probe: who was it that treated you that way (e.g. a fan, musician, reviewer, etc.)?

Probe: How did you respond?

Have you ever noticed that men and women treat you differently, or not really?

Probe: could you tell me about a situation where that happened to you? How did you respond?

Probe: would you say that men and women promoters/fans/musicians/reviewers
treat you differently, or not really?

**Closing/Demographic Information – for everybody**

How old are you?

What kind of education do you have?

What is your marital status?

Were you born in Canada, or elsewhere?

Is there anything else you’d like to tell me?

Can you recommend anyone else I should talk to?

**Interview Schedule – Support Personnel**

How did you get involved in the heavy metal/folk scene?

- **Probe:** About how old were you at the time?
- **Probe:** What was happening in your life at the time? Were you in school? Working?
- **Probe:** Were most of your friends at the time into heavy metal/folk as well, or not?

How did you make the transition from being a fan to producing/working behind the scenes?

What do you currently do in the folk/metal scene?

- **Probe:** Help to organize festivals? Media/publicity work?
- **Probe:** What do you do as paid activities? What about unpaid activities?
- **Probe:** Do you have an official/titled position, or do you do this on a more casual basis?

What kinds of things have you done in the metal/folk scene in the past?

How would you describe the folk/metal scene in general?

- **Probe:** What makes heavy metal/folk different from other music genres?
- **Probe:** Would you describe heavy metal/folk music as particularly masculine or feminine? Why/why not?

**Processes of Production**
Can you walk me through the process of putting on a show/recording a CD/organizing a festival?

Probe: How many people are involved overall, and what do they do?

Probe: How do all of these people get into contact with each other and decide to work together? For example, is it more common that you would contact a promoter/band/sound engineer, or that they would contact you?

What are the most effective strategies you’ve found for reaching audiences? (e.g. social media? Traditional flyering? Advertising?)

Are there any types of bands that you are particularly interested in adding to a lineup/working with? Any types of bands that you would not want to work with?

Probe: What qualities do you look for in bands that you work with?

Probe: Do you pick bands based on your own musical tastes? Based on what’s popular, or who will draw a crowd? Based on something else?

Are there any types of shows you prefer to work on (e.g. house shows, festivals, one-off concerts)? Why?

Can you tell me about a particularly good experience that you’ve had putting on a show or festival/producing a CD? How about a particularly bad one?

Does your work require you to invest any of your own money out upfront? If so, do you normally make it back or not?

Do you have another occupation outside of playing music/promoting shows/recording CDs? What is it, and about how much time do you spend doing that?

Have you ever thought about playing music yourself or not? What is appealing or unappealing to you about this?

May I ask how much you typically earn as a producer/festival staffperson/publicist/etc.? Is it relatively stable income, or does it vary a lot from month to month?

How much do you make from your other job(s) that aren’t related to music?

Aesthetic Logics/Symbolic Capital

Do you have any sort of artistic input into who gets booked to play a show or a festival?

If yes: What qualities do you look for in musicians that you might book?

If yes: How do you normally hear about musicians to book, e.g. word of mouth? A formal application process? Do you actively seek them out?
What makes good folk/metal music? What are some bands or musicians that you like, and why?

Are there any specific subgenres of heavy metal/folk that you particularly like or dislike? Why?

Do you listen to any other kinds of music? What kinds? How often?

Is there anything that functions as a marker of cachet or status in the folk/metal scene, e.g. an award they’ve won, a producer/promoter they’ve worked with, a venue they’ve played at?

Are there any kinds of performances that are more prestigious than others?

Is there anything that you’ve achieved in the music scene that you’re particularly proud of? What would you like to achieve at this point?

**Gender in the Field**

Do you think that it’s easier to be a man or woman in the folk/heavy metal scene, or would you say that there’s more gender equality?

*Probe:* Are most musicians that you see/listen to/work with men or women? Do you find that men/women musicians are taken more or less seriously, or is gender not really relevant there?

*Probe:* What about most people that you hang out with in the scene – are they men or women, or is it pretty equally divided?

*Probe:* Are the behind-the-scenes people like promoters, managers, and sound techs mostly men or women, or is it pretty evenly split?

Have you ever noticed that men and women behave differently in the folk/heavy metal scene, or not really? Can you think of an example?

*Probe:* what about men/women in certain jobs? For example, is there anything a woman musician (reviewer, sound tech, promoter, fan) would do that a man wouldn’t, or vice versa?

In the folk/heavy metal scene, have you ever felt that you were treated a certain way because of your gender, or not really?

*Probe:* Could you tell me about a situation where that happened to you? (if R asks for an example) For example, I’ve heard women musicians say that people assume they don’t know a lot about sound equipment even when they do.

*Probe:* Who treated you that way (e.g. a fan, musician, reviewer)? How did you respond?
Have you ever noticed that men and women treat you differently, or not really?
   Probe: could you tell me about a situation where that happened to you? How did you respond?
   Probe: would you say that men and women promoters/fans/musicians/reviewers treat you differently, or not really?

_Closing/Demographic Information – for everybody_

How old are you?

What kind of education do you have?

What is your marital status?

Were you born in Canada, or elsewhere?

Is there anything else you’d like to tell me?

Can you recommend anyone else I should talk to?
Appendix D: Annotated List of Key Public Texts

**Key Texts in the Folk Scene**

*Roots Music Canada* ([www.rootsmusic.ca](http://www.rootsmusic.ca))
This is a blog-based website with multiple contributors spanning different roles in the folk field such as music critics, practicing musicians, festival organizers, and publicists. Posts cover a variety of topics, including album and live concert reviews, news about the folk and roots music scene in Southern Ontario (e.g. announcements of upcoming festivals and album releases), interviews with musicians and other field actors, advice to musicians, and analytical reflections on the workings of the folk field. I purposively sampled 20 posts focused on interviews with musicians, advice to musicians, and analytical reflections on the workings of the field that discussed issues of theoretical relevance, such as how the work of music production is conventionally accomplished and how field actors in different roles relate to each other.

*Bon Vivant: Candace Shaw* ([www.candaceshaw.ca](http://www.candaceshaw.ca))
This is the personal, blog-based website of Candace Shaw, the former artistic director of the Peterborough Folk Festival. Shaw’s blog includes a number of posts that detail her challenges in securing funding for the festival, selecting artists, organizing ancillary events around the festival, and pleasing audiences. I purposively selected 8 posts focused on these topics.

*Reflections and Rants* ([www.richardflohil.ca/wp/category/rants](http://www.richardflohil.ca/wp/category/rants))
This is a blog hosted on the professional website of Richard Flohil, a well-established publicist in the Toronto folk and roots scene. Many blog posts touch on topics of theoretical interest to this dissertation, such as the relationship between publicists and musicians, and what musicians can do to improve their careers. Other blog posts reproduce the text of speeches or keynote addresses that Flohill has given at industry conferences.

**Count Data: Conference Listings, Individual Festival Websites and Award Records**
I collected count data on folk musicians’ activities and opportunities through multiple publicly available online sources. I counted and compiled data on the gender distribution of active musicians and support personnel in the folk field based on listings of attendees at 3 professional conferences: the Ontario Council of Folk Festivals (OCFF) October 2012 and October 2013 annual conferences, and the Folk Alliance International (FAI) February 2013 annual conference. The OCFF publishes the most recent “delegate directory” on their website after the conference in October, which I downloaded and analyzed in the 2012 and 2013 years. FAI prints a list of delegates and their contact information in the back of the printed conference programme, which is provided to all attendees. I did a web search on each conference participant’s name, and used publicly
available online information to verify both their gender, and their role within the field. As most attendees at these conferences are actively seeking work opportunities (e.g. musicians are seeking gigs; publicists and agents are seeking musicians as clients), they have strong incentives to establish a web presence and publicly provide information about themselves. I was unable to establish the gender and field role (e.g. musician, support personnel, or critic) of less than 4% of attendees at these conferences.

I collected count data on the gender distribution of folk festival performers by reviewing the websites of individual folk festivals, which normally (but not always) list both the current year’s lineup of performers and lineups from past years. I focused on folk festivals held in Ontario during 2012 and 2013, as that was the geographic region and time period on which I had focused my fieldwork and interviews. I counted the number of men and women performers for the following folk festivals (22 total):

- Eaglewood Folk Festival, 2012, 2013
- Hillside Folk Festival, 2013
- Mariposa Folk Festival, 2012, 2013
- Mill Race Folk Festival, 2013
- Northern Lights Folk Festival, 2013
- Peterborough Folk Festival, 2012
- River and Sky, 2013
- Summerfolk, 2013

I compiled count data on awards nominees and winners based on one Juno category (Folk) and all Canadian Folk Music Awards (CFMAs) categories from 2011-2013. I based this information on historical records available on the Junos website (www.junos.ca) and the CFMA website (www.folkawards.ca).

**Key Texts in the Metal Scene**


This is a biweekly column that ran from January 2012 to June 2013 in Canada Arts Connect, an online magazine focused on the Canadian arts scene. Each installment features a profile of and interview with a prominent female metalhead, including musicians but also promoters, journalists, and support personnel. The author, Natalie Zina Walschots (known professionally as Natalie Zed), is a well-known music journalist in the Toronto metal scene. Walschots started this column in response to a satirical blog post on metalsucks.net entitled “Public Service Announcement: Girls do Not Like Metal”
(see figure 2.3). In the interview feature, Walschotts generally asks the women she profiles if they have experienced any sexism or discrimination in the metal scene, but also allows them to speak about their experiences in the metal scene more generally. Given the theoretical relevance of these discussions, I purposively sampled all entries focused on women from Southern Ontario or who had a connection to the Ontario metal scene, excluding only interviews with women who were clearly not part of the Toronto metal field (e.g. profiles of women metal promoters or reviewers in Scotland or Norway).

**Metalsucks.net** ([www.metalsucks.net](http://www.metalsucks.net))
This is mostly a blog-based, multi-author review and news site, which occasionally includes advice to musicians and emerging promoters, and analytical pieces about how musicians organize their activities, e.g. the financial challenges that musicians face on tour. I purposively sampled 12 analytical and advice-based posts.

**Metal-archives.com**
This is a user-generated, but heavily moderated, wiki that is intended to be a comprehensive encyclopedia of metal bands, listing releases and past and present members. I primarily used this site for count data, but also conducted substantive content analysis on their rules to better understand the symbolic boundaries that metalheads draw around subgenres that are and are not eligible for inclusion in the metal field.