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Following the Footsteps of a Rag Doll Dance: The Subversive Femininity of Siouxsie Sioux

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By

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Abstract

Following the Footsteps of a Rag Doll Dance: The Subversive Femininity of Siouxsie Sioux

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In a culture that views women in rock as artistically inauthentic, postpunk icon Siouxsie Sioux uses citational embodiments and the evocation of dreams to create authority and authenticity for herself. This invents tradition, which ultimately lead to her icon status and creates space for subversive femininity. Sioux's icon status was forged by the iconoclasm embedded in her refusal of the expectation of women's place and treatment in music. Where women were expected to appear demure and willowy, Sioux was dominant and masculine.

Where the expectation of song content was expected to be heartbreak and crushes, Sioux's songs were about dreams and nightmares. Where women in rock were expected, and disrespected, as white and Western, Sioux changed from Susan Ballion to Siouxsie Sioux. To retain her subcultural authenticity while being a successful artist, Sioux evokes dreams which create a space outside of the cycle of commodification and consumption inherent in mainstream popular culture. Through Sioux's performative authenticity constructed by citational embodiments and subcultural capital Sioux is able to create an authoritative voice for herself and retain it with the evocation of dreams. An authority status for Siouxsie Sioux is not automatic or inherent, but rather it is constructed. She has authority both in the sense of being in command – her name is in the band's name and she is on the other side of the 'and,' and she also has the capability to influence or command thought. This authority led to validation to her invented traditions. The goal of this research is to understand the tradition invented by Sioux of a new femininity and to help and decode the reasons why these traditions led to her icon status. Hobsbawm (1983) views invented tradition as "evidence" which can be used to understand the urge to create new traditions and what they say about the people who adhere or do not adhere to them. The study of this invention of tradition in postpunk subculture can help to understand the ways in which our culture's understanding of femininity and alternative femininity has evolved and why.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

At the 100 Club in London, England, September of 1976, Siouxsie Sioux first stepped on the stage. Then she was Susan Ballion, playing in a band billed as Suzi and the Banshees. The set was a shambles. The band had scarcely rehearsed beforehand and the members could barely play their instruments but, emboldened by punk's ethos of the audience is as deserving as the band to be on the stage, their presence was not out of place on the bill. Preparedness was not prized at the dawn of the UK punk scene. Sioux was already a known face around London as a member of the so-called Sex Pistols superfan group, the Caroline Coon coined "The Bromley Contingent." Sioux, Steven Severin, Marco Pirroni, and Sid Vicious decided last minute to play on the bill, which included the Sex Pistols and The Clash, after a band dropped out. Sioux performed "The Lord's Prayer," an unlikely choice which marked a moody departure from the nascent punk scene. Sioux and bass player Severin soon firmed up the lineup of the Banshees and sharpened their musical chops, but "The Lord's Prayer" and its macabre tone remained. Sioux's inclination to be what she calls "incongruous to a situation" (Jon Savage, 1986) even among her own subculture, is what has propelled her to icon status and has inspired artists to pursue their own artistic ambitions, as much for what she is as for what she is not. Thom York of Radiohead is one of the many artists galvanized by Sioux, as he described on the BBC Radio 6 program "*The First Time With…*":

> "I didn't really think [about going on the stage] until I saw Siouxsie and The Banshees…That [show] completely blew my mind. … I've never seen anyone manage to captivate an audience like she did, you know, with nothing. Just basically with her state of mind. The fact that she was absolutely going to nail it. It didn't matter what happens, she did not care. It was amazing to watch. And then I went to see New Order a week later and they slagged everybody off and stormed off. It was like, 'OK, that's how not to do it.'" [3:42].

I argue that, in a culture that views women as artistically inauthentic, which I explain below, Sioux's citational embodiments and the evocation of dreams create authority and authenticity for herself. These elements work to invent tradition and to forge her icon status, which ultimately creates space for a new femininity. This iconography was forged by the iconoclasm embedded in her refusal of the expectation of women's place and treatment in music. Where women were expected to appear demure and willowy, Sioux was dominant and masculine. Where the expectation of song content was expected to be about heartbreak and crushes, Sioux's songs were about dreams and nightmares. Where women in rock were expected, and disrespected, as white and Western, Sioux changed from Susan Ballion to Siouxsie Sioux. The refusal of Sioux to go along with the notion of the inauthentic woman in rock and as a result creating space for a new, subversive femininity answers the call of Hélène Cixous (1976) for women to write in order to write women into history. This writing/singing/performing helps to foster legitimacy for the notion of women in rock.

Pop cultural icons are all around us. We may not know who they are or what they have done, but we know their faces. We see these faces on t-shirts, mugs, posters, murals. We see these faces emulated in order to evoke their essence. The Aladdin Sane makeup of David Bowie. John Lennon in glasses and a New York City t-shirt. Prince in ruffles on a motorcycle. James Dean in a cuffed white t-shirt. Marilyn Monroe with her platinum wave and red lips parted. Tupac with a bandana. We see these figures emulated in an attempt impart a sort of legitimacy and authenticity to the emulator. Paradoxically icons become icons by the embedded authenticity in their iconoclasm. Often, most people will not even recognize the evocation going on in a pop star's dress, such as the Jennifer Herrema of Royal Trux's influence on some of Rihanna's

stylings. But because these icons are so steeped in layered citations, the message of authenticity is received.

Sioux's face is embedded in the culture - unique enough to be known in abstract - on the cover of magazines, on stickers, on shirts, in caricature. She is herself a cultural shorthand. Ads in zines were selling badges of her face before her first album came out. Siouxsie Sioux is an icon. For icons like Siouxsie Sioux, her transgressions against the norms speak to the 'others,' or outsiders, in society and provide a space for them to inhabit, to find a place of legitimacy for themselves by inhabiting Sioux's legitimacy before finding their own space by standing on her shoulders. Sioux, of course, is herself standing on shoulders, as all icons do. This project aims to unspool the how and why of Sioux's legitimacy in rock and icon status in the culture. The how is Sioux's performative authenticity which yields legitimacy and the why is her evocation of dreams in her art.

Figure 1: Flier for the 2020 Rock 'n' Roll flea market featuring caricatures of Michael Jackson, Slash, Sioux, Lemmy, Run DMC, Donna Summer, and David Byrne

Figure 1: 'Women Who Rock' candle collection on etsy featuring Sioux, Nicki Minaj, Dolly Parton, Cardi B, and Madonna

Figure 3: Still from the film 'Run Fatboy Run' with Simon Pegg wearing a Banshees t-shirt

How does one sell lots of albums but not be perceived as 'selling out,' i.e. maintain the credibility of the subculture but reap the financial benefits of wider acceptance? The mainstream is understood to have sold out to reach the heights of wide acceptance. The small subcultural world has not sold out but does not make their living from their musical output. But what about the rare middle ground performer, the big subcultural performer who is still seen as authentic and not as selling out? Siouxsie Sioux is one such performer who lives off of her art but is not seen as a sellout. Sioux's inclusion on the cover of punk zine compilations and retrospectives, a scene known for its authenticity policing, of *Ripped and Torn* (covering years 1976-1979, published in 2018), *Search & Destroy* (issues 7-11 from 1978, published in 1997) *Sniffin' Glue*, (covering 1976, published in 2009) confirm this. How does she retain her subcultural authenticity while also being a successful commodity?

Two songs from 1981, "Spellbound" by Siouxsie and the Banshees and "Girls on Film" by Duran Duran, illustrate the tension between two forms of musical expression, the mainstream popular culture producers and the 'true to music' artists, and when explored helps to explain the rare positioning of Sioux. When Simon LeBon sings about models and observes partially naked young women roll around in shaving cream in the Duran Duran "Girls on Film" music video, Siouxsie Sioux's haunting voice and lyrics promise something more than superficiality; the Banshees video is striking, evocative, dreamlike. The worlds expressed in the two videos are very different and yet share a similarity in that they are both consumed on the world stage of television. I have chosen this comparison because both Duran Duran and Siouxsie and the Banshees emanate from the same postpunk world. Siouxsie and the Banshees formed in 1976, Duran Duran in 1978. Both bands were reaching for a similar audience of smart, young people who were looking for intelligent songwriting and musical expression.

Sioux's subversion of authenticity within commerciality is still appreciated today. As makeup tutorials by drag stars emulating her look will attest, Sioux is an icon. To these people and countless others, Sioux's feminine masculinity challenges notions of traditional femininity and masculinity, thereby showing the cracks within their constructions. As theorists of gender as performativity have argued, gender is not inherent but rather learned and rehearsed. Sioux's appearance and behavior laid the groundwork not just for women to create new spaces in culture for themselves, but also for men and non-binary people as well. By exposing the artifice Sioux, among others like Laurie Anderson and Grace Jones, helped to create new ways of seeing and performing gender. Although Sioux's height of fame was from the 1970s through 1990s, her influence still can be seen today. The remainder of this introductory chapter will explore a review of the literature surrounding popular culture, authenticity within subcultures and afforded to women, invented tradition, and performative citationality. This review will provide context for my claim that Sioux must create legitimacy for herself on the culture stage, which also makes space for a new, subversive femininity.

Popular Culture

Popular and mass culture are the sites through which a cultural identity may be formed (Mel van Elteren, 1996). Consumer commodities make up a significant part of popular culture. Commodities are both entertainment and a site of identification through which broader social connections are enabled. For example, fans of Siouxsie and the Banshees identify themselves to other fans by wearing band t-shirts. Popular commodities cycle through consumption. First, through purchasing and enjoying, as a discourse among consumers, and finally cycling back to consumption. According to Fredric Jameson (1991), this "consumption of sheer commodification" is a mark of the era of postmodernism (p. x). A particular marker of

postmodernism isn't just the enchanted meaning consumers give to commodities, but a modification of late capitalism wherein the consumer is further alienated from the conditions of labor (David Harvey, 1989).

In the postmodern era where culture is commodified and identification made through consumption, what is made available to consume must be palatable to the widest possible audience. Yet products must be innovative enough to draw attention. Alison Huber (2013) argues that dominant popular culture's metaphorical descriptor "mainstream" is apt because it acts as a river does; it rages along a path, picking up elements of art, yielding a watered-down product which can be easily assimilated. Jameson also sees popular culture through a water-based analogy when he writes of the urgency with which art producers as commodity suppliers try to keep up with the demand for "fresh waves" of new and exciting products for consumption. The propulsion of capital behind the ebb and flow of cultural production and consumption is relentless and, as a consumer, the pull to submit to the mainstream current is strong, as submission is rewarded with wide acceptance by the majority.

But acceptance of this cultural output is, of course, not appealing to everyone. Whether through boredom of mainstream music or a genuine distaste of it, there are those who are driven to look outside of the norm. Dick Hebdige, in his seminal work on the punk subculture, *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* (1979), considers these people enacting a refusal to go along with and accept the norms of style and music offered to the masses. John Clarke et al. (1975/2005) describe subcultures as groups outside of the mainstream that are "focused around certain activities, values, certain uses of material artifacts, territorial spaces etc. which significantly differentiate them from the wider culture" (p. 94). Hebdige writes that artifacts and spaces utilized by subcultural members are available and recognizable by everyone, therefore

their different use acts as a statement of deviation from the norm and membership in a subculture. A suit and tie which signals stability and seriousness to the masses takes on another connotation when worn in conjunction with subcultural tastes, such as the teddy boys (teddy signifies the Edwardian suit morphed into a modern, rocker nickname) wearing the suit in and amongst gangs of rock and skiffle fans.

This refusal and subversion of standard signs signals to the dominant culture that this formerly traditional semiotic communication has changed, means something different depending on who is wearing it, and is actually a symbol. The suit also functions as a signal for other subcultural members to recognize one of their own. Hebdige contends that once these subversions are covered by the media and subsequently commodified by industry, the subculture loses its momentum and ceases to be a vital organism. Sarah Thornton (1996) however, disagrees that media coverage defangs subculture. To Thornton, outsider and wider attention works to validate and authenticate subcultural fans and creators.

Jean Baudrillard (1981/1988) argues that we live in a society constructed of signs and symbols, which refer to nothing but themselves and are used to create simulations of both quotidian and spectacular scenarios. Baudrillard sees the phases of the image starting as a reflection of a real object before passing through two successive stages to ultimately become the reflection that is not reflecting anything but is itself the image. Punks are aware of this key element of the postmodern condition and are keen to expose these constructions in the most shocking possible ways in both music and style. Ryan Moore (2004) found this subversion and refusal a key half of punk's reaction to postmodernity. Moore understands the second half of punk's reaction to postmodernism as a focus on the real, or authenticity, so as to avoid, and avoid being taken in by, those who perpetuate simulations earnestly and/or in aid of capital rewards.

Authenticity Within Musical Subcultures

Authenticity research in subcultures has found that authenticity within groups centered around music is generally considered to be masculine and the inauthentic feminine (Helen Reddington, 2016; Helen Davies, 2001; Kembrew McLeod, 1999). Hebdige seemed to agree with this notion as his *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* concerns itself with male artists and male fans. Thornton's *Club cultures: Music, media, and subcultural capital* includes women in her examination of clubland and found that when subcultures achieved mainstream attention, they become feminized with female names and accessories associated with the subgenre (ie. fans become Techno Tracys and the music handbag house).

McLeod argues that claims of musical authenticity by fans and creators are a way to stave off the feeling, if not the reality, of being assimilated by the mass cultural identity of mainstream culture. Authenticity, and the detecting of (in)authenticity, in these subcultures then becomes a way of protecting the culture from the mainstream in the face of media representation. Therefore, navigating the terrain of subcultural authenticity and capital is tricky.

Authenticity and Artistic/Commercial Tensions

Walter Benjamin (1936/2017) contends that the nucleus of a work of art is its authenticity inherent in its original form (p. 1256). This understanding of authenticity questions the validity of any form which depends upon reproduction. If there is no original to which art in our society refers, then each reproduced object becomes its own original. This argument is made by Thornton in her historicizing of the mass medium of music: a record becomes an original when it is created in a studio with the sole purpose of being sold in album form. In this way, recorded and circulated music becomes authentic, because it is in its original form.

If authenticity is possible in the medium of recorded music as Thornton argues, then how does one retain 'truth to music' when the mainstream demands wide appeal? Cornel West (1990) calls this "the Existential Challenge" facing progressive cultural producers (p. 106). One way to gain and/or retain authenticity for artists is by using their art to bring attention to the simulations inherent in mainstream symbols. This is what Karina Eileraas (1997) believes iconoclastic feminine performers like Siouxsie Sioux are doing when they act on stage or sing in albums in ways outside of mainstream feminine behaviors. This untypical behavior embodies the ways in which traditional gendered behavior is constructed and creates authenticity of 'truth to music' with actions that suit the performer and not the mainstream.

Keir Keightley (2001) insists that although the deep connection one feels with their favorite music is inextricably tied to capitalism, music can still produce "intense feelings of freedom, rebellion, marginality, oppositionality, uniqueness, and authenticity" (p. 109). Janice Radway (2011) writes that zines were an outcrop of these intense feelings, formed from the punk ethos, and served as a way for fans to "communicate among themselves . . . as a defiant response to the commercialism of mainstream society" (p. 140). So that although in the pre-streaming and downloading era one would have to purchase music in order to listen to it, the appreciation and expression of this music could be done in a non-commodified way and attract fans to one another.

Another exercise in simulation exposure is through the performance of dreams, what Jonathan Crary in *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* (2013) considers the only escape from capital. As Crary sees it, most of modernity as well as the 24/7 cycle of postmodernity disrespects sleep because capitalism demands round the clock subservience. In the negation of these demands, sleep operates as both the last refuge from capitalism and a metaphor for a world

without capitalism. In sleeping and dreaming we are vulnerable, cannot earn money, and are free to explore a reality without the boundaries of capitalism.

Although the representation of dreams are commodified in this example, I argue that through the performance of dreams in the Banshees' 1981 song and video "Spellbound" Sioux enacts a protest against mainstream music, especially when in contrast to Duran Duran's "Girls on Film" of the same year, and in so doing helps to create a subcultural community which authenticated Sioux and her fans. I argue that this evocation of dreams is integral to Sioux's subcultural authenticity and acts as a stopgap from the commerce inherent in the music industry from contaminating and altering her art. But before overcoming this hurdle, Sioux must first reckon with the resistance against the very existence of women in rock.

Women's Authenticity in Rock and Punk Rock

Young Western people in the 1970s who were both bored and exhausted by the hypermasculinity of rock wanted to find their own place in music, a place with meaning that spoke directly to them, and gravitated towards the new genre of punk (Barker and Taylor, 2007). The movement was surrounded with much fervor and adulation because of its transgressive elements, although the authenticity of the movement, at least in the UK, was shaky from the beginning. Steve Redhead (1990) urges us not to take the view that punk's radical ethos somehow makes it more real or 'authentic' than rock and Malcolm McLaren, the self-lauded punk provocateur who claimed ownership over the concept of the Sex Pistols, a band which is credited for the dawn of British punk, saw punk as a posture and made sure everyone knew it (Barker and Taylor). McLaren's crass commercialism taking the form of selling 'punk' clothes in his shop and his relentless self-promotion threatened to delegitimize any notion of authenticity in punk (Angela McRobbie, 1993).

Despite these reservations of authenticity, punk did make a space in the culture for new faces and new music. Punk is now seen as an egalitarian movement more welcoming to women than rock. Caroline O'Meara (2003) argued that, with no gatekeepers, punk's "enthusiasm for musical amateurism . . . provided a space for women to fully participate" (p. 300). Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie saw in punk's aggressive attitude toward the status quo of rock as a groundbreaking movement, where participants did not let their "sexuality be conducted as a commodity . . . and one of its effects has been to allow female voices to be heard that are not often allowed expression on record, stage, or radio -- shrill, assertive, impure individual voices" (p. 14).

McRobbie and Frith and O'Meara describe the scene as a liberating shift away from the rock establishment, but when punk was new, women's authenticity in the genre was not always granted. As reported by Reddington in *The Lost Women of Rock Music: Female Musicians of the Punk Era* (2016), the rock press was initially just as unfriendly to women in punk as they were to women in rock. Women in punk were seen as enacting a stunt by many rock journalists who tried to discredit them by attempting to reiterate traditional feminine roles outside of their musical personae. For instance, the best-selling music magazine in the 1970s, the *New Musical Express* (the NME), published a recipe by Patti Smith, the first time a recipe was ever published in the magazine, in an act of apparent attempted policing of Smith's status (p. 47). John Peel allegedly joined in delegitimizing women in punk with the quip that, "punk opened the door for fat women in dungarees to get up on stage and play in bands" (p. 142).

Helen Davies (2001) found through thorough analysis of the UK rock press that men are considered the baseline of authenticity and when women were mentioned it was as a woman (usually 'girl') first, then as a musician, often relying on the comparison of the artists as a female

version of a well-known male rock star. Women were often lumped in as a group when there was no common ground other than gender. Additionally, well-read women were described as pretentious while well-read men were presented as intelligent. This view of women as an illegitimate presence in rock could be due to the fact that the majority of writers at the publications Davies investigated, the Melody Maker, the NME, Q, Vox, the Guardian, and the Independent, are male and assume their audience to be as well. The readers of these publications then internalize the notion of the inauthentic woman in rock. As a result, women in rock music have struggled to be taken seriously due to the assumption that rock authenticity is inherently male. Subcultures themselves were studied as intrinsically male as McRobbie wrote in 1980, critiquing the work of Hebdige and Paul Willis, in the way in which they consider males to be members of a subculture and do not consider women's position in them at all. Of course, cultural studies have come a long way since then, but this is the time Sioux lives in when she begins to make music.

Situated within this milieu, Sioux utilized various citational elements to create authority and authenticity in order destabilize the obstacles to her legitimacy as a female postpunk performer. Additionally, and perhaps problematically, she also relied on appropriating the name of a Native American tribe, along with recalling the figure of the dominatrix and other expressions of feminine masculinity to invent a tradition for a new femininity in the arts.

Invented Tradition and Citationality Background

Invented traditions (Eric Hobsbawm, 1983), are new rituals and symbolisms that are created. These invented traditions transmit and normalize new values and, because they are made up of elements of the past, or are tweaks on elements of the past, these new traditions cite specific histories to cultivate an aura of legitimacy around emergent cultural expressions.

Because these elements are citing existing tropes and concepts, these invented traditions can be accepted and understood much quicker and easier than something completely new.

These citations of existing elements used in a new way are embodied performatively and can also be understood as what Diana Taylor (2003) calls 'acts of transfer,' or the "transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated [behavior]" (p. 2-3). A culturally savvy performer chooses elements she wishes she possessed and by evoking their symbol, transfers their essence onto herself. This is what white performers are doing when they evoke Native Americans to add an almost intangible depth to their performance. This type of legitimacy seeking through non-Western others, what Pavithra Prasad (2013) calls "authentic bodies" (p. 33) belie the hegemonic forces inherent in their seeking. This authenticity then adorns the white body with legitimatized otherness. Sara Ahmed (2013) writes that native bodies are often transformed by the West as "knowledge, property, and commodity" (p. 82). Historically white Western bodies have viewed themselves as the center of the world, and, as off-center, native bodies can be transformed in this way and elements of their essentialized culture can be selectively consumed, as if at an all-you-can-eat buffet.

This transformation of Native bodies and culture into independent signifiers utilized by non-Native people as accessories is an example of Ahmed's commodification of Native bodies. The settler exports the notion of the Native in television programs and movies, which then perpetuates and popularizes the Native tropes portrayed as the definition of what it means to be Native. These symbols are then cited by performers, or on 'tribal print' garments, etc., and the citer or wearer is doing so in hopes of imparting the notion of the Native onto herself for that brief period. Philip Deloria (1998) writes that the perception of Indianness constructed by colonists is heavily skewed by Western prejudices. "Dignified nobility and inhuman savagery"

(p. 20) are the most dominant representations of Native Americans exported by European colonizers of the Americas. Sioux's authority and legitimacy are constructed in part by benefiting from the use of symbols learned from this commodification. In the next chapter I will explain how this use of the citational native, along with Sioux's experimentation with the representation of gender works to create legitimacy for herself in the culture which creates space in the culture for subversive femininity and/or outsiders. Visual artist Sue Webster found in Sioux an explanation for a feeling and being that she could not put words to before:

> "Growing up in a suburban town called Leicester, I felt like an outsider. When I first saw an image of Siouxsie, I realized that I felt so different than the world into which I'd been born. I didn't have friends that had similar tastes. I was drawn to the dark side of life. It was powerful to see images of women who weren't afraid to be outspoken, who didn't conform. They wanted to be listened to and had something to say. To an 11-year-old girl growing up on the outskirts of town, that was a wake-up call" (Jadie Stillwell, 2019).

Webster's testimony reinforces the importance of seeing others inhabiting a forged space you yourself could occupy. The space Sioux inhabits was carved by authority, citations, and the evocation of dreams, and reveals the iconoclasm resultant of being incongruous to the dominant culture. As Webster makes clear, to her Sioux was an other and gravitated towards her because Webster herself felt like an other. In fact, the language she uses above is coded in the language of the other. Outsider, different, dark side, outskirts are words Webster uses to describe herself as separate from the dominant culture. Sioux herself felt like an other in her world and gravitated towards and appropriated symbols which, similarly to Webster's word choice above, explicitly transmits the message of the other. For Sioux, to embody the other and refute the trope of the inauthentic woman in rock was to appropriate the non-white and non-traditionally feminine. These semiotic choices send a message that is as clear as Webster's is above, but without having

to use words. Sioux's citations work to remove her from being viewed as an inauthentic woman in rock, but also works in tandem with colonial urges to erase the Indigenous.

The following chapter unpacks the citations utilized by Sioux to construct her legitimacy and create traditions which carved out more space in the culture for subversive femininity. The second chapter explores the evocation of dreams as a method of retaining subcultural authenticity while creating commodified art. The final concluding chapter summarizes my findings and the ways in which Sioux subverted hegemonic standards of women in the culture by changing the expectations of what it means to be a woman in culture.

CHAPTER 2: INVENTED TRADITION AND CITATIONALITY IN SIOUXSIE SIOUX'S POSTPUNK AESTHETIC

Drag performer Sasha Velour applies foundation as she describes the person whose makeup she is emulating and why she is drawn to her. Velour says by watching and listening to Siouxsie Sioux she learned that, "you could have hairy armpits and look like a vampire and still be powerful and femme." This homage by Velour confirms the icon status of Siouxsie Sioux, as only icons are afforded the treatment of a makeup tutorial by a drag queen. Sioux is an icon of subversive femininity whose appearance and actions create a space of legitimacy for Sioux and a template for her fans to follow.

Music journalist Lucy O'Brien (1994) said of Sioux when O'Brien was in school and forming her own band:

> "To me then, an idealistic sixth form innocent, timorous yet aching to enter the wild, strange, androgynous world which she and her coterie seemed to signify, Siouxsie was the One Who Knew, a woman who had surely been to the edge, nay was living on it, study of which would somehow give us access" (p. 88).

This access O'Brien speaks of is the access to occupy space in the arts that Sioux, among others, helped to legitimize for the nuanced of gender. Androgynous musicians were not new. Bowie of course laid the groundwork for his trailblazing gender-playing descendants, but as a man was afforded an innate legitimacy that for women, trans, or nonbinary people required additional finessing to achieve. Sioux's androgynous gender performance signals what Jack Halberstam (1998) has called "female masculinity." To Velour, Sioux's feminine masculinity challenges notions of traditional femininity and masculinity. For O'Brien, Sioux gave her the chance to feel legitimate in a male-dominated music - and beyond - world. At first, these fans are emboldened by Sioux to dress like her and wear her makeup before, after inhabiting the legitimated space,

creating their own look and identity. I argue that, in a culture that views women as artistically inauthentic, Sioux's citational embodiments create authority and authenticity for herself and

Figure 2: Thumbnail image of Sasha Velour's makeup tutorial of Sioux

invent tradition, which ultimately lead to her icon status through iconoclasm. I will start with an explanation of the ways in which Siouxsie Sioux, like other performers who play with gender and subculture, use citation and invented traditions to challenge conventional ideas of feminine musical performance. Following this I offer what can be thought of as the ideological foundation of Sioux's early authority status. I will then explain how Sioux cites archetypes of the dominatrix and Native American as ways to cultivate further authority which builds authenticity and therefore legitimacy before describing how feminine masculinity functions for Sioux and which may be the reason why she has gained her icon status and perhaps what emboldened her to seek it at all. In closing I will discuss how Sioux's invented tradition of countercultural feminine performance has emboldened others to continue reinventing gender performance in music.

Invented Tradition and Citationality

In this section I talk about the ways in which citations work to create invented tradition. This is related to my argument that Sioux, as a woman in music, must create her own

authoritative voice. Because few existing traditions supporting subversive femininity existed, Sioux needed to assemble new customs which bolstered her legitimacy and therefore her authority.

Invented tradition, according to Eric Hobsbawm (1983), are novel customs and semiotics which are created to "inculcate certain values and norms of behavior by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past" (p. 1). The sense of continuity with the past is further cemented by utilizing old materials in new rituals. In this way, invented tradition is akin to bricolage, or a creative repurposing of materials, as the symbols chosen by Sioux are done so methodically and with purpose. Each symbol carries with it its own meaning and the meanings selected create and impart their own authenticity to Sioux. These invented traditions transmit and normalize new values and carry with them the actions to inhabit and express these new norms. By embodying certain aesthetics of gender and otherness, Sioux has contributed to a tradition of a new femininity rooted in independent self-possession. Rather than create a new femininity out of whole cloth, Sioux's invented traditions borrow authenticity from existing tropes and concepts that are understood to already have varying registers of power. As a savvy cultural producer, Sioux has access to many artistic avenues from which to choose her citations.

These citations are embodied performatively and can also be understood as what Diana Taylor (2003) calls 'acts of transfer,' or the "transmitting social knowledge, memory, and a sense of identity through reiterated [behavior]" (p. 2-3). In choosing the citational elements that she does, Sioux is enacting the elements of strong, transgressive femininity that have been minimized or forgotten through history. Through the only slightly changed look and demeanor she has maintained throughout the decades, Sioux has transferred the meaning behind her citations into a coherent symbol or tradition that can then be enacted by her fans or those who do

not even know her but experience her influence on the culture. These influences could only have the wide impact they do because of the cultural status Sioux retains. These statuses were not seen as inherent within Sioux and were earned.

Siouxsie Sioux's Authority

In this section I discuss Sioux's authority. This is connected to my claim that a subversively feminine voice of authority required constructing. This authority creates legitimacy for Sioux's position as an authentic voice in rock and creates space for likeminded individuals to also inhabit. This authority is constructed because of the prevailing notion that women in music lack authenticity.

In the audience of some of the earliest Sex Pistols shows was a young Siouxsie Sioux. She went on to attend almost every one of their shows and was dubbed by journalist Caroline Coon as a member of "The Bromley Contingent," a suburban gang of Pistols devotees. Coon (1976/2003) describes the early Pistols shows as revelatory to the audience; the shows imparted the knowledge that the audience themselves could be on the stage the next night, if they had the desire and courage (p. 194). The Pistols did not display music ability or panache with their instruments or the mics. They were rude and gross and conveyed the message that nothing mattered, and they did not care. The Pistols inspired dozens of bands to form in the U.K. and everyone who cared about music knew who they were and who the Bromley Contingent was. Sioux became such a fixture of the Pistols scene that, because of her fandom and her unusual self-styled attire, Sex Pistols manager McLaren invited her to attend what became a few minutes of television infamy on the Grundy Show.

Figure 3: Sioux (right) and fellow Sex Pistols fan on the Grundy Show

Even before the Pistols in 1976, Sioux possessed a keen fashion flair and her friend Simon Barker remarked that, "Some people might think 'Sioux' is an invention, but she's always looked incredible. She was a star before she'd sung a note" (Mark Paytress, 2003, p. 29). Sioux often experimented with avant-garde haircuts and hair colors not found in nature in the days before Manic Panic. Keenly aware of shock publicity, McLaren knew Sioux's look would add to the extreme presence of the Sex Pistols on television.

This moment of television became infamous because of swears spit out of Pistols members' mouths. Before, during, and after the swears, Sioux stands behind the Pistols, immediately catching the viewer's eye with her distinctive look and attitude. She speaks to the host when spoken to, but the focus of the camera is on the Pistols. Yet the camera's total focus was not needed for Sioux to transmit her unusual qualifications. Sioux's appearance and demeanor on this "Grundy" episode exhibited features which embodied punk subcultural authenticity: a cavalier attitude to the somewhat leering host, cool theatricality in movement and facial expressions, impeccably chosen clothing and makeup somewhat inspired by hooligan favorite "A Clockwork Orange," and the subcultural capital to be standing behind the Sex

Pistols. This performance led to a demand for Sioux's image to grace the cover of British and international tabloids and she became one of the "faces" of punk. This early connection with (male) punk already legends helped inch Sioux to authority initially, before she even had a band. Widespread press recognition was one of the reasons why Sioux is in the band name 'Siouxsie and the Banshees,' because the music magazine reading public already knew her name. These few moments of television jumpstarted Sioux's authority and authenticity but would not be enough to cement her icon status. Sioux's use of dominatrix imagery and attitude further aided this cause, as did the citation of the Native American.

Colonial Appropriation

Citational Native

This section concerns colonial appropriation, specifically Sioux's citing of the Native. This connects to my argument that for Sioux to not be subject to the prejudices against women in music, she must become something other than what women were expected to be in music. To achieve this, in Sioux's appropriation of the Native American, she is using the master's tools to dismantle the master's house (Audre Lorde, 1984).

In choosing the name "Siouxsie Sioux," Sioux imparts the charms of an exotic Other upon herself. In this sense the notion of essentialized natives act as what Pavithra Prasad (2013) calls "authentic bodies" (p. 33) who are seen as imparting a mystical validity to white Westerners who view themselves as the center and therefore the default way of being. Sara Ahmed (2013) writes that native bodies are often transformed by the West as "knowledge, property, and commodity" (p. 82) which can then be parsed into symbols.

Growing up in England, Sioux watched a lot of television, including American Westerns. Never having set foot in the United States as a child, Sioux's view of Native Americans was

solely through the lens of colonialism. Because of this, Native American tribe names, like the Sioux, embodied a special, magical aura not complicated by the actual existence of the lives of Native Americans. Sioux viewed the Native people portrayed in these Westerns as the only interesting and dignified aspect of the program (Paytress). This inclination can be viewed as an inclination to relate to the 'other' represented on these programs. It can also be understood as viewing native bodies as less complex and therefore more authentic than the white Westerners. By utilizing the name Siouxsie Sioux, Sioux is citing that perceived authenticity as her own. This perceived more-truthful-way-of-being is selective and can be put on or taken off at one's whims, what Tuck and Wang describe as to "become without becoming" (p. 14), a settler adoption fantasy. Sioux is able to absorb one facet of Native American life by choosing the name Sioux, but she does not live the reality of a Native American. The reality of the lives of Native people is not something that those who appropriate are interested in, but rather they are only concerned with mystical elements or spiritualisms that are seen as decorative features that can be used when convenient.

This selective appropriation of Native culture works in tandem with the blotting out of actual Native Americans. The selection of the name Sioux reinforces the legitimacy of colonialism which contends that Native lives and culture are to be harvested as needed. This action treats the Native culture itself as the empty husk which carries the valuable fruit of elements of Native culture which is only valuable if commodified. Since the dominant Western culture values the view of the settler over Indigenous people, this appropriation by Sioux is viewed as she intended, as an exotic accessory which imparts an air of vaguely foreign authenticity. This appropriation, albeit unintentionally, works to both create space for Sioux and remove space for individualized notions of Native Americans. Using the master's tools to

dismantle to master's house can be seen here to illuminate why Lorde urges women to find other ways of bringing about change than to use the tools of domination. Citing the Native American to avoid the trap of the inauthentic woman in rock elevates Sioux but disempowers Native Americans by reinforcing their essentialism. Yet using the master's tools is often all that is accessible. Viewing the ways in which the tools of domination are used to elevate one whole lowering another shows how the master's tools work. The next section focuses on how gender is used to subvert expectations of women in rock. Citing the dominatrix and female masculinity elevates Sioux from the ghetto of the inauthentic woman in music but without at the expense of an already marginalized group.

Gender Disruption

Citational Dominatrix

In this section I explain the ways Sioux plays with gender. This further addresses my argument that Sioux must separate herself from the expectations of women in rock.

Punk fashion is about shock and disorder, described by Vivian Westwood as "confrontation dressing" (Hebdige, 1979/1981, p. 107). The semiotic trappings of the fetish world were no doubt appropriated by punks to shock the public, but the dominatrix whip, black leather and PVC also brought with it an attitude that had the potential to empower. Sioux played with other shocking garments, such as a short-lived period of swastika armband (which she later regretted and denounced - the "Israel" tour's logo of a Jewish star was her way of atoning for this) but the dominatrix iconography was more persistent because it was chosen not just to shock, but because it is one of the few feminine icons in culture with unquestionable power attached to it. Unlike encounters actual dominatrices face, where often men try "topping from the bottom," or control

the dominatrices' actions with commands (Danielle Lindemann, 2010, p. 600), Sioux is in control partly because she is out of reach to the audience.

The iconography of the dominatrix is used by Sioux to create authority. The dominatrix is a figure of feminine strength and power. The dominatrix does not mimic male domination but is on its own a powerful symbol of control. The dominatrix is in control of her sexuality and controls the pleasure of others. She looks at you unafraid and unembarrassed. Dominatrices cannot be cowed by comments like Peel's about what he considered to be the unattractive women of punk's unfair position on the stage. It frankly does not matter to the dominatrix what others think of her. This lack of concern of what others think of her is precisely what leads to her authority. That, and she has a whip.

Figure 4: Sioux on Top of the Pops

On the UK television program "Top of the Pops" Sioux simulates the aura of dominatrix by donning black leather and tall boots. Sioux has the clothes of a dominatrix but the similarities do not end there. Sioux coils the microphone in her hand like a whip and manipulates it to simulate the whip's effect, perhaps echoing Mary Woronov and Gerard Malanga's whip dance in the Exploding Plastic Inevitable show with the Velvet Underground. This whip, along with her clothes and her stare, control the audience and perhaps her band. Sioux's stare subverts what

Laura Mulvey (1992) coined ‘the male gaze.’ The male gaze projects male fantasies and desires onto women on the screen. Sioux’s stare and demeanor convey the message that she is discarding the notion that women are to be looked at. She looks back. Sioux embodies the strength and power of a dominatrix. This embodiment allows Sioux to subvert the image of women in rock who, if seen at all, are sex objects to be used by the whims of others. Thaïs E. Morgan (2008) has argued that the dominatrix parodies hegemonic systems of gender and sexuality and in so doing defetishizes the female form by exposing the elements which construct its fetishization. To Morgan,

> “…the figure of the dominatrix is becoming newly readable within the cultural situation of our postmodernity as an icon of a powerful female subjectivity in process. Thus, through her self-conscious role playing-"acting like a man" and "like a woman" at the same time-the dominatrix breaks the frame of sexual difference, transgressing the prescribed limits for Woman” (p. 7).

The use of the trope of the dominatrix by Sioux works to break down the mold of what is expected of women in rock. The dominatrix complicates the expectation of woman as a sex object, while still being a sex object, but one who is in control of her sexuality. This action of transgressive and subversive femininity allows people to utilize the mold of the dominatrix to inhabit in a way that is legible as separate from the standard woman trope.

Sioux has proven that she is more than just a sex object or groupie. She was on The Grundy Show with the Sex Pistols. She became one of the faces of punk in the media. Sioux’s authority here is buoyed by a convergence of feminism and punk, a time where, according to McRobbie (1991), “both punk girls and feminists want to overturn accepted ideas about what constitutes femininity” and happen to use similar tools to subvert the ways in which women were expected to look and dress in public (p. 32). By utilizing the trope of the dominatrix, Sioux is creating her own power and exposes the forces that align to deny her power. This citation of the

dominatrix acts as the evidence of the desire of Sioux and her audience for a new type of femininity in the culture.

Female Masculinity

This section further addresses Sioux's disruption of gender expectations. This playing with gender, female masculinity, makes up another aspect of Sioux's authenticity and authority. Female masculinity is frequently viewed as an unclear identity by hegemonic forces. Halberstam (1998) writes of his own stigmatization due to others viewing him as ambiguous or illegible.

The citational practice of referencing specific elements of culture in aid of transferring their meanings onto herself, Sioux aims to demystify some of these ambiguities. Sioux's aim is not to be read almost literally as a text, but to use these citations as tools of expression. Sioux uses a pastiche of citational elements to create a new femininity. Toying with identities and representational elements is the mark of the playful postmodern and punk. Punks understand that elements of identity are constructed, so why not pick and choose elements that will create the desired effect of authority status and authenticity. Of course, to have the luxury to pick and choose at all is a privilege which is not afforded to everyone. Sioux faced brutal opposition from those who were confused and angry at her transgressions. Perhaps in a way which can be viewed as a masculine trait, Sioux was not afraid of violence and almost happily engaged in it when necessary.

That Sioux's band is called Siouxsie and The Banshees is a trope typically reserved for the frontmen: "Bruce Springsteen and the E Street Band," "Iggy and The Stooges," etcetera. Sioux takes on the leading role, of an all-male band no less, and calls them not an ambiguous collection of people, but "The Banshees," the plural of the wailing ghost of a female Irish spirit whose haunting screams warn of death. Although the band claim the name derives from the

Vincent Price 1970 British horror film, “Cry of the Banshee” which was on television the week before their performance, the fact remains that Sioux has called her bandmates a name that evokes the stereotype of a hysterical woman while she remains outside of that imagery by being on the other side of the “and.”

Halberstam contends that “we seem to have a difficult time defining masculinity, [but] as a society we have little trouble in recognizing it” (p. 1). These actions of creating authority and tradition and using citational elements of cultures as one pleases are typically associated with masculinity. And yet, this masculinity is not necessarily gendered as male. To Halberstam, these instances of female masculinity help us to see how these elements associated with connected maleness and masculinity as constructed.

A behavior typical of female masculinity according to Halberstam is a refusal to accept what is expected of you. Before the live performance of Siouxsie and the Banshees in the video "Girls Bite Back," Sioux states, "I hate being called a female singer ‘cause I think I'm better than any male singer as well." Sioux is refusing to accept the bucket she has been put in by the press as the “female” version of the genderless but understood as male ‘real thing.’ Because she disagrees with this comparison, she rejects it. This embodiment of rejection may be the most important part of creating her icon status. Sioux does not accept this designation because she wants to be compared against all contenders of all genders. This statement illustrates how Sioux created her iconoclastic status in the music world and larger culture, and in so doing created space for other transgressive feminine presences like Sasha Velour and fashion designer Pam Hogg. Sioux is not content to be forced into the female-ghetto of rock. Rather, Sioux stalks through traditional expectations of women on stage and in music just as she stalks the stage. Sioux challenges critics and the audience to view her not as a woman first or as a female version

of an established male rock star, but as a performer in her own right, just as men are. This challenge by Sioux to critics and the audience is not posed just in interviews, but in the way Sioux commands attention on the stage.

To Halberstam, female masculinity's illegibility brings with it danger and possibility of violence. Sioux's pairing of the gender disruption of the dominatrix with female masculinity has been met with violence, but not in the way of illegible trans people. Sioux takes from masculinity the confidence of having a rightful place on the stage. She uses the dominatrix to both soften and harden masculinity and femininity. This tension is iconoclastic and charismatic.

Hogg credits Sioux's performative charisma as inspiration for Hogg to be creative in her own field. What was different about Sioux, Hogg said, was the way in which she created her own space for herself: Sioux could stalk the stage and command a presence, but not in the typical male rock star mode. To Hogg, this performance created space in rock and the greater creative arts not just for Sioux, but for anyone who was incongruous to a creative field. Hogg explains that Sioux was intent on creating her own look, which as a result was imitated by fans. This space that Sioux helped to create did not require emulation of Sioux's look in order to inhabit that space, although many did. The space could be occupied by anyone experimenting with gender and artistic expression. The forging of this space by Sioux and others and then subsequently by those who were inspired by Sioux to pursue their own creative endeavors acts as further evidence of the desire for new traditions in femininity.

Conclusion

Women are often not afforded authority or authenticity in the arts, or most other fields for that matter. For that reason, authority status for Siouxsie Sioux is not automatic or inherent, but rather it is constructed. To a culture that sees female artists as a baseline of inauthenticity, any

status conferred to women is earned. Sioux rejected the notion of her inauthenticity and created authority status and authenticity for herself with that rejection and through citing the dominatrix and Native Americans. These citations create authenticity and therefore legitimacy for Sioux first in the subcultures of punk and postpunk, and then in the eyes of the media and the culture.

The goal of this research is to understand the tradition invented by Sioux of a new femininity and to help and decode the reasons why these traditions led to her icon status. Hobsbawm views invented tradition as "evidence" which can be used to understand the urge to create new traditions and what they say about the people of adhere or do not adhere to them. The study of this invention of tradition in postpunk subculture can help to understand the ways in which our culture's understanding of femininity and alternative femininity has evolved and why. Sioux was dissatisfied with the tradition of 'femininity as inauthentic' so she rejected it to create her own by utilizing citations to create a new tradition of femininity. The reasons why people have gravitated toward Sioux's alternative femininity are the evidence proving what is valued by these fans.

For D. Soyini Madison and Judith Hamera (2006), studying performative elements, such as Sioux's performative authority and authenticity, helps us to understand "how human beings fundamentally make culture, affect power, and reinvent their ways of being in the world" (p. xii). Sioux's performances through music and being in the culture has changed our culture to the degree that she has inspired many who felt there was not a place for them in the arts to pursue their creativity. Hélène Cixous (1976) contended that this is what happens when women write themselves into history. Deconstructing the elements of her performances can help us to understand what is valued by those seeking out new traditions and what inspires iconoclasts to create new traditions.

CHAPTER 3: "WE ARE ENTRANCED:" SIOUXSIE SIOUX'S SUBCULTURAL AUTHENTICITY AND THE EVOCATION OF DREAMS

Jonathan Crary's *24/7: Late Capitalism and the Ends of Sleep* (2013) argues that capitalism insists upon relentless work. In this context, sleeping and dreaming operate as the only escape from capitalism. I argue that therefore dreaming is a metaphor to an existence without capitalism. As such, the evocation of dreams in art creates a space outside of the cycle of commodification and consumption inherent in mainstream popular culture.

In the subculture of punk and the following postpunk, authenticity is essential to the enjoyment of music and is dependent upon the exposure of the simulations of our postmodern reality and the rejection of the commodification of the popular culture industries. In the evoking of dreams in the Siouxsie and the Banshees song and music video "Spellbound," Siouxsie Sioux conjures up a space where listeners and viewers are free from the realities of everyday life. When viewed next to the Duran Duran song and music video "Girls on Film" the results of the evocation of dreams is clear: escape, authenticity, and authentication for both Sioux and her fans. I have chosen this comparison because of origin of both bands in the postpunk music scene and who would be appealing to the same audience at the same time. Both bands began in the punk/postpunk scene in England in the late 1970s before diverging in different paths artistically, while targeting their creative output at the same audience.

How authenticity is constructed and utilized has been theorized to be directly connected with how someone sees themselves and how they would like others to see them. Thornton writes that an artist is not determined to be inherently authentic but becomes authentic when authenticated by others. Someone believes themselves to be "authentic," and who they choose to be a fan of must also authentic. Who someone chooses to be a fan of, and the artist's

authenticity, helps to make up their own identity. In fact, Hans Weisethaunet and Ulf Lindberg (2013) write that "the experience of 'authenticity'. . . is an act of self-construction through an Other" (p. 477). Expanding upon Thornton, Allan Moore (2002) defines three ways in which authenticity is granted to performers by listeners: authenticity of expression (first person authenticity), authenticity of execution (third person authenticity), and authenticity of experience (second person authenticity). Moore writes that these aspects of authenticity, and how they manifest, are granted and performed solely by an audience member, regardless of the intention of the artist.

Two songs from 1981, "Spellbound" by Siouxsie and the Banshees and "Girls on Film" by Duran Duran, embody the tension between two forms of musical expression: the mainstream popular culture and the "true to music" expression. This is an opposition of interest in subcultures, what Kembrew McLeod (1999) describes as "commercial success versus underground or street credibility" (p. 141). An unpacking of this tension between selling records and retaining underground credibility helps to explain the rare positioning of Sioux. Simon LeBon sings about models and watches on as partially naked young women roll around in shaving cream in the Duran Duran "Girls on Film" music video. Siouxsie Sioux's haunting voice and lyrics on the other hand, promise something more than superficiality; the Banshees video is striking, evocative, dreamlike. Their worlds expressed in the two videos are very different and yet share a similarity in that they are both consumed on the world stage of television. Kevin Dettmar and William Richey (1999) contend that the study of popular music and performers provides an ideal lens through which to understand our postmodern society, owing to rock's birth coinciding with the birth of postmodern art. Using "Spellbound" and "Girls on Film" as both

lenses and comparison markers, I will reveal new ways of understanding the retention of subcultural authenticity while creating a postmodern commercial artistic offering.

The representation of dreams is commodified in the Siouxsie and the Banshees' 1981 song and video "Spellbound," yet I argue that through the evoking of sleep and dreams, Sioux is enacting an objection against the culture of consumption of mainstream music. This protest can be seen clearly in comparison to Duran Duran's "Girls on Film" of the same year. This departure from and objection to the norm aids in the creation and reinforcement of a subcultural community. This community authenticates Sioux and her fans. I view this evocation of dreams as a crucial aspect of the ways in which Sioux manages to balance subcultural authenticity with the selling of records, appearing on mainstream television and music videos.

The trope of following one's dreams in the music industry often conjures images of becoming as rich as possible, which necessitates "watering down" one's art to become as accessible to as many people as possible. There are many popular cultural examples of this narrative, including Britney Spears's feature film Crossroads (2002) to Eminem's 8 Mile (also 2002). I argue that by remaining true to music through the evoking of dreams, in the eyes of fans Sioux represents her art as undiluted by the watering down effects of capital. Sioux wanted to make her living from her art and so did expect to have her art commodified. Siouxsie and the Banshees's sale of millions of records leaves no question of commodification. Yet the evocation of dreams does not water down intentions and does not intend to appeal to everyone. This type of art occupies a middle ground between the smallest of subcultures and the mainstream popular culture offerings. Most work on subcultures focuses on male bands and male fans. This work aims to expand the scholarship on subcultures by focusing on Siouxsie Sioux and her fans, who are from all genders.

To begin this analysis I will first give some brief context on Siouxsie Sioux's early departure from punk themes before analyzing the visuals of both "Spellbound" and "Girls on Film." I will then explain how these visuals impact the authenticity of Sioux, how and why fans are drawn to her and what they gain from their fandom.

Siouxsie Sioux formed her band Siouxsie and the Banshees in 1976 after becoming well known as an ardent fan of the Sex Pistols. Even from the start, Sioux's punk roots were not as cut and dry as her contemporaries. Her 1976 first performance was more Velvet Underground, a band she admired for their transgressive sound, than Sex Pistols in its droning sound and avantgarde performance style. Sioux soon shifted to a postpunk sound and lyric that leaned more gothic-inspired. The gothic mentality is less shouted nihilism from the punk world, either for shock value or just for the sake of it, and more reveling in the inevitability of death, with haunted poetry and innovative sounds. Isabella van Elferin (2012) sees goth as "revolv[ing] around the suffocating spaces, the hauntings, and the psychological destabilization of the ghost story" (p. 11). These elements are conducive to the nether-reality of dreams. To Carl Jung (1961), dreams are a space where subconscious desires are enacted out of the control of the dreamer. Desires may be revealed in dreams that are unknown and unarticulated by the dreamer and in this way can be viewed as untampered-with creativity and artistic (unconscious) expression. By evoking dreams, one is conjuring up the space of pure creativity and a respite from the burdens of the waking world. As Jung contends, individuation is the merging of the conscious and the unconscious. When these consciouses are joined as one, neuroses are neutralized by addressing the subconscious in waking life. The subconscious rules dreams. When addressing dreams in the waking life, one may determine their unaddressed fantasies or worries. For Jung, the path of his own individuation utilized translating the images from his dreams into images that he would

draw or paint. Jung felt that if he did not evoke his own dreams in his art, “I might have been torn to pieces by them” (p. 177). The process of the evocation of dreams in commercially available art is the process of an artist harnessing their own individuation. This injects an artist’s subconscious into the culture and acts a method of disarming neuroses instead of letting neuroses rule over art, to ‘be torn to pieces’ by them.

The Look of Dreams vs. The Look of Capital

The 1981 videos “Spellbound” by Siouxsie and the Banshees and “Girls on Film” by Duran Duran provide an opportunity to explore the differences between the representation of capital and the representation of dreams. The opening shots of the respective videos indicate the tone of each and I will begin my analysis there.

Figure 6: Still from the opening of Spellbound

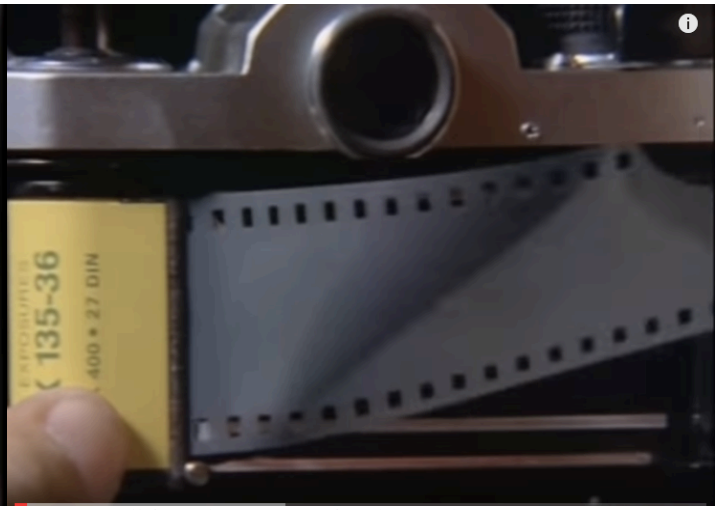

Figure 5: Still from the opening of Girls on Film

“Spellbound” begins with the superimposed images of fire, a cat, and a prowling Sioux. The superimposition of multiple images immediately evokes dreams. This vantage of multiple perspectives supports the notion of freedom of expression and ideas. Already we know this video is not rigidly based in reality or based in reality at all. Sioux is turning into a cat, or perhaps has the soul of a cat. Fire makes us think of night, of tales told ‘round the campfire, of burning witches. This world we are being invited into is different from the world we know. This world

does not follow the rules of the everyday and the video challenges the viewer to escape the confines of the everyday.

"Girls on Film" begins with film being inserted into a camera. From the first frame we know this video is based purely in reality. The audience is of course aware that what they are watching has been recorded, but this video is reveling in its recorded nature. This cementation of reality and the reminder of recording are the negation of dreams. We know that what we will see is in the realm of possibilities and grounded in a world in which we live and work. We soon see the members of Duran Duran putting on makeup along with several female models, who are dressed in small lacy, satiny articles before we are shown a shot of the band on a stage through the camera lens. We now understand the world we will be entering is one of capital and commodification: the commodification of music and female bodies. Duran Duran presides over, albeit in the background, various vignettes taking place in a ring in the foreground featuring women fighting with and/or being rescued by men. Music is not important here; it is the spectacle that drives our attention. Jameson's take on capitalism's demand for "fresh waves" of content to be consumed is apt here: almost as soon as a vignette is introduced, a new one is being set up. The band are only seen fleetingly. They hold their instruments, but almost like props.

Figure 7: Stills from the Girls on Film video

There are flashbulbs going off, reminding us of the reality being portrayed. The exploitation of the female body is a perpetual presence in the video as the women are filmed in the male gaze.

Meanwhile in “Spellbound,” Sioux presides over the over the video and her bandmates. She is superimposed over the images of the other band members and sometimes superimposed over herself. This duplication is another allusion to dreams. Dreams hold surprises and mystery. When watching the video, we are not confined to the rules of physics. Sioux presides over the video because she is our storyteller around the campfire and the leader of the band, which is called Siouxsie and the Banshees, not the Banshees. Sioux is not a disposable commodity as the women in “Girls on Film” are portrayed, or even a commodity at all. In “Spellbound,” music and musicians are important. We know this because when the band members are shown they are clearly playing their instruments. We understand that the song is being conjured in visual form and so the instruments are integral to the song’s representation. “Truth to music” is being portrayed through the close-up images of instruments being played and the singing of all lyrics by an ethereal Sioux.

Duran Duran members have said they meant their song to be a critique of the fashion industry (girls on film = models being photographed) but if so, it is only in the manner of Mark Fisher’s (2009) ‘Capitalist realism,’ where critiques are toothless and only serve to uphold the hegemonic forces of capitalism. Capitalist realism is the accepted notion that the only and best possible economic system is capitalism and any critiques are only surface because another way of living is unimaginable.

The images shown in the video are celebrating the rituals of the fashion industry in its depiction of makeup and being viewed exclusively through the lens of the male gaze. The band claims to want to expose the exploitation of women in fashion while simply perpetuating it in their video. In “Spellbound” the critique of mainstream music is inherent: the video evokes

dreams and in so doing celebrates innovation, draws attention to the people who play and sing the music, and remains true to their music. There are no realities here, only dreams.

Figure 8: Stills from Spellbound

Subcultural Authenticity in the Evoking of Dreams

In this section I explain the ways in which the evoking of dreams reinforces subcultural authenticity. This is related to my argument that subcultural authenticity can be retained while also producing commercial art.

In the evoking of dreams in "Spellbound," Sioux is enacting the refusal of the mainstream and her subcultural authenticity. Sioux is not attempting to refuse all of the trappings of capital in music: she is on a record label and her music video is being shown on television, but this refusal of the mainstream in the portrayal of dreams is key to her authenticity. If punk, and the understanding of punk need not be strictly in the musical sense but rather a sensibility (on which Sioux herself cut her teeth), requires an exposure of hypocritical simulations in the everyday postmodern existence and a quest for the real, the true, the 'authentic,' the "Spellbound" video meets the standard for Sioux's authenticity, what Moore considers first person authenticity.

In this authenticity, Sioux is able to counteract the contaminating force of capital of music video television. But following the logic of Thornton where the media enhances credibility/authority and authenticity, television media exposure did not lessen Sioux's impact or authentication potential. The video for "Spellbound" transmitted Sioux's adherence to the dreamlike world of truth to music to millions of fans who could then authenticate Sioux's authenticity. When viewed side by side with "Girls on Film" just by its very presence "Spellbound" exposes the mainstream, culture industry glorifying nature of Duran Duran. "Spellbound" is the negation of the marks of capitalism on display in "Girls on Film." In this way, the portrayal of dreams not only reveal the subcultural authenticity of Sioux but also act as a shield from the contamination of capital changing the musical output of Sioux. Selling music does not equate "selling out" when subcultural authenticity is present. In the chorus of "Spellbound" Sioux tells us that, "We are entranced," and perhaps the evoking of dreams does just that to sidestep the sullying and altering of art by commerce: it entrances us.

Authentication for Fans

This section concerns what fans get out of being fans of their chosen artists. This is related to my argument that Sioux's subcultural authenticity and iconoclasm work together to make space in the culture for a new type of femininity and also creates space for likeminded people to inhabit.

Subcultures are formed by affinity. Thornton calls subcultures "taste cultures" or groups of people who are drawn together "on the basis of their shared taste in music, their consumption of common media and, most importantly, their preference for people with similar tastes to themselves" (p. 15). Straw argues that music is the site where these tastes are first constructed and where one decides, for the first time, who they wish to ally themselves with (p. 65).

Searching for bands and artists in musical subcultures upon which to grant authenticity plays a dominant role for fans within musical subcultures (Barker and Taylor, 2007). The deviant act of rejecting mainstream music creates an identity separate from the mass culture, which in turn introduces one to a community, this one outside of the mainstream (Holly Kruse, 1993).

In the case of the subculture surrounding Sioux, the affinity is dreams. These fans are drawn to the representation of the other in culture, the 'true to music,' the dreamlike. When fans in this subculture make and listen to their playlists, or make or read zines about or including Sioux, they are making space for art outside of the full, relentlessly capitalistic torrent of mainstream music and the hegemonic systems it represents. Just as in dreams, this affinity is apart from the relentless celebration of commodification in the mainstream. I am not saying that these subcultures are magically separate and immune from the capitalist forces in the wider culture, but when they listen to her songs, Sioux fans find refuge in a space similar to dreams. This is in opposition to the experience of those who exclusively listen to songs of the mainstream which revel in conspicuous consumption and the celebration of sheer commodification. These mainstream fans have no refuge from capitalism and must live in it at all times. These individuals probably do not notice this circumstance, since they have not been driven to seek anything outside of it.

Will Straw (2001) views the notion of those who are drawn to artists who are 'true to music' as a "snobbish attack on mass taste" by those who believe "that music was degraded outside of a life fully devoted to music," (p. 68) but I argue that there is something gained by fans of bands who are seen as living lives devoted to music. When these make and listen to tapes of the more obscure bands or make mix and listen to CDs compiling favorite songs, or make or read zines about these bands and/or the surrounding subculture, they are making space for art

outside of the full, relentlessly capitalistic torrent of mainstream music and the hegemonic systems it represents. Radway (2011) considers this exchange of homemade objects an embodiment of punk's DIY ethos, an essential part of their "defiant response to the commercialism of mainstream society" (p. 140).

By choosing to listen to Siouxsie and the Banshees instead of Duran Duran, I argue these fans outside of the mainstream are using their taste as a tool. This tool finds community and uses it as an immunizing forcefield from the postmodern symbol without a referent. These fans place some faith in subcultural leaders, not grand narratives, or even superstars. This semi-detour around enthusiastic capitalism by subcultural members could not be performed without strong subcultural figures providing art worthy of such devotion. Sioux's authenticity creates space for herself in male-dominated rock, and space in the wider culture for a new and different femininity where she controls the gaze. This leadership status led to unanticipated consequences, including the recreation of Sioux's iconic look by her fans. Sioux did not intend, and was confused by, her clones in the audience. (Paytress). This discrepancy indicates that, in support of Moore's theory, authentication actions by fans is independent from the desires and intentions of the authenticated. To Simon Frith (1987), authenticity is the ability to upset the notions of what is commercially viable, or "what guarantees that rock performances resist or subvert commercial logic" (p. 136). To this end, iconoclasts must create and define "its own aesthetic standard" (p. 137) and provide "an experience that transcends the mundane, that 'takes us out of ourselves" (p. 144). The evocation of dreams by Sioux creates a place of escapism from the conscious world and defines her own aesthetic which allows fans to step into a new world and or into Sioux's shoes.

Conclusion

Richard Middleton contends that authenticity in music is co-constructed by both the music and the fan. Hans Weisethaunet and Ulf Lindberg see authenticity as construction of oneself through another, which echoes Diana Taylor's act of transfer. The authenticity of an artist transfers to a fan who then reinforces the authenticity of the artist. In a subculture, determining which tastes (in the form of bands) are deserving of acceptance by subcultural members is dependent upon look, sound, and other factors which are tied up with the nebulous concept of authenticity. In the subculture of punk and the following postpunk, authenticity is dependent upon the exposure of the simulations of our postmodern reality and the rejection of the commodification of the popular culture industries (Moore, 2004). In the evoking of dreams in "Spellbound" Sioux conjures up a space where listeners and viewers are free from the realities of everyday life. This evocation provides a respite from the harsh facts of the commodification of our waking moments.

When viewed in comparison with "Girls on Film," a video in which we see the ways mainstream culture celebrates its commodification, "Spellbound" is its negation. The evoking of dreams allows viewers a chance for escape and to revel in the creativity that can be unleashed when the mind is at rest and free from the obligations of the working world. "Girls on Film" only reminds us of what we must contend with every day: the commodification of art, artists, women, and how this commodification itself is then made into something which can be consumed.

Sioux partially constructs her authenticity through this representation of dreams. In this portrayal of un-reality is a truth: the 'truth to music.' For the subcultural world, art does not thrive in the reality of the culture industry where creativity is watered down, commodified, and consumed. For subcultural members, creativity is celebrated when it is not marred by the touch

of the mainstream. By representing an otherworldly oasis, Sioux enacts her authenticity by creating a spellbound dimension where art and commerce can coexist without compromising art for the sake of wider acceptance. In this middle ground of semi-commercial musical success, dreams are harnessed as forcefields.

By gravitating towards the music of Sioux over the mainstream darlings Duran Duran, fans are rewarded with a location for ungrounded creativity and expression. These fans form a community based on dreams. Since they are drawn together by the refusal of the mainstream, these fans can have one place where they are not reminded of the grind of their daily lives. In "Spellbound" fans see a world unmoored from the round-the-clock lights of a 24/7 society. In dreams there are no repercussions from neglecting duties or doing what one pleases. These are the riches of dreams and fans can enjoy them while listening to or watching "Spellbound." When the song is over, they must return to their duties but their small escape was just that: an escape from waking life.

These findings illustrate that a respite from capitalism can, paradoxically, be found within it by the evocation of dreams. Subcultural music is commodified but resists the watering down of artistic intention by conjuring dreams. I do not believe that fans are engaging in what Mark Fisher calls "interpassivity" (where people expect their consumption of anti-capitalist products to do their anti-capitalist work for them) when they listen to "Spellbound." In fact, these fans are not doing anti-capitalist work at all, but rather finding pleasure in the art that celebrates creativity that takes inspiration away from the waking world. People are drawn to art and art styles toward which they have affinity and this affinity partially constructs their identity. Fans who connect with art that evokes dreams are looking for a place to escape the commodification and consumption cycle of mainstream popular culture.

This sentiment may provoke a connection to the earlier mentioned urging by Lorde not to use the master's tools to bring about lasting change, that the world will not meaningfully change unless we cast off all the trappings of the capitalist world. And yet, choosing to be a fan of and enjoy art by artists such as Sioux, by withdrawing from the celebratory art of commercialism such as Duran Duran, can be viewed as a revolutionary act. As Gilles Deleuze, and Félix Guattari (1972/2000) explain:

> "Good people say that we must not flee, that to escape is not good, that it isn't effective, and that one must work for reforms. But the revolutionary knows that escape is revolutionary—*withdrawal, freaks*—provided one sweeps away the social cover on leaving, or causes a piece of the system to get lost in the shuffle" (p. 277).

Fans of Sioux and her evocation of dreams are endorsing the taking from within oneself, not without oneself; the subconscious and not conspicuous consumption. Using and evoking dreams requires the fan to do some of their own work in their enjoyment of music. There is subtext and ambiguity there to tap into one's own self-generating dreams. In this way, a piece of the system is dislodged. After watching the video to "Spellbound," one is perhaps left thinking of their own dreams instead of never leaving the reality of consumerism and exploitation depicted in the video of "Girls on Film." In this way, however small, a resistance is enacted through the escape to dreams.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSION: YOU HEAR LAUGHTER CRACKING THROUGH THE WALLS

Popular culture reflects the culture and also has the potential to shift the culture. In Stuart Hall's "Notes on Deconstructing the Popular" (1981), he argues that popular culture functions as the near-constant tearing down and rebuilding with the same, repurposed materials. The forms these materials take can be in service of the ruling class to perpetuate their power over others, or to subvert it, in what Hall calls "the arena of consent and resistance" (p. 239). Each loud, new voice of a marginalized group heard in dominant culture works to chip away at the essentialized image of that group, performing a sort of resistance in the arena of popular culture. This is to Hélène Cixous (1976) an integral act of reclaiming autonomy for the marginalized. Written in the same year as Sioux's first step onto the stage, Cixous's "Laugh of the Medusa" encourages women to express themselves creatively so as to create agency for themselves and to change the culture, to dispel the "confus[ion] of the biological and the cultural" (p. 875). This sort of expression creates space. This is the expression of Siouxsie Sioux.

To create this space, Sioux became everything that was not expected of women in rock music. If women in rock were white, willowy, and sang about the expected feminine tropes of heartbreak, Sioux became the opposite. To do so, Sioux utilized citational embodiments of the Native, dominatrix and female masculinity. In a culture which suspects the legitimacy of women in rock, these citational embodiments impart a legitimacy and authenticity upon Sioux which create authority for her voice. This authority works to make space for Sioux and later those inspired by her. The departure from the expectation of women in rock was the move of an iconoclast, which resulted in her icon status.

The citational embodiments of Sioux work to create legitimacy in a culture which sees women in bands as a gimmick. To do this, Sioux employs citations from outside of herself to make herself different from the notion of the inauthentic woman. When Sioux cites the Native American she imparts the trope of Indigenous authenticity onto herself. This unintentionally works to reinforce the erasure of Native people while also celebrating the dignified nobility trope of Native people. Susan Ballion is now Siouxsie Sioux, which makes her exempt from typical assumptions about women in bands. She adds to her legitimacy by beating any accusations of gimmickry before they can be made.

The evoking of the dominatrix and female masculinity play with notions of gender to shift the space around the area where women should be seen in the culture. Once this new femininity is seen by fans and the wider culture, it reveals the separation of the biological and the culture. If Sioux is a woman and looks and acts the way she does, then the questionable-authenticity-position of women in rock can be viewed as cultural and not biological.

The creation of spaces for alternate femininities is important in order to move the culture to a new direction. Enacting this type of transgressive femininity is an act of resistance again the dominant culture. To make this resistant act in the culture one must express alternative voices through writing. As Cixous expressed:

> "writing is precisely *the very possibility of change*, the space that can serve as a springboard to subversive thought, the precursory movement of a transformation of social and cultural structures" (p. 879).

This legitimacy of a writer's voice can only succeed in a subculture if an artist is not seen as "selling out," or "the distancing of an artist's music and persona" (McLeod, p. 141). The evocation of dreams function as a way for Sioux to retain subcultural authenticity while being an artist with gold records. Sioux's evocation of dreams lies in stark contrast to the pure commercial

output of consumption celebrating art. In this way, Sioux retains her subcultural authenticity and the space she creates in the culture for new femininity has legitimacy.

If Sioux felt that she must become everything that negates what was expected of a woman in rock who were viewed as inherently inauthentic, this reinforces Cixous's argument for an expansion of women's voices. Women must write themselves into history and reclaim their bodies. This action creates space, as Sioux has done. Where Sioux had to be everything that negated the expectation of women in music – heartbroken, willowy, and white – in so doing she helped to create the space for a new, subversive femininity.

Cixous writes that although not often expressed, the subconscious of women is still churning, still holds the potential for creative expression. Cixous's urging to expel these thoughts from the subconscious is similar to Jung's insistence to harness dreams into creativity before they do damage to one's waking life. So women must write and creatively express themselves as Medusa's laugh breaks through the walls of expected behavior by women.

This laughter works to show what can be done by a woman with a voice. It acts a mother guiding the way. To Cixous, "everything will be changed once woman gives woman to the other woman" (p. 881). Sioux's subversive femininity is a gift to others who did not know that a space like Sioux's could be occupied. Shirley Manson, of the band Garbage, when asked who her icon was, replied:

> "…Siouxsie Sioux . . . literally changed my life and filled me with power that I didn't even have. I just stole it from her and I faked it until I made it, literally."

Sioux's creation of space mothered a variety of performers and creators to occupy their own space. Sioux's discontentment with the feminine space allotted women in rock created, along with other gender subversives, an alternative space to occupy. Thom York, Sue Webster, Sasha Velour, Pam Hogg and others have attested to the importance of seeing a new space to occupy,

from which to further resist. Other women contemporary to Sioux were doing similar work, such as Wendy O'Williams of the Plasmatics, Poly Styrene of X-Ray Spex, Ari Up and Vivian Albertine of the Slits, among others, yet because none of them were on the middle ground that Sioux straddled between subculture and mainstream, their work to create space is not as widely influential or recognized. The video for Siouxsie and The Banshees's "Spellbound" and many other television appearances and videos regularly from 1978 until 1996 when the band broke up put Sioux in the minds of the public in ways that the lesser known bands could not because of reduced access. Although Sioux used the master's tools (Audre Lorde, 1984) to do the work of space creation for subversive femininity which (unintentionally) further essentialized the Native American which takes away their space, because she used those tools she was able to transmit her message of resistance to expectations of femininity in rock to a wider audience.

Lorde argues that using the master's tools may bring results but only temporarily. Perhaps using the tools of domination to bring about change gradually shifts the meaning of those tools until their use yields different results. Or maybe the change is only superficial. Women and alternative femininities are afforded more legitimacy in rock now yet white women are still appropriating cultures of color to achieve authenticity and legitimacy, such as Katy Perry and Miley Cyrus appropriating black culture. This is the tension of positive results won by the use of the master's tools used to dismantle the master's house. And yet, because the gain of a space of a subversive femininity was afforded because of the music of Sioux as well as her look, it mirrors the central tension of rock itself. As Keir Keightley (2001) explains,

> "One of the great ironies of the second half of the twentieth century is that while rock has involved millions of people buying a mass-marketed, standardized commodity (CD, cassette, LP) that is available virtually everywhere, these purchases have produced intense feelings of freedom, rebellion, marginality, oppositionality, uniqueness, and

> authenticity. It is precisely this predicament that defines rock since negotiating the relationship between the 'mass' and the 'art' in mass art has been the distinguishing ideological project of rock culture since the 1960s" (p. 109).

To negotiate the mass and the art, Sioux uses her subcultural capital and the conjuring of dreams to keep the mass from interfering with her art. To Simon Frith (1987), this almost inexplicable ability to walk the tightrope of mass and art, the incongruity of the seemingly unlikely star like Sioux is the crux of authenticity:

> "Authenticity is, then, what guarantees that rock performances resist or subvert commercial logic, just as rock-star quality (whether we are discussing Elvis Presley or David Bowie, the Rolling Stones or the Sex Pistols), describes the power that enables certain musicians to drive something individually obdurate through the system" (p. 136).

For Sioux to create authenticity where there was none guaranteed and to have the cultural impact that she has had almost *requires* the tensions she embodies: the mass and the art, the subcultural and the mainstream, making space and taking away space. That Sioux was able to push her obdurate self through the system of rock makes no sense as much as it does. This is how she was able to create the space that so many people found to be a revelation. Sioux's created authenticity and authority, her evocation of dreams work as an aura around Sioux of undeniability. Just as Frith cites Presley, Bowie, the Stones, and Pistols above as having the rock-star quality, or to be undeniably deserving to occupy the space they do, so does Sioux. The subverting of logic of these icons, or the iconoclasm which constructs their icon status, is an act of resistance in Hall's arena of culture.

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