Road Crews and the Everyday Life of Live Music

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Abstract

This thesis is about the everyday life of live music. It explores the taken-for-granted, quotidian and mundane, yet ultimately essential, aspects of the realization of concert events. At its centre are two minimally understood aspects of live music: road crews and touring. The road crew is one of the key groups of support personnel involved in the realization of live music, and touring shapes, constrains and informs their working lives, practices and relationships. Based on findings from interviews, participant observation and archival research, the thesis proposes a theory that live music events are constituted and ultimately realized by the daily efforts of a tour's support personnel. The chapters explore and analyze the experience of being on tour and the workplace culture of road crews, the various supplies and documents necessary on a daily basis at concert events, and the integral role that tour managers play in the working lives of musicians. The thesis also defines road crews and provides insights into how they learn their roles and maintain work through networks and informal practices. The research findings presented here aim to expand the area of live music studies by widening the scope of the understanding of live music and its personnel and analyzing a broader set of activities that are integral to its realization. In particular, those that may be separate from the creative and aesthetic decisions that directly shape live performance and the concert spectacle. This study provides a lens through which to understand the live music industry differently and demystify the extraordinary status accorded concerts and artists. Due to the uncertainty surrounding live music in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic, this thesis can serve as a snapshot that captured some of the features of touring and the everyday life of live music for a group of road crew members at a particular time in history.

Résumé

Cette thèse porte sur la vie quotidienne de la musique en direct. Elle explore les aspects pris pour acquis, quotidiens et banals, mais finalement essentiels, à la réalisation de concerts. Deux aspects peu connus de la musique en direct sont au centre de cette thèse : les équipes de tournée (*road crew*) et les tournées. L'équipe de tournée est l'un des principaux groupes de personnel de soutien impliqués dans la réalisation de la musique en direct, et la tournée façonne, contraint et informe leur vie professionnelle, leurs pratiques et leurs relations. Sur la base des résultats d'entretiens, d'observations participantes et de recherches dans les archives, la thèse propose une théorie selon laquelle les événements musicaux en direct sont constitués et finalement réalisés par les efforts quotidiens du personnel de soutien d'une tournée. Les chapitres explorent et analysent l'expérience d'être en tournée et la culture de travail des équipes de tournée, les diverses fournitures et documents nécessaires au quotidien lors des concerts, et le rôle intégral que les gestionnaires de tournée jouent dans la vie professionnelle des musiciens. La thèse définit également les équipes de tournée et donne un aperçu de la manière dont elles apprennent leurs rôles et maintiennent leur travail par le biais de réseaux et de pratiques informelles. Les résultats de la recherche présentés ici visent à étendre le domaine des études sur la musique en direct en élargissant la portée de la compréhension de la musique en direct et en analysant un ensemble plus large de personnel et d'activités qui font partie intégrante de sa réalisation. En particulier, celles qui peuvent être séparés des décisions créatives et esthétiques qui façonnent directement le spectacle vivant et le concert. Cette étude permet de comprendre différemment l'industrie de la musique en direct et de démystifier le statut extraordinaire accordé aux concerts et aux artistes. En raison de l'incertitude entourant la musique en direct suite à la pandémie de COVID-19, cette thèse peut servir d'instantané qui a capturé certaines des caractéristiques des tournées et de la vie quotidienne de la musique en direct pour un groupe de membres de l'équipe de tournée à un moment particulier de l'histoire.

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Introduction

October 1998. A group of us fans are standing outside of the Aragon Ballroom in Chicago, having claimed our place in the queue early. Suddenly, a long-haired man runs furiously to the venue's entrance, bangs on the door and shouts loudly, demanding to be let in. As he explained moments later, his frustration was not only from his inability to access the venue, but from being withheld from what was awaiting him inside: his breakfast. Twenty years later during participant observation at Venue A, the morning routine featured similar concerns. When road crews were scheduled to load-in early enough, mornings were normally focused on orienting them to the catering room for breakfast. While the same kind of irate display did not feature, the motive behind the 1998 scenario was further validated when a member of a touring party stated that his crew needed breakfast because "no one wants an angry roadie."

This thesis is about the everyday life of live music. It explores the taken-for-granted, quotidian and mundane — yet ultimately essential — aspects of the realization of concert events. Everyday life may commonly be thought of as having a relatively unexceptional character, but the activities that comprise it are vital. Guy Debord (1995) believes that everyday life is "the measure of all things," which implies great value, and Rita Felski (1999: 15) suggests that, when carefully examined, the "everyday ceases to be everyday" and has the potential to lose its character. These comments illuminate the usefulness and ambiguity of everyday life, and are not taken here to cast an excessively celebratory tone that risks interfering with the nature and quality of everyday activities. It is within the ordinariness of the activities that comprise daily life that significance is located. The familiarity of everyday life means that its significance is often hidden beneath its own taken-for-granted nature. The notion of everyday life has much to offer a

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study of live music for its ability to uncover the kinds of activities and experiences that usually go unnoticed. The concept of everyday life is additionally useful for how it supports the micro-level approach of this study.

The everyday life of live music is examined here through the lens of road crews and their experience of touring. This is the first in-depth study of road crews and their working lives. It shows how the daily activities and experiences of road crews are integral to the realization of concerts and central to a more complete understanding of live music. The road crew is one of the key groups of support personnel involved in the realization of live music. As support personnel, road crews can themselves be included among the taken-for-granted aspects of everyday life. As their work occurs backstage and in the wings (but not exclusively), and their responsibilities involve working alongside stars and artists, they are subtly present yet always just slightly out of view. Members of road crews are "at work, right in front of the audience which largely ignores them in its lust for the stars" (Gorman 1978: 11). Road crews may be minimally understood, but they maintain a certain ubiquity in the cultures of rock and popular music. They are the subjects of several songs, are represented in films and television shows, and there is even a beer named after them. Facebook pages are dedicated to specific crew members who look after well-known musicians, and artists commonly state their appreciation for crew members onstage and in interviews. Yet they are consistently referred to as "unsung heroes" who play important but rarely discussed roles in the lives of artists and the organization of live music. In other words, they are omnipresent in the realization and mythologizing of live music yet remain minimally understood as subjects themselves. A history of live music without road crews is an incomplete account. Given the significance of the live music sector as an employer (Frith 2007: 2, Hracs 2015, Williamson and Cloonan 2016), the direct connection road crews have with concert events

makes them an important source of insight into working in the industry. The notion of everyday life can recover those often "swept aside" by other events by invoking "precisely those practices and lives that have traditionally been left out of historical accounts" or "sidelined by dominant accounts" (Highmore 2002: 1–2). As such, this study moves them to the forefront. In doing so, it widens the scope of who gets included in research and histories of popular music.

Looking closely at road crews brings into focus the importance of touring to the realization of live music and its significance in their working lives. It draws attention to touring as both a *process* and a *term*. Touring is a coordinated routine of transportation, accommodations and communication designed according to the strict confines of an itinerary but that is highly subject to change and revision. The experience of touring is an all-encompassing way of life that comes with expectations and effects. Touring shapes, constrains and informs the working lives, practices and relationships of a tour's support personnel. Tour buses have particular rules; demanding schedules combined with close living quarters enforce certain types of behavioural conduct; and managing life back home requires adaptation and understanding. Sleeping schedules vary, as do the length of working days, and other people's priorities usually come first. The experience of touring may be mythologized as sex, drugs and rock and roll, but in practice is more directed to meeting basic needs than engaging in excess. This thesis draws attention to these features and works to develop and expand the understanding of touring and its relation to live music. It recognizes the need for specificity when using those terms and provides a way to do so.

The approach taken here joins the efforts of other live music scholarship in working toward a history of rock and popular music that reflects the importance of live music and its possibilities as an object of study. The body of scholarship on popular music and its industries

has been criticized for an emphasis on recordings (Frith et al. 2013: ix, 62). The concert environment is so interesting because it blends a multiplicity of experiences in one setting, and suggests there is ample room to expand and develop this area of study. Live music studies has shifted from a small but emerging area (see Webster 2011: 16–17) to one that is larger and more relevant than ever. Its growth and importance are evident from recent edited collections dedicated to live music research (Mazierska, Gillon and Rigg 2020, Anderton and Pisfil, Forthcoming) and special editions of academic journals dedicated to understanding the live concert experience (*Rock Music Studies*), exploring relevant contemporary issues in live music (*Arts and the Market*) and situating it as a "crucial dimension of 21st Century popular music" (*Ethnomusicology Review*). It is already clear that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the live music industry will generate further scholarly interest and discussion. Given the relative paucity of literature on road crews and touring, this thesis aims to provide groundwork and expand the area of live music studies by widening the scope of the understanding of live music and analyzing a broader set of activities that are integral to its realization. The findings presented here provide a lens through which to understand the live music industry differently and demystify the extraordinary status accorded concerts and artists.

A set of key questions informed the research conducted for this study. What do road crews do while on tour? What activities comprise their daily lives? What is it like to be on tour? How do members of road crews manage relationships with others while living and working in close quarters? How do they understand themselves as workers? Is live music about place or mobility? How does a concert happen? What are the features of the workplace culture on tour? How do road crews work alongside musicians? What is the nature of their relationship? How do

road crew members get jobs and maintain careers? What do members of road crews experience when they return home from tour? The chapters that follow aim to provide some answers.

The next section of the Introduction details the scope of the thesis.

Scope

This study was narrowed in consideration of the appropriate length of a PhD thesis, and with regard to the realities of the program's time limitations. Several factors need mentioning to outline the scope. Live music and touring feature several types of crews: the local crew employed by the venue (see Chapter 3), the equipment suppliers' crew[1] and the artist's road crew. The emphasis here is on the latter. At times, particularly in Chapter 3, the thesis discusses and refers to the venue's local crew in order to contextualize and explain particular aspects of the research. However, it does not make this group a central feature and does not engage in any sustained analysis of these workers. The thesis is focused on freelance, self-employed workers on road crews who are hired by and work directly for artists on tours.

Given the diversity of specialized roles that comprise road crews, and in the interest of maintaining a clear definition and overall manageability, this study could not be exhaustive. It includes the following roles: tour manager, production manager, head of security, guitar technician, monitor engineer, sound engineer, and production coordinator. Additional roles are at times mentioned or briefly discussed as relevant or necessary. This emphasis is directly related to the research that was conducted and was determined according to the roles occupied by research respondents and as observed during participant observation, which will be discussed in detail in the Methodology section. Not all of these roles are represented equally and some feature more prominently than others. This is both a reflection of the research process and a decision taken

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[1] An equipment supplier is a company from which audio, lighting or video equipment can be rented for an event or a tour. The company hires crew members to attend to the rented equipment at the event or during the tour.

following data analysis. Combined, these roles offer commonalities and general insights and understandings about the daily lives of these workers, the experience of touring, and the everyday life of live music. The specificity of individual roles demonstrates important variations and differences, as the concentration on the tour manager in Chapter 4 will show.

An unexpected pattern, and a valuable finding, emerged during the research that informed its scope. All of the research respondents have (on average) 20 years or more of experience in their careers, and, as a consequence, the thesis is focused on an older and more experienced demographic of cultural worker.[2] The category of age brings with it the accumulation of experience and the ability for reflection on the many facets of the everyday life of live music. This aspect therefore presents a perspective from an understudied group of workers and a counterweight to the understanding of the cultural labour workforce as young (e.g., Hesmondhalgh 2013). It also problematizes the claim made by Clem Gorman (1978: 18), in his behind-the-scenes account of rock concerts, that most crew members "do not stay on the road beyond the age of about thirty-five."

Time and place are also important factors in the range of the study. As implied by the above, this is contemporary research situated in the current time and recent past of the modern concert industry. It is not a historical account of workers on tour. The findings presented in the following chapters relate to working in live music from the mid-1980s to the present, and any occasional deviation from that time frame is noted. Regarding location, workers based in the United Kingdom and United States constitute the research sample. However, their working lives

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[2] Richard Ames's (2019) book, a collection of personal interviews with some of the "pioneers" of the UK live music industry, presents additional evidence of an older demographic. He noted that, since the time they began working in the 1960s and early 70s, over half of them "still work in the music business" while others had retired and some had died (x).

and experiences occur in an international setting and their mobility is a key component of the everyday life of live music.

Finally, the genres and types of tours covered are broad yet have particular emphases. Primarily featured here are road crews working for commercially successful and well-known artists in the rock music genre. The chapters also include findings from crews of artists in folk, jazz, R&B, hip-hop and electronica, as several workers have moved between them. Generally speaking, findings are related to mid-level tours, or in venues having an audience capacity of between 2,000 and 5,000. However, several factors complicate that narrow focus. Musicians may play a range of types of venues on the same tour and may alternate as support or headliners, which places road crews in diverse settings and broadens their work experiences. Additionally, over the course of their careers, road crew members may work for many artists on different types of tours, and, as such, my research findings draw on an accumulation of workers and experiences that likewise reflect this range, from small DIY tours in clubs to major production stadium tours. The thesis is less concerned with carefully describing a particular type of tour and is primarily interested in understanding the everyday life experiences of workers on tour.

The next section of the Introduction outlines two important definitions in order to understand the purpose of the thesis and the chapters that follow.

Definitions

It is important to understand the terms "live music" and "tour" as well as the relationship between them. These definitions are included to orient the reader and offer greater understanding of the thesis' purpose and focus. The findings presented in the chapters will also demonstrate and provide further support of the following definitions for the reader.

Live Music

Live music events are constructed through the coming together of various elements.[3] At the same time, live music is a *structure* that produces a tour, the process of touring and distributes important roles and duties. Live music can and does happen without touring: musicians play lengthy residencies in a single city, do "one-off" concert engagements, or make a sole festival appearance. A tour, however, does not occur without live music. In this way, live music is the *purpose* of a tour.

From the 1960s, major record companies viewed tours as distinct marketing strategies and "promotional vehicles" for recordings (Laing and Shepherd 2003: 567, Negus [1992] 2011: 130, Frith et al. 2019: 2). The decline of record sales in the first decade of the twenty-first century (Hesmondhalgh 2013: 342) placed greater emphasis on touring as a major source of "bread and butter for most artists" (Black, Fox, and Kochanowski 2007: 154, Shuker 2013: 49, Hracs, Seman and Virani 2015). However, most musicians "make their living selling their services as performers rather than from their returns from record sales or copyrights" (Frith et al. 2013: 62) and touring has been a consistent source of revenue independent of record sales (Laing and Shepherd 2003: 567). Country artists in the 1920s toured on the "major Southern vaudeville circuit," the working lives of jazz musicians in the 1930s and 1940s consisted primarily of "being on the road,"[4] and the "chitlin' circuit" was an "economic necessity" for blues and R&B musicians that enabled African-American performers to "make a modest living" from the 1930s into the 1960s (Boyer 1990, Laing and Shepherd 2003: 567, Olsen 2007: 2, Peterson 2013: 45). In this thesis, shifts or distinctions in the function of touring are ultimately less important than

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[3] See Behr et al. (2016) for a discussion on an ecological approach to the construction of a live music event.
[4] From 1935 to 1955 US jazz musicians faced restrictions from the musicians' union on touring in the UK. See Williamson and Cloonan (2016) for an in-depth study of the British Musicians' Union.

what they can be reduced to: that a tour occurs when an artist needs or wants to perform live

music as a means to support and/or develop their career (Black, Fox and Kochanowski 2007).

On a daily basis, on a tour, live music is the *objective*. The activities of the entire day are

structured around the live music event and directed toward its outcome. This objective can be

symbolized by a concert ticket[5] which grants an audience member access to an act of

performance (Becker 1982: 119) that takes place in a particular setting at a specific time and that

has been anticipated after being sold in advance (Straw 1999–2000: 155). Each performance is a

singular event and an exclusive, immediate occasion for those in attendance. The concert ticket

promises the possibility of a particular experience and, generally speaking, comes without the

option for a refund should expectations fail to be fulfilled (Brown and Knox 2017: 236, Pitts

2014: 28).

Live music is understood here as a structure, the purpose of a tour, and a daily objective,

all of which help to situate and support the perspective of the road crew. Other scholars have

been concerned to define live music by raising ontological questions about what it means to be

"live" (Thornton 1995, Sterne 2003, Auslander 2008, Sanden 2013, Jones and Bennett 2015).

These debates have been framed around the notion of authenticity, the relationship between live

and recorded music, and ideas of presence and mediation. Though this scholarship makes an

important contribution to live music studies, such an approach is outside the scope of this thesis.

Existent research has also established live music's economic and cultural value (Krueger 2005,

Frith 2007, Holt 2010, Waksman 2010, Behr, Brennan and Cloonan 2014), as well as its

historical role in British cultural life (Frith et al. 2013, 2019, 2021). Scholars have done

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[5] Tickets and attendant issues, such as pricing and the secondary market, are an important area of live music studies that is outside the scope of this thesis. See Jones (2002), Krueger (2005), Brennan and Webster (2011), Budnick and Baron (2011), Johansson, Gripshover and Bell (2015), Behr and Cloonan (2020), Westgate (2020).

important work to balance the recording-centric analysis and history of popular music through an understanding of the "symbiotic relationship" between the recorded and live music sectors (ibid.; Waksman, forthcoming, cited in Pisfil 2020: 384). Live music has also been examined in terms of performance, production techniques and audience experience (Cavicchi 1998, Auslander 2008, Holt 2010, Bennett 2012, Lingel and Naaman 2012, McKinna 2014, Colburn 2015, Jones and Bennett 2015, Brown and Knox 2016, Kjus and Danielson 2016). These studies were important in informing my general understanding of live music and its study, but most of them fall outside the boundaries of my own concerns. However, particular aspects of some of the works cited here are of use, and the most relevant scholarship on live music is dealt with in detail as applicable throughout the chapters that follow.

Tour

A "tour" is the total set of all planned live music events in a particular itinerary (see Chapter 2). An individual concert "falls [within] a wider temporal series of events. The whole series is a called [a] tour" (Weinstein [1991] 2000: 203). Tours differ in scale, which will vary according to the types of venue and their capacity, along with production requirements and number of personnel. Tours of top-tier artists may consist exclusively of stadium or arena dates while mid-level musicians play large theatres, but they can also alternate between them. Tours may consist solely of concerts in urban venues, but may also include festival appearances.[6] Further, artists may spend part of a tour as a headliner and another part as a support act. These points are made to illustrate the variations that can exist when referring to a "tour," even as our understanding of a "tour" is rendered consistent by a series of events that comprise an itinerary.

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[6] Existent scholarship minimally examines touring circuits in terms of historical development and significance (Théberge 2005, Frith et al. 2013) and more contemporary considerations as to why musicians perform in particular markets (Johansson and Bell 2014).

The state of "being on tour" — or "touring" — refers to the experience and practices involved in realizing a sequence of live music events. It is the process of bringing live performances to specific places at particular times. Touring is an activity and experience (something people do), a mindset (a way people think), a workplace (where people utilize skills, maintain a living and participate in its culture), and a social space (where people interact and contend with social phenomena). It is also an activity that is organized by and expressed through specific language and terminology, which the following chapters will demonstrate. Touring creates, and unfolds within, a complex mobile world that exceeds any single event and is characterized by a particular way of life (Williams 1983).

Though scholars have begun to recognize "itinera[nt] spectacles" in distinction to notions of "concerts as fixed events" (Pisfil 2020: 384), touring is "still poorly understood" and a topic that has rarely been explored in the academic literature in depth (Wynn and Dominguez-Villegas 2015: 131, McKinna 2014). Studies have briefly addressed aspects of the history and marketing purposes of touring (Laing and Shepherd 2003), its economic importance within the industry (Black, Fox and Kochanowski 2007), logistics and geography (Johansson and Bell 2014), and role in musicians' working lives (Jansson and Nilsson 2015, Wynn and Dominguez-Villegas 2015). Most relevant here is André Nóvoa's (2012) research that illustrates how touring is strongly connected to identity construction. His study offers important insights though is limited by its exclusive focus on musicians working at a grassroots level. Nóvoa shows that mobility is one of the "most relevant features" in the lives of workers on tour (367), which is further evident in Chapter 2. However, existent scholarship largely overlooks the experience and culture of touring. The scarcity of such research is most evident when it is unavailable. Roy Shuker (2008: 57) drew on an anonymized work of non-fiction titled *The Big Wheel*, written by Bruce Thomas

(1990), the former bass player in Elvis Costello and the Attractions, to obtain a sense of the experience of touring. As with the scholarship on live music, the pertinent literature on touring is addressed in greater detail when relevant throughout the four chapters.

The next section of the Introduction will outline the conceptual framework for the thesis.

Conceptual Framework: The Everyday Life of Live Music

This thesis proposes a theory that live music events are constituted and ultimately realized by the daily efforts of a tour's support personnel. Its point of departure is an unexplored area in the scholarly literature on live music. After putting forth their notion of live music's ecology, Adam Behr et al. (2016: 19) observed the following:

> We need to make more complex existing socio-economic accounts of the construction of live music events, to see that people and activities carefully kept backstage to ensure that the performances themselves seem magical are brought into the glare of the academic spotlight. We need to understand what those people apparently wandering aimlessly or marching purposefully about as a gig is put together are actually doing.

Musicians may fulfill the role of performers and the duty of performance in live music. However, the majority of people working in live music and on tour are not musicians, but rather the workers that assist them. That such people, and those working backstage, are often neglected is not unique to live music studies. As Norbert Elias (1978: 16) has described, people commonly speak of "structures as if they existed … above and beyond any actual people at all." Revealing backstage activity, notes a theatre scholar, also risks removing the "mystery and magic" of onstage performance (White 2014: 1, see also Webster 2015: 105–106). Within the existent scholarship on live music, the attention given to personnel has primarily focused on concert promoters (Laing 2003, Brennan and Webster 2011, Cloonan 2012, Webster 2015, Waksman 2016, Frith et al. 2013, 2019). Emma Webster's (2011) PhD thesis on the practices and experiences of UK promoters was a significant contribution to understanding the essential role

that behind-the-scenes workers play in the realization of concert events. She conducted an in-depth ethnographic study and demonstrated how promoters' working lives both "shape and are shaped by the live music ecology in which they operate" (1). Venue owners, agents and artist managers have also been explored, though not extensively (Gallan 2012, Jones 2012, Frith et al. 2013). Prior to this study, the state of scholarship on road crews was correctly summarized by Sergio Pisfil (2020: 387), who observed "no serious work on road crews and their place in rock practices." Such minimal attention was seen as unsatisfactory because of the important role road crews play in the economic, creative and experiential dimensions of live music (ibid.).

On occasion, road crews have been the focal point of a text. One book-length oral history exists, titled *Live Music Production: Interviews with UK Pioneers* (Ames 2019), featuring transcriptions of interviews with workers in UK live music production. Among them are people who started influential lighting and sound equipment rental firms, as well as catering companies, during the late 1960s to the mid-1980s. Ames' book provides useful first-hand and historical accounts of their experiences in their respective roles and is an important document of this era in UK live music. However, it is not situated in relation to the scholarly literature, nor does it analyze or theorize the roles and experiences which are its focus. A short encyclopedia entry on "roadies" exists (Weinstein 2003) that provides fundamental, if limited, information, and scholars have recently examined the sexism in the touring world through the experience of merchandise staff (Vilanova and Cassidy 2019). Rachel Pfennig Hales (2017) wrote a creative non-fiction MFA thesis that described her years of work on road crews. However, road crews are more frequently present in the literature not as objects of study but as examples to help explain other concepts. Richard Witts (2005) described the "roadie cabaret" — or the time between the support act and the headliner in which crew members arrange equipment and check the sound —

as part of the ritual and audience experience of waiting at rock concerts. Christopher Small (1999: 9–10) includes roadies among the many individuals involved in "musicking." Trevor Pinch (1993: 26) uses the example of road crews checking amplification equipment ("Testing-one, two, three ... testing") in an article that examines the notion of "testing" as an object of research in the sociology of technology. Mavis Bayton (1998) gives some information on the work responsibilities and conditions road crews encounter as well as insight into the experiences that women musicians have had in working with them. By studying road crews, this thesis makes a contribution to existent live music studies and to wider scholarship that argues for the recognition and inclusion of a greater variety of support workers and their efforts as objects of scholarship in the cultural industries (e.g., Faulkner 1971, Negus [1992] 2011, Mayer 2011, Nakamura 2014, Maxwell 2016).

To bring those people and activities to the fore, and contribute to a more complex account of the construction of live music events, this study draws on the notion of everyday life. Several studies have previously explored the use, function and meaning of music in everyday life, and the topic has been of particular interest to scholars in the psychology of music (Crafts, Cavicchi and Keil 1993, Hargreaves and North 1999, DeNora 2004, 2016; Frith 1996, 2012; North, Hargreaves and Hargreaves 2004, Sloboda and O'Neill 2001, Sloboda 2010). The most thorough and influential work on music and everyday life is Tia DeNora's (2004) *Music in Everyday Life*. Her book focuses on the consumption of (recorded) music and the significant role it plays in structuring, organizing and creating meaning in people's lives. DeNora illustrates the ways in which music functions as an aesthetic resource to make sense of situations, and as a form of power that is strongly intertwined with and constitutive of identity, human action and relations, and social context. She draws on examples that include the use of music in-flight, in exercise

classes, in retail shops, in music therapy and in intimate social settings. DeNora's work is important for how it bridges the relationship between music and everyday life but differs significantly from this study in its purpose and orientation. By some extension, it could indeed be possible to frame — in this case live music — as the central factor in the working lives of road crew members. However, to use "music," in DeNora's terms, as the ordering device would be an overgeneralization that would fail to account for the many factors that shape the working lives of road crews and that are involved in the process of touring. DeNora foregrounds the influential role of music in daily situations, and she is unconcerned with offering a clear definition of "everyday life." In contrast, this thesis uses the idea of everyday life to understand the people and activities central to the realization of live music. It moves from considering music as a mediating factor or affective component in the experience of everyday life to positioning live music as the central purpose and outcome of a complex set of processes, relationships and activities that occur on a daily basis. Rather than think in terms of everyday life *and* music or music *in* everyday life, it examines the everyday life *of* live music. In doing so, it draws attention to the many kinds of activities that are involved in and important to the realization of an event but may be separate from the creative and aesthetic decisions that directly shape live performance and the concert spectacle.

Live music has been understood in its capacity as performance and meaningful events, as a source of economic and cultural value, and through an emphasis on promoters and audiences in its realization — in other words, for its most exceptional and visible attributes. However, it is also comprised of the routine, the mundane, and support personnel, all of which are important aspects of live music events and their understanding. Behr et al. (2016: 18) observed that

workers in live music seem more focused on the "material conditions of music-making"[7] than the music itself. The perspective of everyday life taken here greatly expands an understanding of the conditions of music making, and sees them not as separate from but as constitutive of live music events, as the following will show.

For the purpose of this study, the usage of the term "everyday life" follows ideas put forth by Rita Felski (1999). Everyday life, she states, is "the unavoidable basis for all other forms of human endeavour" (15). It is "the essential, taken-for-granted continuum of mundane activities that frames our forays into more esoteric or exotic worlds" (ibid.). This establishes the fundamental quality of everyday activities, their connection to the realization of other types of events, and speaks to their consistency throughout differing circumstances. To situate everyday life in the context of live music means to position it within a complex setting that is perceived simultaneously as routine and exceptional by differing parties (Frith 1978: 169; see also Webster 2011: 16). While the audience typically experiences a concert as a highly anticipated and exciting event, the road crew experiences it as the culmination of a daily routine that is comprised of their everyday efforts, as the next four chapters will establish. However, road crews also understand and recognize the audience's perspective on the concert event, and feel strongly connected to and motivated by its outcome. In attending to the routine elements of live music, they are very much a part of making it exceptional for the audience. Everyday life is often seen in opposition to such exceptional moments. Henri Lefebvre (1991: 97, see also Poster 2002) has described it as "in a sense residual, defined by 'what is left over' after all distinct, superior, specialized, structured activities have been singled out by analysis." Rather than differentiate

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[7] In their use of the term "material conditions of music-making," they include "technology (all those cables, boxes, soundboards, lights, computers, etc., to be heaved and positioned and secured) and on bricks and mortar, on the effects of the shape of the building on entry and exit, stage arrangements, acoustics, security, and musicians' and audience movement."

everyday life from the exceptional moment, Felski (1999: 17) argues that the distinctiveness of the everyday "lies in its lack of distinction and differentiation." Acts of "innovation and creativity are not opposed to, but rather made possible by, the mundane cycles of the quotidian" (21). This thesis takes the position that everyday life is productive and constitutive of those moments, and follows Felski, who critiques and distances herself from Lefebvre's negative view.

Examining the everyday life of live music from the perspective of the road crew means understanding how its members work alongside musicians or, rather, individuals with the occupational status and identity of stars, artists and performers. Such status and working relationships — and their differences — are a normal part of the everyday for road crews. Musicians' status as performers, artists and stars is integral to understanding the everyday life of live music. The use of these terms to identify and differentiate professional roles is not to invoke or reproduce stereotypical associations with these positions. Musicians encounter working conditions and face pressures associated with performing and touring (see Toynbee 2000, Jones 2012) that can and do influence everyday life and workplace interaction. Their absorption and "preoccupation with music and the life of the musician" is a further contributing factor (Jones 2012: 70). The presence of musicians occupying such roles is a component in how the hierarchy, conventions and daily activities of touring, as well as the experiences and occupational identities of road crews, are shaped. As previously stated, touring is a significant aspect in the ways in which musicians earn a living, and live music forms the basis for this remuneration. In this way, musicians may be "particular sorts of workers" who are "people seeking to do jobs," but in the touring environment their status as "performers, celebrities, and stars" (Williamson and Cloonan 2016: 8, 10) is central. While stars, for consumers, represent "a form of escapism from everyday life and the mundane" (Shuker 2013: 62), for workers in the live music industry, they are part of

everyday life and the mundane. In addition to their roles as workers, performers and stars, musicians are also employers (Stahl 2013: 184), which is central to understanding their relationship with members of road crews.

Accordingly, to bring road crews "into the glare of the academic spotlight" (Behr et al. 2016: 19) is to show how their role as *support personnel* is key to understanding them and the everyday life of live music. To be or give support at once invokes the nature of work activities and the question of hierarchy. Touring is organized around the musicians and live music performances that are at its center. Artists perform the "core activity" and make the "choices that give the work its artistic importance and integrity" while support personnel are an essential group that assists them and contributes to the outcome (Becker 1982: 24–25, 77). This thesis agrees that support is indeed assistance, but it is also productive and constitutive: an active process of "holding up," "enabling" and "looking after" (OED 2020). It takes the position that road crews are *primary workers in supporting roles*. While they are support personnel to artists, they are also primary workers due to the significance of their supporting efforts in realizing live music.

The use of the term "primary" is adapted from David Hesmondhalgh's (2013: 259) characterization of creative personnel. The latter are "primary workers in the production of symbols, information, entertainment and meaning — the core products of the cultural industries." If live music is the structure, purpose and objective of a tour, and it distributes important — "core" — roles and duties that must be fulfilled and enacted by a group of specialized workers in order for it to be realized, then road crews are primary workers. The term "support personnel" implies a subordinate position or secondary status. The chapters will show that such secondary status influences the working lives of members of road crews, but that the notion of hierarchy on tour is not so simplistic. Rather, some crew members move between

positions of authority and subordination that vary with context. Further, this thesis calls into question Becker's (1982: 77) statement that the term support personnel, in its capacity to subordinate, "accurately reflects their importance in the conventional art world view." My findings challenge this notion by demonstrating their significance to the live music industry.

Hierarchies, status differentials and power dynamics shape and define aspects of the workplace, but no one "from the most famous to the most humble … escapes the reach of the quotidian" (Felski 1999: 16). This understanding of everyday life acknowledges the "shared reality" of being "anchored in the mundane" (ibid.). Everyday life "does not only describe the lives of ordinary people, but recognises that every life contains an element of the ordinary" (ibid.). This helps to establish and characterize the shared workplace of touring. The everyday life of live music includes and is experienced by all members of the touring party in distinct ways.

Felski's definition of everyday life is further elucidated by ideas of repetition, home and habit that characterize its temporal, spatial and modal aspects and underpin important features in this study. Felski emphasizes the "need for routine in the organisation of daily life" (21). Repetition is therefore a manner in which people organize the world and make sense of their environments. Touring is a repetitive process that is structured and organized by an itinerary and operates most efficiently when carefully planned in advance. However, the process of continuously moving from city to city means members of road crews inevitably confront unpredictable issues on a regular basis, and an important part of their working lives involves troubleshooting them. Gaye Tuchman's (1973) idea of "routinizing the unexpected" developed through her research on journalists' work, may be used to understand how the everyday life of live music depends on, and is shaped by, road crews' handling of "seemingly unexpected events"

and doing so with a particular urgency and minimal disruption to the continuity and atmosphere of the working day (111, 117, 119). Repetition is also integral to identity formation "as a social and intersubjective process" (Felski 1999: 21), which speaks to the kinds of self-definition, social bonding and shared workplace culture that characterize touring and working on a road crew.

Everyday life takes place within various spaces and during movement between them (22). Concert venues are an important focus of the existing scholarship, which describes their function and significance in the production and consumption of live music (Grenier and Lussier 2011, Frith et al. 2013, Holt 2013, Edgar et al. 2015, Behr et al. 2016, Kronenburg 2019). In this way, scholars (Frith et al. 2013: ix) have called attention to the significance of locality and place in live music, and in popular music history more generally. The process of touring transforms these localities and venues into temporary spaces in which important daily activities and preparations for performances are negotiated. For road crews, cities and venues are temporary and stationary hubs of activity that interrupt on-going mobility, and are what Friedrich Kittler (1996) would call media that process and circulate workers from one place to the next. A significant part of touring occurs during that time and in movement from one place to the next, inviting an attention to how road crews work both *within* and *between* venues. A full understanding of the everyday life of live music means accounting for their *mobility*. This statement builds on recent scholarship that has argued that "thinking about rock tours as *moving* productions brings out important aspects of rock live performance that still need further research" (Pisfil 2020: 389, original emphasis). Tim Cresswell (2006: 2) describes mobility as "displacement" and the "act of moving between locations" which is commonly exemplified by the idea of moving from point A to B. Cresswell is particularly interested in the line that *links* A to B as a site of analysis (ibid., see also Nóvoa

2012: 366). His approach is to "explore the content of the line that links A to B, to unpack it, to make sure it is not taken for granted" (ibid.). This thesis follows Cresswell's approach to mobility in order to conceptualize and analyze this process and experience for road crews. Further, it considers that the line between A and B shapes and is shaped by activities in both locations.

The nature of spatial arrangements on tours makes it an experience marked by a particular interpersonal intensity, as road crews and musicians live and work in close proximity, and do so over extended periods of time. To be on tour is ultimately to be mobile and to construct a sense of home. Road crews are at once away from home at the same time that they exist within a temporary one formed by and within several types of spaces, including tour buses, hotels and venues. Any regularly visited place that "in its very familiarity becomes a symbolic extension and confirmation of the self" can be thought of as home (Felski 1999: 25). Rather than one specific locale, it is an "active practising of place" in which familiarity is "actively produced over time" (24, see also de Certeau 1984). Home is also defined by, and a site in which, power struggles and inequalities related to gender, class and generational differences (ibid.) are negotiated, all of which feature in the experience of everyday life analyzed in the chapters that follow.

The idea of habit, or the distracted enactment of routine tasks, is a feature that "crystallises" the experience of everyday life (Felski 1999: 26). It is a basic and often stabilizing quality of daily existence and identity (ibid.). This notion lends itself well to the process and experience of touring described by members of road crews. Everyday life "is the process of becoming acclimatised to assumptions, behaviours and practices which come to seem self-evident and taken-for-granted … it is a lived process of routinization" (31). If identity formation

results from repeated behaviours and emotions, any sudden change in the "rhythm of one's personal routines … can be a source of profound disorientation and distress" (28). Touring involves learning and adjustment, and comes with its own set of expectations and habits, as findings in the chapters will show. Felski notes that the mundane practices that organize daily life are rarely the subject of reflection unless a "specific problem emerges to demand our attention" (27). In this way, the idea of habit also illuminates how behaviours and practices are eventually identified for modification. In particular, these ideas support how crew members learn to be on tour and alter their practices over time, and to the issues around stress, mental health and wellbeing currently being debated about working in the live music industry. Habit "may strengthen, comfort and provide meaning" yet relying on it too much can constrain, have adverse social effects, and promote "complacent acceptance of the way things are" (28).

As this section has shown, Felski's approach attests to the shared character and experience of everyday life despite the various roles that workers in live music occupy. In this way, it accounts for the ways that hierarchy, which is a key issue in this study, is put into practice and reproduced on tour. It is routinized by repetitive acts that are important organizational components and sources of identity formation. In other words, the practices and conventions of touring help to solidify hierarchical positions and related self-understanding. Felski's notion of home as the site in which difference is negotiated and familiarity produced means that tour buses, hotels and venues are the spaces in which personnel actively participate in processes and interactions that reconstruct the live music hierarchy and their relative positions. Finally, the idea of habit highlights how hierarchy is taken-for-granted and reproduced involuntarily through engagement in daily conduct and activities (26–27). The enactment of such habits situates hierarchy as a constraining feature in the working lives of support personnel at the same time that

these habits are the source of their movement between positions of authority and subordination (28).

In these ways, Felski's understanding of everyday life helps to situate the perspective and experience of the road crew. As live music is the overarching structure, purpose and objective, and a tour is produced in order to facilitate live music events, the activities that occur throughout a tour, and during the process of touring, constitute the everyday life of *live music*.

The next section of the Introduction will discuss the methodology used to conduct research for the thesis.

Methodology

This section provides an overview of the methods used in this study. It outlines my approach and also provides some reflection on the research process. The overall goal was to generate new ideas and different ways of thinking about live music. It does so by examining road crews and the processes and workplace culture of touring. The minimal existent literature on road crews, and my specific interest in understanding their working lives, perspectives and settings, led to an inductive research process and an interpretive qualitative study. It began as somewhat open-ended and exploratory and was gradually narrowed, with the intention being to build concepts rather than test theories (Merriam 2002: 5). Following the qualitative approach, the primary concern of this study was depth and understanding (ibid.). It sought to "discover and understand a phenomenon, process, the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved, or a combination of these" (ibid.: 6). And to do so by exploring the "nature of that setting — what it means for participants to be in that setting, what their lives are like, what's going on for them, what their meanings are, what the world looks like in that particular setting" in the contemporary time (Patton 1985: 1 in ibid.: 5).

Researching an overlooked group of workers who are minimally understood came with the challenges of access and availability of information. My approach was to examine the working lives of road crews via a variety of methods and sources in order to optimize data and produce "knowledge on different levels" to achieve depth and understanding (Flick 2014: 184). The qualitative approach involved data collection through interviews, participant observation, document analysis of archival materials, and consultation of primary and secondary sources and media representations. As such, the study involved triangulation, or the use of several methodologies or sources in the study of the same phenomenon in an attempt to enrich the study, capture a variety of dimensions, and provide "a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility" (Denzin 1970: 291, Eisner 2017: 110, Bowen 2009: 28, Flick 2014: 183–184). In this way, all of these methods worked collectively to capture and demonstrate the everyday life of live music. Each of these methodologies and sources are described below.

<u>Interviews</u>

Interviews were conducted in two stages. In an effort to acquire foundational knowledge, explore possibilities and reveal some issues and directions that might not have been anticipated, it was determined that informal consultations should be conducted prior to any official interviews. Informal consultations were also an attempt to generate contacts and locate potential participants via referrals and snowball (or chain referral) sampling, which is a useful strategy for making contact with groups that can be difficult to access, such as some workers in the arts and culture (Handcock and Gile 2011: 369, Heckathorn 2011: 356).

Research ethics clearance was initially obtained in August 2016 and four consultations were conducted between November 2016 and January 2017. Individuals were consulted who could offer a range of perspectives and thereby speak about various phenomena relevant to the

project. I consulted a UK-based musician, a US-based tour manager, a UK-based academic who had conducted relevant research on live music, and a tour manager based in Canada. Professor Martin Cloonan referred me to the musician and the academic, and the musician suggested and put me into contact with both of the tour managers. The conversations averaged an hour each and took place in-person in Glasgow and Montreal and on Skype. Respondents were informed that the study was in an exploratory stage. The consultations covered various aspects of road crews and tour work, including job entry, working conditions and responsibilities, misconceptions about the work, and the specific occupational histories of the respondents. The consultation with the academic was useful for raising awareness of potential sources and discussing ideas about possible methodological approaches. In addition to these consultations, informal conversations with Dr. John Williamson at the University of Glasgow were integral to the development of the project.

Official interviews began in April 2017 and were completed in August 2019, with a total of thirteen research respondents. Interviews took place in-person in Glasgow, London and Bath, on Skype or on the phone, and each lasted a minimum of one hour and a maximum of one hour forty-five minutes. One respondent participated in a consultation, a formal interview, and was also later contacted with questions via email; one was formally interviewed twice (7 months apart), and one was interviewed three times (once a year in 2017, 2018 and 2019). Additional interviews were conducted with these specific respondents because of relevant questions that arose as the study progressed that they were able to address based on their roles and experience. All respondents in formal interviews except one were willing to answer follow-up questions as needed. While the sample size could be seen as a limitation, it fostered the depth and understanding that are the "essence of qualitative research methodology" (Crouch and McKenzie

2006: 494). In achieving such depth, it "is much more important for the research to be intensive, and thus persuasive at the conceptual level, rather than aim to be extensive with intent to be convincing … through enumeration" (ibid.). This sample of respondents produced rich information and a strong data set that reached saturation (Mason 2010) and generated consistent patterns. These patterns were further substantiated, and nuanced, in other sources discussed in this section.

Respondents included four tour managers, with one also having extensive experience as a production manager; a monitor/sound engineer; a head of security; three guitar technicians; and a production coordinator. Nine of the respondents were men and four were women, which reflects the wider unequal gender representation in the live music industry workforce. I spoke to respondents working for commercially successful artists on mid- to high-level tours, and interviewed additional respondents for broader understanding. Two respondents involved in the earliest interviews primarily worked on smaller level tours, and were valuable for expanding my understanding of touring and for recognizing the different conditions and experiences that workers can encounter at various levels. An interview was also conducted with a sound engineer working for a prominent touring theatre/circus group, in order to grasp differences from the conditions and experiences of workers on popular music concert tours. Two of the interviewees were not members of road crews, but worked in related positions, one as the manager of an events company and another as the director of an advocacy association for freelance workers on road crews. They were able to provide unique perspectives based on their occupations and a broader understanding of the live music industry. One interview that was conducted with a guitar technician/musician could not be included in the thesis because he failed to return his consent form.

Respondents for interviews were recruited based on referrals from other people. Part of the importance of referrals had much to do with my status as a relative outsider to the live music industry. My personal connection to live music was through more than twenty-five years of concert attendance, and professionally during my years as a journalist. Since 1994, I have attended hundreds of concerts and during that time have had many informal interactions with a range of touring personnel, musicians and fans. While working as a journalist from 2002 to 2005, a selection of my features and interviews covered live music, and these were usually arranged via a publicist or record label representative. These experiences certainly inform my broader understanding of live music and touring, and the knowledge acquired from them has been useful during this study. As I had no prior work experience or existing network of road crew members or other personnel who could forge contacts, an essential component of the research was to make those connections.

Another reason referrals were integral is that road crews are insular groups and their workplace culture is marked by privacy and respect for each other and the artists who hire them. Additionally, the freelance nature of work, combined with the emphasis on networking and reputation for career continuity, creates a particular expectation to maintain that privacy and respect. As such, the idea of being interviewed, particularly with someone unknown, can create suspicion or unease. As is the case in hiring processes, road crews do not blindly admit people to their circle. Most people making a referral made a point to tell me that it was best for them to make the introduction to whomever was to be interviewed. I discussed this with most of my respondents who confirmed that this is a normal and preferred way of approach, generally speaking.

A key component of, and asset to, the recruitment and interview process was my time spent as a Visiting Researcher in Music at the University of Glasgow. This opportunity put me in contact with Professor Martin Cloonan, who became my co-supervisor. As an academic researching live music and a former band manager, he has a network of relevant contacts. Prof. Cloonan was the connection to many of the research respondents and either referred or introduced me directly to them or put me in touch via mutual contacts who then made introductions. Other contacts were acquired via snowball sampling through referrals from research respondents following interviews. Two came from academic colleagues, and in one case I reached out directly to a respondent who was more easily accessible due to his visibility as an author of books about touring. While referrals and snowball sampling were necessary and helpful, they also presented challenges if people making referrals did not fully understand the goals and purpose of the project. Referrals did not always result in participation, and there were a number of unsuccessful attempts. Issues involved in recruitment and access exemplify the challenges of research on live music and could be among the reasons why few behind-the-scenes studies exist.

The process of arranging interviews with willing respondents was in and of itself a very useful process in the ways that it revealed much about their working lives and the conditions of touring. Interviews were scheduled entirely based on respondents' availability, and I made myself available accordingly. One respondent, a referral from a tour manager I had interviewed, was on tour during the time the interview was initially scheduled. A phone interview was arranged for 17 July 2018, but when I called her there was no answer. After sending an email, she replied that she had fallen asleep given that the last few days had been hectic with border crossings, and she was exhausted. We rescheduled for 31 July 2018. That day, when I called her

at the scheduled time, the call was forwarded to voicemail after ringing twice. I tried a second time, but when she answered the phone the signal cut out. She subsequently sent a text and explained that they were driving and had bad reception. She said that they were running late due to bus trouble and would arrive at the hotel in approximately two hours. We rescheduled for 14 August 2018, at which time the interview did take place. In other instances, emails were lost in the shuffle at particularly busy times, respondents needed gentle follow-up emails as reminders, or responses were slow due to the nature of their schedules. Generally, it was best to schedule interviews when research respondents were not on tour. A description of the respondents and the corresponding interview schedule is available in Appendix A.

In accordance with McGill University research ethics, all research respondents who were interviewed completed, signed and returned a consent form that provided details of the project and information about their participation. McGill ethics defaults to anonymity and respondents are not named unless they provide consent. Half of the respondents agreed to be named and the other half chose to remain anonymous. In the interest of consistency, I use only first names in the thesis, and the first names of those respondents requesting anonymity have been changed.

I now turn to the approach to the interviews and their content. In consideration of the goals of the project, interviews were selected as part of the research process given their usefulness in directly obtaining first-hand accounts of relevant experiences. My interest in interviewing and the kind of knowledge it generates continues from my previous professional experience as a journalist. Understanding the daily lives of these workers relied heavily on the willingness of research respondents to openly share their experiences. Additionally, the different roles occupied by members of road crews brought the potential for a range of perspectives. To maximize the outcome of the interviews, I utilized a semi-structured (or in-depth), yet flexible

approach that emphasized engagement and active listening (Ayres 2008), with a conversational, non-confrontational tone (Rubin and Rubin 2012, Flick 2014). As a foundation, all interviews were organized loosely around a specific set of predetermined questions that were asked to each respondent. These questions were based on the following themes, some of which overlap:

- Being a worker: entry to the field, motivation, maintaining work, average year

- Job description: role(s) on tour, responsibilities, typical day

- Working with other crew members and musicians: relationships, interaction, hierarchy

- Being on tour: adjustment, working and living conditions, health and wellbeing, culture

However, interviews were highly flexible and open-ended in order to allow the interviewees to "elaborate or take the interview in new but related directions" (Cook 2008). Questions were also tailored according to the particular role that the respondent occupies in a road crew. Some of the most important aspects of the study originated in statements made by the respondents. This was a flexible approach that also allowed the opportunity to further probe and immediately ask important follow-up questions for deeper insight into a given area. In sum, the interviews were intended to alternate between "the researcher's introduction of the topic under investigation, the participant's account of his or her experiences, and the researcher's probing of these experiences for further information useful to the analysis" (ibid.). Questions could have been posed and data collected via a large survey. However, the standardized and inflexible nature of survey questions would not yield the texture and experiences of touring work that was the aim of the project, and that a smaller sample of in-depth interviews provided. Further, surveys are often "infeasible when the population is … geographically dispersed, and … that are difficult for outsiders to penetrate" (Sudman and Kalton 1986, Heckathorn 2011: 356).

Interviews were designed to "build a solid, deep understanding … based on the perspectives and experiences of interviewees" (Rubin and Rubin 2012: 38). In this way, conducting interviews comes with the awareness that the information respondents provide is based on their own understandings of situations, that people may construct particular versions of their experience and past, and may speak from their own interests. However, my approach is to take their statements seriously and recognize their usefulness for analysis and application.

All interviews were audio recorded and I personally transcribed them. During data analysis, I looked for consistent themes, compiled quotations and passages into categories, and noted patterns or differences between roles and individual respondents based on their responses and statements. The themes that emerged from the interviews formed the basis for, and shaped the direction of, the thesis and its chapters, with the exception of Chapter 3, which is based on participant observation. In this way, while in-depth interviews form the basis for this study, they are "often combined with other forms of data … to produce a rich account of the research setting or phenomenon under investigation" (Cook 2008). I now turn to the next aspect of methodology, participant observation.

<u>Participant Observation</u>

During research for this thesis, I became interested in acquiring first-hand experience in the live music industry in order to gain deeper understanding of my area of study. In March 2018, a job listing was posted for the position of Hospitality Coordinator (see Appendix B) at a venue (referred to as Venue A; see Chapter 3 for description) in the United States. In the cover letter for the application, I indicated my status as a PhD candidate and that my interest in the job was due to my academic research on concerts and the live music industry. After a Skype interview with the manager and her assistant, I was offered, and accepted, the position a couple of days later.

Prior to starting the job, I wrote to McGill research ethics to ask if it was possible to include some of my experiences and observations in my findings, and specified that the names of people and organizations would be changed (or remain anonymous). The latter statement was included given that my role as a worker and the nature of my responsibilities meant that anonymity was essential in order to ensure privacy. That is why all personnel, artists and venues associated with these experiences are anonymous in the thesis, or names have been changed. The research ethics department confirmed that including these activities was suitable and in accordance with the clearance I had already received, which allowed for participant observation at concert venues.

I attended on-site training on 27 May 2018 and began working the next day. The season consisted of 31 concerts, which were spread across three months, with the last show occurring in early September 2018. Show days did not follow a consistent schedule. In some cases, there was one concert each week or, in others, three show days in a row. I worked a total of 29 concerts, with two absences related to a pre-existing academic commitment overseas. However, I discussed them with a colleague who handled my responsibilities on those days. The concerts featured a wide range of artists from various genres, of different ages and operating at many levels of experience and popularity.

In my role, I was considered part of the local crew and worked with a core team of ten people, including the promoter, local production manager, runner, and food and beverage manager, and frequently interacted with other on-site personnel. Many of the job's details are included in Chapter 3, but I will offer some information here. Working days averaged fourteen or fifteen hours, from load-in to load-out, with additional time required the day before for grocery shopping for rider items. My role was the primary contact for incoming tour managers regarding

rider and hospitality items, and I was responsible for communicating with them in advance and on show days. Additionally, I interacted with a range of road crew members concerning venue-related information. Communications with road crews were generally direct and goal-oriented, based primarily on tasks that needed to be accomplished, and were impersonal. However, these unavoidable work-related interactions further substantiate the need to maintain anonymity.

This position meant I had a direct responsibility in the daily process of the concert season, and a role in maintaining the organization's and promoter's reputation with the visiting road crews and artists. In this way, this approach created a risk of bias given that I was a worker with real responsibilities that brought with it the possibility of losing distance and objectivity and "going native" (Flick 2014: 315–316). During participant observation, I "observe[d] from a member's perspective" but was also aware that my participation as a worker influenced those observations (ibid.: 312). In other words, my own ability, and the manner in which I conducted myself, in this role could affect various aspects, and my interpretation, of the working day and related activities. In my findings, I draw primarily on the conventions and procedural aspects of the role, and identify my presence, in the third person, in any relevant observations that are included in the thesis. I would normally make notes on my laptop during down time in the local production office, and complete them at home at the end of the day.

My decision to accept a paying job could be met with criticism. Two academic colleagues did raise this as an issue, given that it technically takes jobs away from people working in the industry. This factor is another aspect that demonstrates the difficulties in gaining access to and an understanding of the live music industry. It should be noted that the position I was hired for is a seasonal and temporary one with absolutely no possibility of being hired into a permanent position. The reason it was available in 2018 was because the person who had

fulfilled the position for the previous three years could no longer make it work with her schedule due to its temporary and impermanent status. The job listing had been posted for two weeks before I came across it and applied, which gave ample opportunity for others to apply and be considered.

During the three months of working at Venue A, I also had the opportunity to spend one day observing at another concert venue (referred to as Venue B; see Chapter 3 for description). One of the research respondents I interviewed was on tour at the time and the band had a concert date in the same city. The observation took place in July 2018 but was arranged in advance during an interview with the research respondent, who invited me to the venue for the day. The research respondent introduced me to everyone on the road crew, four of the five band members, and the support act. He explained that I was a researcher working on a PhD about road crews and that he had invited me to come along to see how it all works.

I spent the first seven hours of the day in the front of house and standing room area, which provided the opportunity to closely watch as the road crew set up the equipment on the stage, and attended to the various technical, sound and lighting preparations for the concert, which was something I rarely could observe, and certainly not in such detail, at Venue A, given the nature of my job responsibilities. I spent the second part of the day in the green room/backstage area, at a table with the tour manager and production manager. We discussed aspects of their jobs and specific occurrences of the day and I observed them at work, along with the general environment and activity in the backstage area. After the concert, I observed the road crew dismantle and pack up the equipment. Throughout the day I recorded notes in either a small notebook or typed them into my phone.

Participant observation contributed to a deeper understanding of the interview contents and was a useful way of confirming, expanding and noticing distinctions from respondent's statements. It provided enriching context and perspectives, as well as an opportunity to participate in and observe the practices and workers involved on a daily basis in live music. This choice took a cue from Sara Cohen (1993: 123) on the value of going out into the world to conduct research "emphasizing music as social practice and process." Participant observation has been an effective method in other studies of live music (Webster 2011) and touring (Nóvoa 2012), though they differ significantly from this study in subject matter, purpose and approach. The nature of my participation and the direct access it provided generated a rich source of information that is useful to this study as well as future research. It created greater possibility in terms of providing groundwork and developing a perspective on aspects of live music that have been minimally explored. The inclusion of venues of this specific size and type, a 1,900-capacity amphitheatre (Venue A) and a 2,600-capacity music venue (Venue B), is additionally important due to their underrepresentation in existent studies. Arenas and festivals have been well represented while mid-sized venues have received minimal attention, and even less in specific relation to the working practices occurring within them. As such, participant observation created the opportunity to expand the academic literature about the spaces in which concerts take place.

<div align="center">Supplemental Participation and Observation</div>

During the research process, additional opportunities became available in the form of live music and music industries-related events. Several of these events were attended due to their usefulness for building on specific aspects of the study and contributed additional understanding of the working lives of road crews. Others were less relevant but offered exposure and more general understanding. I will briefly describe the most relevant events and mention those that were less

pertinent to account for their part in the research process. Notes were taken during or immediately following each of them.

Three events offered additional understanding of the career paths and nature of the working lives of road crews. The first event was a series of panels sponsored by ticketing company Skiddle titled Mental Health in the Music Industry. Each panel featured different speakers from a wide range of industry roles discussing issues related to mental health in the industry and ways to address them. My primary reason for attending was to gauge the degree to which, and how, road crews were being included, considered and discussed, as the majority of music industry-related mental health surveys and organizations have been primarily focused on musicians. The panels took place in London, England, on 2 October 2018, and in Manchester, England, on 3 October 2018. The second was an annual event called Production Futures, which I attended based on the suggestion of one of the research respondents who is directly involved in its organization. It is essentially an informational session and networking opportunity for new and potential workers in the live music industry. Production Futures took place in Wakefield, England, on 7 November 2018. The third event was a benefit concert for a road crew member who had recently suffered a stroke and was unable to work for the foreseeable future. The concert was titled "BrandAid" as a reference to the crew member's name, John Brandham, and was co-headlined by the Pretenders and Suede, for whom Brandham has worked for the past fifteen years. The concert was organized to generate financial support during his recovery. It took place at the O2 Shepherd's Bush Empire in London, England, on 20 November 2019, and I also closely followed the promotional campaign for the event.

Additional events contributed general knowledge and were primarily associated with the more exploratory stage of the research process. They warrant mention here but are not included

in the thesis. Among those of some significance was a touring panel and networking event put on by Scotland-based organization Born to be Wide in September 2016, followed by their annual convention, Wide Days, which covers a broad range of topics for emerging musicians, in April 2017, both held in Edinburgh. Additionally, in October 2017, I attended the annual Venues Day in London, which is concerned with the ongoing issue of venue closure and preservation, and is also a networking event. While these events minimally addressed topics covered in the thesis, they created access to the industry and its personnel, and provided greater awareness of its concerns and practices. They also highlighted challenges of the research process by drawing attention to the uncertainty involved in specific events and the value they may have for a project. Most importantly, these events assisted with recognizing what was not relevant to my project and what could be excluded, and were useful exercises for learning to narrow and focus the study and therefore identify the best and most relevant sources of information.

The next section describes the last part of the methodology: archival research, primary and secondary sources, and media representations.

Archival Research

The archival research occurred in August 2018 and July 2019 at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Library and Archives in Cleveland, Ohio. I spent a total of seven eight-hour days exploring relevant archival materials. The most important archive was the David Russell Collection. David Russell was a prominent tour and production manager from Ohio who worked in the industry for approximately 30 years. He worked for artists including R.E.M., The B-52s, Janet Jackson, and Cher, among others. Russell died in 2005 and his wife donated his collection of tour documents to the Library and Archives. I was made aware of the collection via email communications with the staff.

The David Russell Collection contains a substantial selection of materials from 1978 to 2003 and provides a strong overview of the working practices and everyday life of a tour and production manager while also functioning as an account of the practice of touring. The archive includes detailed tour budgets and interpersonal communications regarding their negotiation. It features tour itineraries and travel schedules that give insight into the financial aspects and touring conditions for artists and crew working at a particular level at a specific time in music history. It also contains pertinent information and documents about road crew personnel, particularly hiring processes, CVs and correspondences between Russell and potential crew members. Of significant interest was Russell's collection of the "Road Rage" comics he personally illustrated during several tours, commenting on life on the road. Similarly, he wrote daily communications to the road crews that were used to provide essential information but also made extensive use of humour, commented on touring life and featured photos and inside jokes about artists and crew members. Additional materials, such as his personal notebooks, were difficult to make sense of, particularly as his notes did not come with context or explanations. Closer examination, however, gave some sense of the kinds of daily responsibilities and matters his role entailed, and the number of notebooks implied much about his workload.

Prior to arriving at the Library and Archives, I searched its website for materials and then submitted my requests to the librarian. The volume of the collection meant I did not have time to explore everything, instead focusing only on the most relevant contents. The archive is organized in files labelled according to document type. I was primarily interested in those in the categories of Tour Productions and Personal Files, and was able to determine the most relevant documents to consult based on file names and content descriptions provided on the Library and Archives website. On my first visit, I requested photocopies of relevant documents which were later sent

to me for a fee. On the second visit, I paid to borrow a device from the Library and Archives to take photos of the relevant materials, which were then emailed to me. In addition, I kept a log of notes while reviewing the materials, and the staff were available to answer questions or clarify aspects of the archive.

I followed the view that documents are "'social facts,' in that they are produced, shared, and used in socially organized ways" and are both resources that provide information and artefacts that themselves disclose something (Atkinson and Coffey 2004: 58; Coffey 2014: 369). In this way, I used document analysis to analyze the materials, with an approach that recognizes documents as "ways in which social actors make sense of social worlds" and "can provide data on the context within which research respondents operate" (Bowen 2009: 29–30, Coffey 2014: 371). Further, document analysis was useful as it can supplement, "verify findings or corroborate evidence from other sources" (Bowen 2009: 29–30). Information from these materials is included throughout the thesis to convey aspects of the culture and process of touring.

During both visits to the Library and Archives, I also spent time in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame Museum. I was specifically interested in locating exhibits that featured information about road crews and/or touring and in understanding the manner in which this institution represents live music's support personnel. There are two main areas in the museum that feature road crews: a small, seemingly permanent exhibit titled "Backstage Stories" and a small space dedicated to one of the Rolling Stones' long-time crew members. I photographed all of the items and made notes about the exhibits.

<u>Primary and Secondary Sources, and Media Representations</u>

A number of primary and secondary sources, as well as media representations, were consulted to enrich the study and are briefly described below.

Autobiographies and Guidebooks. A number of current and former members of road crews have published autobiographies of their experiences (see Appendix C). Similarly, several have published guidebooks on working on tour or how to become a member of a road crew (see Appendix C). These sources provide first-hand accounts and information about the working practices of touring and were useful resources to compare and contrast with interview content.

Online Sources. A variety of online sources contributed breadth of knowledge. The online blog *This Tour Life* is a useful resource that addresses the realities of working on tour, as well as ways to cope with them, and is authored by experienced personnel. I located and followed a variety of social media accounts (Twitter and Instagram) of road crew members, which gave insights into the everyday life of touring. The weekly podcast *Roadie Free Radio* began in 2016 and features interviews with people working in a wide range of roles on tour. Time limitations did not allow me to review all 187 episodes to date, but I consulted a selection of them. Those reviewed were chosen, in part, to compare and contrast with interviews and participant observation and, as such, featured members of road crews with the same roles as those in my sample. Additionally, a selection was reviewed that featured roles I had the least access to through my other methods, as a way to expand my understanding.

Music Press, Trade Publications, Newspapers. Given the importance of the press to rock and popular music, a variety of magazines were explored for coverage of both road crews and touring. This included articles primarily about members of road crews, features about musicians on tour, and those covering aspects of touring, such as riders and set lists. The scope of the research in printed magazines was primarily determined by the contents of the personal collection of Dr. John Williamson at the University of Glasgow. It contained a selection of the UK music publications *Q*, *Vox* and *Select*, as well as live music industry trade journals *Audience*

and *LiveUK*. Content from several, more general, music industries-related trade journals, such as *Billboard* and *Music Week*, was also consulted. I consulted a selection of each of these publications during a period that ranged from 1991 to 2015, which provided a consistent temporal frame with the sample of research respondents' work histories. A number of articles about road crews and touring were published in the Music section of *The Guardian*, between 2007 and 2016, and were consulted.

     Television and Film. While there exist a wide variety of concert films and documentaries, many of which I have viewed, I was primarily interested in television and film that made road crews the central focus. As such, there are not many, but they include fictional representations in: a short-lived Showtime series titled *Roadies* (Crowe 2016); sketches from *Saturday Night Live* (1990) and *Steven Universe* (Sugar 2016); a feature film titled *Roadie* (Cuesta 2011); a music video by Tenacious D titled "The Roadie" (Hill 2012), and short film *Roadie* (Milburn 2004). Documentaries specifically about road crews exist, including *Miles to Go Before I Sleep* (Jones 2016), which was released by Showtime as a promotional effort for the *Roadies* series; and *Roadie: My Documentary* (Hoffman 2019).

     The best way to use these sources was an important consideration. I realized that several of them (e.g., autobiographies, fictional representations, press coverage) could individually function as the basis for entirely different and interesting studies of road crews and touring. Not all of this information appears here, but is included when suitable or in dialogue with other types of data. Several sources are interwoven throughout the thesis to reinforce existent patterns, highlight contradictions or demonstrate additional perspectives. Overall, these sources played a vital role in supplementing my knowledge and exploring other dimensions of the working lives of road crews.

The next and final section of the Introduction will describe the focus of each of the four thesis chapters.

Chapter Descriptions

Each chapter focuses on an aspect of the daily activities and experiences that comprise the working lives of road crews and shows how they are of importance to the realization of concerts and to understanding live music. The thesis begins in Chapter 1 by discussing who road crew members are and how they become part of the everyday life of live music. To do so, it defines road crews and analyzes the manner in which they gain entry to the field and continue their careers as freelance workers on tours. The chapter emphasizes the importance of both the individual and collective nature of working on a road crew and the integral role of contacts and informal practices in acquiring and maintaining work. It provides important context for the chapters that follow and makes a contribution to wider scholarship on working and workers in the music and cultural industries.

The thesis moves from defining road crews and key aspects of their career paths to exploring the complex mobile world of touring. Chapter 2 is about the experience of being on tour for members of road crews. It analyzes the ways in which touring shapes their lives both on and off the road, how they manage close working relationships, and highlights important characteristics of their workplace culture. These factors offer deeper insights into the nature of touring and its effects on workers and, in doing so, draws attention to a wider set of practices and processes involved in live music events.

Chapter 3 expands the understanding of the factors involved in making a concert happen. It shows the kinds of taken-for-granted labour activities that are integral to the everyday life of live music and the working lives of support personnel. This chapter explores the daily practices

of acquiring a rider and working with local crews, and examines road crew members' temporary

workspaces and the significant activities occurring within them. It provides a nuanced and micro-

level account of how concerts are realized and extends the scope of how live music can be

understood.

The thesis takes a close look at the specific role of the tour manager in Chapter 4. In

particular, it examines the working relationship tour managers have with musicians. The tour

manager's role is largely defined in relation to the needs and requirements of specific artists, and

a key component of their jobs involves looking after musicians. The chapter considers what it

means to do so and the ways that this working relationship shapes and potentially affects

musicians as well as the decisions tour managers' make, the nature of their daily activities, and

their own self-definition. In this way, this relationship is of particular importance to

understanding the realization of concerts and the everyday life of live music. The Conclusion of

the thesis presents a synthesis of my research findings and offers suggestions for future studies.

Chapter 1

Who are Live Music's Support Personnel?

This chapter will define road crews and analyze some of the important characteristics of the working lives of this group of support personnel. It focuses on understanding their many and varied roles as well as the norms and practices that shape their career paths. In doing so, it establishes the collective and individual nature of road crew members and shows how they become part of the everyday life of live music. The chapter argues that road crews are comprised of specialized workers who strongly rely on contacts and informal practices to gain and maintain work.

Chapter 1 begins by establishing what road crews are and defining a selection of the primary individual roles that comprise them. It also problematizes the term "roadie" that is commonly applied. Next, it shows the ways workers learn their roles and the types of training available to them. From there, the chapter discusses the manner in which road crew members gain access to the live music industry and maintain work as freelancers — or do not — and suggests that contacts are the most important factor in doing so. It then addresses diversity and the minority status of women on road crews. More broadly, this chapter contributes a deeper understanding of working in the music and cultural industries.

What is a Road Crew?

A "crew" is defined as a "group of expert specialists each of whom have specific role positions, perform brief events that are closely synchronized with each other, and repeat these events across different environmental conditions" (Webber and Klimoski 2004: 265; Sundstrom et al. 1990, Klimoski and Jones 1995). A crew forms temporarily to complete a specific task, and after an

assignment is complete the members disperse and take new work in units comprised of different members (Webber and Klimoski 2004: 266, Arrow and McGrath 1995: 380). Following this, a road crew is comprised of individual workers with specializations who handle the logistics and technical requirements of a concert tour and collectively work for the realization of live music events. Interviews with research respondents confirmed this:

> … the industry is staffed by very highly skilled, highly experienced professionals who do a job that only a very small number of people in the world could actually do at the level that I was doing it at … when I quit … probably … there was 100 people in the world that had the experience to do the job that I was doing (Daniel 2017).

> What people don't tend to realize about people who are in this job is that they tend to be exceptionally technically knowledgeable who live an incredibly transient life and are able to socially survive in this environment (Tony 2018).

Members of road crews work, live and travel together throughout a tour's itinerary and duration, and participate in shared norms and a workplace culture. As they are comprised of distinct roles that function interdependently, working on a road crew means occupying an individual position with unique responsibilities at the same time that it involves participation, cooperation and identification with a larger group. In this way, understanding a road crew involves balancing the view that they are "competent individuals coming together to do work" with a perspective that accounts for and acknowledges the characteristics of the group (Ginnett 2019: 80). The size and specializations of a road crew vary according to the production specifications and budget of a tour and are a function of the personal and professional requirements of musicians. Figure 1 lists some of the roles on a road crew and includes those that are represented in this thesis.[8]

Tour Manager (TM): TMs have many responsibilities that vary according to the needs and requirements of artists and tours. They handle the tour's budget and advance each concert date. Advancing refers to the process of communicating with venue promoters and relevant personnel to discuss and confirm show details and logistics and ensure that technical and hospitality requirements will be handled correctly. It also involves obtaining relevant information about the

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[8] Additional roles include road manager, lighting designer, lighting technician, rigger, caterer, wardrobe, merchandise vendor and driver. See Reynolds (2008: 40–44, 2012: 162–190) and Waddell, Barnet and Berry (2007: 235–247).

venue's location and spatial characteristics, and establishing times for arrival, soundcheck and performance (see Reynolds 2020). For the TM, advancing is a way to prevent problems that may occur on a show day. By gaining awareness of what to expect, they are able to anticipate potential problems or advise the touring party on how to attend to them, prior to the event (ibid.). A key component of their job is to maintain the smooth operation of a tour by attending to day-to-day activities and troubleshooting problems as they occur. This largely involves communicating information about schedules, transportation and accommodation to the touring party and doing so in a manner that ensures prompt arrival at all relevant destinations. They also pay per diems to the artist and crew, settle the artist's performance fees with promoters on show days, and report attendance numbers to the artist's management (ibid.). TMs also rely on and communicate with local crews at venues on show days (see Chapter 3). Depending on the size of the tour, some of these tasks may be divided between other roles, including the tour accountant, production manager or production coordinator. A key component of TMs' daily working lives involves working closely with musicians (see Chapter 4). TMs travel with musicians, oversee their promotional tasks, sometimes handle their personal affairs, and maintain communication with artist management.

Production Manager (PM): PMs oversee technical workers on the road crew and handle all aspects of a concert's production requirements. These aspects include sound, lights and video equipment, as well as their transportation and budget. PMs handle technical riders detailing specifications and discuss them in advance with relevant local personnel, and they are concerned with the logistics of load-in and load-out at venues on show days. Depending on the size of the tour, the PM may also handle the travel and meal requirements for the road crew. PMs do not need to be technical experts as they oversee skilled technical workers. Communication between the PM and the TM is essential.

Production Coordinator: On larger tours, a production coordinator will absorb some of the responsibilities of the PM. Their duties vary according to the tour and the working preferences of individual PMs and TMs. Coordinators can be responsible for handling non-technical aspects for the road crew, such as booking travel, dealing with immigration, ensuring receipt of per diems, and organizing food needs and catering.

Head of Security: Security is present on tours of very high-profile artists or when it is deemed necessary for the musicians' safety. They have a range of responsibilities that vary according to artist, including close protection services and directing safety measures. They are involved in ensuring the artist's safe arrival and departure to and from venues, hotels and transportation. In addition, they coordinate with local authorities, handle security logistics before, during and after performances and issue accreditation/passes.

Front of House Engineer (FOH engineer): The FOH engineer is responsible for mixing and controlling the audio that the audience hears during a concert, and ensuring good sound quality. The FOH engineer also handles all of the audio equipment and oversees the technical crew. During a concert, the FOH engineer is located behind a console in a designated area in the middle of the audience, and faces the front of the stage.

Instrument Technicians/The Backline (e.g., Guitar, Bass, Drums, Keyboard): Instrument technicians are responsible for the daily maintenance, operation, set up and packing up of musical instruments and their associated audio components. They also oversee the musicians' stage environment, such as the set list, towels and water. Instrument techs attend to any issues that may arise before a concert and are positioned in the wings during a performance in order to troubleshoot as needed.

Monitor Engineer: The monitor engineer mixes the sound that musicians hear while performing. This involves creating a tailor-made mix according to each musician's preferences through speakers or in-ear monitors. During a concert, the monitor engineer is normally positioned at the side of the stage in order to communicate with musicians, which is typically done with hand signals.

Figure 1

Members of road crews are commonly referred to as "roadies." The term is familiar enough in popular culture that 12 December 2012 was declared "international roadie day" given the 1-2-1-2-1-2 numerical configuration of the date and its reference to the process of sound checking (Virtue 2012). It is also reflected in the titles of topical films,[9] television series[10] and songs about them.[11] The term is generic and can be used to describe any member of a road crew. Deena Weinstein (2003: 565) articulated the meaning of the term.

> As rock concerts have become more sonically and visually elaborate, the number and specialization of roadies have increased accordingly. Roadies set up the show, maintain (repair and tune) the musical instruments, operate equipment during the show (the lights, sound and special effects), and pack up ('tear down') and transport everything required for each night's concert. Bands playing at very small venues serve as their own roadies or take good friends on their low-budget everything-in-a-van tours. In contrast, arena-sized rock tours employ dozens of roadies, many of whom are well-trained and sometimes well-paid specialists. Each musical instrument has its own 'tech,' and those in charge of sound and lighting ('engineers') increasingly have had formal training. Other roadies are selected solely for their brawn, working as 'grunts' or security staff.

Based on this passage, and in view of the definition of a crew as being comprised of specialized roles, to identify an individual member of a road crew as a roadie is a contradiction in terms. If a crew is defined as such, then central to understanding road crews is accounting for and making

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[9] *Roadie*, 2011
[10] *Roadies*, Showtime, 2016
[11] "The Roadie," Tenacious D, 2012, "Roadie Man," Pretenders, 2016

sense of the individual roles that comprise them. Weinstein's passage is useful for how it clearly illuminates problems with the term roadie. On one hand, the difficulty is essentially based on a question of language. In referring to "techs" and "engineers," Weinstein acknowledges the variety and specializations of roles on concert tours. However, in foregrounding the term roadie in characterizing these workers, she denies the importance of specialization and undermines the specificity of their roles. The definition of roadie is further confused in relation to skillset and differing scales of tours. If roadies can be 'grunts' hired solely for their brawn, and the role can be fulfilled by the friends of early-career musicians,[12] it is hard to grasp how the same term can be effectively applied to the "specialists" that have become integral to advanced concert technologies on arena tours. A roadie is associated with the *general* responsibility and experience of working for musicians on tour while the term also invokes *particular* roles. The universal application of the term renders it meaningless in understanding what these workers actually do and are responsible for.

The problematic nature of the term roadie is reflected in and supported by my findings. Research respondents indicate that as concerts have become more elaborate and crew members more specialized comes the desire to be recognized and perceived accordingly. They acknowledge that language is a key component in such occupational identification, and while their own perception of and commitment to their work has not changed, the importance of the terminology used to describe it has.

> … it's funny cause we used to be called roadies, but now everybody wants to be a technician don't they? … everybody wants to be a technician and taken seriously whereas I was still quite serious when I was being called a roadie. I think the thing is if you use the word roadie people don't see it quite a proper thing as being a technician do they (Duncan 2018).

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[12] This chapter will later show how working for friends is an important part of learning and training for members of road crews.

I don't use it myself. I call myself a technician. I will use the word roadie kind of like in jest, but I wouldn't use it in any professional way (Adrian 2018).

The generic nature of the term and, likewise, the wide range of skills associated with roadies are incompatible with the working practices of research respondents in this study. Simon Frith et al. (2021: 48) provide additional evidence with a quote from the Stereophonics' stage manager, who confirmed that

People aren't just roadies anymore; there's no such thing as a roadie, you can't do the job now if you're just a roadie. A lot of people are very highly qualified mathematicians or physicists, or really highly qualified electrical engineers, who transgress into this business now because they like the lifestyle, they get paid very well and we need them! [laughs] … If you think you can just hump a box to get a job, forget it. That's not the qualities we're looking for anymore …

The physical aspects associated with the responsibilities of a roadie essentially refers to "humpers," which is jargon for people who haul equipment and push flight cases during load-in and load-out. This type of unskilled labour would not feature in a larger division of labour on contemporary tours. Humpers do exist, but it is the local crew, not the touring crew that fulfill this duty.

There are no unskilled people on the road cause we can't afford to take unskilled people on the road … Local crew will cover the load-in, load-out, the humping if you like. They'll load and unload the trucks, they'll help with unpacking things out of the flight cases, they'll help set things up, the risers, things moving about on stage, they'll put all the flight cases away somewhere neat, they'll usually know in advance where they go that doesn't block fire exits (Glen 2018).

This activity was evident during participant observation at Venue A and Venue B and was attended to by the local crews. The distinction can be further observed in Roy Shuker's (2008: 58) overview of the concert environment, in which he describes the range of personnel working backstage. He states that there are "technicians in charge of the instruments and equipment (amplifiers, etc.); stagehands, *who often double as roadies*, people to work the sound and lighting

boards, security guards, and the concert tour manager" (ibid., my emphasis). As such, the term

roadie is laden with meanings that deflect or undermine the skillsets of road crew members.[13]

Roadie was once the operative term for musicians' support personnel on tours (Bennett

[1980] 2017: 75).[14] However, research respondents report that they perceive the term as

"pejorative," use it solely in humour and do not believe the term accurately reflects what they do.

> Cause that's what people think, 'oh what do you do?' I work in the concert industry, I'm
> a technician in the concert industry. 'Oh is that like a roadie?' … I don't find it a helpful
> term. It doesn't tell you anything about what a person actually is or what they do (Adrian
> 2018).

Only two respondents self-referenced as such in interviews. During participant observation only

one member of a road crew used the word roadie, and the local PM used the term once in relation

to a specific touring party. Taken together, research findings suggest that the term is now rarely

used by and less accepted amongst members of road crews as a label for their occupational

identities. The term road crew accounts for the individual specialized roles that comprise a group

with the common purpose of realizing live music events.

Not all members of road crews reject the term "roadie" as an occupational identifier, nor

do they agree with the notion that it is belittling. The website and Instagram account

"roadiedictionary"[15] provides definitions of workplace jargon. Its definition of roadie is as

follows: "Did you know there are a bunch of people that get offended by this word? They find it

derogatory?" (Thomas 2020). That such a description is favoured over an actual explanation of

the term suggests that the rejection of "roadie" is widespread but also contested. It could also be

a reference to a shift in the term's meaning and usage. Matt McGinn (2010: 39), longtime guitar

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[13] Gorman (1978: 25–28) also countered the perspective held by "casual observers of the rock scene" who "seem to believe that roadies are basically unskilled people…"

[14] An in-depth and comprehensive historical analysis of roadies, and the term, is outside the scope of this thesis. This type of study would be a useful contribution to further understanding this group of workers and their longer history.

[15] https://www.backstageculture.com/roadie-dictionary-a-list-of-touring-terms/

technician for Coldplay, stated in his book that some "roadies refuse to admit they're even 'roadies' at all" and prefer, consistent with research respondents in this study, to be referred to as "techs" or "technicians." McGinn understands this viewpoint due to the term's association with a period of time during which tours were characterized by excess, and "roadie" can imply a lack of professionalism (ibid.). However, McGinn is "proud, not ashamed, to call myself a roadie and always do" and he notes this is "much to the amusement/horror" of those who distance themselves from the term (41). Significantly, he believes that crew members want to reclaim "roadie" as a "positive term and revive it, with good association" (42). Evidence suggests that this is true and is occurring.

Though crew members reject "roadie" to describe their individual roles, they continue to utilize the term as shorthand to refer to the collective experience of being a worker on touring crews. The word "roadie" is used to signify that a person or group is part of this specific line of work. This usage of the term can be observed in various types of communication. Books written by road crew members often include "roadie" in the titles. For example, *Roadie: My Life On the Road with Coldplay* (McGinn 2010), *Rock Roadie* (Wright and Weinberg 2009) and *Roadie, Inc.: How to Gain and Keep a Career in the Live Music Business* (Reynolds 2012). It is further evident in media forms that broadcast their stories and causes, such as the podcast *Roadie Free Radio*[16] that features interviews with crew members and sells roadie-themed merchandise, and the album project *Whole Lotta Roadies*[17] that was created to raise funds during the COVID-19 pandemic. There is also the Australian organization Roady for Roadies[18] that likewise raises awareness and money for crew members affected by the pandemic. The Roadie Clinic[19] is an

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[16] Podcasts and merchandise available at roadiefreeradio.com
[17] See https://wholelottaroadies.bandcamp.com/album/whole-lotta-roadies
[18] Website is roady4roadies.com
[19] See the roadieclinic.com

US-based non-profit that offers services and resources to road crew members who may struggle with the difficulties of life on the road. Social media accounts also reflect how the term "roadie" still circulates, such as the "theroadiecookbook,"[20] which offers a space for crew members to share stories and recipes, discuss food they have tried on the road and raise funds. Workplace terminology such as "Roadie Friday," which refers to a show day before a day off on tour, further substantiate its continued use. These examples suggest that crew members have reappropriated the term "roadie" and reserve its use for a means to express a more general participation in the work experience of touring rather than as a label for their specific role within the collective road crew.

A crew forms when "an organization has developed the technology to carry out a class of projects (tasks) and then selects personnel to staff the project" (Webber and Klimoski 2004: 266). Following this, road crews come into existence when an artist is ready to go on tour, requires specific personnel to assist them and has the resources to afford them. In the early stages of a career, often originating at the local level (see Bennett [1980] 2017: Chapter 4), musicians deem hiring someone a worthwhile forfeiture of part of their pay due to how it can save them time and energy on preparations and transportation. H. Stith Bennett ([1980] 2017: 74–76) notes that, contrary to the misnomer that musicians' working lives are "easy" and "devoid of manual labour," the need to move and attend to equipment means that hiring someone is a "common solution to the frustrations of physical work." These rudimentary requirements can be extended and applied to artists that attain higher levels of success and greater resources. When it becomes possible to develop more complex live shows, the need develops for a group of more highly skilled and specialized workers. Hiring road crews means that the labour associated with live

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[20] https://www.instagram.com/theroadiecookbook. Also available at theroadiecookbook.com

music is distributed across several parties who collectively share the responsibilities and work toward its realization.

If "the number of personnel reflects the size of the tour and the economic importance of the musicians" (Shuker 2013: 49), then the road crew's presence and work on tour are symbolic of another group's success. Seen another way, the road crew enable and contribute to musicians' success, and its continuity, through their supporting roles.

> There's also a satisfaction in helping a band progress. It's not always the case, sometimes you join a band and they're already at a high level and you just keep 'em going, but the last band that I toured with was [artist], when I started working with them they were quite raw and not that great live and needed a lot of technical help to step up to the level that they were trying to get to, and seeing them go from the initial gigs that we did with them which were like, I think the first gig I did with them was at a 250-capacity club in London to two nights in the Hollywood Bowl, you know 20,000 people and you know being and totally owning it. Being part of that and I think if you're a monitor engineer you know the band are there every night, you're right there with them every night, so it's quite an intimate relationship and so being part of that and going through that journey it was incredibly satisfying and I did that with a few bands. So that was great (Daniel 2017).

Contributing to the development and advancement of an artist's career in the live setting is an integral component of the working lives of road crew members, and the ability to witness and experience such a process fosters a sense of gratification.

In their capacity as support personnel, road crew members can be perceived as "invisible" workers due to the ways in which their tasks and activities generally occur behind the scenes. As with other types of support workers in the cultural industries, the labour of road crews makes an important contribution but often goes unnoticed, unrecognized or unacknowledged (see Mayer, Banks and Caldwell 2009). In the film industry, this would be associated with the notion that "everything that matters happens on-screen, not off" with off-screen workers and their labour being "largely invisible to the general audience" (Curtin and Sanson 2017: 1–2). Within the live music setting, the responsibilities of road crews mean they are directly involved in the realization

of concerts, yet are ultimately excluded from the spectacle itself. While road crews are "invisible" in the theoretical sense of the term utilized by cultural industries scholars, as should already be clear, this thesis does not support the view that activities that happen out of sight do not matter but are rather constitutive of live music events. Further, it demonstrates that a group of workers' relative visibility to audiences should not be a determining factor in whether or not they are perceived as important.

In practice in the everyday life of live music, a more precise way of describing road crew members is that they are *less visible* given their occupational expectations and the functional components of the realization of live music events. Road crews are ultimately workers who are not supposed to be seen, or should be minimally visible, in order to avoid detracting from musicians' performances. This is enhanced by the clothing that members of road crews wear, which generally consists of a black shirt (sometimes provided by the artist), black shorts or trousers and black boots, but does vary. Road crew members' attire has often been the target of humour and stereotypes because they have been known to wear old band t-shirts and worn-out clothing.[21] However, black clothing is an observable, consistent and functional characteristic of stagehands and behind-the-scenes workers across cultural sectors. The manner in which members of road crews choose to express their version of this convention is connected to participation in a music culture, yet style choice ultimately retains a utilitarian purpose. Black clothing contributes to making crew members less conspicuous, and is a practical choice given that "there's a certain baseline of what you're wearing is going to get dirty and torn" (Glen 2018) and stronger shoes are safer in a concert environment. The minimal visibility of road crew members is also equated with a job well done.

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[21] See Simpson (2009) for an article that addresses the stereotypical "roadie uniform."

My job role, you should take pride in position if nobody knows who you are, if you're never in a photograph or very rarely in a photograph and people have to go, 'oh God I didn't see you there.' That's a massive compliment in my job (Tony 2017).

In contrast to the notion of invisibility that can characterize support workers, considering aspects of their working lives that are visible offer important insights. More effective wording, however, would point to the idea of their *presence* and *absence* in particular contexts.[22] The observable activities of road crew members in the concert setting reveal details of their working lives and indicate their importance to the everyday life of live music. While instrument technicians' designated place during a concert is at the side of the stage, the need for them to leave these spaces and appear onstage — which they often do hunched over to reduce visibility — means some type of technical issue has occurred that requires attention. The labours of front-of-house engineers are on display in an exclusive space in the centre of a venue's floor, surrounded by yet separated from an audience, throughout an entire show, and is symbolic of their importance. Though TMs spend hours backstage sending emails to advance a show, in which their contributions to realizing a concert are unseen and unknown, when they appear outside of a venue they become the target of fans' attention (see Chapter 4). Expectations around the presence and absence of road crew members also plays an important role in maintaining the conventions and rituals of a concert. The aforementioned "roadie cabaret," when crew members make final adjustments and preparations on the stage and to the equipment prior to the start of the headliner's set, serves as a marker of anticipation for audiences (Witts 2005: 147). Similarly, road crew members signify the end of a concert when the house lights are turned on and they emerge from the wings to 'tear down' the stage and equipment, and during which time fans view them as opportunities to acquire a set list or drumsticks.

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[22] See Webster (2011: 91–92) for a discussion on covertness and overtness in relation to the role of concert promoters and their presence at live music events.

The significance of road crew members is represented symbolically by the system of passes (or "credentials") that define and control insider-outsider boundaries of the touring party. Passes identify and grant access to members of the touring party and label and limit the roles of those peripheral to it. The artist and road crew receive laminated passes ("laminates") that grant them "Access All Areas" or AAA for short (Reynolds 2008: 37).[23] The AAA pass allows full access to the venue, including backstage, at all times. Passes are a marker of status and prestige for outsiders, in which proximity to the artist is the allure and functions as a form of symbolic capital (see Fonarow 2006). For members of road crews, these passes are functional and allow access to the touring workplace. But in their function, they create and symbolize the road crew's access to and participation in an exclusive group.[24] Members of road crews, in particular TMs, PMs and security personnel, also reserve the power to determine who receives particular passes, including AAA laminates. They are trusted to set and control the boundaries between insiders and outsiders and shape the social composition of the backstage environment. The AAA laminate reveals that road crews simultaneously occupy positions as support personnel and have the highest, most exclusive clearance and proximity to artists. This highlights a tension in the live music hierarchy while also positioning road crews in its upper ranks.[25] In this way, AAA

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[23] People affiliated with the touring party may also receive AAA laminates, such as record label executives, family and booking agents. They may have full access or it may be limited by restricting escort privileges; in the latter case, a small sticker would be added to the laminate (Reynolds 2008: 39). Other passes that indicate specific levels of access include Guest, Aftershow and Working. The Guest pass allows an individual to go backstage after the show and to remain within the venue after the show is over. The Aftershow pass allows a person to remain in the venue after the audience leaves and to participate in aftershow activities, usually a party. The Working pass is given to members of local crews (see Chapter 3) or other people working on a show day. These passes are usually stick-on and are differentiated by colour. Venue security personnel receive a document that features copies of and details about the passes on a given show day, which is also posted at access points (ibid.).
[24] In her study of British indie musicians, Wendy Fonarow (2006: 147) observed that road crew members formerly used laminates as representation of their career histories. They would wear all of their previous laminates as a "portable resume" which other crew members could view to "determine what colleagues they shared in common." Fonarow noted that though this practice was common in the early 1990s, it was "uncool" by the 2000s and is now seen as "lame." Further, she described how a crew member's current band will make fun of the other bands that the crew member has worked with. None of these practices were observed during participant observation or reported by research respondents during research for this thesis.
[25] Webster (2011: 131) further substantiated the place of road crew members in the live music hierarchy when observing that the TM in particular is "regarded as the 'top of the tree' and is the person ultimately responsible for the entire tour once it is on the road, in terms of looking after and managing the crew."

laminates further substantiate the notion put forth in the Introduction that road crews are primary workers in supporting roles.

Understanding road crews also means grasping how they see themselves as workers in the realization of live music events. Research respondents perceive their roles in distinction to musicians. They frame the difference in relation to industry hierarchy and to musicians' centrality to live music events and their positions as artists.

> The artist is the boss, you are primarily supporting, it's all about them. Their name's on the ticket, that's an old cliché. If your name's not on the ticket then you mean nothing, you're replaceable (Glen 2017).

> They're the talent, you know. It doesn't say [my name] on the ticket, you know. They're what it's all about and they're unique individuals, they're special people … And you need to treat them as special people. It doesn't mean you need to kiss their arse, you know … it's good to maintain their respect for you, but you need to understand that they are the talent, they are, I can't write a song, I couldn't stand up there and do what they do. And you need to understand that (Daniel 2017).

Road crew members outside of interviews and participant observation for this study further supported this view. In his guidebook on tour management, Mark Workman (2012: 315) observed that "artists of every type are unusual people and quite unlike the average person you deal with in normal everyday life." In these ways, research respondents confirm that being on a road crew involves being in a supporting role. They also recognize a tension in their roles. Both Glen (2018) and Amy (2018) see themselves as support personnel, but not exclusively as such. Glen stated that the nature of his role "depends who you're talking about. It's a support role for the artist. It's a primary role for the business, I feel like." Their roles and responsibilities place them in a position of importance to the live music industry. In other words, the live music industry could be said, in part, to depend on the services of members of road crews in realizing live music, which would make them primary workers in relation to the industry. Amy described

her role in terms of a professional skillset and pursuits that render the distinction between support and primary blurry.

> Kind of both. That can be a little frustrating like the further that you go up the ladder, like tour managing or whatever, cause you're doing something that you're using your organizational skills, you're using your business skills so it's a big job, but at the end of the day you're still getting paid to put your life and your pursuits of things on hold to support an artist … I think as you go up, like production manager, tour manager, it's a little bit of both because you're kind of in that position to be primary in certain roles, but you're supporting in other parts, so it's a weird one … you do have pride in the job that you do but sometimes it feels like your work is being, you have to put your work on hold to take care of the artist, but taking care of the artist is your job, too, does that make sense? So yeah, it's a little bit of both I think.

The fact that both of these respondents are TMs factors importantly in the perspectives and self-perception provided here. TMs have close working relationships with musicians (see Chapter 4), and the role grants them positions of relative authority at the same time that it is based on the notion of support. The next section of Chapter 1 will describe and analyze how people learn and acquire skillsets that enable them to become members of road crews and part of the everyday life of live music.

Learning and Training

Members of road crews often have shown a strong interest in music from early in their lives. With the exception of Tony (2017, 2018) whose motivation to work in the live music industry was part of a broader career trajectory in close protection security, all respondents spoke of an interest in and enthusiasm for music that began at a young age. The motivating factor of music is further evident in the autobiographies that members of road crews have published (e.g., Wright and Weinberg 2009, McGinn 2010, Douglas 2021). Music generally plays an important formative role for members of road crews but is not characteristic of all of them.

Scholars have found that a successful career in live music develops despite an absence of "strict rules, formulas or entry requirements" (Frith et al. 2013: 18). Consistent with this

observation, there is no formal qualification to become a member of a road crew. As Glen (2017) summarized, "most people I know in the same circumstances have come into it in the same way and I think fundamentally that's without any official training." The typical site and method for learning is on the job and through practical experience. Crew members initially become involved in working in live music in their local area by working for promoters and at venues or university student unions. Amy (2018) described how she "grew up as a production runner and worked for production companies" that gave her experience with and access to tours coming through venues in the local area. Glen (2017) spent "a lot of time in the venues" working behind the bar, helping his friends' bands, assisting with organizing local nights and setting up the PA. The student union at Daniel's (2017) UK university featured prominently on national touring circuits at the time. Initially motivated by the opportunity to gain free admission, he worked for the union by hanging posters up around the city to advertise for concerts. Doing so turned into a paying job on the stage crew, which he described as a local "training ground for professionals" as it was comprised of very few students. UK student unions have been significant to live music and its workers since the mid-1950s, and started to become important venues on the touring circuit by the mid-1960s, particularly for the jazz and folk genres (Frith et al. 2013: 179–180, 2019: 63–64). During this time the union role of "social secretary" became an established position. It involved booking music and other forms of entertainment, and provided an opportunity to work with agents, negotiate fees and produce live events for large student audiences. It was likewise identified as an important starting point for commercial promoters and was a "new path into the live music business" by the mid-1960s (ibid.). Daniel noted that the majority of workers from his student union's crew are still in the live music industry in some capacity. In this way, research findings indicate that student unions have functioned as important training sites and a "path into

the live music business" for a range of workers in live music, including future members of road crews.

As mentioned in the previous section of this chapter, an early job for crew members is helping friends who are musicians. This usually involves driving friends to and from gigs and assisting with moving equipment. Adrian (2018) summarized the experience of working for his friends' bands.

> And that took kind of like a four-year period that was probably like, in retrospect, a training ground for some of the basic skills, although it didn't feel like that at the time, it was just an excuse for traveling around with my mates having a nice time. But yeah, in hindsight, you get a lot of the basic skills there, the basic skills really being picking stuff up and carrying them and you know learning how to keep to schedule and having a little bit of discipline around schedule and tasks and things. But it was all very very informal.

As Adrian's account suggests, the act of helping friends is not necessarily taken, at the time, as a serious step toward a career path, and the value of early and informal experiences do not become apparent to crew members until later. Glen (2017) similarly reflected on his early experiences on tour as having been characterized by driving a van and selling t-shirts for friends' bands "just helping out … for fun a couple times." Duncan (2018) echoed this when explaining that he lived in a shared house with a musician who played "some odd gigs around the clubs of the UK and stuff … he said, 'do you want to come along and help out for some beers and a laugh?' and I said, 'oh yes please'."[26] The informal manner in which they take on these roles, and the pleasure they assign to them is foregrounded over any association with work. However, these contacts and experiences create opportunities to develop skills and gain exposure to the field.

Skills are further developed by observing, working with and learning from more experienced co-workers through instruction and mentorship. Venues facilitate regular access to incoming touring parties, which creates contact with a wide range of skilled workers from whom

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[26] See also Gorman (1978: 38).

future road crew members can learn. Research respondents described talking with visiting crew members about their jobs in order to learn as much as possible about their roles. While venues are resources for on-the-job training, crew members in turn demonstrate high levels of initiative and commitment by taking advantage of and seeking out learning opportunities. The importance of venues in this context reinforces their significance and highlights further problems with the threat to the existence of smaller ones. The numerous closures of small, grassroots music venues, and uncertainty over their survival, are a major focus of concern, given their role in facilitating development and exposure for upcoming musicians.[27] However, these spaces also serve as sites of learning, development and networking for support personnel. As such, small venues are equally important to many types of workers, and issues pertaining to them have had an impact on a range of careers in the live music industry.

Some members of road crews were musicians themselves, and moved from intending or attempting to make a living as one to working on a crew. Being a musician facilitated direct participation with the live music industry and offered important transferrable skills. For those crew members, their interest in music and the realities of being a musician gave way to needing to decide, or realizing, what to do with their career. Adrian (2018) described this process.

> There comes a time when you have a realization that you might not have either the talent or the opportunities or just the plain look to make it in the music business as a musician yourself. Certainly in my case after five years of trying I came to that conclusion. I was getting older as well and the windows of opportunity as a musician were all closing very very rapidly. And it's kind of like when you take your stock of yourself as a person and what skills you have, particularly skills [that] might be transferrable to the general job market and I didn't really have very many. The only thing that I knew about in any depth was messing around with guitars and amplifiers and you know various bits of audio gear. And it became, 'well, how can I turn what I know and what I'm barely good at into an on-going career?' So becoming a technician in the concert industry was possibly the best opportunity to stay within the music business itself but within a different role in a different area in it.

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[27] See Music Venue Trust: musicvenuetrust.com.

Crew members who were musicians also come to realize that they are better suited and more interested in working in different roles. Being a musician leads them to discover this line of work.

> I was in a band … I wasn't in a particularly good band, and I wasn't a particularly good bass player. But it led me into this and I found out I was better at this, I like this better. I don't want to be that guy. Do you know what, it's too much hanging out if you're a musician. All day for 90 minutes. I think I would develop a drinking or a drug problem fairly quickly, I'd just get bored. Whereas the tour manager or the production manager are effectively the two busiest people on the road. You get no point at which in the day when somebody might not come and ask you to solve a problem. I like that (Glen 2018).

Such road crew members are not simply "failed musicians," which implies that the latter is considered the more desirable role and becoming a crew member is a secondary decision that they simply settle for. Rather, there are both push and pull factors in their shift to working on a crew and they locate suitability and legitimacy in their positions.

Research findings indicate that though road crew members eventually specialize, they tend to learn multiple roles early on, and that doing so allows them to gain experience and opportunities that help them navigate the field (see Reynolds 2008: 382–384). The ability to draw on a variety of skills is useful for job entry and can be an asset for continued employment. In this way, they are like other professionals in the live music industry in that they often wear "several hats at once, a form of multi-tasking that could be said to define this business sector" (Frith et al. 2013: 18). It is important to note that scholars have identified this tendency in terms of the same person occupying the role of "manager, agent, promoter, venue owner and, indeed, musician" (ibid.). This pattern amongst support personnel not only identifies consistency amongst workers in live music, but highlights the range of, and reinforces the distinction between, specialized roles on road crews that serve important functions in the industry. Amy (2018) strongly emphasized the importance of learning multiple roles, encouraging potential

entrants to "do like do everything you can … you will learn everything." Doing so offers opportunities to understand the wider division of labour in live music at the same time it can help with the development of a specialization.

> At that time I was assistant carpenter. The beauty of the Roundhouse was that we were all able to do something of everything. My job was carpenter but effectively I used to do work on the doors, on security, behind the bar sometimes, in the catering area but my full-time job was carpenter for the place. That developed into eventually becoming production manager for the Roundhouse (Ames 2019: 36).

Making an effort to learn a variety of roles also widens the scope of potential work opportunities. Duncan (2018), who now works exclusively as a guitar technician, started out by working multiple roles. Being a "bit of a jack of all trades" was beneficial for how it reduced the risk of being bypassed for a job. Road crew members also cultivate opportunities by being available, which is another key factor in both learning and acquiring work. Research respondents reported that being present and taking every job that was offered enhanced learning and access. This sometimes involved a willingness to make themselves available or rearrange their schedules even if they were already booked.[28] Working at venues, assisting friends, learning multiple roles and being available are the ways that crew members "pay their dues" and prove themselves in the early stages of their careers.

It is here that it is important to remind the reader that this study is focused on a particular demographic of crew member, those that have an average of 20 or more years in the industry and began working at a particular time. While the informal practices of on-the-job-training and assisting friends are still utilized and accepted in terms of learning and acquiring work, there are now alternative means and a diverse set of possibilities in the form of college and university programs. These include the Backstage Academy,[29] run by former TM Glen Rowe, and the

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[28] See Faulkner (1971: 113) for evidence of a similar pattern amongst freelance studio musicians.
[29] https://www.backstage-academy.co.uk/

Technical Services Route program at The Academy of Contemporary Music in partnership with Middlesex University London.[30] The former offers both undergraduate and postgraduate degrees in areas including Live Events Production and Live Visual Design, while the latter is a series of modules, including Live Event Management and Live Sound, that is taken as a component of an undergraduate program in Music Industry Practice. In addition to these programs, the annual event Production Futures,[31] held in the UK, is a convention and networking event designed to assist job seekers. While it is unknown to what extent, or even if, these training programs will shape the industry and its practices over the long term, it is important to highlight that these are options that were largely unavailable to the group of workers in this study. As noted in 2007, "few, if any, colleges have ever offered comprehensive educational programs to train individuals for careers in the concert industry, anyone working in this business has had to either learn their craft through on-the-job training or via fairly well-structured mentoring systems" (Waddell, Barnet and Berry 2007: 2, Reynolds 2008: 381). There is evidence of prior interest in developing a standardized or formal system of professionalization, especially in consideration of advancements in concert technology. In the 1960s, Claude, the "head roadie" for the band Family, observed that crew members had to attend trade fairs in order to keep up with technology. He endeavored to start an agency to train and advise younger workers and believed that they'd "do pretty well" (see Frith et al. 2019: 73). A similar observation was made nearly forty years later in 2004 by Feargal Sharkey, formerly of The Undertones, and then-chair of the UK Government's Live Music Forum, who noted that the live music scene was in "great shape" but suffered from "a lack of trained technicians" (Frith 2007: 3).

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[30] https://www.acm.ac.uk/courses/higher-education/technical-services-route/
[31] https://www.productionfutures.co.uk

The development of these training programs can be seen as part of the "rapid expansion of activity and employment" in the cultural industries, and their desirability as an expression of the "new" economy that promotes the perceived strengths of cultural work (Banks 2007: 1, 4). In their emphasis on technical roles, these programs are connected to the technologization of the concert industry (ibid., see Cunningham 1999) given the specialized training such positions require. They are also a reaction to the lucrative nature of the live music industry, the effects this has on the industry being seen as a "viable source of employment" and likewise the recognition of the "importance of structured career training and guidance" (Reynolds 2008: 381). Such a notion differs fundamentally from the experiences of crew members in this thesis, who remembered that live music "was never a job that was mentioned in your careers office or whatever cause nobody knew you could make a living at it I don't think" (Duncan 2018). These programs may be indicative of a changing set of norms and expectations, or at least of a more diversified set of career paths.

The relative success rate of these programs in allowing entry into the industry, and the acceptability of these programs in the everyday life of live music, is as yet not fully clear or known. However, road crew members do express some hesitation and even resistance towards them. Duncan (2018) found it difficult to connect classroom training to the actual experience of live music.

> … you can learn all the theory but you've still gotta have that hands-on training to get live show experience. And the pressure is there whether you've got 50 people heckling you or 50,000 people heckling you … so you know you can sit in the classroom and be taught how things go together or where to plug things in but I don't quite understand how it works in terms of then going off to do shows for the band.

Glen (2017, 2019), who taught related music business courses while he was recovering from an injury and could not tour, does not see such programs as viable pathways to careers in live

music. In his view, they provide useful knowledge, access to experienced people in the field, and may help students recognize which particular area of the industry is of interest. However, they do not compensate for the hands-on experience and contacts made working in local venues nor do they guarantee students jobs in live music. Such a qualification is "useless" and is not what industry personnel are looking for, though it does have the merit of demonstrating a certain level of commitment over a two-year period. The "good students" take advantage of the information available to them in the course and simultaneously work in a bar or live music venue to gain experience — and may disappear from the course once they have gained enough information. He criticized the courses for the ways in which he perceives them as taking advantage of "a lot of people who want to be on the road and taking their money" (2017). They are "taking people's money and giving them false hope, giving them some idea that this is gonna lead somewhere. It absolutely doesn't (2019)." Simon Frith (2007: 13) similarly questioned the continued attraction of conservatories and stage schools despite the fact that the majority of "graduates will not make a living from performing." Sally Anne Gross and George Musgrave (2020: 137) have also questioned the value and approach of such courses and the "same dream" being sold and perpetuated with them. They referred to the practice of "cramming more and more students" into these programs without rethinking the built-in and taken-for-granted promotion of the music industries' "mythological vision" of itself as irresponsible. For crew members who no longer want to tour as often or at all, however, the courses provide, and are regarded as offering, access to employment as teachers. Such statements from research respondents represent an ambivalence regarding the courses and crew members' own participation in them.

An off-the-record conversation with a panel participant at the Production Futures event in 2018 further confirmed the predominantly negative view of university training courses. This

participant understood the technical programs as primarily being a product of how quickly the technology changes and develops. Despite this, he does not believe that the informal, largely word-of-mouth mode of recruitment is completely changing — or that it should. He explained that if he was given 20 CVs and one of them was a referral from someone he knew, he would hire that person over someone with a degree. He added that he thinks students have no idea what working on tour is actually like; they see the glamour, but have no idea how hard it is, and highlighted that crew members are "lucky" if they have an 18-hour day with little sleep, and are crammed into a bunk or the back of a van. His comments reflect an adherence to accepted practices and some mistrust toward these university courses, which is based primarily on the disconnect between the limits and possibilities of classroom learning with real-world experience. They also highlight the importance of the culture and experience of touring in being a suitable worker, and in understanding what that entails. As this thesis will show in more detail, a key component in working on tour involves participating in its social norms and culture. In their resistance to such types of tertiary education, their comments reinforce that their informal practices have come to be taken as the norm or standard. This is similar to reactions and perspectives from workers in recording studios following the development of similar training programs for their field. Susan Schmidt Horning (2004: 719) observed that studio engineering continued to "value on-the-job training over formal education, even after such education had become available." This was based on a "general attitude within industry that schooling can take one only so far, and that the real training is up to the employer and occurs in the workplace" (ibid.). Such attitudes can also be taken to reflect the view of personnel in the wider music industries, as they have "long been suspicious of academic courses and tend to value hands-on experience above qualifications" (Cloonan 2005: 86).

More recently developed programs offer hybrid versions of these courses. Bypassing the

formal accreditation route, members of road crews have begun to offer free courses online in the

form of Tour Mgmt 101.[32] This program began in March 2020, shortly after the start of the

COVID-19 pandemic, and is taught by industry personnel as a series of webinars about various

aspects of touring. The timing of its origin can be seen as a way to generate or maintain interest

in and connection to an industry that may lose many workers. Aspects of this program will be

discussed later in this thesis. The Tour Bus Smart program[33] led by PiL/Pigface drummer Martin

Atkins, is a practical learning experience in affiliation with Millikin University's Music Business

Program in Illinois. Students do not have to be enrolled at Millikin to apply and can take it for

college credit or not. Started in 2019, it places emphasis on extending teaching methods outside

of the classroom through a "five-day immersion on a national concert tour." As evident by the

website's description that "some things cannot be taught. Some things need to be *lived…*" the

program endeavours to cover the range of responsibilities, activities and emotions road crews

confront on tour. This program can be seen as a response to concerns or criticism over the

disparity between classroom-based instruction and practical experience. However, how effective

it is in doing so, beyond an introductory level, is difficult to gauge considering the potential

limitations created by bringing a larger than normal group into the working environment of a

tour. In this way, it may do more for the culture and experience aspects than in actual training.

Similar to Tour Mgmt 101, Atkins also began conducting free online sessions during the

pandemic to teach students about touring, though he is focused on grassroots level musicians

rather than on road crews. The next section will discuss the manner in which road crew members

initially acquire and continue to maintain touring work, or do not.

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[32] https://www.tourmgmt.org/
[33] https://toursmartbus.com/

Getting In, Getting Work, Getting Fired and Leaving

Training and learning opportunities provide road crew members with access to a network, which is an essential component to acquiring work on tour. "Getting in" has been described as the most difficult aspect of working in the cultural industries (Blair 2001). Such a characterization can also be said of the live music industry, given that the "concert business society has always been somewhat closed by its own nature" (Waddell, Barnet and Berry 2007: 2). Research interviews indicated that members of road crews hold a similar perspective on the industry.

> The touring business it runs in certain ways. Access to it is if you like by invitation only. You can't apply for a job and get it without somebody knowing you. I don't know whether that should change cause it works. Breaking into it's very difficult if you're not living in the right place, if you're not willing to work for nothing for a long period of time, you know (Glen 2019).

Following their early work experiences, respondents identified a key opportunity, or a "break," that was integral to working on tour and that they perceive as the entry point to the career that followed. In all cases, respondents acquired their respective positions from someone they knew. Amy (2018) described how these networks start to develop.

> … you meet the same people and if you work in those jobs for a couple years, the same people come back, you build relationships, you're also building relationships with other people you might be working with eventually and the people you're working with locally. A lot of times they want to do the same things, so you're building future touring stuff.

While working as a production runner, she obtained a role as assistant TM through a band member who had performed at her venue. He put her in touch with his manager who was taking over tour management responsibilities and needed an assistant. As another example, monitor engineer Daniel (2017) had been working as a drum technician for local bands when a friend of his, who worked for a local audio company,[34] broke his foot and needed someone to take over

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[34] Some road crew members work for audio or lighting supply companies prior to working directly for artists, and some audio and lighting technicians work solely for such companies. An in-depth examination of such companies and career paths are outside the scope of this thesis.

his job. And, while working at an event, Adrian (2018) received a job offer when someone he knew was notified that a crew member had to cancel. Because that person already knew Adrian and the quality of his work, he asked immediately if Adrian was available to start the following week. In this way, road crews are consistent with workers in other sectors of the cultural industries who rely on networks of people (Blair 2001, McRobbie 2002a, Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011, Curtin and Sanson 2017). Members of road crews make their way in the field through a series of contacts made through and enabled by a variety of work experiences over time that helps them move into relatively steady freelance touring work. The importance of contacts to acquiring jobs emphasizes the role of trust, and functions as a form of "pre-screening" for people given the close-knit nature of working and living on tour, as the following chapters will show.

The transition from early work and learning opportunities to being a full-time freelance crew member is the product of a casual momentum rather than a clear-cut trajectory in which workers are aware of having completed or reached a particular stage. In this way, crew members often describe the sense that they "fell into" their careers rather than making a concerted effort to follow a particular path or attain a specific position. It suggests that careers on tour occur accidentally, were unplanned or came about easily and without forethought. The phrase "fall into" as a means to explain their career paths was noticeable in this study's sample and is commonly observable in interviews with or stories about road crew members in various media outlets. In general, however, members of road crews do not actually "fall into" their jobs, but rather are well positioned to acquire work in this sector based on their involvement in live music,

their network of contacts and their pursuit of opportunities that then translate into steady freelance work.[35]

This chapter has shown that gaining access to the industry is dependent on contacts and that this method is the preferred and trusted manner of doing so for members of road crews. As freelance workers, continuing to get jobs follows a similar informal method that is based on contacts and word of mouth. While musicians may hire crew members early in their careers, as they become more successful, they are less involved in doing so. The artist's management or the TM are responsible for hiring the crew (Reynolds 2008: 387). Crew members become aware of available positions not by job advertisements, which are rarely publicly posted, but through their network of contacts.

> Well, not one of these jobs would have been advertised anywhere. It's just 'I need a tour manager does anybody know anybody?' Then they'd be like 'oh well ask him,' 'oh I don't know, but I think he's available.' There's constant chat on Facebook, anybody got any work? I'm free. You know, I'm finished. Anybody know of anything? And that's, I got [job with artist] cause their road manager he said 'I can't do it but I know this guy is free' (Glen 2017).

As this quote indicates, crew members are offered available positions based on recommendation and/or prior contact with the relevant parties. This process has been compared to the manner in which electricians or plumbers are hired. The most trusted way to find a plumber or electrician is to call someone who has recently used their services and ask for a recommendation. When hiring road crew members, enthusiasm and experience are regarded as less important than a verbal positive performance review (Reynolds 2008: 388). In other words, crew members are "only as good as your last call" (Faulkner 1971: 111). Daniel (2017) summarized how this process typically works.

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[35] See Webster (2011: 127–152) for an analysis of the ways in which concert promoters depend on networks and accumulate social capital to maintain their careers.

Normally you just get a call, or these days more often an email, saying are you available, such and such, either from someone you know or someone saying such and such has recommended you. 'We need a guy for this touring period, are you interested,' and that starts the conversation and then assuming if all things are right, money's right, all the rest of it, then it either continues or it doesn't. But yeah, it's very direct and very informal.

Adrian (2018) confirmed a similar experience by explaining that "quite often you get calls from friends, 'are you available?'" If the crew member of interest is not available, that person will usually suggest several other people who may be. As tours are scheduled and crew members accept work, finding acceptable and available workers can be difficult. Glen (2018) recalled asking a dozen United States-based PMs to fill in for a five-week North American tour and learning that all of them already had work commitments.

The practices around the use of CVs further confirm the significance of the system of referrals in recruiting road crew members. My research indicates an inconsistent practice with the use of CVs. In general, just as jobs are not advertised, submitting CVs and formal applications are not the typical method of recruitment and hiring. Duncan (2018) described his experience:

… its word of mouth or people you know rather than anything else, you know I've never had to give a CV to anybody. I believe people have started asking for them nowadays but I've never needed one, it was always somebody I knew would say 'oh this band needs somebody for this tour do you want to do it' and I'd say yes.

In some cases, a crew member will be asked to send a CV after already being referred for a job in order to demonstrate their experience.

… if you've actually worked with somebody … somebody's been referred for a job and then, and honestly, typically in this business a resume is almost a formality, you get referred and somebody'll call you so you know they're interested in you and then they'll ask for your resume cause they wanna see what you've done, so that kind of speaks to the level of work that you can do … (Amy 2018).

The CV functions in such cases as a legitimating and supporting component to the recommendation rather than being the initial space of evaluation. Documents in the David

Russell Collection archive exhibit further how CVs and cover letters function in the recruitment of crew members. Ten relevant documents were in the archive and were related to tours for Genesis and R.E.M. The documents were usually sent to the artists' management, though one was sent directly to Russell. The context and circumstances of these submissions are not entirely clear, nor is the manner in which applicants were made aware of the positions. However, the wording of the letters, and the backgrounds of the applicants strongly suggests they became aware from word of mouth, mutual contacts and as relative industry insiders. Two CVs appeared to be "cold calls" to inquire about the possibility of being hired and make the management aware of their skills and availability. One applicant seemed to have an existing connection to Russell, who expressed preference for her over another candidate, with whom Russell also seemed to be familiar. In three cases, the crew member submitting a CV and cover letter identified mutual contacts who served as a referral or had directly suggested sending an application. In these cases, details about the mutual contacts, and the circumstances and context of their working relationships, were emphasized and foregrounded in the written communication. For those without direct contacts, they attempted to overcome that absence with a variety of tactics, which revolved around some type of indirect reference or interpersonal communication. One applicant contacted the artist's management office prior to sending documents while another included a reference letter from the TM of the artist for whom he currently worked. In the latter case, his documentation was forwarded to Russell (via the management), at which point the applicant included a note that mentioned a mutual contact from whom Russell could obtain additional information about the applicant. Other submissions clearly identified a key role or organization within the live music industry with which they were affiliated and had been employed. Such an approach foregrounds and relies on the reputation of an organization in order to compensate for a

direct connection. These applications also featured a much more formal tone than those with

mutual contacts. As these examples are solely connected to the hiring practices for crew

members working for top-tier artists, they may also reflect an interest or need to recruit workers

with a particular profile or may function as an additional screening process.

These findings suggest that referrals and mutual contacts form the basis for, and are the

most important aspect of, the recruitment and hiring practices of road crews. Whether or not CVs

and application documentation are needed or requested, the presence of a mutual contact is

valued above all other considerations. This is made additionally obvious when applicants rely on

other methods to generate a sense of legitimacy when contacts are not available. Similar patterns

in recruitment practices have been identified amongst film production crews, which are almost

entirely based on referral, formal HR procedures and CVs are rare or only provided after

personal recommendation, and job advertising is uncommon (Blair 2001). The practices in live

music and film, however, represent a difference to practices in other cultural sectors. The touring

productions of Cirque du Soleil, for example, rely on an HR department to recruit its employees.

The emphasis on networking and word of mouth for acquiring work is further evident in

the connection between touring and job offers.[36] As with other types of freelance workers, road

crew members compete for jobs in a labour market where "ability, reputation, tact, and social

contacts determine the nature and volume of [their] work" (Faulkner 1971: 44). It can be said

that touring is the manner in which members of road crews earn a living at the same time that it

functions as the basis for how they continue to acquire jobs.

> It's all word of mouth … it's all about relationships, it's all about connections, it's about
> people like seeing you do your job … there's always this joke about take a short gig if you
> want work because for some reason if people see you working they ask you, but it's all
> about keeping your relationships and people, it's really like when you're working around

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[36] This is different than the selection criteria for other types of crews, which tends to be "highly focused on task-related qualifications" (Webber and Klimoski 2004: 267).

20 other people on tour, and you're working with different management companies and … sometimes there'll be management companies or agents that … have another band that they just happen to know from the management that they're looking for a good tour manager (Amy 2018).

As Amy's quote indicates, when crew members are on the road they are actively maintaining and forging relationships with people who are witnessing and evaluating them do their jobs. Networking is a practice that members of road crews understand as simply being built into the nature of their jobs more than the kind of deliberate act it can be for other types of workers.

Work came to find me. And it all came from networking and I didn't know I was networking. At the time I probably rejected the term, it was far too business-like. Networking, don't be ridiculous. But I was out on the road all the time, meeting people, talking to people, looking useful, being useful, saying yes, doing favours … You remember those kinds of things … Cause you never know that might be a new job for you soon (Glen 2017).

Rather than engage in workplace interaction as a "guise [for] networking" (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011: 155), the latter is an informal product of the proximity and collegiality that characterize road crews and working on tour. At the same time, nurturing and maintaining those relations is integral to acquiring future work, as it is that network upon which crew members depend. Helen Blair (2001: 160) observed a similar pattern amongst film crews, in which people known from previous working relationships or via references are hired, and those who are not known are excluded. After crew members gain access, former colleagues become the primary type of contact and replace previous methods of securing work, though friends can remain important sources of referrals and work-related information (ibid.). Road crew members engage in a continuous and mutual process of evaluation that is a factor in how they continue to acquire work. As Chapter 2 will show, this built-in system of networking and evaluation can and does have implications for how road crew members conduct themselves and experience being on tour.

My findings indicate a direct connection between a crew member's presence and visibility on what they call the "touring circuit" and the receipt of job offers and ability to maintain steady work. Crew members are aware of each other's active presence on tour through word of mouth, social media, at music festivals and through association with the artists they work for. Being on tour means "you're out" and that "people know you're out" which also implies that a crew member is actively looking for work. Similar to film crews, workers hear of and secure work through personal contacts who provide recommendations (Blair 2001: 152). If mutual contacts know of other jobs that are or will be available on upcoming tours, the crew members already on the road become the most likely candidates for those positions.

This aspect of their working lives also reveals the risk of job insecurity and uncertainty when taking time off from touring. Aside from normal breaks and holidays, if they are or must be away from the road, it becomes more difficult for road crew members to access work again when they are ready to return. Being off the road means crew members are "off the game" or "not part of the scene anymore" and they "just disappear" (Daniel 2017). Part of why this occurs is because the "relations among people in crews are typically defined by their function in the crew with the assumption that one member can be easily replaced by another member with the same skill set" (Webber and Klimoski 2004: 266; Arrow and McGrath 1995: 389). It is further enhanced by the oversupply that is a characteristic of the cultural labour market, which means that workers can quickly be replaced. Daniel (2017) stopped touring in 2013 in order to spend more time at home and work on a major event being held in his local area. He did not intend to leave permanently, but continued to receive steady work in his local area and ultimately did not go back on tour. Reflecting upon when he initially left, he stated

It's amazing how quickly when I stopped touring, how quickly the phone stopped ringing and the emails stopped. Within under a year, nine months, and I haven't had an offer. I think I had one offer last year (Daniel 2017).

Such working conditions are particularly problematic when crew members become sick, injured or need to take time off for personal reasons. Tony (2018) explained how he was affected after taking time off following the birth of his daughter.

I was in a very steady employment for an artist when my daughter was born, she's now 9, but when she was born, I decided to take three months off to obviously help my wife and spend some time on the farm and that sort of stuff. It actually stretched on a little bit more, four months, but at the end of that four months I found it incredibly hard to get anybody, cause once you make a gap that gap gets filled by somebody else and it's one of these situations where there's a lot of social aspects of it, so if that person comes in and fills your space, makes friends, you get to a point where it doesn't matter how good you were, this guy's now here, so sorry that's just the way it is. So no, there's no job protection at all (Tony 2018).

Glen (2017) was unable to tour for a period of time following an injury incurred from an accident. His experience of coming off the road was similar to Daniel's.

Put it this way, I'm not getting any job offers anymore, but I'm not on the road anymore. At least I'm not getting many. Cause people know I've come off the road, I think, and that's not necessarily been on social media (Glen 2017).

In contrast, he did return to touring when he was offered a position as a PM, which he attributed to being "very lucky." He described his experience of returning to the touring circuit.

… because now I've been back out on the road, since June, job offers have just started coming in again. I've been offered three or four decent gigs, that I have not been able to do because I'm doing this. And once those start bouncing around and there's a little network of people who start talking to each other, they go 'oh you're out, you're looking' and there's three weeks in the middle I can't do so I've got people doing them for me (Glen 2018).

Visibility on the touring circuit essentially translates into access to work hours and varying degrees of job uncertainty. This suggests that crew members' networks are complex and ephemeral given that the networks are most effective when crew members are actively working on tour and leaving the road represents a break. The nature or strength of relations between

workers are less important and influential than are presence and visibility. Road crew members

on tour comprise the "core workforce" that has the greatest access to work hours and less

employment uncertainty due to a network of personal connections. Those that leave the road

temporarily become the "peripheral workforce" that encounters greater uncertainty and the

potential for longer periods without work given that they have lower access to work on the basis

of limited contacts (Christopherson and Storper 1989, also Blair 2001). Road crews can and do

move between these two categories. These terms are adapted and applied here to the live music

industry from Susan Christopherson and Michael Storper's study of film crews. The concepts of

the core workforce and peripheral workforce are useful for illustrating this aspect of road crews'

working lives. However, the authors equate "experience" for film crews with union accreditation

that does not apply to road crews. No official union for members of road crews currently exists,

though there was an attempt in the United Kingdom in 2003 to 2004 with the short-lived

Roadcrew Provident Syndicate. My research suggests that the difficulty of organizing is linked to

the freelance, self-employed status and independent, self-sufficient mindset of road crew

members. Road crew members can join the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees

(IATSE)[37] in the United States and Canada, or the Broadcasting, Entertainment,

Communications and Theatre Union (Bectu)[38] in the United Kingdom, of which only one

respondent reported being a member. They can also join and consult the Production Services

Association,[39] which is a UK-based trade association organized to address the needs of the live

event production industry and represent and advocate for workers.

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[37] https://www.iatse.net/
[38] https://bectu.org.uk/
[39] https://www.psa.org.uk/

The network that members of road crews depend on to secure work is also their competition. This is most clearly expressed when a crew member has conflicting commitments or is otherwise unable to take a regular job. In this situation, crew members ask people they know who work at the same level to temporarily cover for them. This situation comes with a risk of being replaced permanently, which can and does happen.

> Somebody you've called and said 'can you cover for me' has gone in and loudly criticized everything you've done and loudly said how much they could do it better and they ended up with the job. So that's dangerous … Yeah, I have people who are my competition, who were my contemporaries and now I don't necessarily have much contact with. Who have stolen work from me, I would regard it as, taken work off me. Some of them are doing well, some of them aren't. We're civil to each other when we see each other (Glen 2018).

When temporarily filling in for someone is successfully handled, it works because crew members adhere to particular expectations. Crew members state that there is essentially nothing they can do to protect their jobs or prevent someone from taking their position. Rather, they become selective with respect to whom they entrust with such tasks.

> You just develop … a relationship with people you trust won't do it. Who will rather not do it, who will come in and do what's necessary, not rock the boat, not bad mouth you to the artist and get on with it. Because you need those people, they need you, you know. I've got three or four people in mind who've covered for me and I've covered for them and that works beautifully (Glen 2018).

The arrangement also depends on a code of conduct and an understanding between crew members. It involves accepting, respecting and trusting the working practices of the person whose role is being fulfilled, and not questioning their choices in front of the artist.

> And I've gone in and thought 'this is a bit odd' I wouldn't have done it like this but I keep my mouth shut, do the four weeks, get off again, maybe chat to them about it, 'why'd you do it?' there might be a reason for it. Maybe an artist-driven reason why things are done this way and not another. So, you just trust them and get on with it (Glen 2018).

By adhering to these practices, crew members create, rely on and maintain informal systems that help them navigate their career paths while they also protect each other's reputations and livelihoods.

Research respondents in this study spend an average of six to nine months working each year, and their trajectories reflect the working patterns of a group of crew members with decades of experience. They are typically hired as independent contractors for a specified period of time. Respondents noted that they generally do not receive work contracts when being hired for a tour. The work agreement is made via an email exchange in which the terms are indicated, such as the role, pay and amount of time. Practices can, however, vary. Respondents also reported that it is common to be put on payroll for the duration of their hire when touring with American artists. They characterized the early years of being freelance workers as difficult and stressful, since starting out working for smaller bands with limited tours made it hard to put together a schedule and a sufficient income. In other words, it took time, experience and contacts to accumulate enough work and this type of schedule. The distribution of work over the course of a year is dependent on several factors. The first is that work logically follows the relative high and low seasons of the live music industry. Live music seasons are marked by "practical weather conditions for leisure arrangements. Outdoor music festivals are concentrated in the summer season, bracketed by the club concert touring seasons from March to May and September to November" (Holt 2010: 245). This factor was reflected in research findings as respondents addressed how their schedules are shaped by the time of year in relation to peak times for tours. Adrian (2018) described a "typical year … would be February to May, then maybe a short break, very very busy summers with the amount of festivals that there is now in Europe … and

September to December is very very busy again." Another factor is that road crew members tend to work for several different artists and ultimately depend on this variety to make a living.[40]

> … it tends to be the same four to six artists recurring, cause once they're on an album cycle you can do anything from four months to a year with one and by the time you've done that with a couple of artists the first ones have come round again. So certainly over the past ten years or so it's been the same half a dozen artists recurring (Adrian 2018).

This is directly related to how musicians work and earn a living as their careers are marked by, and involve balancing, a "particularly relentless routine of touring and recording" (Frith et al. 2019: 166). Ideally, one artist is recording while another is touring, which facilitates continuity in crew members' work schedules. An overlap between artists' schedules puts crew members at risk for losing work or compromising their working relationships when having to choose between tours.

> … the nature of bands is they don't tour constantly, they tour for a year and then go in the studio for a year or two. So if you're lucky your bands match up, so I worked for [artist] for 17 years, I worked for [artist] for 10 years. It just so happened that their touring schedules didn't overlap so I was able to keep those going. It's when they overlap that you either have to give it up or get someone else in to cover you otherwise you might lose that band or whatever (Daniel 2017).

Crew members' touring schedules are ultimately shaped by and dependent on the artists for whom they work. In this way, they generally have little or no discretion or control over their own schedules. In one case, however, a respondent explained that she carefully plans her schedule in order to accommodate other activities. Ange (2018) stated "ideally I try not to work more than six months out of the year … I would just turn down work from November till probably March every year" which allowed time to pursue her interest in snowboarding. Ange balanced this arrangement by working during the busiest months for tours which in turn facilitated the ability to take time off.

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[40] See Faulkner (1971: 113) for evidence of a similar pattern amongst freelance studio musicians.

Consistent with how contacts are integral to acquiring work, research findings show that interpersonal relationships factor significantly into a decision to fire a member of a road crew. Getting fired or retaining a position is directly associated with the strength of their relationships with an artist. In particular, the likelihood of getting fired is greatly reduced if the road crew member in question is viewed favourably by an artist. During participant observation at Venue A, the local production manager explained that a crew member working on that day's concert had a drinking problem and that the other crew members "have been trying to get rid of him, but he can't get fired." The local sound engineer at Venue A, who also freelances on tours, described retaining a position because a group's lead singer preferred her though the keyboard player preferred a different person. Both she and the local production manager agreed that "there's a lot of that kind of stuff that goes on." Glen (2018) further confirmed these types of practices.

> … you often find it very difficult if not impossible to fire someone that [the artist] like … Yeah, unless you've got a very good reason for it, and then they should trust you, but they might still overrule you, 'yeah, he was drunk last night, but I love having him on the road, he makes me feel good, keep him' … Yeah, cause I don't think he's doing his job properly. And often the face they show the artist is fantastic and then they're not loading the truck, or they're not doing what they need to do, you know, communicating properly. So at that point then it becomes very difficult. But an artist who trusts you will go 'well if that's what you really think, then he's got to go.'

The working relationship and clear communication between the TM/PM and the artist are integral in attending to firing practices. However, a complicating factor is that the crew member in question may behave differently toward the artist than toward the rest of the crew. Such impression management conceals the reality of the crew member's job performance and gives the artist a favourable perception. It is in such circumstances that artists must rely on the trust they accord to TMs and PMs in attending to performance evaluation and making decisions.

Research respondents also described contrasting circumstances, however, in firing practices and artists. Ange (2018) prefers not to work closely with artists due to how it makes her

feel as though she has to be on-guard and places her "in the firing line." This perspective comes

as a result of having witnessed a variety of "people get sacked for no reason because an artist is

just temperamental." She recounted one situation in particular.

> … I had a set carp[enter] who walked past one of the artists in an arena, and I guess the guy said hi to the carp and the carp didn't respond cause he was probably in the middle of something, you know, was thinking about fixing some problem, whatever, didn't acknowledge the artist and got fired because of it. It's like when you're around the artist you're just that much closer to being fired for any irrational reason.

Ange's preference to avoid working with artists is not experienced in isolation. The

aforementioned Tour Mgmt 101 features a document on its website titled "Rules of the Road"[41]

that provides guidance on crew conduct. It offers insights that resonate with Ange's experience

and concerns over the likelihood of getting fired when working closely with musicians.

> The stars are not our friends they are our employers. 'Closest to the fire, first to get burned.' If they know your name, guess who they're going to freak out on when something goes wrong? Also, it wouldn't be a bad idea to remember exactly who you work for.

Andy (2017) similarly described the ways that artists utilize the power to fire on members of

road crews, which he identified as being connected to particular emotional states. The artist's

excessive use of firing resulted in the crew being unable to take it seriously and reappropriating it

as humour. Such practices suggest a disregard for the crew's roles, a belittling of their job

security and reinforce the live music hierarchy.

> There's artists who every single performance there's self-doubt, almost loathing, then you mix in drink and drugs and you just get fireworks, then it's like how do you deal with that, everybody gets fired, there was one band I toured with and it was a standard joke we'd all get fired every single night and then next morning the artist would come out and say 'you know I'm so sorry' and all this. And you know it's just … at that level it's a bit of a joke, but then it can really go really badly.

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[41] Available at https://www.tourmgmt.org/templates.html

In these cases, artists' behaviour represented a clear hierarchical division and a subordinate view of crew members by utilizing power out of self-interest and to fulfill ego-driven needs. That instances such as these occur and negatively impact the working lives of road crew members also shows the extent of the effects of working on tour. Musicians encounter and experience difficult working conditions, pressures and insecurities that come with the potential to be misdirected and further exacerbated with substances (see Toynbee 2000: xi, Jones 2012: 70, Wills and Cooper 1988). Despite musicians occupying positions as employers, these situations also represent a problematic understanding of and inexperience with business practices in the music industries (Jones 2012: 70; see Chapter 4).

The usual practice for firing is that the crew member in question will finish the tour and not be asked to return for the next one. A crew member is effectively fired when they are not called back or are told that the arrangement was not working, and a decision has been made to select someone else. Firing someone during a tour presents logistical challenges for TMs.

> Actually on the road said you're going home? … Truck driver who was drunk. Marched him to the train station, said cheerio … three or four times, to be honest. That's it, you've got to go and I've got to find somebody for the next show. And that's often the defining moment. I mean South America everyone's got a visa, there's absolutely no way of replacing this person without a massive headache, it's just not gonna go well (Glen 2018).

The itinerary of a tour makes it difficult to fire a crew member abruptly due to the fact that they need to be quickly replaced. This is particularly difficult in countries where crew members depend on visas to be able to work. However, in extreme circumstances, these measures are necessary for the wellbeing of the touring party and safe continuity of the tour. Practices around firing reinforce the nature of crews, as work groups, being able to sustain regular changes. At the same time, the challenges in firing practices illuminate the influential role of a tour's itinerary and the logistics of travelling in the inability to replace crew members when needed.

Leaving the road is also a factor in the working lives of road crew members and one that respondents confronted and addressed. Research findings indicate that leaving the road can be a product of extenuating circumstances that are unrelated to the everyday working conditions and realities of touring. Two crew members stopped touring for health-related reasons; Amy (2018) quit when she developed a health problem and was forced to stop touring, and Glen (2017) left after sustaining an injury. The former has not returned to touring, though she still works in the industry in non-touring roles, and the latter returned after recovering. Glen tried other occupations, such as teaching, but "wasn't happy. I like being on the road and I'm good at it. And I've tried a few other … things and I'm less good at it and less happy." He stated that as he is approaching 50, he has thought about retirement but believes he will continue as long as he still enjoys touring. As previously mentioned, Daniel (2017) stopped touring in 2013 to work on a local production and spend more time at home after purchasing a new house with his wife. While he was touring, he never considered changing careers. He "didn't actually intend to stop permanently, I intended to stop for a year and then see what happened" but ultimately did not return and acquired a position with his wife's live events company. Though Daniel's reason for leaving was influenced by the amount of time he was away from home, such conditions were ultimately not the determining factor nor were they seen as a reason to quit permanently. At the time of interviews, Tony (2018), in his late 40s, planned to leave after the artist for whom he has worked for the past 17 years finishes the next tour. He noted that he expects it to be a "hard transition." These cases demonstrate that crew members enjoy the type of work they do, continue if they can or find work in a related area.

The lifestyle of touring is a contributing component in other cases. Andy (2017) reduced his touring schedule when he "got to [my] forties and the attendant problems of drinking too

much and drug abuse, obviously take a toll." He began writing books about working on tour, and now teaches music business courses for most of the year and tours during the summer season. Ange (2018) stated that she's "probably tried to quit working on the road five or six times" and would like to stop touring full time. Part of the reason is directly related to the working conditions of touring, which she described as "physically taxing, the travel is crazy, the lack of sleep is crazy. I've had heath issues I may not have had because if I hadn't worked on the road and yeah, I'm just tired." It is also connected to her age (mid-40s) and the labour oversupply, as younger people can be hired in her position for less money. Ange would prefer to "keep my foot in the door" while doing other types of work, and described coming up with an "escape plan" that would allow her to stay partially connected to touring and road crews as an accountant while being able to spend more time at home. Her situation provides insight into the difficulties that members of road crews confront as they get older and become aware of the realities and potential limitations of working on the road with possibilities for moving into new positions outside of touring. Her use of the phrase "escape plan" characterizes this difficulty by invoking a desire to leave and to locate the means to do so. Both cases demonstrate that crew members take advantage of the skillsets they acquire from touring and transition them into new but related types of work. The last section of Chapter 1 will discuss gender and diversity in relation to road crews.

Gender and Diversity

Road crews are marked by minimal diversity and a clear gender imbalance. The majority of workers on road crews are white men. During participant observation, overall, representation of diverse groups of people was minimal. Of 30 artists, six of them had road crews with some visible diversity, and these crews usually worked for non-white or openly gay musicians. The

lack of diversity on road crews has been covered in *Rolling Stone* magazine (Browne 2020),[42]

and the social network Roadies of Color United[43] works to encourage collaboration and promote

a more inclusive industry. Gender disparity is evident in the composition of the sample of

research respondents and based on observations made at Venue A and Venue B. It is further

addressed by organizations such as Women in Live Music[44] and SoundGirls[45] that provide

resources to women interested in such a career path and raise awareness of the issues and

challenges they confront. The former also includes a list of women crew members who are

available to be hired for concert tours. The minority status of women on tour is further visible

through various forms of media coverage that feature interviews with and stories about them.[46] It

is additionally evident by the manner in which women road crew members represent themselves

when publishing their stories and offering guidance to others interested in their line of work. Kim

Hawes's (2019) autobiography is called *Confessions of a Female Tour Manager*, Claire

Murphy's (2019) book is titled *Girl on the Road: How to Break into Touring from a Female*

Perspective, and Tana Douglas (2021) highlights her groundbreaking role with *Loud: A Life in*

Rock 'n' Roll by the World's First Female Roadie. The inclusion of gender in the book titles

signifies novelty, an uncommon experience and a unique perspective, and the recurrent reference

to it implies a collective sense of having been unheard and unrecognized. The recent publishing

dates of all three books — compared to men on road crews who published books a decade earlier

— and the close succession of their releases reflect a longer path to being taken seriously in their

roles. Women certainly do work as members of road crews, but their presence is noticeably

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[42] https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-features/music-road-crews-diversify-the-stage-1097096/
[43] https://www.roadiesofcolorunited.com/
[44] https://womeninlivemusic.eu/
[45] https://soundgirls.org/
[46] See *The Guardian*: https://www.theguardian.com/music/2007/apr/13/popandrock.gender; NPR:
https://www.npr.org/2016/09/04/492433224/meet-the-woman-whos-been-pearl-jams-sound-engineer-for-24-years

minimal. The underrepresentation of women on road crews is consistent with a broader pattern of uneven gender representation in workplaces in the music industries (Whiteley 1997, Clawson 1999, Leonard 2007, Hesmondhalgh 2013).[47]

The gender imbalance is further expressed in the roles that women tend to occupy when working on tours. Gender roles are reproduced through associations with particular positions that are considered the norm along gendered lines. Stereotypically, women tend to occupy roles such as caterer, wardrobe assistant, merchandise vendor (see Webster 2015: 105, Vilanova and Cassidy 2019) or production coordinator more than they are found in technical or management positions. It is important to note that not all of these roles are featured on all tours and were therefore not consistently observable. Findings from participant observation were generally consistent with and substantiated the presence of the gendered nature of particular roles, but also reveal some nuance. Those reported here are the exception. At Venue A, there was one male wardrobe assistant. At Venue B, the artist's merchandise seller was a man, and two women engineers worked on the local sound crew, one of whom was also a freelancer at Venue A and had previously worked for the local PM's company. On the local crew at Venue A, the hospitality staff and caterers were women, with the exception of one man. In management roles, there were seven women TMs and three assistant TMs present during participant observation. Two women were road managers, in a role that used to be interchangeable with the TM but now tends to focus on aspects of hospitality and can be seen through a gendered lens. In reflecting on their years of experience, respondents noticed that the TM role is fulfilled more consistently by women than in the past, and report seeing more women in technical roles than when they started working on tours. There are also several instances of artists hiring all-female road crews.

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[47] Efforts have and continue to be made to call attention to and change the gender composition of various sectors of the music industries. See UK Music's (2020) diversity report: https://www.ukmusic.org/equality-diversity/uk-music-diversity-report-2020

However, during participant observation, women accounted for less than 10 percent of workers in management and technical roles. Mary Celeste Kearney's (2017: 165) research, based on interviews in the press, indicated that ten women worked as TMs in the UK at the time.[48] Women may confront challenges in management or technical positions if their ability and qualifications to do these roles is explained and evaluated in terms of gender rather than skillset.

> I also think that women are more suited to certain roles, possibly because of a more traditional, empathic nature of women, I think they can relate to the artists a lot more … I certainly know quite a few female tour managers, I don't know if that's a mothering thing that artists require, but I certainly know a couple of female monitor engineers who, possibly as I say it's that empathic, that can relate to what people want a lot more, they're a lot more sympathetic, they're a lot more perhaps they just listen a bit more, maybe that stereotypical alpha male thing doesn't make you receptive to other people's needs as well as, perhaps that's just an idea off the top of my head (Adrian 2018).

For women, gender is a factor in the types of roles they are able to learn and pursue. Ange (2018) has worked primarily as a production coordinator during her career, but has held multiple roles. Gender factored significantly into the path she took based on how it inhibited access to training.

> I think that when I started I had a keen interest in sound design, but there just weren't any women doing it and I had no mentors, I didn't have anybody I could talk to about it and the idea at the time of somebody who's kind of a girly girl doing sound was just so preposterous that I would have front of house guys humour me and be like 'yeah during the show come up here and you can watch what I'm doing,' but no one would ever take me under their wing and teach me anything and if I have any major regrets, that's what I wanted to do but it was too hard for me to even get into it or find someone to mentor me, I just decided to stick with doing the admin jobs because it was where I could get work, and doing merch or doing wardrobe, because these were the soft-touch jobs that I could get, that would keep me on the road.

Ange's story shows the limitations and frustrations women encounter in trying to access male-dominated roles. Women who are able to train and acquire work as sound technicians can also encounter difficulties on the basis of gender (Kearney 2017: 159). It is consistent with a longer history of problems that women contend with that are related to the intersection of gender,

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[48] See https://www.independent.co.uk/arts-entertainment/music/features/where-are-women-rock-music-industry-2009515.html

technology and learning in the music industries (e.g., Bayton 1997, Bourdage 2010). The pervasive view of technology as "masculine" relies on excluding women. Informal training and mentorship mean that male territorialism around technology can act as a barrier to knowledge transmission for women. The value and perception of formal education programs for road crew members are still being debated, as discussed earlier in this chapter. However, they may be an asset for women interested in working in live music. The presence of women in sound engineering, and other technical roles may be assisted by their ability to attend colleges and universities to acquire such skills. These institutions create opportunities for women to avoid the challenges, limitations and exclusionary practices that can occur with informal mentorship and on-the-job training.

While male road crew members commonly describe their experience of gaining access to the live music industry as an accidental chance of "falling into it," a noticeable departure in this study's sample was Amy (2018). She did not use the term to describe her path and presented a much more decisive and intentional approach to her early involvement in music. She stated that when she was working as a production runner and learning different jobs she "wanted to tour" and made that known to PMs on incoming road crews. Ange (2018) similarly did not use this term to describe her experience. The difficulty for women in accessing the live music industry is almost made manifest in a more direct and decisive approach. In its difference from the casual perspective described by men, their non-use of the term reflects the unlikeliness of a woman simply *falling into* this career path.

Gender can also factor into being fired from a job. This chapter discussed various reasons that contribute to why road crew members lose their positions. While an artist's preference for particular crew members is among them, this can be complicated by gender. Ange (2018) was

once fired from an otherwise all-male crew and artist and replaced by a man because she is a woman. The exact reason for the firing was not made explicit, but gender was certainly the determining factor.

> … for whatever reason I was stuck on the band bus and it was an all-male band and it just kind of got around, I don't know if it was girlfriends and wives or whatever, they just didn't want a woman on their bus and there wasn't room for me on the crew bus and I was replaced by a man … It was explained to me by the tour manager. Which was nice because sometimes you just don't even get that explanation, you're just gone. But it was really kind of him to explain 'oh it's not you, it's really not you, it's strictly like a weird gender thing and it's like fickle artist's garbage.'

In this case, relative discomfort with their gender renders a crew member unfit for a job. The decision to fire the crew member is not based on whether or not the artist likes or dislikes her, but due to an aspect of her identity that is deemed incompatible. John Vilanova and Kyle Cassidy's (2019: 96–97) study on "merch girls" included a similar account of losing work on the basis of gender and that women's presence on tour is unwanted because they are "presumptuously sexualized." This instance further illuminates the kind of sexism women can encounter and the difficulties of being a minority on tour. The topic of gender will be further addressed in relation to masculinity and touring in Chapter 2. This chapter will now close with a summary and conclusion.

Conclusion

Chapter 1 has shown that road crews are groups of specialized workers who have important individual roles and collectively participate in a shared purpose and experience. It has demonstrated that such specialization renders the term "roadie" a problematic descriptor and inaccurate reflection of what road crew members do. With advancements in concert technology and as musicians require a diverse group to support them, crew members prefer terms that recognize their roles and contributions. Findings presented here have offered insights into what

motivates road crew members and which aspects of their work they find gratifying, and has shown the support they provide to artists as among them. As behind-the-scenes workers, road crews are similar to other "invisible" workers in that their efforts are rarely acknowledged or recognized. This chapter has also suggested that the visibility of road crew members, along with their attempts to be less visible, provide important insights about their roles in the everyday life of live music. Such findings substantiate the significance of the activities of support personnel in their occupational identities as well as in the realization of live music.

Road crew members destabilize notions of hierarchy in the music industries by simultaneously being support personnel and having the highest level of access in the backstage environment. They also complicate clear-cut understandings of the secondary status of support personnel by self-identifying in distinction to artists and recognizing their central importance to the live music industry. This chapter has also shown that road crews are marked by an underrepresentation of women and minimal diversity, which means they reproduce exclusionary patterns that exist in the broader music industries.

Road crew members acquire skills and become oriented to live music through interests and pursuits that create the conditions of possibility for their future careers. Working at venues functions as a legitimating factor in the choice of live music as a career, provides training and places workers within a network of contacts. There are no formal qualifications for becoming a member of a road crew, and the emergence of university training programs is viewed with suspicion. Such a perspective shows that crew members accept and trust the informal process of learning that occurs on the job and through the accumulation of practical experience. Road crew members strongly rely on contacts and informal practices to gain and maintain work. They get in, move through and advance via a series of work opportunities and their network. Likewise,

contacts also matter when crew members are confronted with an inability to work or risk being fired. Taken together, Chapter 1 has established the collective and individual nature of being a road crew member and has demonstrated how they become part of the everyday life of live music.

Chapter 2

Being on Tour

Touring is the central activity in the working lives of road crew members. As stated in the Introduction, touring — or being on tour — refers to the experience and practices involved in realizing a sequence of live music events. Live music is a structure that distributes important roles and duties, and people occupying these roles are part of a complex mobile world. On tour, members of road crews encounter particular conventions and conditions that structure and shape their working lives. They also participate in a workplace culture that enhances the ability to co-exist cohesively and effectively facilitate the realization of live music and that, in turn, fosters a particular way of life (Williams 1983: 91).

Road crew members define, perceive and experience touring as distinct from the "real world" that exists off the road. Research respondents refer to touring with such terms as "a bubble," "outer space" and "our world" and differentiate themselves from the "civilians" who do not work on tour (see also Gorman 1978: 15). Louise Meintjes (2003) and Antoine Hennion (1989) took a similar perspective, and used corresponding terminology, in their studies of the recording studio — studies that are useful for conceptualizing the road crew's sense of the world of touring. The recording studio is "an enclosed space … a private space with a secret life" (Meintjes 2003: 84). It is "cut off" from the "outside" or the "real world" and is "made to the measure of people so that they can test their own creations" (Hennion 1989: 407). This perspective is further reflected in tourism studies. Buses, a common mode of travel on tour, transport "passengers in a closed environment" that creates a "physical and psychological distancing … from their outside environment" (Holloway 1981: 381). By temporarily leaving

"the real world," the world of touring becomes a compartmentalized space. This separation is further enhanced through the manner in which crew members adapt to the road, the specificities of which substantiate that to be "on tour" is as much a mindset as it is a mobile activity and workplace.

Chapter 2 is about the experience of being on tour and the characteristics of the complex mobile world of touring. It shows how touring shapes the lives of road crews and is a significant component in the realization of live music events. This chapter demonstrates that the conventions and culture of touring define working life for road crew members in the everyday life of live music. It begins with a discussion about show days and the long hours that characterize working on tour. From there, it analyzes the disorientation that can and does occur on the road, which is linked to a tour's itinerary and is a common stereotype about the experience of touring. The chapter then addresses key components of the social experience of touring and how road crew members manage working and living closely and continuously with others. It continues the analysis of gender by exploring masculinity in the workplace culture, and then examines the ways that touring can affect crew members' mental and physical health. The chapter then discusses how members of road crews adjust to life at home when they are off the road.

Show Days

Individual concert events — or "show days" — are central sites of activity in the realization of live music. Findings from participant observation indicate that it takes, on average, twelve to fourteen hours on a show day to produce a ninety-minute concert. Figure 2 provides an example. It focuses on the activities, as observed, that occur during a show day at a venue on a tour. It does not account for the hours of work invested off-site, in hotels or on the bus, by various members of the touring party. Nor does it account for the hours prior to and in preparation for a

given show day, when TMs and PMs "advance" the show requirements with promoters and local

crew members.

Example of Show Day

10:00 a.m. Arrival of Production Manager (PM) and technical crew members of touring party.

10:05 a.m. PM assesses the stage and designates where equipment is to be placed. Load-in begins; local crew assist with loading in equipment from the truck into the venue.

10:22 a.m. Riggers start working on stage backdrop and lights; this is handled by five people.

10:28 a.m. Set up of front of house soundboard begins; involved personnel consists of the band's Front of House (FOH) engineer and two local sound engineers. Merchandise person starts sorting through boxes.

10:31 a.m. Riggers finish attaching backdrop to rig. PM is briefed by local crew.

10:37 a.m. Backdrop rig is raised; stage lights are turned on.

10:40 a.m. Drum kit starts to be assembled on stage, which is placed on top of a riser.

10:43 a.m. FOH engineer starts to make adjustments on the soundboard; crew member instructs local crew on how and where to arrange and store empty flight cases in the venue until they are needed for load-out.

10:46 a.m. Props and on-stage lighting fixtures are placed on to the stage.

10:49 a.m. Small barricade is set up around the front-of-house area to separate it from the standing-room-only floor.

11:00 a.m. The house PA is turned on; amplifiers are placed on risers on the stage.

11:07 a.m. Barricade that separates the audience and the stage begins to be constructed.

11:14 a.m. On-stage lighting fixtures are tested; drum technician cleans and polishes the drum kit.

11:27 a.m. Recorded music is played over the PA to check sound levels.

11:30 a.m. The last flight case is removed from the stage and the ramp to move them is removed. Curtains have been hung at the wings of the stage; microphones begin to be set up by the crew.

11:35 a.m. Set up of audience barricade is complete; drum technician sets up glass enclosure around drums. Local crew place red rectangles on the stage side of the barricade. Bottles of water are placed by the barricade for the security to give to the audience as needed during the show.

11:40 a.m. The line check begins with the drum technician playing the drums.

11:43 a.m. The stage lights are turned on and checked.

11:45 a.m. Crew members begin checking the artists' microphones.

11:52 a.m. Two crew members are on stage; one works on an amplifier, the other on the lead singer's microphone.

11:54 a.m. Guitar technician brings guitar on stage; additional microphone checks are done for each band member's set up, which involves communication between the instrument technicians and the FOH engineer. The drum technician checks the sound of all parts of the drum kit.

12:05 p.m. The FOH engineer encounters technical difficulties as the power suddenly goes out.

12:11 p.m. Power is restored.

12:13 p.m. Line check is complete.

12:15 p.m. Touring party leaves the area.

12:30 p.m.–2:00 p.m. House lights are turned off, stage lights are illuminated. Venue space is generally quiet except for checks and adjustments being made to lighting.

2:00 p.m. Venue concessions staff arrive and begin setting up.

3:00 p.m. Venue bar staff begin setting up. Merchandise worker sets up in the front lobby of the venue.

4:21 p.m. Instrument technicians re-enter venue space and begin checking instruments again.

4:38 p.m. FOH engineer returns with other members of the road crew.

4:44 p.m. Band begins soundcheck.

4:55 p.m. Band finishes soundcheck and returns to the backstage area. The TM, who arrived earlier with the artist, watches from the middle of venue floor; now talks with PM.

5:00 p.m. TM, PM and crew return to the backstage area.

5:00 p.m.–10:15 p.m. Crew members and artist are in the backstage area, which functions as a multipurpose facility. This time period represents an overlap between work activities and

downtime for different members of the touring party. The TM and PM work continuously during this time, attending to emails, printing setlists, making hotel and food arrangements, holding meetings with venue personnel, and attending to artist's needs. The PM picks up coffee from a local coffee shop. Several crew members rest or take naps on chairs. Members of the touring party use the laundry machines. Several band members leave with a runner to visit the city. Two band members confirm the set list for that evening. The bus driver arrives from sleeping at the hotel and is in the dressing room area.

5:30 p.m. Catering arrives from a local restaurant. Crew and artist take turns eating.

7:45 p.m. –8:15 p.m. Support act performs.

8:45 p.m. Headliner begins. TM escorts the artist to the stage prior to performance, and watches part of the performance from a balcony.

10:10 p.m. House lights raised prematurely prior to artist's second encore.

10:15 p.m. Headliner finishes. TM escorts the artist to the backstage area/dressing rooms. Crew begins to dismantle the stage.

10:17 p.m. Local crew begin to take apart the audience barricade.

10:34 p.m. Backline technicians pack up instruments and risers are dismantled. Backdrop and lighting rig is lowered and starts to be dismantled. Crew members call out instructions to indicate the order in which cases should be loaded onto the truck.

10:39 p.m. Stage backdrop placed into a case. Local crew sweep the venue floor.

10:41 p.m. Last item removed from the stage and final cases remain to be loaded into the truck.

Figure 2

The content in Figure 2 is based on observations made at Venue B (see Chapter 3 for

description), which involved close observation of the entire process of a show day. This is not to

say that the working day at Venue A was remarkably different. Load-in occurred, on average,

between 9:00 and 10:00 a.m., with the earliest being 8:00 a.m. and the latest 2:00 p.m.

Soundchecks also occurred in the late afternoon, usually around 3:30 p.m., with the earliest at

12:00 p.m. and the latest at 4:30 p.m. Venue A had a hard curfew of 9:45 p.m., at which time the

concert had to be finished or the sound was cut, a regulation based on the type of property of

which the venue is a part. Taken together, working days at Venue A averaged 12 hours.

Observations at Venue A also indicate that road crew members are often on-site before they actually start work activities. Being on-site can mean being in the bus parked outside of the venue, or involve going to catering for breakfast, taking a shower, or spending time in a dressing room prior to starting tasks for the day.[49]

A show day for TMs typically involves work activities that are related to the immediate concert as well as tasks for other events. As tours are necessarily planned in advance, "[l]ong before the first date of the tour much 'backstage' work is already done" (Weinstein [1991] 2000: 203). The planning that begins months ahead continues as the tour progresses and individual concert dates become closer in time. While TMs attend to the necessary tasks on a given show day, they also spend time preparing for the next ones. Much of the time working in their production office (see Chapter 3) is future-focused and consists of advancing the details of upcoming shows by communicating with promoters, hospitality and hotels in other venues and cities — confirmations and adjustments to months of careful pre-planning and coordination. At the same time, they are overseeing the requirements of the day, processes that should go without incident if they have advanced accordingly, and as such are entirely present, liaising with promoters, security and the relevant local crew at the current venue. The site of one concert effectively becomes a workplace for planning another.

Crew members have "clear roles and responsibilities" (Webber and Klimoski 2004: 267) and, as Figure 2 shows, specific road crew members are needed to perform tasks at different times. Start times follow a particular order as production elements build on each other. However, while crew members may begin at certain times, their activities overlap and multiple forms of work occur simultaneously. The daily schedule demonstrates that the length and intensity of the

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[49] See Webster (2015) and Gorman (1978: 20) for additional insights about the working day of a show day.

working day varies according to role. Load-in, set up and line check is a relatively routine and fast process, but is followed by several hours of relative inactivity prior to soundcheck and then the actual show. In this way, a show day is not characterized by continuous work but by duration over time; it involves periods of intense activity and downtime, and a key component is waiting. When research respondents were asked about what they spend the majority of their time doing while on the road, several cited waiting as the most common activity. Daniel (2017) described he was often "waiting for something" and Andy (2017) stated that "these days … all I pretty much ever do is festivals, it's just waiting." Tony (2017) referred to waiting as "a big factor in my day" and specified that his job requirements involve "waiting for my boss to come out of his room, waiting for the show to start, waiting for guests to come, waiting for people to make decisions" (Tony 2017).

Scheduling is significant and has implications in the working lives of road crews. The time that crew members are needed to start working at the venue often relates to the amount of sleep they get. Generally speaking, those arriving early sleep less and those needed later get more rest. That this is an issue is expressed through humour, which is a strong aspect of the culture of touring and will be discussed in more detail later in this chapter. The backline crew is a particular target due to how they are the group of workers who are the last to arrive and who get the most sleep. For example, Adrian (2018), a guitar technician, usually starts at 10:00 a.m., finishes around midnight or 1:00 a.m., and goes to sleep around 2:00 or 2:30 a.m. As such, the backline is called the "country club" to imply a kind of leisurely, unhurried existence. Targeting specific members' working days and mocking them for being relatively easier than others illuminates the long hours culture that is characteristic of tours. That crew members outside of

the "country club" have bestowed such a nickname on the backline crew is also indicative of the ways they use humour to manage differences between them.

Following this discussion of the backline crew, this thesis disagrees with notions put forth in an academic article titled "Live Music's Backline Labor" (Vilanova and Cassidy 2019) that focuses on merchandise (or "merch") staff, specifically women, on tours. The article is limited by the fact that the authors do not define or explain what they mean in their use of "backline." It seems that theorizing merch workers as "backline" is an attempt at an approach similar to that taken by Vicky Mayer (2011) in her use of the term "below the line" in her study of television workers. Mayer's (2011: 4) use of "below the line" follows industry conventions that separated workers "along a division of labour known as 'the line'." Below the line workers refer to those using "manual skills under the control of managers" and are understood in contradistinction to creatives and professionals (ibid.). This term applies to and can safely account for a wide range of workers due to the clear division in definition. Backline is an industry term that refers at once to equipment and the attendant technicians. The difference is that "backline" is highly specific and does not have the capacity to do the kind of theoretical work that Vilanova and Cassidy intend. To generalize this term is to do a disservice to the multiplicity of roles on a road crew and is a misuse of an operative industry term. Further, the authors overlook the importance of the workplace culture in understanding and theorizing what it means to work in live music. Their use of the term "backline" is incompatible with the connotations of the colloquial "country club."

During a show day, numerous other activities accompany work or occur during lulls in activity. Road crew and local crew members stand around and talk while waiting for their next activities, the FOH engineer talks with others and attends to guest list requests from members of the local crew. During the process of checking the sound and doing the line check, crew

members engage in banter and humorous exchanges. For example, at Venue B, while the bass technician was checking his instrument, the FOH engineer made jokes, saying to the technician that "you're on fire" and that this was "some of your best work." Observation at Venue B also highlights anomalies that can occur during a show day, and how schedules are adjusted accordingly. The minimal activity in the afternoon at Venue B was due to the fact that the band and crew wanted to watch the World Cup semi-final, which they did in the dressing room. The schedule of the day was adjusted to allow time to accommodate watching the game, and also created a longer lull of activity in the day than was typical. It is additionally useful for understanding the waiting that can be experienced throughout the day as well as the variations that can occur in order to accommodate interests and create normalcy in the everyday life of live music.

Despite the lengthy hours, crew members reported feeling as though they do not have enough time to finish their tasks. Adrian (2018) referred to the need to work to a deadline as "possibly the most stressful part" of the job:

> It's just knowing that there's that deadline which is showtime and everything has to be ready. That can be stressful depending on what you've been doing earlier in the day … whether there's a knock-on effect of any delays, cause we're last in the building we usually feel the worst pressure for time delays cause shit rolls down hill.

Adrian's quote suggests that the backline crew experience pressure based on their later arrival in the organization of a show day. This runs counter to the perceptibly relaxed working day they are teased for via their nickname. While they may be advantaged by a later start and more rest, they are disadvantaged by a shorter period of time before the concert and the potential for trickle-down problems to complicate their working practices.

> … I guess cause of the time restraints and what has to be done the whole day is stressful but you just get used to that stress and it's just part of the day. It's possibly wrong to characterize it as stress, but there's always an awareness of the time restraints that you

have to work with so sometimes you have to prioritize tasks, sometimes you have to postpone tasks and get through it. I think if you speak to enough guitar technicians every single one of us has gone through a show knowing that something is broken.

Adrian's comments indicate that show days are marked by unpredictable circumstances and situations, and suggest that time constraints are experienced differently by the various departments of road crews at the same time that they underpin all of their working lives. Time constraint can also affect the ability of crew members to properly attend to important aspects of their jobs, which creates risk in the management of their reputations. The reporting of consistent time pressures further implies that stress is taken as a normal and consistent feature of a show day and as something to be managed.

Research respondents cited the number of hours as a major component in the day-to-day experience of working on a road crew. Head of security Tony (2017) summarized the hours as follows:

The hours are definitely probably the biggest factor. A normal typical working day worldwide I would say would be somewhere between 8 to 10 hours. That's a half day for us for the most part. I will regularly be working 18 hours a day, seven days a week for months at a time.

Amy (2018) described her working day by "you just don't get to put it away at 5 p.m." In addition to the hours involved in a single concert, work also transcends spatial boundaries as it occurs in venues, on forms of transportation and in hotel rooms (see Chapters 3 and 4). Road crew members label touring schedules in terms of "show days," "travel days" and "days off." For TMs, the latter can be characterized more precisely as "non-show days" due to how they often still need to work on days on which there is no live music event (Amy 2018). The TM at Venue B expressed that he was looking forward to having the following day off in order to attend to emails and get caught up on work. A non-show day provides time and space to work away from the demands and time constraint of a show day. Road crews are like other types of behind-the-

scenes workers in that both "invest untold hours" (Curtin and Sanson 2017: 1). A long-hours culture is a consistent attribute of working in the cultural industries. As example, David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker (2011: 116) observed working patterns of ten hours or more per day, seven days a week, among some workers in the television industry. Respondents gave further indication of the long hours, as well as their significance, by positioning this characteristic as a determining factor for new entrants to the field or potential crew members. Daniel (2017) and Adrian (2018) both stated that touring is not an environment for anyone who is not willing to work "ridiculously" or "very very" long hours, and noted that an absence of such motivation acts as a filter. These findings suggest that road crew members accept these conditions as part of the expectations of their jobs and among the non-negotiable features of the everyday life of live music. Research findings also suggest that TMs in particular are attracted to and motivated by this line of work because of how their own personalities match the long hours, the demands of touring and the specific requirements of their positions. Glen (2018, 2019) described himself as constantly "up and moving … I really like being busy. I'm very bad at being idle." TMs characterize themselves as having a certain restlessness, a preference for being occupied with activities and an intense work ethic.

> … I think that everybody who does this has a pretty extreme work ethic, like you will work until work gets done. And it's like people are not always, myself included, not always so good at knowing when to stop and that's why you see people burn out, you know and people are now talking about 'you gotta take care of yourself' and … you just go until the work's done, like people can be pretty intense. I think that it's like people are pretty perfectionistic, but … not to the point where it necessarily stops them from doing their job, but to get everything, you know, it's a point of pride to get everything exactly right and have it work like clockwork (Amy 2018).

For road crews, the long hours culture in which they work is the product of the overall length of a tour, the repetition of this pace over an extended period of time, and the steady mobility of travelling between dates. An important aspect to understanding the working hours of crew

members is that the nature of touring means that these conditions are continuous and sustained throughout the course of a tour. The chapter now turns to discuss the disorientation that road crew members experience while on tour.

Disorientation

For musicians and road crew members "time and location get blurred when you're moving so quickly around the globe" (Barker 2017) and "sometimes you don't know what city you're in" (Simpson 2015a). The possibility for touring to create a sense of disorientation is among the clichés and stereotypes of life on the road. It has most commonly been addressed, with a degree of humour, in relation to musicians when they are performing and forget which city they are in, which has been described as "one of your worst nightmares" (Barker 2017). The "rockumentary" *This is Spinal Tap* (Reiner 1984) is a common reference point used to characterize this experience. The film features a well-known scene that takes place on a show day in Cleveland, during which the band members are lost in the backstage area and one of them repeatedly states "Hello Cleveland!" in an effort to commit the correct city to memory before walking on stage. Members of road crews are also subject to such experiences. As example, in February 2017 at a concert in Australia, Guns N' Roses' long-time instrument technician, McBob, introduced the band to the crowd by referring to the audience as "Sydney" and did so by screaming the city's name (see Frankel 2017). However, they were actually in Melbourne, nearly 900 km away, and the situation was made worse by the fact that McBob is actually from Melbourne.

My findings support the notion that touring can be disorienting for road crews, and that such an experience is part of the everyday life of live music. A sense of disorientation was repeatedly observed during participant observation. At Venue A, informal conversations with members of road crews were often held while walking and directing them to the catering room.

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These talks typically included a question about where they had just come from. In all such instances except one, the crew member could not immediately remember the previous city. Their response usually involved a pause or hesitation and they often consulted their mobile phone to check the itinerary. In one case, a bus driver could not remember where he had arrived from despite being the person who drove. The only crew member who could recall the previous location without hesitation was a younger, female assistant TM, which could imply the degree to which she was still trying to prove herself. At Venue B, as a visibly exhausted band member talked with crew members, they referred to their previous concert as having occurred a couple of days before, when it had actually taken place the night before.

The sense of disorientation is linked to a tour's itinerary. An itinerary is essentially the plan for the tour and is comprised of the tour dates, individual show schedules, travel agenda and accommodations. The itinerary is represented by the tour book, which is a physical document that includes specific details of the tour plan, in addition to the names, job titles and contact information for involved companies and personnel.[50] Though itinerary information is communicated via email and smartphones (see Chapter 4), it is still customary to print the tour book (Reynolds 2008: 358). Itineraries are also highly subject to change, and crew members colloquially refer to the tour book as the "Book of Lies" because "as soon as you print an itinerary it's out of date" (Glen 2019).

The primary influence on an itinerary is economics. Touring is expensive[51] and artists need to play as often as possible to offset costs. For example, in André Novoa's (2012: 353–354) study of grassroots musicians on tour in Europe, the group's schedule included 19 days of travel

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[50] Tour books may not include the contact information for artists due to privacy concerns (Workman 2012: 146).
[51] The costs associated with touring are outside the scope of this thesis. See Reynolds (2008), Waddell, Barnet and Berry (2007) and Nóvoa (2012). Documents in the David Russell Collection at the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame Library and Archives also provide detailed evidence of expenses, particularly for tours of top-level musicians.

and only one night without a show. In contrast, musicians who have greater available resources

and highly lucrative tours, such as Paul McCartney or The Rolling Stones, are able to take two or

three days off in between show days. Figure 3 features two examples of schedules of tour dates,

the first from a top-tier artist and the second from a mid-level artist.

Example 1		Example 2	
23 May	New Orleans, LA	10 July	Brooklyn, NY
27 May	Raleigh, NC	11 July	Charlottesville, VA
30 May	Greenville, SC	12 July	Philadelphia, PA
1 June	Lexington, KY	13 July	Boston, MA
3 June	Fort Wayne, IN	15 July	Montreal, QC
6 June	Madison, WI	16 July	Toronto, ON
8 June	Green Bay, WI	18 July	Pittsburgh, PA
11 June	Moline, AL	19 July	Cleveland, OH
14 June	Arlington, TX	20 July	Chicago, IL
22 June	San Diego, CA	21 July	Royal Oak, MI
26 June	Phoenix, AZ	23 July	Minneapolis, MN
28 June	Las Vegas, NV	25 July	Calgary, AB
29 June	Las Vegas, NV		
6 July	Vancouver, BC		
10 July	San Jose, CA		
13 July	Los Angeles, CA		

Figure 3

Figure 3 highlights the additional, and related, importance of the routing of a tour, which is the

relationship between where the concerts take place and how the touring party travels to and from

them. Difficult routing can increase expenses and negatively impact the health and wellbeing of

the touring party. Members of road crews use the term "dart board tour" to refer to instances

when the routing is so complex that it suggests it was "determined by throwing darts at a map"

(Thomas 2020). The example used was a four-day stretch of a tour that went from Montreal to

San Francisco to Atlanta to Pittsburgh. These destinations were clearly chosen for effect to

illustrate an extreme example, but it implies the importance of routing. For road crews, these

factors are significant because they affect the character of their working lives. The itinerary

dictates the schedule that they will follow and therefore shapes the experience of touring. It is

interesting to note that the pace and related experience of concert touring is not unlike that of

organized tourism. The belief that tour guides "need to pack every moment with activity" leads

to travellers becoming fatigued and disinterested partway through the tour (Schuchat 1983: 472).

While such practices could arguably be more easily adjusted in a leisure-based setting, the

underpinning concern of economic value and the resultant pace affects the intensity in much the

same way.

Research respondents described a variety of occurrences that suggest the potential for

touring to be a source of disorientation. Though crew members may have some engagement with

the geographical locations they visit, traveling on tour is practical and functional, and its overall

purpose is to facilitate the realization of individual concert events. Traveling on tour can

effectively be defined as the process of following the various details of a tour's itinerary. Road

crew members' consistent movement between different versions of the same types of spaces can

inhibit differentiation from one location to the next.

> So yeah, that's the one thing that people always ask you, must be amazing travelling. No,
> I've seen the airport, I've seen the Holiday Inn and I've seen a big tin shed. And I've
> looked out the window of the car between the three. You might get to go for a half-hour
> walk around about lunch time (Glen 2017).[52]

Disorientation also has the potential to arise when crew members encounter similar itineraries on

different tours.

> … two bands I mainly work for now. And it just so happened that last year it would
> pretty much be one band would finish touring and I would go straight onto the other one.
> I spent a lot of time in America, I started on one side, Miami with one band, went across
> to LA and then you know, I … then picked up the other band and we came all the way
> back playing some of the same towns I'd been in not long before. There's a lot of
> repetition goes on, too cause a lot of bands play the same venues. You know there's
> certain venues on the circuit and then depending on your size you will sort of go up or
> down depending on how you're doing (Duncan 2018).

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[52] Gorman (1978: 17) provides another example of how touring inhibits road crew members from having the "time to stop and look."

An itinerary does not necessarily entail a full tour schedule, but can also include one-off dates. Daniel (2017), based in the UK, described having once "flown to Australia for one show and then flown back again." In such a case, disorientation can be linked to the intensity of travel and drastic changes in time zones rather than the continuous pace of moving locations during a tour. The manner in which touring parties travel can also be a contributing factor. Tony (2017) works for an artist who has their own 737 and, because he "directly serve[s] one of the band members," is among the 54 people who travel on the plane. Rather than fly from one city to the next, the travel agenda is based on a practice called "hubbing."

> … if we go to the states, they won't fly from New York to Detroit to Texas to whatever, they will split the states in half and they will hub out of either New York or LA, so instead of doing what the crew do where they go on the bus in San Diego and they travel all the way up the coast in a bus to San Francisco, we will stay in LA, we will get up in the morning, we will get on the plane like it's a bus, we will fly to San Diego, we will do the show, we'll fly back to LA, we'll all go to bed at the same hotel. The next time we'll do it again and that's how we do it you know. And you have certain rules where if the flight is over, I think the rule is if we're over a four-hour flight then we may stay over where we are just to save flying back four hours, but yeah, we tend to hub it and that goes for Europe as well.

For crew members like Tony who work for artists who primarily perform in arenas, the characteristics of such types of venues can also contribute to a sense of disorientation. Road crew members and musicians alike have described North American arenas in particular for how they "seemed identical," "felt like you could be anywhere," and are "sort of all the same but with just enough differences to mess with your head and keep you slightly confused" (Edgar et al. 2015: 136). Arenas can be linked to disorientation based on their generic appearance and because they are typically located in similarly indistinguishable areas in the outskirts of cities.

Disorientation on tour can also be understood from a different perspective. On tour, the working lives of crew members, and their spatial and temporal whereabouts, are structured according to the itinerary and demands of their roles. In this way, they are not so much

disoriented as they are exhibiting a lack of concern and attention. They are oriented to the activities and places of work rather than the wider location around them. Given that the daily objective on tour is the realization of live music, the specific location in which a road crew works on a given day is ultimately irrelevant. In the same way that travelers on a guided group tour in the tourism industry exist within their own "bubble" and are only acclimatized to a local area through its limited framing by the tour guide (Holloway 1981: 382), road crew members are primarily oriented to an area based on the work-related spaces and details of a tour's itinerary. An individual stop on a tour is one in a series in which crew members attend to the activities involved to ensure a concert happens. The location serves as a temporary setting that road crews occupy and is a container in which the necessary tasks can be enacted and completed. The ability to do their jobs and the end result are more important than the details of where they do it, and their focus is on the work and the deadline rather than the location. In other words, the fact that it is a "show day" is more important than the fact that it is occurring in "Chicago."

This experience can be characterized by the difference between "location" and "place." The former can be a city, or thought of as point A or point B, but it does not have meaning. On the contrary, the latter are "locations imbued with meaning and power" (Cresswell 2006: 3). Similar to Felski's (1999: 24–25) notion of "home," they are "meaningful segments of space" to which people become attached, fight over, exclude others and experience (ibid.). For road crew members, the various buses, hotels and venues they temporarily occupy and in which work and life are experienced while on tour function as "place" (see also Chapter 3). Road crew members remember and speak of particular places based on the work conditions they present. Venue A was distinguishable because of the distance between the load-in area and the stage, and more so once it had been modified to be more accommodating. Boston is particular for how the load-in at

the Orpheum Theatre is through the front door due to the fact that there is no back entrance, and Glasgow is associated with the three-stories of stairs that are a feature of the load-in at Barrowlands. These factors suggest that crew members are oriented to an area based on the features that relate to the particular context of their working practices. In this way, disorientation regarding location is the result of an orientation toward tasks and place. The chapter now examines how members of road crews live and work together during a tour.

Working and Living Together

Being on tour positions road crew members in an intense setting in which they work and live in close proximity for extended periods of time. Crew members state that they "live on top of each other" or "in each other's pockets" to describe this experience. The close nature of the touring environment is one of the reasons why the hiring process, discussed in Chapter 1, relies so heavily on contacts and referrals.

> If you're gonna be with a bunch of people 24/7 … it's a lot of vibe, feeling like you're a good fit, and it's like how else do you know unless you've been with that person, unless you've actually worked with them? (Amy 2018).

The need for road crew members to travel between dates on an itinerary, and the forms of transportation they take when doing so, create the close proximity on tour. Mobility is how "geographic movement becomes entangled in the way societies and cultures assign meaning through talk … and live out their lives" (Cresswell 2006, see Adey 2017: 7). The mode of transportation in which crew members travel varies with the scale of the tour and resources of the artist. Two research respondents who work for non-mainstream rock and folk artists travelled most frequently by van; the majority of respondents work for established rock musicians and travel in a tour bus, also called a sleeper bus; and one respondent works for a top-level rock band and travels by private jet. During participant observation at Venue A and Venue B, the majority

of headliners and their road crews travelled by bus, though in some cases cars were used to transport members of touring parties from hotels to the venue, leaving it unclear what the primary mode of travel was between cities. Those who travelled by van tended to be support acts.

The specific mode of transportation that road crews utilize creates conditions and shapes their experience. Different forms of transit may facilitate more or less intense interpersonal situations, and may enable, constrain or define social interaction. Van touring is usually associated with a smaller division of labour and more acute social experience. A typical van used on a concert tour fits up to eight people, has limited spatial comfort and a complete lack of privacy. They do not feature conventional sleeping accommodations nor convenient access to toilets. Tour buses, or sleeper buses, are the "standard travel method for modern tours" (Reynolds 2008: 350). Sleeper buses are typically occupied by 10 to 14 people (ibid.). They are essentially standard buses that are converted and are equipped with sleeping accommodations in the form of bunk beds, which are typically stacked in threes on either side of a corridor. Sleeper buses also feature a bathroom, shared eating and living spaces and lounges at the front and back. Traveling by plane represents less intense proximity and more opportunities for comfort and privacy. Plane travel tends to be reserved for the band, its entourage and key management and touring personnel, while other members of the same touring party travel by bus. Who travels by plane is based on a combined factor of role on the tour and seniority in the artist's touring party. With a different artist, some personnel on the plane would usually be on the bus with the rest of the road crew. As such, the plane represents a hierarchy that is inconsistent with the norms in the road crew division of labour and, as a result, the topic of who travels by plane is "quite divisive" (Tony 2018). Crew members who "hub," as explained in the previous section, go to the airport

after a show, fly to the hub destination, which is usually four hours or fewer away, and stay the night at a hotel. An in-depth comparison of the experiences of traveling on different modes of transportation is beyond the scope of this thesis. For the purposes of this study, the contrast between them is less significant than what they have in common: they position crew members in settings that extend their proximity to others outside of the scope of a show day, and, though transient, they provide a "framework for social interaction" (Holloway 1981: 398).

The confines of living on a bus create particular expectations around conduct, a fact which contributes to both a more agreeable and safer living environment. The close-knit bunk bed sleeping arrangements depend on keeping noise levels down while others are asleep. Research respondents and primary source materials repeatedly expressed that the "cardinal rule" of bus touring is that "no solids" are allowed in the bus toilet (Glen 2017). This is due, in part, to the close proximity of bus life, but has a practical reason in that bus toilets require maintenance too often and this is too expensive (Cody the Roadie 2020). If someone violates this rule, it is usually the bus driver who must clean the toilet and the imposition is unfavourably regarded. When crew members are unable to wait until the bus stops and they can use proper facilities, they must engage in a practice called "hot bagging." When the bus is parked, it is expected that it is kept locked to safeguard personal belongings. Further, road crew members are discouraged from bringing unfamiliar people onto the bus.

Close working and living conditions place a particular emphasis on social cohesion and managing relations between road crew members. The nature of their working lives means they move between groups and must quickly adapt to new and different people or resume interaction with others. In the short term, doing so creates a more tolerable workplace while on tour. In the long term, it influences how crew members evaluate each other and maintain their reputations.

The significance of social relations is expressed when road crew members refer to their touring colleagues as "family" for the kinds of bonding and shared, relatable experiences that life on the road creates between them. The term can also be understood to represent the tensions that characterize the nature of those relations, which is largely a product of the closeness and familiarity they encounter.

At the most basic level, relations between crew members are maintained by mutual respect and tolerance for others and their habits. Crew members must respect their colleagues and their personal working and living areas, attend to the cleanliness and maintenance of their own personal spaces and habits, refrain from creating difficulties and be cooperative and considerate. Given the variety of people's personal habits and preferences, doing so is not always easy. Crew members must "make yourself a vital part of the bigger picture" and adaptation and efforts made benefit the greater good of the tour (Adrian 2018).

> So you might find someone's personal habits slightly offensive, but if you … just leave it alone and shut off … if someone doesn't change their socks as often as they should, you know, maybe he has personal hygiene that you find not quite up to your standards, unless it's utterly offensive, then you just leave it. You have to, you have to get on (Daniel 2017).

Having the right attitude and a willingness to adapt are among the ways that road crew members "fit in" with the larger group on tour, which is integral to its functioning. Acquiring work is strongly dependent on the ability to fit in, and those who cannot fit in often do not continue working on road crews. "It's such a tight, closed work environment that you can't have people who don't play nice with others involved" (Ange 2018). Fitting in can rank higher than skillset in terms of suitability for working on tour, which suggests it is not only integral to the immediacy of a given tour but also functions as a criterion by which crew members assess each other for future positions.

> … if people don't have good attitudes they get weirded out and they don't end up lasting on the road very long. I mean you can only, like your technical ability might be amazing but if you're just not fitting in with the crew, if you just don't fit in or working on the road is just not good for you, people tend to fall out, like they tend to not last long. And like attitude is kind of a huge, I would say attitude is way more important than technical ability quite often, just being able to fit in and play nice with other people (Ange 2018).

A major component in how they fit in is their demeanor. Crew members have been noted for their "curious enthusiasm, energy, dedication and general can-do attitude" (Ames 2019: i). In this way, they represent a positive attitude despite potentially uncomfortable or challenging working conditions. Such a demeanor is part of the norms that function as "the informal rules that groups adopt to regulate and regularize group members' behavior" (Feldman 1984: 47). Norms indicate expectations for behavioral conduct and express the group's values and identity (Durkheim 1983). Introversion or "standoffish" personalities could produce difficulties and are viewed as dispositions inconsistent with the norms of touring given the close contact and need to get along well with others (Adrian 2018). This need reflects the closeness of touring at the same time that it is an effort to manage it. To be "on tour" is not only to occupy a role and a set of responsibilities, it is a way of being and presenting oneself.

> … on tour you never completely relax … But because you're pretty much with other people on the tour 24/7, if you're sleeping on the bus, you can never completely switch off you know from whatever you're on-tour persona is, you've got to keep that on all the time (Daniel 2017).

The reference to an "on-tour persona" suggests that crew members adjust and modify aspects of their personalities in order to fit in with the group. This persona differs from the person they are and the attributes they may reveal off-tour. Ange (2018) attested to this by observing that "what's really strange is when you hang out with people on the road very often they're different off the road." This suggests the act of impression management, or performance, put forth by Erving Goffman (1959). Impression management is the attempt by individuals to control the

impressions that others form about them (Leary and Kowalski 1990: 34). Crew members put on a "front" that is shaped by their roles, social norms and context (40, 41; Goffman 1959). Impressions are strongly tied to the ways that others treat and evaluate each other and are an important motivational factor in the achievement of goals (38). Given the role of networking and referrals in the acquisition of work for road crew members, their reliance on others places particular significance on impressions (ibid.).

The on-tour persona also highlights that being on tour means crew members are always "on" given the norms and expectations associated with life on the road, as well as the importance of following them to acquire future work. This factor symbolizes the all-encompassing experience of being on tour and suggests that the "working day" for road crew members is continuous. Goffman's (1959: 106) notion of "regions" further addresses this feature of their working lives. In a "front region" — the touring workplace — workers attempt to convince the audience — their co-workers and employers — that an "activity in the region maintains and embodies certain standards" (107). A "backstage region" is where a performer is supposed to be able to relax and refrain from the character. It is also an environment where the audience is not permitted access, which is a requirement in order for the performer to be able to prepare for the performance (111–114). Road crews have limited access to a "backstage region" in the context of their workplace. Though they spend a portion of their working day in the backstage area of a concert venue, it is among their audience: co-workers and musicians. The tour bus equally provides minimal privacy, with communal areas for relaxing and curtains separating bunk beds. As such, road crews have limited ability to acquire or inhabit backstage areas (114–115) where they can disengage from expectations.

These kinds of strains along with continuous and close living and working conditions mean that the touring environment functions as a type of pressure cooker. While mutual respect and social norms are strategies designed to maintain order, personal limitations inevitably expire. Everyday occurrences that would otherwise not become issues have the potential to become exponentially magnified. Or, as Tony (2017) succinctly summarized, "dramas become real dramas."[53] Friction can develop based on repetition and familiarity in which someone may "cause the same problem, the same joke everyday at the same time" (Glen 2017). A crew member may lose patience with another person's habits, demeanour or the overall pressures of touring.

> I think that people have blowouts … it just becomes too much … you might [find] something about someone you find really annoying but you don't just … leave it. But then you know sometimes if someone keeps pushing your buttons and pushing your buttons eventually when they, on the bus when you've had a wee too much to drink that'll explode. And you know I have seen that on more than one occasion turn into a physical fight. And you know, that generally will just be laughed off the next morning (Daniel 2017).

Such reactions give insight into the intensity of touring and demonstrate the interpersonal effects of its conditions and norms. Feelings or frustrations are withheld to a breaking point, which suggests that crew members struggle to conceal them. This also represents the masculine features of the culture of touring, which will be discussed in greater detail later in this chapter. If there is excessive conflict between particular members of road crews, and to the point that it negatively impacts the tour or production, the offender will usually be removed and replaced. However, research respondents stated that such circumstances are rare. A major reason that such tension occurs is that crew members do not have ample time away from each other nor the privacy to

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[53] Musicians describe the social realities of touring in similar terms. Lol Tolhurst (2016: 169) of The Cure stated that "being in a touring band is rather like being married to the people you work with … You live with each other 24\7 for months on end, and the smallest irritant can become a very large dispute if you're not careful" (Frith et al. 2019: 172).

attend to issues and disagreements. Whereas working in a 9 to 5 office environment allows

people who have disagreements a certain distance, the conditions of touring largely inhibit such

opportunities.

> … you go to work during the day you have a fallout with … one of your colleagues, you
> then go home at night and depending on how you see things, there's a fair chance you
> will regulate yourself out again and by the time you see them again you'll be able to have
> met some compromise. We don't get the opportunity a lot of the time to have that break
> from contact and for anywhere as long a time, so if there are any negativities or
> relationship difficulties or whatever they tend to be magnified because there's no escape
> from them (Tony 2017).

This factor further confirms the long hours culture that characterizes working on tour. The

working day is not exclusively limited to the hours of a show day, nor to the on-tour persona

crew members maintain on the road, but continues on to the forms of transportation as road crew

members live and travel together. With the exception of TMs, and generally speaking, crew

members' time off, or downtime, is during days when there are no shows and at meal times on

show days. However, the catering room is generally occupied by members of the touring party.

Spending time apart is essential to managing relationships on tour, but is difficult within the

context and conditions of the working lives of road crew members. The next section of Chapter 2

will explore the role of camaraderie and friendship in road crew members' working lives and the

workplace culture of touring.

Camaraderie and Friendship

While it has been established that touring has the potential to cause disruption between people, it

also is the source of camaraderie. As in an organized group tour in the context of tourism, the

group "reinforces a seemingly independent existence and the ability to co-exist with others"

(Schuchat 1983: 469). Mobility tends to foster a sense of closeness (Adey 2017: 10) and can

facilitate a bond between crew members. In the closed-off world of touring, people "traveling

together and sharing a common culture will feel closely drawn to one another, resulting in a higher level of interaction" (Holloway 1981: 388). Members of road crews often cite camaraderie as one of the reasons they enjoy touring. Tony (2017, 2018) expressed the importance of camaraderie on tour when discussing differences in modes of transportation. Though he now travels by private jet, he was ambivalent about the merits of plane travel in comparison to his previous experience on buses working for other artists. While he admits that plane travel is "very luxurious … and it's very glamorous" the bus is preferable based on a difference in social interaction: the "level of camaraderie you get on a tour bus tour is pretty high, people who bond fairly tightly." Research on group tourism has found that the back of the bus, or the lounge in a touring context, offers "both location and opportunity" for sociability and that "membership in a tour group encourages this kind of interaction" (Schuchat 1983: 470).

Camaraderie is often expressed through the shared humour that members of road crews use on tour. Workplace humour on tour can be characterized as banter and as deprecating. It is directed at many subjects, but often is inspired by the process and experience of touring and the artist for whom crew members currently work.

> It's all kinds of things … Sometimes, at the artist. Yeah, definitely. Each other. There'll be something that you stick on to for a while and start talking about, like a theme … Running joke and that will just run and you're just trying to do it to keep each other's spirits up (Glen 2018).

Crew members make such exchanges in person during the working day or on the bus, but may also communicate humour through technology. Glen (2018) explained that his crew has different groups on WhatsApp, one for important work-related information and another reserved for random conversation between crew members. He read a selection of texts aloud from the latter group during an interview.

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… there's one called the Bullshit Bar which is just for everyone else talking rubbish. You can turn that off if you like cause sometimes 4:00 in the morning it goes nuts and everybody's just texting nonsense to each other. It's hard to define what it is … Just jokes, almost like you would do on Facebook sometimes, you know, 'I found this it's funny' … I mean, our audio technician who went to a wedding, and the band are playing [song by artist he works for] and they thought that was funny, so he's just making faces at that you know. Very hard to …check those two they look like Heart and then … they're talking about the front row there, they're talking about we should go to the Irish pub across the road, here's our truck crash, our truck crashed in New Jersey … you know, just … Oh look I've got too many pillows in my room.

His quote highlights the kinds of topics that become the source of jokes and banter between crew members and can be seen to directly reflect key elements of their daily working lives. On the one hand, musicians and the live music environment become subjects of jokes via references to songs and the front row at a concert. On the other, it captures elements of the mobile experience of touring by including comments on the crashed truck, pubs in local areas and the familiarity of hotel rooms. Participant observation at Venue A gave further insights into the presence and importance of camaraderie and humour on tour. As Chapter 3 discusses, visiting touring parties found aspects of the multipurpose work environment to be a consistent source of humour. One TM spent an extensive amount of time making use of some of the supplies reserved for children's art classes at Venue A for the sole purpose of teasing a colleague in order to amuse himself. The use and significance of humour also extends onto the local crew (see Chapter 3). The maintenance of, and expectation to maintain, a light-hearted, humorous work atmosphere illuminates the stress and long hours that comprise it at the same time that it provides a veneer.

Outside of interviews and participant observation, the David Russell Collection archive attests to the significance of humour as an expression of camaraderie and as an effort to maintain morale. Russell, as both a TM and PM, authored daily written communications to his crews that detailed important information about each show day's schedule. The archive contains several folders of "practical jokes" which are essentially documents that look like tour-related

communications and seem to have been used for practical purposes, such as to indicate set times. In addition to the key details, he usually included a Polaroid of a band or crew member and some type of commentary that directly made fun of a situation relevant to, or that had recently transpired on, the tour. The source and target of humour was daily life on the road, crew members, days off, the local culture of cities, and the references were sometimes specific to a given artist. For several years, he also drew a series of comics called "Road Rage," sometimes on the back of tour documents, that directly addressed aspects of the everyday life of live music. It is unclear how they were circulated on the road and who saw them, but their title, topical nature, and his very effort in drawing them reveal much about the nature of touring and the daily experience of doing so. Aspects of the content are certainly inside jokes only decipherable by those who were on a given tour, but in general, both the content and the documents themselves offer clear insights into the frustrations of touring and the attempt to overcome them.

The extensive use of humour effectively implies the difficulties of life on the road. The reliance on it to maintain good working relations and a congenial environment suggests there are underlying reasons to lighten the mood, or "keep each other's spirits up," and a pervasive need to do so. Adrian (2018) described that "it pretty much runs on its sense of humour … It's kind of like laughing and joking and that gets you through the day really" (Adrian 2018; see also Gorman 1978: 31). David L. Collinson (1988: 185) has shown that humour and banter in the workplace, specifically in a male-dominated setting, is "conditioned by a desire to make the best of the situation and enjoy the company of others." Workers perceive humour as a means to cope with and resist the conditions of the workplace. It provides the "illusion of separation" from the circumstances and strengthens self and group identity (ibid.). Following this, humour may be a

feature of the workplace culture that creates bonding and a sense of camaraderie, but it is ultimately a means of coping with the conditions of touring.

The formation of such bonds can inevitably turn into friendships that exist and continue both on and off the road. Research respondents spoke of having met some of their closest friends while on tour. They also addressed the difficulties that friendship can present on the road due to how closeness can complicate boundaries and working dynamics. The challenges of and need to maintain professional relations can be tied to the expectations associated with specific roles. Those in management positions, such as PMs, are responsible for handling aspects of production that directly affect the working lives of technical crews. Though they interact and socialize, they must delicately balance personal aspects in order to maintain the integrity of their positions: "you do need to keep it professional … cause you're making decisions they don't like" (Glen 2018). It is in the negotiation of working relationships that the implicit hierarchy between particular crew members is expressed. Tony (2018), who does personal close protection security for a specific band member, articulated that though he finds value in the good nature of their relationship, it can "get really in the way of getting shit done." Tony noted that the level of interaction with musicians has been unique in his career in close protection security, which also included working for diplomats and royalty. In those sectors, which he referred to as the "formal world" of close protection, his "job was not to really interact with my client in any real way, more than perfunctory duties because the relationship can get in the way of the duties." The more informal tone to relations in the music industries can be an asset as it can "help you persuade your client to do stuff that they might not want to do." It has also led to instances where he has had difficulty being taken seriously in his role.

> … we were in Paris a couple years ago when the attacks happened … it was my job at the time to run the team and I ordered an evacuation of the building of all of our crew and all

of our band, and trying to get the band to get in the car was a real big deal because they didn't understand what was going on and they didn't have that understanding of … 'if this guy tells me to get in the car in that manner, I better just get in the car and ask questions later.' They wanted to discuss it and eventually I had to say 'fire me tomorrow but you can either get in the car or I am going to put you in the car and that will be it.' Luckily, our guys understand, but the relationship got in the way, because 'oh it's just Tony, Tony can get a little bit harsh at times,' my sense of humour is quite dry and all that sort of stuff.

Friendship between crew members can also be a problem when they are hired based on existing personal relationships. Chapter 1 indicated that working for friends is a common early source of training and experience for crew members. However, as musicians become more successful, close personal relationships may create difficulties if the crew member in question is not highly skilled enough to appropriately manage daily responsibilities on tour. Hiring someone "like a friend or a relative, who lacks the necessary expertise to keep the tour running smoothly" can be "disastrous" (Waddell, Barnet and Berry 2007: 3). TM Malcolm Cook (2011: 15) made the same observation in his autobiography and cited the risk for the artist to take control as being a potential threat to the success of the tour. The need to trade personal ties for professional contacts can be both a result of and assurance for the continued upward mobility of a musician's career. Discrepancies that occur also have the potential to ruin the relationships between the artist and crew member.

Glen (2017, 2018) recounted being hired as a TM for a close friend during the time that the band "broke," gained international success and toured extensively, and that the experience "destroyed" their friendship. He described how he "hung on by my fingernails for two and a half years" while the crew evolved from two members to 54 in approximately eighteen months. The intense pace of the tour and artist's promotional schedule, and the time constraint this imposed on daily working life, inhibited him from properly keeping track of the tour accounts. The accounts were comprised of fifteen different currencies in "an envelope that I'll get to at some

point and then by the time I got there I couldn't remember what had happened" and which took an extensive amount of time for an accountant to later rectify. He acknowledges taking on too much without asking for the proper support, such as an assistant, from artist management. In between that tour and the next, Glen assisted the band with the recording of its second album, which he called a "mistake" because it inhibited time off and space between him and the artist. During the second tour, his relationship with the artist was strained, on the one hand due to the fact that the latter did not forgive him about the money mishandling on the first tour. On the other hand, it also was strained due to a lack of communication between them. The artist disliked the manner in which Glen woke him up on the bus each morning, and rather than address it, he let it "fester" and it took a month for Glen to be made aware that he was annoying his friend. They did not fully resolve the matter and "I never worked out what he wanted me to do instead." He eventually hired an assistant during the second tour, and when he needed a week off due to a heart murmur he was asked not to return and the assistant replaced him. Due to this experience, he sees friendship as a "massive disadvantage" which he connects to the importance of maintaining communication on tour and, similar to Tony's experience, the potential for personal and professional boundaries to collapse.

> … it just makes those difficult conversations harder to have. It makes the lines a lot more blurred … it was very personal for me when things went well and badly, I was trying to do my best for my friend. Whereas if you know in your heart that you're doing your best for the company that you work for then it's absolutely fine if it fucks up. You know I tried. But if it fucks up and I'm still going, 'fuck I should've done this and I should've done that. I'm lettin' him down' you know. And it was bad. Too difficult. Can't be friends with someone you're working for on that level, I don't think.

These examples have revealed that friendships that pre-exist and form between members of a touring party can cause complications in the work environment that in turn affect the relationships themselves. They also combine with research findings in this chapter to show that

working on tour is marked by tensions in the management of relations. Being a member of a road crew on tour involves different degrees of intensity in the bonds that form between people. At the same time that touring is marked by closeness and camaraderie, relationships on tour can be fleeting and ephemeral. The limited length of a given tour and the uncertainty of any specificity regarding future positions means that crew members may only work together for a short time. In some cases, the same or similar crews may re-form each time a particular artist goes on tour. In others, it may be a one-time occurrence.

> … it might be two years if you're part of the core team of a band and you're on the road for two years, then you're gonna spend two years with these people. You might never see them again. Or it might be a month and you might never see them again or you might see them again in five years time. So you know that that relationship is transient (Daniel 2017).

In this way, crew members may resist bonding or committing to establishing friendships. The realities of touring that take crew members in separate directions and the potential for emotional implications mean such efforts may not be deemed a worthwhile investment. Similar patterns have been found in a tourism context of group travel. Some tourists refrain from extensive amounts of interaction or "extending their personal lives through the trip" and are not interested in "follow-through," while others seek meaningful relationships (Schuchat 1983: 471). As such, being on tour is at once highly interpersonal at the same time that it is isolating. The chapter will now address the topic of masculinity and how it permeates the culture of touring.

Masculinity

Chapter 1 discussed the male-dominated nature of road crews, which is another example of the widespread underrepresentation of women in the music industries. The notion of "the road" reinforces such marginalization by its association with masculinity. Rock culture has a strong link to notions of independence and "nomadic bohemianism" (Kearney 2017: 162). Vilanova and

Cassidy (2019: 90) identify Kerouac's *On the Road* and the figure of Odysseus as positioning the "archetypical road-traveler" as a man. Historically, men have been mobile, and women have not been unless they have done so in the company of the former (ibid., see Leed 1991). In this way, "travel is 'genderized' and becomes a 'gendering' activity" (ibid.) which is reflected in the norms and expectations on tour. Through their reproduction, gender is a "ritualized performance on tour within a specific set of labor, industrial, and cultural practices" (92).

My research findings support these notions and indicate the manner in which masculinism operates on tour. Crew members state that the conditions and expectations of touring lead them to develop a "fairly tough persona" or a "thick skin," to "keep a shell" and "be pretty hard and able to take a lot of shit" (Daniel 2017, Cooper 2007). Being on tour necessitates compartmentalization to successfully adapt to life on the road. Crew members are expected to leave their personal problems behind, handle the conditions and realities of working on tour, and do so without comment or objection. Any appearance of weakness is strongly discouraged. These assumptions about conduct are understood and reproduced by crew members without being explicitly stated.

> … you kind of have to come baggage-free and you have to be able to cope with you know isolation from your family, stresses from travel, the amount of uncertainty that can come along with the job, that you've got to be able to cope with that, you've got to be able to cope with that without complaint. That kind of like strength of character is very important and it's possibly unspoken that that's expected of you. Everybody misses their families, everybody has personal problems, but you're not supposed to bring that to work. Whether that's a good thing or whether that's a bad thing I don't know (Adrian 2018).

These findings address the shared conditions and experiences that come with being on tour and reinforce the need for suitability and adaptability to the actualities of this line of work. Deviance from these expectations is discouraged due to the potential to affect other crew members and the ability for work to be done. "You can't … be in a bad mood one day because that will affect the

people around you, you can't be upset one day because you're missing home" (Daniel 2017).

Crew members perceive emotional difficulties as incompatible with the nature of the work and the pressures of touring.

> You can't have people with emotional problems on the road, it, on a practical level, it endangers the production and on a personal level you know it can start to effect people around you … morale is very important, and trying to carry someone who's obviously in distress, because of the unique working circumstances I think is very very difficult because it's not like an ordinary job and you're not in ordinary circumstances. It does make it difficult (Adrian 2018).

An inability to cope with the conditions of the road — or the perception of being unable to — can have an impact on the acquisition of future positions.

> … anyone who isn't capable of doing their job … will not get a job again, so any form of weakness, be it physical, mental, inability to go without sleep, well, 'I'm not giving them a job cause he's not capable, he can't take it.' If you can't take it, you don't get a gig, it's as simple as that (Daniel 2017).

These notions are significant enough to the workplace culture of touring that they are reproduced in educational tools designed to inform potential road crew members. The online program Tour Mgmt 101 explicitly states this in their document entitled "Rules of the Road."[54] The document advises crew members if they "have personal issues, please leave them at home ... There's no room for them on the bus," requests that they "do not whine; you are an adult, and hopefully a professional. It's not becoming," and reminds them that "there's no crying in Rock and Roll!!" The fact that such content was written and included as part of the program implies a need to inform newcomers as well as the importance of adhering to its points, and the title of the document positions the contents as non-negotiable.

These findings further substantiate that crew members acquire positions based on their network but that their ability to be recommended is also linked to how well they fit in with the

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[54] Available at https://www.tourmgmt.org/templates.html

norms and expectations of touring. The discouragement of weakness or vulnerability is an extension or by-product of the male-dominated and masculine nature of touring. This represents stereotypically masculine behaviour that is collectively shared and reproduced by road crew members. It can also be linked to the exclusionary nature of touring at the level of gender and functions to reinforce those barriers.

Camaraderie is also another means through which the male-dominated nature of touring is evident, as it leads to a tendency for stereotypical masculine behaviour to permeate the workplace culture. Male research respondents acknowledged that all-male road crews can engage in stereotypically "macho culture." They characterized it as "blokey" and as a comprised of "male banter" such as "dick and bum and fart jokes" (Adrian 2018, Daniel 2017, Glen 2018; see also Gorman 1978: 33). They also expressed a personal dislike of macho culture, seeing it as offensive, unsophisticated and unbalanced. The maturity of the respondents and the number of years they have encountered such behaviour during their careers may be contributing factors to their perspectives. Male respondents stated that they welcome women on the road, cited them as positive influences on the culture of touring, and indicated that they believed women's presence worked to undo or balance the atmosphere.

> I think the gender balance of the crew is very important in that sense in that if it's all male it can be quite, pretty horrible. And I think having a number of women on the bus can change that dynamic quite dramatically and it becomes a little bit more nurturing is probably a bit too strong a word, but you don't get that whole big macho loads of blokes on the road together thing. Cause a lot of the women'll just cut through that bullshit. And that stops all that a little bit, it changes the dynamic and it makes it much better (Daniel 2017).

Members of road crews take issue with and become weary of macho culture. The acceptance of women on tour is ultimately a positive indicator and suggests the potential for a more inclusive workplace. However, the reasons for their welcome presence, and the manner in which it is

expressed, effectively reduces women to their gender and stereotypes about their roles. Women are welcome on the road for the ways in which they can create a better atmosphere and make touring more comfortable for men. This effectively reproduces male dominance and stereotypical gender roles. The next section will discuss the effect of touring on mental and physical health.

Mental and Physical Health

The conditions in which road crew members work can be linked to the possibility of adverse effects. Research findings offer evidence of the need for the recent concern and scrutiny over the working conditions in the music industries in particular relation to mental health. One factor is the aforementioned long hours culture in which road crews work, and which is important for understanding the everyday life of live music. Mark Banks (2007: 56) has noted that cultural workers are valued because they "show dedication by working long hours or [working] under oppressive circumstances." To be "described as a regular '9–5' worker is no longer a commendation of diligence but a term of disapprobation" (Banks 2007: 56). In other words, the grit and endurance of such hours and conditions are respected and potentially rewarded. In 2020, The Tour Health Initiative was launched, which is designed to collect data from members of road crews on the "conditions and effects of living our lives on the road" (tourhealth.org). The survey includes a question about working hours but is still in the data collection stage and conclusive findings are not yet available.[55] This topic has also been recently addressed in a report by the Broadcasting, Entertainment, Communications and Theatre Union (Bectu)[56] that found long hours to be the biggest concern of cultural workers (Evans and Green 2017: 3, 5). The report observed that people who work long hours have a poor life-work balance and that

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[55] Episode 158 of the podcast *Roadie Free Radio* features an interview with the members of the Tour Health Research Initiative and information about the survey and its goals. It is available at: http://www.roadiefreeradio.com/podcast-1/2020/2/10/tour-health-research-initiative.
[56] https://bectu.org.uk/

> the long-hours culture is a real danger for workers. It means that people suffer mental health problems, anxiety attacks, disrupted sleep patterns and poor emotional well-being — and strokes, heart disease and even cancer. People make mistakes that affect the quality of their work (7).

Though specific to the long hours culture of the film and television industries, the similarity in working conditions suggests that these conditions are widespread throughout cultural sectors. Evidence of these patterns amongst road crew members was found during research for this study and is detailed throughout the thesis chapters. The authors of the Bectu study referred to the long hours as an "unnecessary" component of film and television production. However, as suggested by respondents in this chapter, it is taken as a norm in the contemporary cultural workplace. Working "longer or unsocial hours" (Banks 2007: 56) is among the attributes that Angela McRobbie (2002a, 2002b) argues is characteristic of "being flexible" in the cultural workplace, which means that "one must do whatever is required to support commercial interests." In this way, the long hours culture that characterizes the everyday life of live music illuminates the great potential for road crew members to be exploited and exposed to risks that impact their health and wellbeing.

Current media coverage and studies conducted by UK-based organizations such as Help Musicians UK,[57] Music Manager's Forum[58] and Music Support,[59] along with Sally Anne Gross and George Musgrave's (2020) book *Can Music Make You Sick?*, also report the potential for working in the creative industries to impact mental health and wellbeing. Attending to mental health is seen as a priority as touring in particular was cited as "an issue for 71% of respondents" surveyed (Britton 2015, George 2017, Gross and Musgrave 2020). Though these studies were primarily focused on musicians, the shared conditions of touring suggest that a comparable

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[57] https://www.helpmusicians.org.uk
[58] https://themmf.net
[59] http://www.musicsupport.org

situation exists for road crews. The Tour Health Initiative survey aimed at road crew members includes questions about mental health, though, as previously mentioned, results are as yet unavailable. Generally speaking, attitudes toward mental health in live music have begun to shift and efforts have been made to encourage openness about discussing related issues and eliminating the stigma around doing so. Organizations such as Tour Support[60] promote awareness and develop platforms for addressing these issues on tour. The break in touring due to the COVID-19 pandemic has been viewed by many road crew members as a time to rethink and revise current practices, so it is to be seen how this will factor into the culture of touring when it resumes.

In the particular context of this chapter, mental health is a consideration in relation to the close living and working conditions of touring and likewise the kinds of support crew members may receive from each other. Attitudes about weakness and the impression management that crew members rely on suggest that dialogue about such issues is minimal, and research respondents reported different experiences concerning the degree of openness. While respondents acknowledged that the norms and expectations have certainly inhibited crew members from asking for help or talking about difficulties during the course of their careers, they also state that such conversations have become more commonplace than in the past. They indicated that when crew members encounter difficulties, they often do confide, though trust is an essential component. As this chapter discussed, the bonding potential of touring means friendships can and do develop and that crew members may find others among them who they feel they can "talk to about stuff" (Daniel 2017). If members of road crews are having a difficult

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[60] https://www.lighthopelife.org/tour-support

time, they will let others know. Experience is an asset in such circumstances based on an understanding of the pressures that touring can create.

> … if somebody's struggling with something people aren't usually shy about letting people know … I properly barked at somebody and then went to apologize and said, 'I'm just under a bit of' and they understood. It's just you do trust each other to a certain point, and everybody's who's been doing it for a while understands that it's really difficult to do for a long term without some sort of pressure release here and there. So you do offer an ear or a shoulder or a drinking buddy or a walk in the country, you do try and look after each other, or people make unlikely friendships you know, whoever suits you most you'll end up with, hanging out with, some people don't talk much, but you know, it's just them (Glen 2018).

Crew members also offer mutual support when dealing with life events. As touring involves extensive periods of traveling, they experience life changes and encounter personal challenges while on tour, which their colleagues witness.

> … you see people going through divorcing. You know you see people have children while they're away, you've seen people trying to give up smoking. I'm not smoking on this tour, oh fuck, here we go, but you see people lay completely bare (Andy 2017).

> I think you'll find that the whole tour bubble look after each other … It's natural thing people on the road look after each other. Towards the end of the last tour there in North America my mum was really sick and everybody was asking after her, they all said, the management said, 'if you need to go home, just get on a plane.' And a number of them sought me out to talk about how I was doing to talk about similar situations with them, I missed the last show in London cause my mum died that morning (Glen 2018).

The shared experience of going through major life events at a distance while doing so in close proximity with others creates a type of bonding through relatability that encourages the formation of a support system.

As we have seen, particular roles on tour come with gendered associations, and this factor can have effects in relation to mental health. Ange's (2018) role as a production coordinator also places her in the role of confidante. As the person who assists with the everyday requirements for the crew, she is also often the default person for crew members when they need to talk to someone.

> I don't think people do talk about it very often … sometimes I'm in a position where people come and talk to me if they're having a bad day just because I'm their 'mom' or whatever on tour so people come and tell me, I might hear it more than other people do.

The role of production coordinator is one of the positions on tour that is commonly occupied by women. This role can have similar features to the more personal side of tour management (see Chapter 4). A crew member who is both a woman and working in a "mom" role is deemed safe for discussing problems. In other words, expressing "weakness" is less threatening and more acceptable when it is done in the presence of a perceived caretaker or someone occupying a maternal role. Though Ange is available to offer support to others, she also felt as though she had to conceal her own emotions "because I'm the one that's there to try and make things good for everyone, I would have to hide my feelings. I would try." Ange perceives herself as responsible for the wellbeing of others and that her role requires her to do so based on its expectations and gendered associations. Following from this, she refrained from showing her own feelings, which can be linked to the social norms of touring as well as the gendered expectation to put others first. It is also connected to her status as support personnel, and demonstrates a larger point about how road crew members must often put others before themselves in their working lives. This case, however, also reveals that this can operate along gendered lines. Particular roles on tour may be more vulnerable than others based on the nature of their responsibilities.

Ange spoke to becoming "burnt out" from having to conceal her feelings during a particularly stressful tour. This example further suggests that such expectations can place unrealistic demands on road crew members in terms of wellbeing and have the potential to negatively affect them. She recounted a "toxic" tour during which a backline technician who was dating the artist manager used his relative power to have several crew members fired baselessly.

In this situation, Ange's role as production coordinator again made her the person everyone voiced their concerns to.

> … people were upset and so like I was hearing about it from everyone, but I had no one I could vent to about it, like how stressful it was for me and how terrible it was for me. Cause I'm seeing my friends getting fired or quitting and that was really hard for me, and I had no one to vent to about it except for my friends back home … [who] were sick of hearing about it and were like 'why don't you just quit cause this isn't good for you?' And I wouldn't, I couldn't quit. It's hard to complain to someone who doesn't work on the road because if I talk about the everyday little things that happen, it's just they add up to a bunch of big problems.

Ange and the other crew members referred to the tour as their "Vietnam" and said that the environment was such that people who "haven't been there with that particular artist" cannot fully understand the extent of the situation. This illustrates how much a tour can vary according to the artist a crew member works for and the extent to which musicians can affect their daily working lives. One of the ways that crew members coped was to form "suicide pacts." Particular crew members agreed that one of them "won't quit unless you quit kind of thing, or if you get fired then I'll quit." After the tour she went to therapy and took time off from touring in order to address and recover from the effects of the situation.

Amy (2018) discussed a stressful tour and said that she ultimately decided to stay in order to ensure she was paid. As a favour, she took over for an artist who had recently fired their previous TM. The crew was "great," but the artist was a "challenge."

> … after that first run, [I] really did not want to do the rest cause I was like, I knew it, that this was way too hard on my mental health, and I thought to myself, 'you know, I could eek out two more weeks because if I walk away somebody else is going to get paid for all the work I've done and put together' and … I knew that this tour was no good for my mental health and my anxiety levels, it was really there was just a lot of pressure I was being put under and I knew that for me I should just step away and then I thought this guy is never gonna pay me if I just step away and then I've done all this work, so I'm just gonna power through for two weeks.

Despite being hard on her mental health, the advance work she had done as TM meant she would lose the money should she choose not to finish the tour. Such circumstances highlight the precarious aspects of working on tour. The absence of job security puts road crew members in a position in which their wellbeing may be compromised. They recognize the adverse conditions in which they are working but also understand the pressures of their line of work and must prioritize their livelihood. They effectively choose between their work or wellbeing. Ange and Amy chose relatively extreme language to characterize their work environments and experiences within them. The tour was likened to "Vietnam" and working meant having to "power through." Such language implies that these crew members encountered strain and that the tour required considerable effort to endure. Though these circumstances represent particularly challenging tours, they draw attention to tensions that exist in the working lives of road crew members and potential sources of mental health issues on the road.

The culture and conditions of touring can also have adverse effects on the physical health of road crew members due to the expectations and pressures that the constraints of the itinerary impose on them. Daniel (2017) stated that road crew members "can't get ill" because the schedule of the tour essentially inhibits room for sick days, and no one else is available to temporarily fill the role. Similar to musicians, crew members do not have replacements readily available should someone become unable to do their job. Working on tour is inherently precarious as it is constituted by conditions that presume and rely on the good health of all members of the touring party without means of accommodation for situations that occur. The result is that if road crew members "do get ill you just have to do your job, even though you're ill" (Daniel 2017). As a result, crew members may neglect themselves or delay receiving attention to problems they are having.

> … I did one tour where now I realize really stupidly I actually had a really severe kidney infection and didn't get it seen about … I just kept it to myself cause it was just kinda like they knew I wasn't feeling great but I was like … Just because my priority was what had to be done. I would not do that again cause … when I did finally go and get help about it … they were like 'this is really serious what are you doing?' (Jennifer 2017).

Ange (2018) recounted having a broken foot on tour and receiving minimal assistance from the other crew members. She stated that everyone was aware of her injury and helped her for the first day, but that they "soon forget, you know. And it's not saying that they're bad people, it's just how it is." Her experience confirms a relative lack of tolerance for any type of weakness and shows the difficulties of handling physical limitations on the road. Additionally, the choice to tour with an injury or illness can be linked to the freelance nature of this line of work and to the importance of staying visible on the circuit discussed in Chapter 1. These findings also imply that the conditions of touring are accepted and taken for granted by crew members, and represent a denial of the potential difficulties and an inability to change them. In other cases, a health condition may force crew members to leave a tour. Amy (2018) recounted having shingles while being on tour. Dealing with the infection meant that she was "burning the candle at both ends" and needed to "get this under control." In October she knew she was going to have to leave the tour due to the condition but stayed on till mid-December to finish the first part of the tour. Someone replaced her for the remainder of the tour that began the next year. Though she did ultimately leave, she still waited before attending to her condition, which further illuminates the pressures road crew members encounter, the precarious nature of working on tour, and the tensions that exist in their working lives. The final section will analyze the experiences road crew members have when they return home.

Off the Road

Being off the road is also a significant component in the everyday life of live music. While tourists may express relief at returning to the comforts of home after a trip, many road crew members experience a sense of disruption when leaving a tour. Returning home offers less a sense of relief about going back to somewhere familiar and more of an adjustment process of breaking with and transitioning from the patterns and activities of being on tour. It represents a marked contrast in daily rhythms and responsibilities, and the change affects crew members in multiple ways. My findings suggest that touring can function as a stabilizing feature in their lives and that their identities are strongly shaped and defined by touring. That touring can create a sense of normalcy for crew members is evident in the amount of time they spend working versus being at home and the adjustment they encounter. During participant observation at Venue A, a TM stated during the month of June that he had been home for about "fifteen days" that year and still refers to his wife of more than 20 years as "the bride" due to the infrequency with which he sees her. As stated in the Introduction, if identity formation results from repeated behaviours and emotions, any sudden change in the "rhythm of one's personal routines … can be a source of profound disorientation and distress" (Felski 1999: 28). The disruption felt when workers return home from touring shows its significance to their identity.

When returning home from touring, road crew members must readjust to the norms of life off the road. Returning home means that they abruptly stop working, traveling and following an itinerary that they have become accustomed to throughout the duration of the tour. They pause from the constraints of time and demands of a schedule. The long hours, unexpected problems and deadlines cease to dictate their lives. In this way, they must adjust to a pace of life that differs from the pace and pressures of an itinerary. Road crew members manage the residual

effects of life on the road as they re-enter the patterns of daily life at home. Doing so is a process, and the experience is effectively an extension of the long hours culture of touring.

Leaving a tour reveals the disconnect that crew members perceive between being on and off the road. It further substantiates that they experience touring as another "world." Ange (2018) likened the experience of coming home to "re-entering earth from outer space." She identified the difficulties in transition as being related to aspects of the norms and culture of touring in distinction to the modes of conduct and responsibilities associated with being at home.

> … cause you really are sort of in this weird bubble and you have to get your legs again underneath you … I come home from tour and I need, I need a good two days to just sleep and sort of get, like stop swearing like a sailor and you know get back in the habit of cooking for myself and … doing self-care that gets put on hold when I'm on the road because I'm caring for everyone else.

Her emphasis on attending to basic needs and to taking care of herself suggests the extent to which touring compromises the ability to do so. Further, her role as a production coordinator often involves putting others before herself. The need to readjust to cooking is a response to the convenience of catering and reliance on purchasing food on tour, which does not require crew members to prepare anything for themselves, and, in any case, renders that impossible most of the time given the available amenities. Glen (2017) also recounted difficulties with acclimating to the norms of everyday life off the road. The regularity of showering in hotel rooms on tour caused him to often forget to bring a towel into the bathroom at home. The other difficult adjustment was the free and frequent access to alcohol on tour made available by the hospitality rider (see Chapter 3).

> … I still have trouble sleeping without a glass of wine because of my habit of you finish work, you get on the bus, you have a quick couple of glasses of wine, you go straight to sleep cause you need to get that six or seven hours of sleep on the bus in order to be up and function the next day. And wine for me then became a trigger. Drink wine fall asleep. Don't drink wine don't fall asleep … I've still got it. You can call it minor alcoholism. But I need it, I rely on it and I've yet to manage to stop it.

The time constraints of the itinerary created habits on tour that led to a physical association between alcohol and rest and continued into his daily life when he returned home. Daniel (2017) similarly articulated that the nature of the lifestyle of touring becomes more apparent when crew members stop and realize they had engaged, without being aware of it at the time, in unhealthy behaviours which can include lack of sleep, irregular eating, alcohol and drugs. He recounted the practice of taking drugs in order to stay awake for longer when he was tired and still had work to do. He explained that "you learn very quickly that that actually is counterproductive" but seems like a good idea at the time given the pressures and circumstances. This suggests that aspects of the workplace culture and the everyday life of live music are taken for granted by crew members and that the pressurized environment of touring normalizes and encourages such activities. This shows the impact that the conditions of touring can have on crew members, how they cope with them and how they carry over. The conditions of touring do not solely effect crew members while on the road but continue into their non-touring lives and lead to longer-term habits or practices.

Research respondents reported a variety of sensations when returning from tour. Tony (2017) described that for "the first three days you're bouncing off the walls." Adrian (2018) likewise needed a certain amount of time to adjust due to the sudden shift and agitation that follows leaving a tour. He linked this directly to the difference in schedule and routine.

> Mentally, I'm a lot better than I used to be … I'd have what I used to call a restless period for a few days, cause after a long time where you've been working to a certain schedule which … usually involves finishing late at night, then getting back into a different [one], it can be like a horrible grinding of gears changing your routine overnight. So I used to have like this come-down period of a few days while my body recovered and I got into the rhythm of a different routine, a non-touring routine, but that changed when I had children. Cause as soon as you come through the door you're on duty, so that got rid of that habit fairly quickly.

He highlights that experience played a part in making the adjustment easier, which suggests that crew members learn to manage the conditions of touring over time and make efforts to adapt. Adrian found the transition is eased by his family due to the pressure it placed on him to shift from his role on tour to being a father. His reference to the come-down period as a "habit" and that having children put an end to that practice, suggests that such restlessness can be avoided if other responsibilities fill the place of touring. Andy (2017) also attested to having an easier adjustment than when he began touring, which he linked to maturity. Rather than children making it more manageable, he used to find coming home to his family "extremely difficult" due to how domestic responsibility was at odds with the "sex, drugs and rock and roll mode" that he would find himself in.

Throughout his career, Glen (2018) found that he was "either on, a thousand miles an hour, or off" when he returned from tours. He would try "to organize everything" at home and come up with a series of household projects or renovations to work on to occupy himself. At the latter extreme, he "become this sloth. I did nothing but stick my head in the fridge and sit on the couch." The low that occurs following a tour is called "post-tour depression" or the "post-tour blues" and has been experienced by both road crews and musicians. Glen never experienced depression before he began touring regularly and for extended periods of time. He connects it to the ways that the pressurized work environment of touring, and the related heightened state of alertness and continuously being "on" are in marked contrast to the pace of domestic life when the urgency of an itinerary is removed.

> … when you're on the road you have no choice, load-in is this morning, the show is this afternoon, flight is tomorrow, all these things need done. And if they don't get done, you don't get the plane and the whole thing comes crashing down.

As a TM, work does continue at home in the form of advancing the next tour, but there may be a period of time before such preparations are necessary, and the pace of paperwork, phone calls and emails is markedly different. Glen found difficulty motivating himself to start working again after coming home.

> Previously I'd get home and I'd be a mess for a week. And then I would try and do some work and I couldn't face it and then I wouldn't face it and then it would be late, and then I'd be guilty and then I'd just develop this whole difficulty in facing up to it in between. And as soon as I'd go back out on the road I was fine.

The after-effects of touring lead to a lack of motivation to work, which can in turn have implications for tasks being completed. Such difficulties are alleviated, however, by going back on tour, which creates a sense of normalcy and is a stabilizing feature. Glen eventually recognized the need to create balance when returning home by maintaining some type of consistency. Doing so is assisted by learning to minimize the difference between work and life and "live on the road as you would at home and then learn to live at home as you would on the road." Continuing to be busy, establishing a routine and resisting the temptation to lounge are important components.

> … the balance is I need to keep getting up early, I need to keep getting up at half six to go to the gym now … I just need to be slightly active in the morning … Get up, start doing things. And now I've taken a desk and an office around the corner cause working in my place is just really bad for my head. I can't do it anymore. So I go for a swim, cycle in, got my desk, do three-four hours a day tops. Then I'll go back and make dinner and paint the shed and [his daughter] will come home from school and we'll do that stuff. But as long as I'm a bit active for the first half of the day I stave off depression.

Daniel (2017) expressed a similar experience of having learned to establish consistency between life on the road and home. The lifestyle of touring, with access to and consumption of alcohol, the quantity and variety of foods at catering and while traveling, and the relative lack of sleep, can also factor into the post-tour experience. He became dissatisfied with how he would feel when returning home and made changes to develop a more consistent and healthier way of life.

… I think a lot of people quite often would get ill when they came home from tour, that's something that is a consequence of the life that you lead on the road, and I got really fed up with that and I made adjustments to life on the road to make it healthier so that that didn't happen because it's really frustrating, you get home and you're suddenly in bed for two days and then you go back on tour again … So that I would be in a fit state when I got home, not be a wreck when I got home. Sometimes it's not possible, you just haven't slept for a week … But if you can make it as healthy as possible so you get home in a good state …

The manner in which crew members live on tour can have continued effects and directly shape their lives at home. Touring therefore shapes the lives of road crew members on the road as well as off. Particular aspects of touring, such as the constraint of the itinerary and pace of everyday life, have effects that are beyond the control of crew members. At the same time, factors related to lifestyle can ease the transition between home and the road.

Not all crew members encounter difficulties with adjusting to home life after being on tour. Duncan (2018) stated that he is "well adjusted" to coming off the road and able to "switch off into being-here mode really." He does not find a major difference in terms of "head space" between being at home or at work, which suggests he does not experience the same agitation or depression that others may. The only problem he encounters is being tired, and he likened it to the fact that crew members "don't really have weekends" on tour, so he compensates when he returns home. Rather than the restlessness and depression described by other research respondents during their immediate return, his first few days involve resting. Duncan stated he has never experienced post-tour depression and is normally happy to come home. Amy (2018) described a similar pattern when she returned from tours. During her career, her experience of post-tour depression shifted from more intense to minimal, and her transition period involved sleeping, getting organized and running errands. The change was based on becoming "less emotionally invested" in touring than during her early tours. In the past, the camaraderie of touring was more important, but over time the recognition that it is a job and not a social event,

combined with moving into tour management and business-related aspects, led to greater emotional detachment. From these findings, it can be said that returning home from tours affects road crew members in diverse ways and that their ability to adjust may change as they gain more touring experience.

The tasks and patterns that structure the lives of road crew members on tour can come into conflict when returning to their homes and families and present difficulties in their interpersonal relationships. Part of the challenge is to switch from the role on tour into the role in relation to the family or partner. When crew members leave home for a tour, they leave behind a partner or family who subsequently adapts their daily lives in the former's absence. The extent of the crew members' involvement with the daily activities of life back home during a tour is through phone or Skype calls from the road. Absence and compartmentalization can have effects on both the crew member and the significant people in their lives.

> … it can actually make you a little bit less sensitive, it can de-sensitize you to normal life to a certain extent, so when you get a phone call telling you that your boiler's on the blink at home, it doesn't mean anything to you when you're on the road because … it's not in that sphere of, I don't know, influence if you like (Tony 2018).

In this way, the people that the crew member leaves behind adapt during their absence and must also reacclimate to their presence. As such, it is a mutual process in which both parties adjust. Glen (2017) stated that coming home from being a TM or a PM, roles that involve being in charge of a group of people, can create problems when coming home and trying to "be in charge of your household." He stated that his wife "hates it" when he returns from tour and that he is a "nightmare" for the first couple of days. He added that he "had to learn that I'm not in charge at home" when he returns from tour (2018).

> Doesn't usually go down well … You're coming into this nice settled domestic scene, who's been nicely managing without you, you know … and you come in and you want to be involved, you want to help and you want to do all these active things you've been

dreaming about on the road, lovely long cycle rides with your happy family all smiling and you know and they tell you to piss off cause there's washing to do and there's badminton club ... So that routine is quite difficult (2017).

The kinds of activities described here suggest that the home is viewed as a holiday rather than the site of everyday life. This perspective was further evident in a statement that Tony (2018) made about his home being a "holiday place" and that his "life is not at home." Rather, home is idealized as a place to reconnect with family members. This suggests the kind of detachment crew members feel from home and reconfirms the manner in which they compartmentalize their lives. The need to engage in the everyday activities of home life comes as something of a shock to the crew member. Like Glen, Tony (2017) connected the challenge of adjustment to his role on tour, in his case, as close protection security in which he is continuously on call for an artist and builds his schedule around the musicians' lifecycle.

> … but you come in, you have been at somebody's beck and call for months, 24/7 for months and then you … home and then your wife will say the garden needs to be … and you become quite resentful that the garden needs to be tended, which is a bizarre scenario in itself, it's your garden and you're not being asked something unreasonable, it becomes more about the psychological impact of not being able to, make your own decisions if you like at times.

In this case, the frustration comes from a continued pattern of being needed or expected to do something. It suggests the need for a break from the demands of the role and that certain aspects of home life can reproduce the expectations on tour. In these ways, roles may influence the nature of the challenges of coming off the road. The chapter will now conclude with a summary of findings.

Conclusion

Chapter 2 has analyzed the complex mobile world of touring and has shown the ways in which it significantly shapes the working lives of road crew members. The activities and efforts involved in being on tour are constitutive, and integral to the realization, of live music events. This means

that concerts are the result of a long hours culture, which is the product of the length of a show day, the travel between points A and B and the management of work relations during that time. Live events are therefore constituted by the complex working relationships between crew members. The latter are maintained by impression management and mutual respect, which crew members rely on for the acquisition of future work and protect their prospects by fitting in with the norms and expectations of touring. Concert events are further realized by both the challenging conditions of touring and road crew members' attempts to cope with them through shared workplace humour and an intense sense of camaraderie. However, these efforts are also complicated by the potential for bonds to be ephemeral and the implications of friendship on the road. As live music is a structure that distributes roles, the realization of concert events is also marked by differences between them. The workplace culture of touring is permeated by masculinity and reproduces gender inequality and stereotypes. This can be observed through the expectations around conduct and the discouragement of weakness, and also at the intersection of mental health, in which women occupying particular roles become caretakers of others. After concerts have been realized, the process of touring continues to shape road crew members' lives as they encounter difficulties adjusting to the patterns of daily life off the road. The challenges of adaptation imply that touring functions as a stabilizing feature that can foster a sense of normalcy. In this way, road crew members' lives are shaped by the experiences of being on and off the road, and both are important factors in the everyday life of live music.

Chapter 3

Supplies and Documents

If there is one phrase that articulates how members of road crews collectively define the purpose of their jobs and the structuring factor of everyday life, it is "the show has to happen." This *modus operandi* is goal-oriented as much as it is deadline- and pressure-driven. It is a reference to the non-negotiable fact that there is an event scheduled that a large number of people both paid for and will be attending with some degree of expectation. For crew members, it is a guiding force and a commitment to doing whatever is necessary for the event to take place and to run as smoothly as possible. As discussed in the Introduction, live performance is the reason everyone is there in the first place, so all activities are directed toward its outcome. Making a concert happen and doing whatever is necessary is also an important part of maintaining work as a freelancer, with the efforts of TMs and road crews serving as the basis of their evaluation.

People who work in the live music industry often say that the general public has no idea what goes into making a concert happen. Such a statement echoes the well-versed notion that the finished product has a way of encouraging a forgetfulness towards the work behind the show (Maxwell 2001: 2–3, Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011: 55). It also illuminates and reinforces the exclusive nature of the backstage area, and the insider-outsider boundaries that maintain it, that ensure its reserve as a space for preparation not meant to be seen by audiences nor relevant to those uninvolved in its working practices (Weinstein [1991] 2000: 200). What these workers in live music are referring to is the taken-for-granted labour that is largely invisible behind the performance. The organized spectacle and well-rehearsed professionalism of live performance give little indication of the debates about grocery shopping lists, distracted work taking place in

makeshift offices and management of expectations occurring throughout the venue space. Making a concert happen means acquiring and maintaining supplies and circulating information each day and throughout the tour.

Chapter 3 is based on the recognition that taken-for-granted labour activities are integral to the realization of a concert and to the working lives of support personnel. These activities occurring backstage, out of the public's view and through daily communicative practices constitute the everyday life of live music. This chapter demonstrates how everyday life is constructed, maintained and made problematic by the efforts of support personnel and the conventions they follow. It focuses particularly on the hospitality rider. Through an emphasis on a tour's management personnel, it details the ways that TMs (and PMs) create consistency and anticipate musicians' needs, and further illuminates the significance of status in musicians' working lives and identities and the need for its consideration by those supporting them (see Introduction). On a daily basis, important tasks are executed through the working relationship between the TM, larger touring party and the local crew, and involve balancing the needs of musicians with the realities of the local area and available amenities. Chapter 3 also describes the TM's and PM's temporary workspaces and the significant activities occurring within them, which reveals much about the nature of their working lives and the culture of touring. It highlights how daily communications and documents are key social actors (Latour and Woolgar 1986, Latour 1990, Riles 2006) that are integral to and constitutive of the everyday life of live music.

This chapter analyzes these aspects by presenting detailed findings from participant observation, and draws on interviews and additional sources to supplement. These sections will highlight situations that illustrate the activities, power struggles, gender dynamics and other

issues which characterize the working days of TMs in their efforts to make the show happen. These taken-for-granted labour activities offer the basis of a more nuanced understanding of how concerts are realized and the work experiences of support personnel, while expanding the scope of a definition and characterization of live music.

The first section describes the hospitality rider. It explains the rider's function and how attitudes about and perceptions of it vary between different sides of the workforce. Next, the chapter describes the local crew and their working relationship with the TM/PM. From there, it moves to describe the venues in which participant observation occurred, Venue A and Venue B. The following section will discuss the acquisition of rider items. This leads to a brief analysis of the production office and a variety of other documents that are of importance to live music and touring, before concluding.

Understanding the Rider

The rider is a document that is attached to the legal contract agreement between an artist and a promoter (or "talent buyer" or "purchaser") that "details the provisions and facilities to be made available to the artist before, during and after a show" (Bennun 1999, Workman 2012: 119, see also Reynolds 2008). In general, legal terms, a "rider" is an addendum or clause to an existent document or agreement that specifies particular conditions or stipulates additions or changes. For example, a rider can add greater coverage or an additional type of protection on an insurance policy. It is a way to customize, or offer some flexibility, to the existent agreement in order to meet the particular needs of the interested party. It can also be used to detail additions to a document that cannot be easily integrated into the original. In the context of live music, riders are part of the performance agreement between the agent and the promoter that describe further requirements that the latter "must provide to assist the act with their technical, hospitality and

merchandising needs" (Waddell, Barnet and Berry 2007: 137). While the conditions outlined in the riders may seem trivial to the promoter, they are legally binding (155).[61] If part of the rider is ignored, an artist may consider the promoter to be "in breach of contract, demand full payment, and refuse to perform" (ibid). This typically only occurs if the oversight is significant and has potentially detrimental effects, such as failing to acquire liability insurance or acceptable equipment (ibid.).

As indicated, the rider details important logistics for the day of the show and provides specific information regarding the needs of the artist and crew. The rider includes the technical requirements for the show, providing the promoter and local technical crew with instructions for arranging the stage, lighting and sound, and any equipment that must be hired. Most relevant here is the hospitality rider that details the food and drink requirements and personal effects for musicians and crew. All references to "the rider" for the remainder of the chapter refer solely to these aspects. Food and drink refer to catering, aftershow food, bus stock, and items for the dressing rooms and hospitality/green room. *Catering* requirements stipulate the food preferences for breakfast, lunch and dinner, as needed, for the band and crew. Some venues have in-house catering facilities, others have catering brought in from local restaurants; large-scale tours often travel with their own catering.[62] The rider also includes the specific times meals should be served. The scheduling of meals is important because artists cannot eat too close to their performance, and TMs have to ensure they eat at the appropriate hour. TM Glen (2018) elaborated:

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[61] This agreement is the source of humour for road crews. As Richard Ames (2019: 321), a former TM states, "When the band 'rider' was created, it became part of the contract between the band and promoter; the promoter was legally bound to keep his side of the deal, right? Well sometimes!"

[62] See Ames (2019: 321–342) for an early historical account of catering companies for concert tours. Guitar technician Matt McGinn (2010: 83) states the value of caterers on the road "can't be overstated" and observes that tours that can afford to travel with their own catering leads to better wellbeing amongst the crew.

… maybe soundcheck is scheduled for half past 4, [the band will] want to arrive at half past 3 and eat dinner, so you have to brief the caterers that dinner needs to be ready at 3:30, so that they can come and have good hot food and then soundcheck and then chill out, cause post-soundcheck is too close to the show. The drummer especially just throws up if he eats that close to the show, it just doesn't go, he won't do it. So, to look after your band you need to do that kind of thing.

The importance of scheduling meal times was further evident prior to a performance at Venue A. A TM explained that food options needed to be available, and quickly, after soundcheck as the principal singer was nervous about what she would eat given that she had to eat early and had a limited amount of time to do so. In this case, the TM took a *buyout*, which means that the promoter gives the equivalent in cash for a specific meal, instead of catering, so the touring party can purchase their own food at local restaurants or have local crew pick up food for them. Musicians and crew generally also want *aftershow food*, which is usually decided on the day depending on the available options in the local area, and is discussed in more detail later in this chapter. The rider stipulates that the local crew should leave menus in the production office early enough in the day for a restaurant to be selected and an order placed and picked up prior to the end of the show. *Bus stock* refers to the food and drink supplies needed to stock the artist and crew buses. How far into a tour an artist is dictates how much bus stock they need. Tours on opening night will usually require all items to be purchased, whereas nothing will be needed on the last night. Additionally, most touring parties need a supply of ice for the bus(ses). Venue A provided this service and maintaining the availability of the ice supply was an important concern throughout the season. For each musician's *dressing room*, a list is provided of their individual food and drink requirements, and sometimes other personal effects. The list for the *band hospitality room* includes a larger array of food and drinks and is collectively shared by the band members. In some cases, there is also a separate list for the crew room and production office, though this varies. In the latter three cases, the rider can essentially be thought of as a shopping

list that a member of the local crew fulfills. These items, and the workers who attend to them, are colloquially referred to as "hospo" by the touring party and local crew. Figure 4 is a sample of the most relevant sections of a rider, and has been modified to remove identifiers.

GENERAL RIDER
FULL BAND

2. Band Room
    1 table with clean cloth covering
    4 guest armchairs
    1 full-length sofa
    1 coffee table
    1 full-length mirror
    Private and clean en suite bathroom with shower

3. Tour Production Office
    2 6' or 8' tables
    2 chairs
    1 DSL line or posted Wifi instructions
    Power outlets and necessary extension cords

4. Crew Room
    1 table with clean cloth covering
    2 guest armchairs
    1 coffee table

5. Family / Management Room
    Please provide a family / management room wherever possible.

6. Support Room
    1 table with clean cloth
    covering 2 guest armchairs
    1 coffee table
    1 full---length mirror

TOWELS

Please provide (16) black hand towels for stage and dressing. Please also provide (30) large bath towels. All towels must be pre-washed and lint free. Please provide bins for clean/used towels.

Please distribute as follows:
    2 stage towels & 10 bath towels in Production Office
    2 stage towels & 4 bath towels in   Artist   Room
    2 stage towels & 16 bath towels in Band Room
    20 stage towels in guitar world (SR)
    8 bath towels in Support Room

HOSPITALITY RIDER

GENERAL NOTES / IMPORTANT ITEMS

1. Please provide trash cans AND recycling bins in catering and backstage areas.

2. Hospitality should be fully prepared and available in dressing rooms **at load in**, unless otherwise noted

3. We try to be a health---minded tour! Please keep this in mind when proposing menu options. When catering is available BC and the twins prefer catering that is diverse. They like to avoid the same menu too often, for example chicken, salmon potatoes and salad every night gets old. Options like stir-fries, sushi, Mexican, Cajun, Asian foods are appreciated when available.

4. Lunch menus for take out should be thoughtful and diverse. Popular local, healthy options are preferred.

5. After show food menus made available and must be diverse (not too much pizza).

6. This tour has a couple vegetarians.

7. Whenever possible, please use reusable or recyclable plate-ware and cutlery.

8. Numbers below do NOT include locals' needs or support!!

9. Please be mindful to refrigerate perishable items or to re-ice throughout the day as needed.

10. Touring party has 4-6 kids traveling with us at all times.

PRODUCTION OFFICE

(6) Room temp bottles of spring water
(1) 6 or 8-ft clothed table   **All catering and hospitality will be discussed during advance.**
(2) Chairs
(1) tall trash bin and (1) recycling bin
Power source and Internet connection information

18. DRESSING ROOMS / PRODUCTION OFFICE

Some limitations will exist. To be discussed during advanced.

This show will require (4) dressing rooms + (1) production office.

Below is a guideline of the breakdown of furniture for each – per advance:

All Dressing Rooms
TEMPERATURE CONTROL! Easily adjustable by ARTIST.
Freshly cleaned bathrooms
Waste receptacles, including recycling bins , backstage

1. Principal **Room**
    1 table with clean cloth covering
    2 guest armchairs
    1 full-length sofa
    1 coffee table
    1 full-length mirror
    Private and clean en-suite bathroom with shower

TM: Name and Phone Number   , PM: ' Name and Phone Number

DRESSING ROOM HOSPITALITY: SETUP BY LOAD IN

Principal **ROOM**
(1) Case of water
(1) lemon, sliced
(1) Avocado, ripe Assortment of fresh berries (strawberry, raspberry, blueberry, blackberry)
(1) Tea Setup (including honey & assorted teas)
(4) glass tumblers for water (not plastic)
(1) small bucket with clean ice for drinks (please re-ice as necessary)

BAND & CREW GREEN ROOM (FOR 18 PEOPLE)

Beverages
(6) Cases of bottled spring water
(4) Small bottles of Gatorade – no purple
(6) bottles of Perrier (small)
(2) containers/bottles of unflavored coconut water
(1) bottle of Pulp-Free orange juice not from concentrate – Calcium fortified
(12) cans of assorted soda (Cherry 7-up, Coke, Diet Coke, Sprite, Dr. Pepper, etc.)
(1) Coffee Setup, including regular AND decaf and all necessary condiments
(1) Tea Setup (including lemons, honey, assorted teas)
(1) box PG Tips English tea
(1) Whole gallon of Organic whole milk
(1) 1/2 gallon of Organic 2% milk
(2) small cartons of half and half
(1) Case of local microbrews (no more than 6 IPAs)

HOSPITALITY RIDER

(1) 12 pack Shiner Bock
(1) 750ml bottle of Jameson Whisky OR Single Malt Scotch
(2) bottle of French or Italian red wine (no California wines)
(6) glass tumblers
(6) red wine glasses
(20) Solo Cups
(1) bucket of ice for drinks (please re-ice as necessary)

Perishables
*NOTE – Please provide a juicer (we travel with one just incase also)
(4) apples (fugi, cameo or mcintosh – no red delicious)
(1) pack of organic blueberries, raspberries, strawberries
(1) bag of full size organic carrots (for juicing)
(1) bunch of bananas
(1) bunch of celery
(2) peaches
(2) Plums or nectarines
(4) fresh organic red beets (for juicing)
(1) bag/container of chopped pineapple
(1) ginger root
(1) small bowl of fresh tuna salad – important!
(5) lbs total of deli meat sliced thin (please keep in bags so we can take with us) – 1 lb of each (choose between ham, salami, turkey, pastrami, etc)
(3) lbs total of deli cheese sliced thin – 1 lb of each (choose between cheddar, provolone, muenster, pepper---jack)
(2) organic tomatoes
(2) organic avocados
(2) quality cheese blocks, local would be great! – please serve on cutting board (examples: brie, goat, cheddar, etc.)
(1) bag organic kale lettuce
(1) bag organic mixed greens/baby spinach
(2)) small containers of greek yogurt
 (1) cucumber

Snacks/Dry Items
(2) packs of STICK gum (spearmint or peppermint)
(2) packages of loose granola or healthy cereal
(1) bag of tortilla chips
(1) jar of medium salsa
(1) bag of almond M&Ms
(1) bag of raw unsalted Almonds

HOSPITALITY RIDER

(1) package of Airborne
(1) loaf of organic seed and grain whole wheat bread (Dave's Killer Bread preferred)
Condiments for sandwiches (mayo, honey or brown mustard, peanut butter, jam, etc)
 (1) box of Wheat Thins
(1) box of CheezE Its
(1) package of chocolate chip cookies (homemade style, not Chips-A-Hoy!)

Production office:
  3   Muscle Milk pro series drinks Knockout Chocolate
  4   XXL size Smart Waters
  12 pack Mich Ultra cans or Shiner Light Blonde
  2 Bars of DOVE SOAP

  36 Shower towels
  12 dark stage towels

Miscellaneous
Appropriate plates, bowls, cutlery, napkins, etc. preferably dish---washable, reusable items. If this is
not possible, please provide items made from biodegradable materials

ICE FOR BUSES at Load in and after the show

AFTERSHOW FOOD, budget permitting

Please provide local favorite options to Tour Manager before doors.

RIDER IS JUST A ROUGH GUIDE LINE.
TM WILL ADV THE FINAL RIDER TO SAVE MONEY

Figure 4

The content listed in the rider is based on an ideal situation. In practice, exact specifications and all requirements can rarely be fulfilled and are subject to the individual character of venues, budgets and the resources of a local area. The actual purchase of the food and drink requirements varies according to the promoter's hospitality budget, which is negotiated in advance and is part of the agreement with the artist. Catering is also covered by the promoter; aftershow food and bus stock are sometimes covered by the promoter, but the touring party can also be responsible for purchasing these items, and who does so depends on the overall local budget and the relationship between the two groups.[63] The inability to acquire certain rider items may be due to particular items being in excess of the available funds, or cut due to extenuating circumstances, such as low ticket sales (see also Webster 2011: 130). Some items may also be difficult or impossible to obtain in particular cities, usually due to the absence of certain stores. In their guidebooks, TMs Mark Workman (2012: 122) and Andy Reynolds (2008: 64) both stress being realistic about rider requests by learning to improvise and adapt, and accepting that some situations are beyond the control of the promoter due to the specificities of venues, budgets and the local area.

The function and importance of the hospitality list is that it provides reliable and easily accessible sustenance during long working hours and the sometimes unpredictable nature of a show day. It may be all that is available throughout the day, especially for crew.[64] In cases where there is no catering and everyone receives cash to buy dinner, the schedule may not allow time to do so, and the location of the venue and availability of runners can provide further complications (Amy 2018). Even when catering is on-site, individual schedules can prohibit people from taking

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[63] At Venue A, aftershow food was sometimes a power play between the promoter and TM. The promoter tried to avoid paying for food with specific TMs he knew well and involved local crew in interactions with the TM to gauge whether or not the TM expected the promoter to pay or not.
[64] Waddell, Barnet and Berry (2007: 165) also speak to the importance of artists and crew having access to food due to the amount of time they spend in venues.

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time to eat. The hospitality list, in practice and function, closely resembles craft services in the film industry — workers are called "crafties" — which is a selection of food and drinks that are readily available throughout the day on a movie set, in distinction to hot, sit-down catered meals. In film, craft services are particularly useful to crew whose schedules may prevent them from going to catering. This pattern suggests that conventions around food represent the pace and long hours culture of a workplace.

The practical purpose of the rider tends to be embellished when considered in relation to musicians.[65] In popular music culture and the media, the rider, most specifically the list of hospitality items for the artist's dressing rooms, has been presented as a signifier of musicians' privilege and a space for making outrageous demands. Most famously, Van Halen once requested M&Ms for their dressing room and asked that all of the brown candies be removed. While this was initially dismissed as rock star privilege, the reason they did this was to ensure that local crew were reading the rider thoroughly. Their primary concern, in fact, was not with hospitality at all, but with their technical requests. If someone was reading the document closely enough to notice the M&Ms request, then surely they had read and fulfilled the technical specifications accordingly (Roth 2000: 416, TSG 2008, Anderton, Dubber and James 2013: 139).

In the press, British music magazine *Q* used to regularly feature a "Rider of the Month" column, the title itself suggestive of some kind of exceptional status. The column re-printed a band's hospitality rider list, usually that of an artist who had been featured recently in another part of the magazine. It was unclear whether the riders were authentic reproductions or lists gathered for the purpose of the magazine. The column included subheadings such as "every band

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[65] Fonarow (2006: 233) made a similar observation when stating that "Even the very reasonable requirements of the rider in a band's touring contract are framed as perversions. They want five bottles of Evian water, not any old water. They want only green M&Ms in their dressing room. They must be perverted."

has special needs" or "the demands of [insert band here]" and featured captions that made

sarcastic reference to one of the items on the list, such as "Have you ordered our fridge yet?"

(Anon. 2001) or "Don't get caught with your hands in his chocolate chip cookie jar" (Anon.

2003). On one hand, these comments can be interpreted as dismissive of the needs of musicians

in their working environments. On the other, they can be read as a humorous critique of the

supposed excessive or demanding nature of the rider, given that these requests are actually quite

mundane. Either way, unless the prominent inclusion of alcohol counts — which, as discussed

elsewhere in this thesis, is dealt with in various ways — reading these reprinted lists does little to

support the notion of the rider as a space for unreasonable or indulgent requests.

Even musicians themselves internalize and reproduce this perception, and use it as the

basis for evaluating each other. During Shirley Manson's (of rock band Garbage) speech to

induct Blondie into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2006, she lauded the band as being "some

of the loveliest, most self-effacing people you could ever hope to meet" which was justified, in

part, by "when they turn up to play there are no ridiculous demands, no outrageous riders … no

ego" (Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2010).

This is not to say that musicians do not make demands that could be considered excessive

or are beyond the promoter's limits, but that this is an exception rather than the rule (see also

Waddell, Barnet and Berry 2007: 165–166).[66] During participant observation, the most

extravagant items purchased were two designer candles ($35 USD/each) that had to be specially

ordered for the artist's dressing room, along with fresh lilies to be placed onstage for the

performance. The most expensive bottle of wine was $80 USD, which was negotiated down by

the promoter from the initial request for two bottles each costing several hundred. Notably, all of

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[66] An in-depth historical study and analysis of riders would be useful. See Bennun (1999) for a journalistic discussion on riders. See Stokes (1976: 197–198) for another brief example of riders deemed "excessive" or "modest."

these requests came from the same artist, and the concert had not sold well. This attitude towards the rider is embedded in the workplace culture, however, and occasionally manifests itself through off-handed comments or self-deprecating humour from those in the touring party. Such a reaction occurred when artists had catering as well as additional food requirements in the dressing room due to how unnecessary and wasteful it can seem or actually be. One TM at Venue A shook his head at the fact that, despite having access to catering, a band member always had to have chicken wings in his dressing room and stated, sarcastically, that "god forbid" if they were not provided. A support band, clearly conscious of the more limited riders they are entitled to, mocked their stereotyped personas when facetiously telling the hospitality coordinator that they wanted "special V8 with low sodium" and wanted it "now."

The most useful term to describe the nature of the rider's contents is *specific*. The requirements for food and drink are essentially a very specific shopping list, and this specificity is necessary for the ease of a tour and clarity in working relationships. The list provides exact information for what is needed and determines how money is supposed to be spent. The degree of specification does vary, however. Riders can be very precise when they indicate the item, format, flavour and choice of preferred brands, such as "Coconut Water, Individual Cartons, Not juice in cans, Not flavored (Eg: Whole Foods 365, Vita Coco, Naked)." At other times, it may simply specify a particular quality of an item, such as "loaf of white bread," without further detail. Greater detail implies more importance while fewer details effectively communicate the artist's and crews' preferred tastes to the local crew, with the understanding that the latter can use their own judgement when making decisions while shopping. Unless specified in the rider, the local crew at Venue A has the default approach to buy organic food products and high-quality brands. These attempts sometimes failed when such items were deemed unacceptable for

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artists. A wardrobe person for a group laughed at the organic cranberry juice placed in the refrigerator and subsequently requested non-organic, just as a TM for a former chart-topping rock group rejected organic bread in favour of Wonder bread due to the fact that the band is "not fancy." These preferences caused more money and energy to be spent as additional shopping trips were required. The practical need for the rider to be specific becomes clearer in such instances by not being precise enough, as does the difficulty of meeting the needs of all people involved despite advance communication and the combined efforts of the TM and local crew.

The notion that an incoming group of people, whose personal preferences are otherwise entirely unknown to those that will be assisting them, must be clear about what they need would seem to be taken as common sense. This specificity, however, is met with confusion and disdain from local crew. Being "specific" is often interpreted as being "picky." TM Amy (2018) explained:

> People get really really freaked out by riders and like 'oh there's all this specific stuff and they're so picky and they want like Evian with lemon flavour and they have La Croix that has to be this and it has to be this brand of vodka' and it's like, I always tell them it's like if you handed somebody your shopping list and it just said 'cookies' … they are not gonna buy the brands you like … so that's why riders are specific.

This attitude was visible during participant observation at Venue A, where the contents of the rider were often the source of joking, complaints and questions among local crew. Workers took this attitude in part because some of the items can be difficult to find and, as such, created more work for them. It was also related to feeling subordinate due to the relationship of service to served, and status differential more generally. This use of language was a means to cope with and overcome those feelings. It was also related to a certain cynicism or jadedness that came with an awareness of what happens to the items they labour to acquire. In many cases, items go wasted or unused. Some TMs are very concerned to pack food from the dressing room and

leftover catering and take it with them, and support artists tend to take everything from their

rider. Anything non-perishable can be reused by the venue for another artist, and what was left at

the end of the season at Venue A was donated. However, anything perishable goes to waste,

meaning food and labour hours are lost. For a few examples, at Venue A, entire deli trays and

fruit trays were often left untouched at the end of the night, the majority of four extra-large

pizzas were left in the dressing room, all of the food purchased for a production office was not

touched, including cheeses, bread and fresh ground coffee, and in one instance a singer wanted to

order a different kind of sushi as the one in her dressing room was "bland."[67] In this way,

regarding notions of excess or extravagant demands, the rider can be more precisely

characterized by its potential as a source of waste. Efforts to address this issue were visible

during participant observation and in interviews. Some TMs learn to make adjustments to riders

because of waste. One TM at Venue A explained that he no longer allows food in the dressing

rooms following his previous practice of purchasing $1,000 worth of items that no one would

eat. Amy (2018) described her proactive approach:

> I personally like lean and mean riders, I'm like don't put extra shit on there that you're
> not gonna eat … I ask the production coordinator or road manager or caterer to be on top
> of it and be like what are people actually eating and what are they not eating, and I will
> cut it … if I notice that if we have four bottles of Odwalla on the rider and nobody
> touches them at all any day, that's nearly $15 … I will cut it because at the end of the day
> … this is your money … I don't like a lot of waste.

As suggested by Amy's earlier statements about specificity, attitudes about the rider, and

catering and hospitality more generally, are very different from the perspective of the touring

party. While the rider is perceived as a space of privilege by local crew, it is a practical,

functional document for those on the touring crew. The catering at Venue B was not well

maintained in the sense that cups, plates and silverware, which are supposed to be provided and

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[67] Food from catering was also often wasted, but efforts were made by local crew to take home or distribute any leftovers.

replenished as needed by the venue staff, were not well stocked and they started to run out. When the band's frontwoman went for dinner, she questioned whether it was okay to take an additional plate because there was not any left for others, and the TM assured her that they would find more. In addition, the frontwoman's dressing room items, which were minimal, had not been properly supplied. The TM was highly frustrated by both of these factors. He could not understand how simple requests, such as a mug for tea, failed to be fulfilled. Echoing yet dismissing the local crew's perception of artists, he mentioned that the items requested were nothing "unreasonable." For TMs, the rider that is circulated and discussed in advance with local crew is a means to supply the basic and functional needs that maintain workers on tour. The listed items are supposed to be in place and well maintained throughout the day. As the TM explained, the touring party does not want to have to think about these things. Doing so is a time-consuming interruption in the working day. This shows that the failure of the local crew to fulfill their responsibilities falls back onto the TM, and that this results in needing to manage an artist's expectations. The local crew, and their working relationship with the TM and the touring party will be described in the following section.

The Local Crew: Who They Are and What They Do

Touring is a dynamic process and each day plays a part in the whole. The continuity of the tour can be contingent on the quality of each individual stop. Concerts are cultural commodities (Brennan and Webster 2011: 1) and, as discussed in the Introduction, they produce tours, which depend on a supply chain to facilitate the realization of live music. A supply chain, generally speaking, is a "series of linked stages in a supply network along which a particular set of goods or services flows," and is comprised of information, personnel and resources (Law 2016). By reimagining and adapting a conceivably expansive network and process to the particular scale of

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a tour, this thesis theorizes the rider, local crew, venue and resources of its local area as a tour's supply chain. The importance of the supply chain is made explicit, in part, through the mobility associated with touring and likewise the needs of the many workers involved. In addition, its significance is represented by the contractual agreement made with the promoter, who provides supplies to the artist and crew, as well as the personnel to procure them. As evidence of their roles, local crew members usually receive a "working pass" (see Chapter 1) from the touring party that grants them access to the relevant backstage areas and symbolizes their role to the touring party. At Venue A, these passes were supplemental to the laminated identification badges given to venue employees that must be worn at all times. Several areas in the facility are secured and these badges grant necessary access throughout the venue. In these ways, the working passes at Venue A had much less to do with gatekeeping and were more emblematic of their role in the supply chain of a given touring party.

The local crew is an active agent in a tour's supply chain, and functions as the touring party's orienting guide to a venue and their local knowledge source for a particular city. TMs, road crews and musicians rely on a new group of workers in every venue to fulfill the rider, handle their requests and provide local knowledge. If the TM and road crews make working life easier for musicians, local crew are supposed to do the same for TMs and road crews. Head of Security Tony (2018) explained:

> It is a moving conglomerate, so you've got a multi-million-dollar business that moves location every single day, it doesn't have permanent headquarters … and has all of these staff, who every single day have to make the same relationships with different people and it's a really big deal … you can't rely on the relationships you've made to be able to set it up … we have our internal systems and the internal relationships, good and bad, and formalities and informalities, but you can't rely on anything. It's not like all the people who are at work every day and they know where the coffee machine is and they know where the bathrooms are, never mind they know who the boss is and what will happen if this happens. All of that stuff goes out the window because you rely on people you don't know.

The local crew consists of all of the workers at a venue who assist with an incoming tour. This can be related to production, such as the local sound and lighting vendors and their staff. It is also the "humpers" who unload, move and pack up equipment for the touring party.

For the purpose of this chapter, the focus will be on the hospitality coordinator and the runner. The hospitality coordinator — the title used at Venue A — is the designated local person responsible for all tasks related to the rider. The role is centered around the hospitality needs of the touring crew, though the specific name of the title may vary. The term "hospo," as previously mentioned, is shorthand for both the requirements and the staff responsible for them. The hospitality coordinator is responsible for communicating with the TM in advance regarding these matters, shopping for the list of rider items, acquiring or attending to any additional requests on show day, and handling aftershow food. In some cases, they may also assist with catering, though this varies according to whether it is brought in or is in-house. A runner assists the touring party with off-site needs, transport and access to and around the local area. They are available to acquire items, find or provide needed services, accompany musicians or crew to places in the city, or provide transportation to and from hotels, airports and the venue. Both roles require workers, in general, to be on-site from the arrival of the road crew in the morning until the point after the show when it is established that their services are no longer needed. Their days can vary from having very little to do to being extremely busy. The length, intensity and unpredictability of the local crew's workdays places a particular emphasis on maintaining morale and a convivial atmosphere. As with road crews (see Chapter 2), humour plays a major role in the culture of the local crew, to the point that sense of humour and whether workers perceive themselves as being "funny" was a topic raised during the job interview. At Venue A, the local

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production office was a site of continuous banter between members of the local crew, often facilitated and encouraged by the promoter and local production manager.

The nature of a TM's day depends largely on the quality of the local crew. TMs rely on local crew for a multitude of tasks and the successful completion depends on the latter's ability to communicate effectively, possess local knowledge, and be prompt and responsive. TMs know what they need from local crew and evaluate them accordingly. This is where the Van Halen example comes into practice, as attention to detail is an indication of a reliable local crew.

> Sometimes, the whole brown M&M thing is true, you can put something weird on [the rider] to make sure someone's actually reading … if they don't get it then they obviously weren't reading it, but even if they just ask you like 'hey do I really have to get this,' at least you know they read it. So, a really good sign of somebody who's being detail oriented (Amy 2018).

Aspects of their working relationship are structured through the rider and further organized with advanced discussions, while others are unpredictable and develop during the day according to needs and issues that arise. Weinstein ([1991] 2000: 204) accurately captured that the "interdependence of the backstage crew is a source of frustration, bordering on panic, when someone fails to do an assigned task in an effective and timely manner." Though her comment was derived from a heavy metal context, it is consistent across popular music genres. This sense of urgency is most visible when unexpected needs arise close to show time. At Venue A, TMs made requests on short notice for additional mirrors to be brought to dressing rooms to check an artist's appearance, sliced lemons to be placed in a bowl on the side of the stage, and specific types of Perrier bottles to be delivered to the stage to fit into a singer's microphone stand. In order for local crew to handle these tasks effectively, they must receive the request in a timely manner, know where in the venue to obtain the needed items and have the ability to access them, and then bring what is needed to the correct place. In a multipurpose facility such as Venue A,

these tasks can be made more challenging by the layout and time needed to move through the venue. As such, the most valuable attribute of a local crew member is simply to be available. This means being onsite and easily accessible, either by generally being based in the local production trailer or easily reachable through text or phone. In other words, waiting around is an integral component of their job. Local crew are part of the group of workers who are "walking back and forth apparently doing nothing" (Behr et al. 2016: 18). In actuality, the action of walking back and forth means they are in the process of doing something important.

The establishment of the working relationship between the TM and the local crew can be explained as "swift trust," which is a consistent characteristic of working in temporary small groups (Meyerson, Weick and Kramer 1996). Such groups have a "finite life span, form around a shared and relatively clear goal or purpose, and their success depends on a tight and coordinated coupling of activity" (ibid.: 167). The basis for swift trust is that workers act according to roles and responsibilities rather than as individuals (Grabher 2001: 1331) and likewise create an expectation of a role that is "defined more in terms of tasks than personalities" (Watson 2015: 177). This is reflected in the informal nature of communication between the TM and local crew. Professional courtesies or formal introductions are rarely made, and names are not always used or remembered, though there are exceptions. For example, when a hospitality coordinator communicates via email with a TM, the reply usually does not include any acknowledgement of the person's name nor any formal signoff. It is a response intended to clarify needs and facilitate action.

In these temporary arrangements, time constraints eliminate the natural development of mutual confidence needed to maintain trust between workers (Meyerson, Weick and Kramer 1996: 167). The trust that develops within temporary groups is "a unique form of collective

perception and relating that is capable of managing issues of vulnerability, uncertainty, risk, and expectations" and does so from the moment the group comes into existence (ibid.). Instances during participant observation demonstrated how this trust operates in the touring workplace. A recurring example was that of the handling of money. TMs readily hand over their gold American Express cards or large sums of cash[68] to a hospitality coordinator they have just met. In one instance at Venue A, a TM needed the hospitality coordinator to acquire a stock of alcohol for the next venue, which was located in an area without easy access to stores and supplies. She handed the hospitality coordinator eight $100 bills ten minutes after their initial in-person meeting, asked for $300 of alcohol and the rest to be brought back in smaller bills. Another example shows that this type of trust can also be questionable and place workers in vulnerable positions. A production manager requested of a local crew member, who was filling in for the usual hospitality coordinator, to acquire two children's backpacks as they wanted to transport an undisclosed large quantity of "something they need to hide" and stated they needed it to look as innocent as possible. These actions and relationships also further demonstrate the more general informality of practices in the music industries (see Negus [1992] 2011).

The nature of the day for workers on a local crew rests on the personality and organization of a TM and the larger touring party. Local crew must be dependable and present as much as TMs must be able to properly delegate and communicate. TMs have a pervasive reputation for being "grumpy" which is related to the long hours culture of touring (see Chapter 2) and the multitude of their responsibilities (see Chapter 4). Some are difficult to work with and

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[68] Using cash has changed considerably in recent history. Though still used for rider items, cash used to be a primary means of exchange during tours, which demonstrates the informality of touring, as well as risk associated with these practices. TM Stuart Ross told *Billboard* in 2014: "Until about 10 years ago, maybe less, tours were all cash. There were a lot of dollars going across the desk every night. So tour managers or tour accountants had to call the promoter in advance and say, 'I need $50,000.' And it was not unusual for any of us to pick up that amount or $100,000 [in a bag] and distribute it" (Walker 2014). This practice meant they had to divide money up when crossing borders due to the $10,000 limit often imposed (ibid.).

others border on abusing their power. For example, at Venue A, the TM of a well-known country band was preoccupied with having local crew available at "arm's length," a phrase he repeated in a condescending tone throughout the day, and which the local crew appropriated as a joke. To ensure this access, he asked the promoter that several members of the local crew remain in the local production office all day in case anything arose. The limited number of workers meant that the promoter had to ask other workers occupying different positions to take on the role of runner for the day. The TM's request surpassed the normal expectation of having people *available* to being at their "beck and call." The promoter participated in his demands in order to keep him happy while maintaining full awareness of the excessive control, and potential wastefulness, being placed on the local crew's labour time.

Local crew encounter and must be able to work with a diverse set of personalities and workloads. Artists and crew are deemed "easy" or "hard" to work with based on these criteria. Personality translates into how requests are made to local crew, and the specific needs of a touring party can come with particular reasons that may or may not seem logical to them. These factors can affect the local crew's motivation to fulfill them. For artists that have repeatedly performed at Venue A, the accumulated knowledge allowed the promoter and experienced local crew members to advise each other on what to expect in terms of personality and workload in advance. One performer was a regular topic of conversation during the two months prior to his performance due to his reputation for being extremely difficult to work with, his poor treatment of his crew, and that the crew behaved as a dysfunctional family. This awareness allowed the local crew to anticipate a more challenging day and prepare accordingly. In contrast, another group was described in advance as being "loose," that they are like "family" to the venue staff,

and that the TM frequently hugs people. In this case, local crew could anticipate a less stressful, more congenial environment.

On show days, the local crew would often check in with each other to collectively discuss and evaluate the touring crew and artist. They would do so by comparing experiences on the pace of their day as well as the types and nature of requests being made. This was an informal process that occurred as they passed each other in the backstage area or encountered each other in the local production office, and the collective assessment determined the tone and nature of discussion about the crew and artist. These interactions mirror the attitudes and behaviours associated with the rider and shows that local crews use solidarity and foreground self-interest to overcome subordination. These observations also indicate that the TM and the local crew have a mutually dependent relationship that is marked by respective systems of evaluation. The next section will describe the spaces in which those systems of evaluation took place during participant observation.

Descriptions of Settings: Venue A and Venue B

The following is a description of each of the venues in which participant observation took place. This section provides a description of each venue, which serves as context and understanding for the sections that follow, as well as Chapter 4. The difference between these two venues gives insight into the diversity of spaces that TMs, road crews and musicians regularly encounter and highlights the role of space as among the daily issues they contend with in their working lives. The physical environments of live music not only affect music-making and consumption (see Behr et al. 2016, Kronenburg 2019) but the daily lives of workers behind the scenes.

Venue A is in many ways an atypical concert venue. It is located off of a major highway in the outskirts of a medium-sized city in the United States. It is a 1,900-capacity outdoor venue

that is situated on a larger site containing a world-class conservatory and museum. The seasonal

concert series occurs only during the summer months. The institution's facilities are used for a

wide range of events, such as art shows and lectures, and it is also a popular venue for weddings.

The concert series was not part of the institution's original concept and, as such, the facilities

available for musicians and road crews were not originally intended for use as artist dressing

rooms and production offices, though they have some transferrable features. This follows a

longer history of how "the rock tour did in fact become dependent on new buildings, on the

construction of concert halls and arenas that were large and comfortable enough for rock

performances even if not explicitly designed for them" (Frith et al. 2019: 51).

During the time that participant observation took place in 2018, the facilities available to

musicians and crew were situated in two places: the main building of the institution and in the

area designated for load-in, which is also where tour buses and trucks park. Upon arrival,

musicians and crew enter the main building through a storage and working area for employees of

the institution who are not affiliated with the concert series. It is the area in which the necessary

tools and materials for the facility are stored and where many displays are assembled. Musicians

and crew walk through this area, then into an employee lounge, and then into a corridor where

the dressing rooms are located. As such, the "backstage" area overlaps with the office spaces and

lounge areas of a diverse group of workers, particularly during regular business hours. Their

lounge area at times was used by the touring party, with permission, when additional space was

needed. The layout of the facility places the artists and crew at a distance from the stage;

musicians were normally transported by a golf cart at show time. Figure 5 shows the layout of
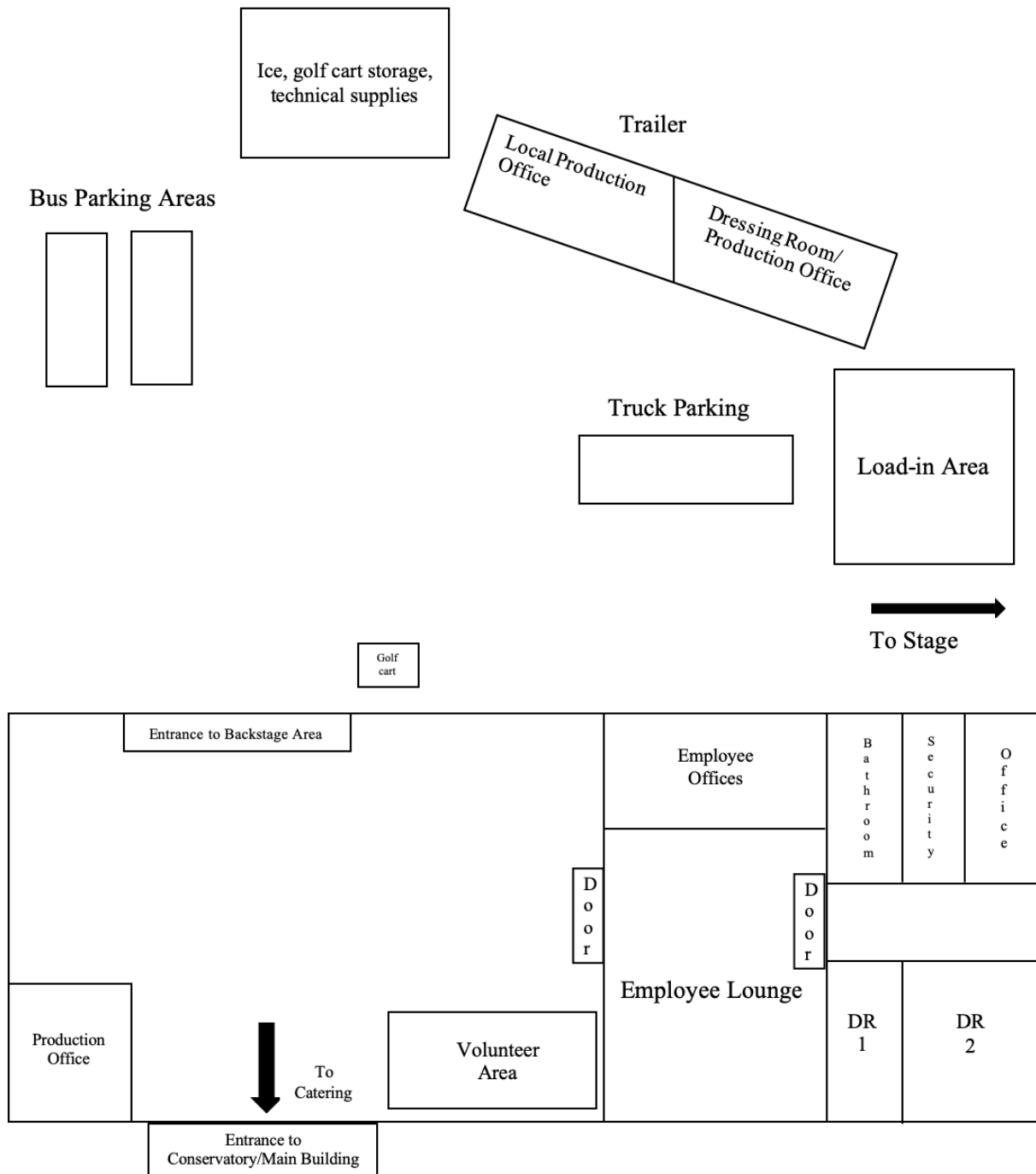
the backstage area.

Figure 5

Venue A has three dressing rooms. Dressing Room 1, usually reserved for the "star," is located

in the main building and was 12' X 15' with ensuite bathroom and shower and featured a wrap-

around sofa, side tables, a dressing table and small refrigerator. Adjacent was Dressing Room 2,

which was much larger at 24' X 15,' and can function as a dressing room, hospitality/green room or both. It contains three tables surrounded by moveable chairs, two armchairs, side tables, a refrigerator and three cabinets. Dressing Room 2 is attached to Dressing Room 1 with a removable divider, so can be opened to facilitate a larger space if needed. A second shower and bathroom are located in the hallway across from Dressing Room 1 for other members of the touring party. Dressing Room 3 is located in a trailer in the parking and load-in area. Half of the trailer is used as the local production office for the promoter and local crew, and the other half is available to the touring party. It is 10' X 30' and includes a couch, tables and chairs. The trailer's desk space also allows it to function as a production office for the visiting tour and production managers (see Figure 5). Figure 6 shows the layout of Dressing Room 1 and Dressing Room 2.
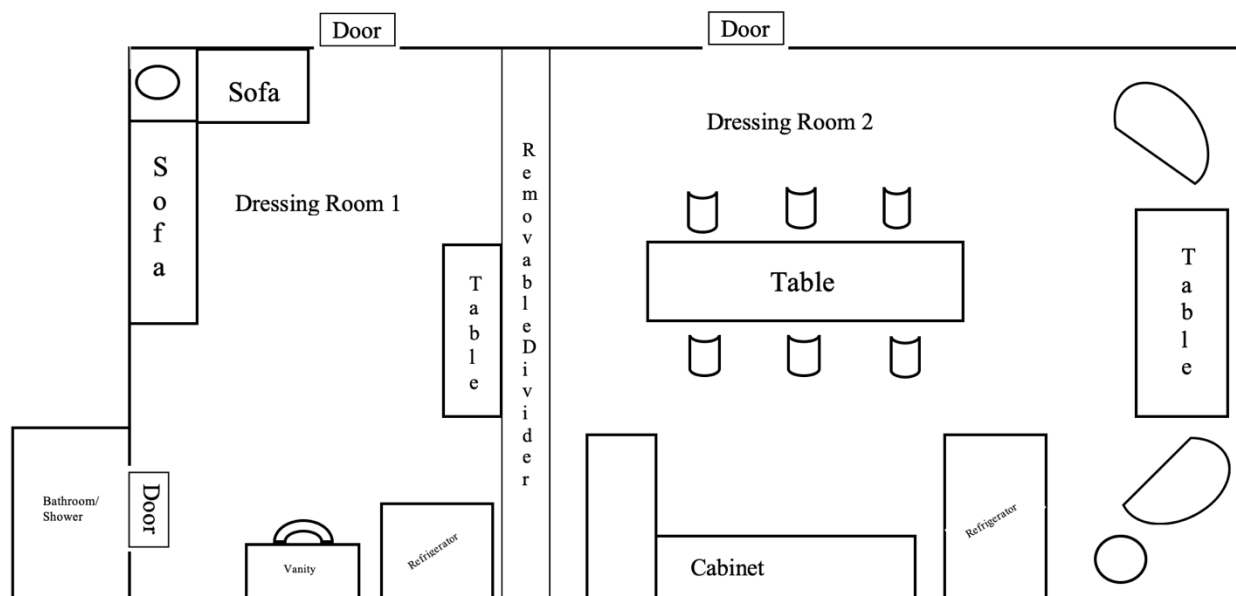

Figure 6

The other option for a production office is located in the main building a short walk away from Dressing Rooms 1 and 2, but is more embedded in the workplace of non-concert series workers (see Figure 5). It is a 12' X 12' room with tables and seating for three people. It is actually a supply room that houses an array of tools and is directly across from a wall on which

an assortment of gardening shears are stored. When additional space is needed for larger tours, local crew could allocate rooms in the public areas of the institution, where other types of events are usually held.

Venue A has in-house catering that usually requires the assistance of a local crew member to find. The catering room is located in the public area of the institution, where visitors wander through to see exhibits during regular business hours,[69] and management and other employees have offices. To access catering, musicians and crew walk from the bus or dressing room (see Figures 5 and 6) to a door that opens into a conservatory, which leads them into the main public and administrative area of the facility. From there, they walk down two hallways and make three turns before arriving at the catering room. Sign placement is allowed backstage but not permitted in the public part of the facility, which means having local crew onsite to guide the touring party is essential. Figure 7 shows the path to catering.

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[69] The facilities at Venue A were open Monday, Wednesday–Saturday from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; Tuesday from 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., and Sunday from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
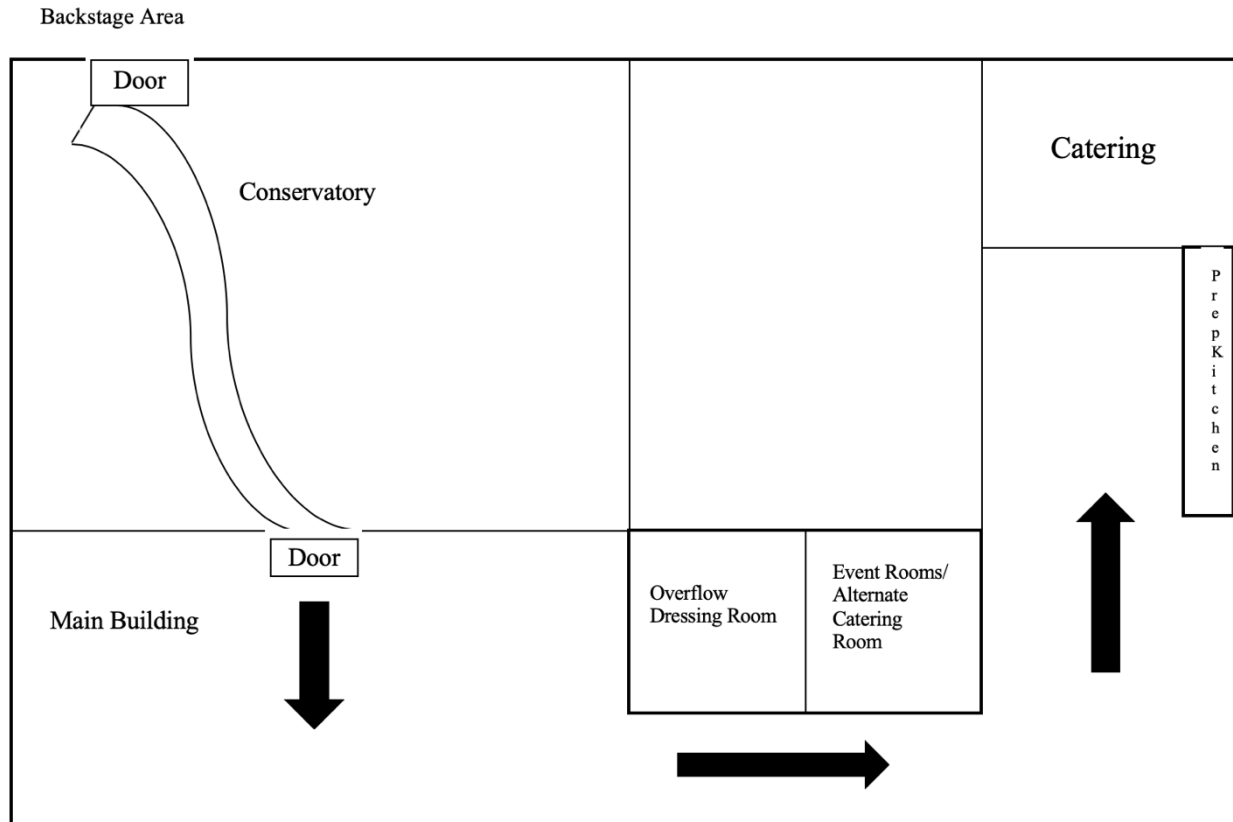
Backstage Area

Figure 7

Venue B is a purpose-built 2,600-capacity music venue that is centrally located in the downtown area of the same city. The backstage area is located on the second floor. It is accessible from a staircase located near a door at the left side of the standing-room hall where musicians and crew enter when they arrive. Load-in occurs at the right side of the hall through a door that opens into an alley. The backstage area has dressing rooms available for the principal and other musicians, the interiors of which were not accessible during participant observation. There is a large communal green room equipped with tables, chairs, a sofa chair, an area to accommodate and serve food and drinks, and laundry machines. There is no designated space for a production office or a crew room. Catering was brought in from local restaurants and was placed in the green room in the designated area. Figure 8 shows the layout of the backstage area

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at Venue B. The next section turns to an analysis of the process, practices and interactions involved in acquiring items for the rider.
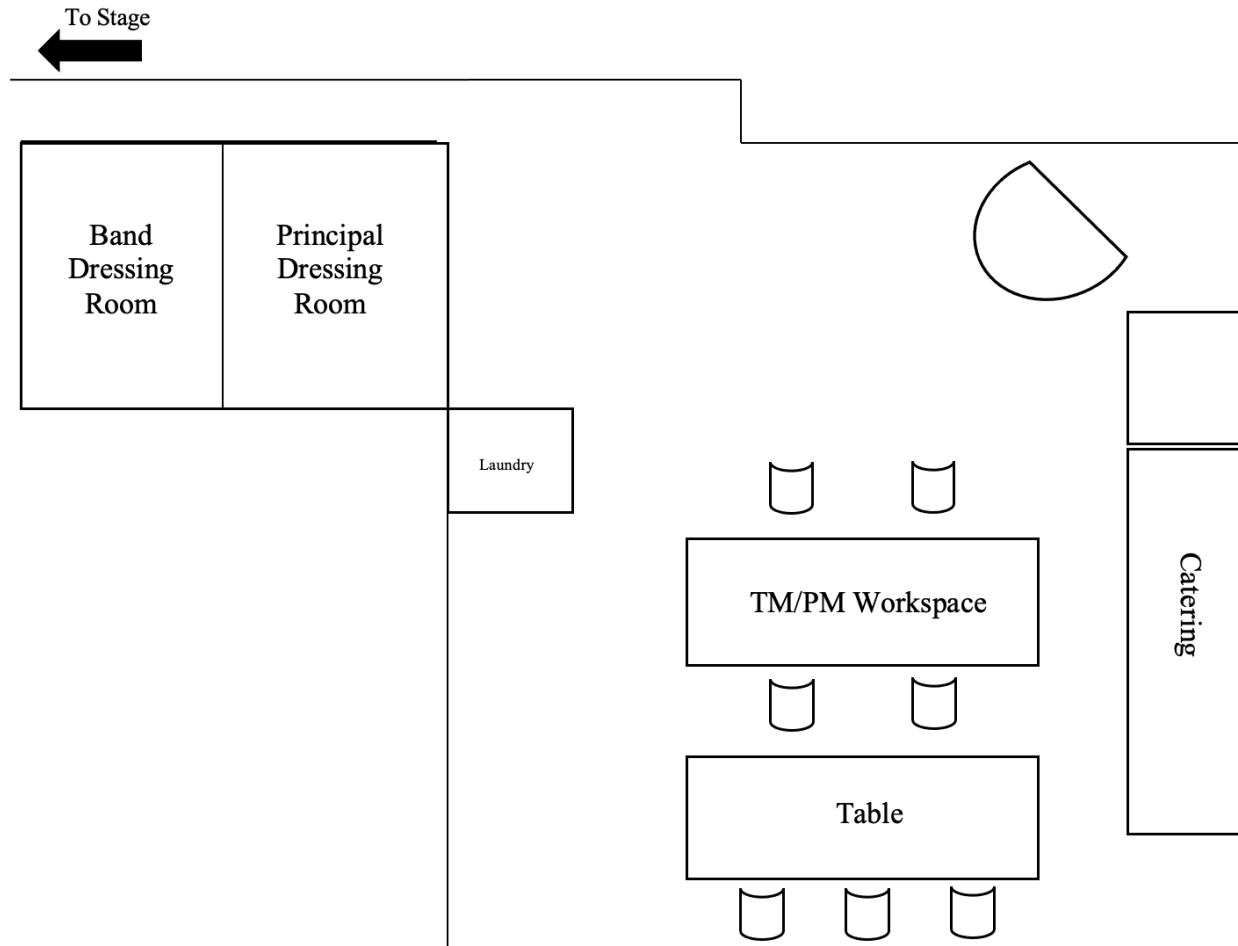
Figure 8

Acquiring the Rider

Prior to a tour starting, the TM (or in some cases the road manager) builds the hospitality rider. A TM usually receives a rider from a previous tour and updates it in consultation with artist management and/or the artist. After it is finalized, the TM sends it to the local promoter. Most riders are available months in advance of a concert, but updated versions are often sent closer to an event and further changes circulated three days prior to a show day. The promoter provides the rider to the person in charge of dressing rooms and hospitality on the local crew. It is this

person's responsibility to acquire the necessary items. This process usually begins several days before the show when the local crew member communicates with the TM (or road manager or assistant, as applicable) regarding the rider.

TMs state that, aside from unexpected issues, a show day should go smoothly if everything is properly advanced. Part of this process depends on the nature of the communication between the TM and the local crew member in advance. The TM and the local crew each possess particular information that is useful to the other's role. The norms of communication are not standardized, however, nor is there a clear procedure or expectation. In some cases, the TM takes the initiative to raise any issues or concerns, and other times it originates from the local crew. Some TMs wait until the last minute to confirm riders and need follow-ups from the local crew in order to supply the necessary information. Regardless, the communication must result in both parties having the information they need from the other.

Several key elements are necessary for fulfilling the rider, and their handling affects the working experience. First, it must be established that the local crew member has the most current version of the rider. Often times multiple versions exist, and outdated versions can and are inadvertently circulated, which results in the purchase of incorrect items. Second, it must be confirmed that everything on the rider is actually needed for that particular day. Artists and crew sometimes acquire a surplus of an item and do not need more in the next city. Checking on necessity saves the possibility of waste for the artist and money for the promoter. Third, any changes to the needed rider items must be disclosed and clarified between the TM and local crew. Finally, the local crew member must notify the TM if there are any potential issues with acquiring items in a given city and, if so, clarify a suitable alternative. In some cases, musicians want specific items from particular grocery stores such as Whole Foods, which does not have

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locations in all markets. This was a reoccurring issue during participant observation as the city in question does not have a Whole Foods. Identifying potential issues in advance creates more time to find alternatives. TMs react to the inability to acquire certain items differently. When told of the difficulty of finding organic smoked salmon, one TM cautiously asked if it was possible to find something that "looks organic." In response to a similar issue with organic smoked turkey, another TM was bewildered by the concern and thought the issue was "funny" and stated to get whatever was available. Their level of concern reflects their interpretation of how important the item is to the artist. It also shows that the rider is based on an ideal situation and that the resources of the local area can prevent exact specifications and all requirements from being fulfilled.

Once information is exchanged and expectations established, the local crew member will go shopping for the rider items, usually the day before the show. During this activity, the TM and local crew member also communicate via text and phone if issues arise. Shopping takes, on average, from two to five hours and can require making purchases at one to five different stores. It can be an exhausting process that calls for significant attention to detail when identifying specific brands or unfamiliar items related to particular dietary requirements. The process is also highly physical, and involves loading and unloading substantial amounts of water, alcohol and food from stores to a vehicle and then into storage in the venue and placement into dressing rooms. The promoter at Venue A recommended that shopping be limited to two stores, and then to communicate with the TM if not everything was available at those locations. His concern was with the amount of energy and time this required of the local crew, however, obtaining all of the requirements is not always possible within those limits. The awareness of the importance of a well-presented dressing room and rider items to the reputation of the venue also influences

efforts to shop more extensively. This gives further evidence of the extent to which workers in the cultural industries commit to their work and push themselves to accomplish good results (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011: 226).

Acquiring supplies also requires managing resources or expectations. If a specific local area cannot supply important rider items, or if a promoter refuses to purchase them, some TMs are prepared by having backups to provide for the artist. They essentially accumulate a stock of these items should they be otherwise unavailable in a given city. The accumulation and usefulness of stock was evident at Venue A during an interaction with a road manager. She realized that the incorrect type of tuna had been purchased for the principal singer and explained that it would not suffice. When the hospitality coordinator offered to find the correct type at the store, the road manager stated she would see what she could do. Later in the day, the local production manager stated that he had observed an entire drawer labelled "tuna" in one of the flight cases backstage, as well as a drawer labelled with an expensive brand of wine, which had been a contested item by the promoter. This same road manager took further initiative to create stock by only permitting one of the singer's expensive candles to be placed in her dressing room and keeping the second one in the production office. These actions function to meet the needs of artists and prevents TMs and road managers from having to deny, explain or manage the musician's expectations. It furthers a sense of consistency and predictability on tour as much as it preserves the integrity of the TM and road manager and their ability to support an artist.

Rider items can become a source of conflict in a given touring party as each member seeks to fulfill their own interests in relation to those of the artist's. TMs that work for the same artist for decades demonstrate a confidence in overruling artist's requests if they deem them unnecessary. Their responsibility for the budget gives them this leverage as much as their

seniority, knowledge of the artist and the trust accorded them diminishes the precarity of their positions. During a conversation about an incorrect rider with a male TM/tour accountant who has worked for the same artist for more than 30 years, he expressed disgust at the frequency with which this musician changes his diet. He also quickly shot down the rider request for a flower to be purchased and placed in the artist's dressing room. He was less concerned with pleasing the artist and more concerned with saving time and money. In this way, TMs and crew that have worked together extensively also exhibit traits and attitudes about artists that are comparable to those one sees within a family. They convey an impatience that results from familiarity and too much time together.

That artist also had a second male TM, who has also worked for him for nearly three decades. This TM was equally unconcerned about the artist's specific needs and relied on his own understanding of the artist and band, stating, for example, that when deciding on aftershow food he usually just orders whatever he feels they will want rather than actually asking. The practices of both of these men were at odds with those of the artist's female personal assistant. The PA has worked for the artist for 10 years and has known him for twenty-five. She seemed very proud of her job, which she described as handling his "very complicated" life, and clarified that she is "grossed out" if she sees him naked. The majority of her experience working for this artist had been in an office-based position, and she had only recently began touring when the artist's usual touring PA had left. The second TM wondered out loud why it was not possible to just get another man on the road. Her lack of familiarity with the informal touring world was a continuous target of humour, and her formal ways of dealing with, and trying to please the artist, were a source of frustration for her colleagues. She was more thorough with the artist, discussing

available food options with him, which irritated her colleague due to the amount of time it took and prompted him to call the band "her kids."

Paradoxically, the male TM referred to himself, moments before, as a "babysitter" (and musicians as "brats") when describing his role. This term is a common label assigned to or used by TMs as shorthand for the nature of their responsibilities to musicians, but that also comes with the potential to offend or belittle both adult parties. As such, it is at times used facetiously or reluctantly, and the reasons for its usage vary with context (see Chapter 4). Most relevant to this chapter is the way that its connotations of childcare can position TMs in a maternal role. Tour management, like the majority of roles on road crews, is male-dominated, though aspects of the job involve tasks that are traditionally gendered feminine. Tensions associated with gender are illuminated by the use of these terms and the different approaches to working practices around them. Though the male TM described himself as a "babysitter," his positioning of the PA in relation to "kids" was a clear reference to her gender and to stereotypical behavioural norms. The PA was much more concerned with the needs of the artist and utilizing close communication tactics to fulfill them. Conversely, the TM resisted such attentive practices, and their "feminine" associations, in favour of his own detached judgement and decisiveness, and found it necessary to explain his method to the local crew. This interaction revealed a tension between his gender and the aspects of his responsibilities that are traditionally gendered feminine while in the presence of a woman colleague handling similar tasks. To counter it, this TM reproduced a pattern among men who occupy feminized work roles by attempting to create and maintain "distance from the feminine" (Pullen and Simpson 2009: 564). His approach was an effort to "restore a dominating position" by engaging in "compensatory gendered practices" in order "to

reconstruct the job so as to minimize its non-masculine associations" (ibid., Heikes 1991, Alvesson 1998, Lupton 2000, Cross and Bagilhole 2002, Simpson 2004).

The PA utilized caution when trying to fulfill a request that she suspected the first TM/accountant would disapprove of. She was particularly concerned with acquiring a specific brand of tonic water for the artist. Two members of the local crew were in communication and the runner, who was at the grocery store, was unable to find the tonic. The on-site local crew member went to the production office to relay the information to the PA. She abruptly ran out of the office and asked the local crew member not to talk so loud because she did not want the TM, who visibly began shifting with irritation when she left the room, to overhear. She asked if there were other brands of tonic water available and the local crew member agreed to find her when the runner called back with more information from the store. When he did, the local crew member found the PA on the tour bus and explained that the store does not have suitable brands, but that the runner offered to go to another location. The PA opted against pursuing it because the TM was "hot." Her behaviour implied a sense of subordination by the male members of the touring management. The importance of her role was positioned as subject to and secondary to the working habits and personal moods of management despite her own longstanding employment by the same artist. This example shows that the rider is a means to understand problematic and exclusionary gender dynamics involved in the daily working practices that contribute to the realization of live music.

The final section explores the daily working practices of TMs and PMs in greater detail through an analysis of some of the significant documents and information produced within the production office. These communications facilitate a schedule and routine, and play an important role in the organization of the backstage environment and as part of the supply chain.

From the Production Office: Day Sheets, Signs and Aftershow Food Orders

The production office is any space within a venue in which the TM and PM, and assistants if applicable, work for the day. The rider indicates the number of tables, chairs, outlets and internet connection needed. The production office is the site of the planning and administration of the tour, with the efforts of workers being applied to both the immediate tasks of the day and to advancing upcoming shows. Most venues have available space that is either specifically reserved for or can function as a production office. If a venue cannot provide adequate office space, makeshift spaces are often utilized as production offices. As TM Andy Reynolds (2008: 31) observed, production offices sometimes take "the form of a space in the cloakroom with a desk and a telephone[.]"

The mobile nature of touring means that TMs are prepared for these conditions. Tour and production managers generally have portable production cases that contain the necessary equipment, including computers, printers, office supplies, credentials and paperwork, needed for advancing and running the tour. They are essentially smaller versions of a musician's flight case that contain their wardrobe and personal effects. TMs and PMs refer to these cases as their "office." At Venue B, the PM explained the delay in providing a credential because he did "not have his office yet," meaning the production case had not been unloaded from the truck and placed backstage. Live music managers treat their "offices" as people do in conventional ones by placing photos, decorations and other personal touches within them. How they do so — an inflatable donut from Dunkin Donuts, a pin with the term "Rigged," and the use of Crown Royal bags as organizational tools — shows their embeddedness in the culture of music and the lifestyle of touring. However, though these cases are portable, they often require desk space to unpack some of the items in order to facilitate work for the day. Regardless of the nature or type

of space, the presence of the production team and their supplies means that these spaces become temporarily reimagined as the production office. Makeshift spaces that crew work in and, to some degree, are accustomed to, is both evidence of and reproduces the highly informal nature of working in the live music industry.

When space is a commodity, musicians' comfort and privacy are prioritized with access to dressing rooms while the workspaces for TMs and PMs can be compromised. At Venue B, the TM and PM had to set up their offices at tables in the closely shared and busy space of the green room (see Figure 8), which also contained catering and was the major hub of activity during the day. In this way, it can be said of the touring workplace that artists are less likely to have to adapt to their environments due to the efforts of their staff, but those who create those possibilities must be highly adaptable themselves. Even prior to arrival at a venue, the cost of touring and the TMs/PMs responsibility to the budget, affects their workspaces. In order to save money on freight costs on a tour of South America, TM/PM Glen (2018) willingly chose to take the "absolute minimum" work supplies needed in order to fit them into a smaller pelican case rather than the usual production case. He also limited what the guitar technicians and front of house engineer could bring, all of whom were unhappy but understood. Though artist management were supportive of the extra fees, he said "this is an awful lot of money and I knew we could make it work." In this way, being a "support" worker also means forgoing individual needs and taking measures that benefit the larger interest of the tour.

At Venue A, the informality that is a normal part of working on tour was in some ways exacerbated due to the multipurpose function of the facility. The aforementioned room in Venue A that was used to store tools was frequently assigned as the production room due to the adequate desk space. The unusual overlap of occupational space was not lost on the visiting

crews, who would make jokes about using the tools and gardening shears "if needed" and found

a great deal of humour in a cooler that was labeled "butterfly waste." Local crew tried to remove

or cover some of the equipment, and offered apologies, but little could be done to alter the

combined workspace. The humour that crew members use to temper these situations highlights

how accustomed they are to adapting, the importance of their willingness to compromise in order

to meet work goals and is also part of a wider cultural norm of coping with the conditions of

touring (see Chapter 2). The use of humour to overcome, or mask, any frustrations about

deference or compromise in the workplace illuminates the "interrelationship between humour

and masculinity in the social relations" of touring (Collinson 1988: 181; see Chapter 2). Doing so

takes on additional significance in a male-dominated workplace given that these behaviours and

expectations are stereotypically deemed feminine.

Despite the production office's mobile nature and potential for compromise, it is a central

media operation and communication hub, or "nerve center for the tour day" (Reynolds 2008: 31).

Matt McGinn (2010: 83), a long-time guitar technician for Coldplay, characterized the

production office as "an inner chamber of extreme professional masochism" based on the

willingness of the production team to handle their many responsibilities and attend to a range of

queries. Within a concert venue, it is the source of important documents and information that

help to orient workers within the venue and assist with communication between the road crew,

local crew and other relevant parties.

The *day sheet* (see Chapter 4 for additional analysis) is a document that outlines the

schedule for a show day and orients workers to their location. A reading of the day sheet's

contents illuminates the information and activities deemed most essential to making a concert

happen. It is a structuring document that communicates when and where workers are needed. In

general, a day sheet provides details such as the date, city and venue, and the scheduled times of all relevant events for the day. This includes transportation and physical arrival at the venue, the set times for load in, sound checks, door and performance times, and curfew and bus call times. Further, meal times and types (breakfast, lunch, dinner; catering or buy out) are included. Additional information, such as the next city and venue, the distance and time to travel there, and hotel information, may also be provided, but the content is based on the preferences of the TM (Workman 2012: 231). A particularly detailed day sheet generated by a TM at Venue A also included the type of venue (small amphitheatre), the weather forecast, contact names for the promoter and local production manager, and internet access information. Further, at the bottom of the page, it featured a "word of the day" which shows the efforts TMs make to enhance morale. An essential component of the TM's job is to maintain a "constant flow of information to [the] organization" that is a major factor in the tour's success (ibid.; see Chapter 4). Doing so means that all personnel have accurate information and understand what to do and where to be (ibid.). In this way, the day sheet is also a reflection of the quality of an individual TM (or PM). TMs or PMs print the day sheets in their production offices and post them in the dressing rooms, green room and bus. The day sheet is also posted in the local production office to inform local crew. Figure 9 is an example of a day sheet obtained during participant observation, which has been modified to remove identifiers.

SHOW: CITY and DATE

WEATHER: 86 H / 66 L / Mostly Sunny

VENUE: NAME and ADDRESS of VENUE

SCHEDULE:

7:00 AM	Crew depart hotel
7:30 AM	Breakfast
8:00 AM	Load In
12:00 PM	Lunch
2:00 PM	Soundcheck
4:00 PM	Dinner
5:15 PM	Doors
6:30 PM	Support Act
7:45 PM	Headliner
9:45 PM	Curfew
After: Travel to	Next City

Figure 9

Additional documents may also need to be generated in the production office based on

the specifics of a venue. Most TMs have laminated, reusable *signs* that they use to direct

musicians and crew to their relevant places.[70] For example, the principal artist and band typically

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[70] Outside of the backstage setting, Webster (2011: 215–221) has shown how visual and aural signage plays a significant role in managing audience behaviour at concerts.

have signs for each of their dressing rooms, and one would also be made to label the production office. Signs are also used to guide workers to the areas in a venue where these rooms can be found. They are generally placed in the venue as soon as personnel arrive and before the artist is onsite. The use of signs is intended to ease the TM's workload and prevent frustrations on the part of the crew and musicians. Workman (2012: 171) equates signage with professionalism, and notes that not using them results in wasted time explaining directions and locations to musicians and crew "that they can't afford to waste" and in some cases, do not even have enough information to do. The importance of the communicative nature of these signs is clearly demonstrated when it fails. At Venue A, an assistant TM, working for a tour with multiple artists on the same bill, incorrectly labeled two of the rooms, which were at significant distance from each other in the venue. This error initially created confusion, and the potential for extra work, for the hospitality team when rider items were being distributed and arranged. On another show day, the layout of Venue A presented problems for a band member who was allocated a private dressing room in the trailer. Despite the signs already being in place, he could not locate them and was initially unable to figure out where he was supposed to be. In this way, ready-made signs do not always suffice. The configuration of Venue A led to TMs/PMs printing special signage to assist with navigating the backstage area, including arrows or additional "to catering" signs. As previously mentioned, at Venue A, despite the usage of signs in the backstage area, they were not permitted in the main part of the building. As such, given their local knowledge, the burden of explaining whereabouts, and physically walking with members of the touring party to catering, was alleviated by the local crew.

Aftershow food orders are another aspect of live music that generate a variety of handwritten and printed documents. Usual practice at Venue A was that the hospitality

coordinator would leave a folder of menus in the production office and communicate with the

TM or PM later in the day to receive the order. TMs have individual methods of communication

for aftershow food. Some prefer to text the details, or call with the information. Others provide a

handwritten document organized according to band, crew and/or individual names of personnel.

Several, usually those working for more experienced groups, had their own Word templates that

featured the name of each person in the touring party followed by the respective food order.

These templates also gave instructions regarding the labeling of food, and requests for

condiments, utensils and where and when the food should be delivered. For an example outside

of participant observation, at the start of the North American leg of R.E.M.'s 1995 *Monster*

world tour, TM David Russell circulated a document to each of the four band members

requesting aftershow food preferences, which he could then refer to throughout the tour. The

template included their name, beverage requests, pizza preferences and the frequency with which

they were comfortable eating it, sandwich requests, and any other acceptable items. Russell

added introductory comments that carefully stated to "remember that in some places we will be

limited as to what form of heartburn is available at 11:00 p.m." and reflected the humour specific

to the culture of touring that was ubiquitous in his communications (see Chapter 2). Russell's

approach to handling aftershow food is indicative of the challenges of coordinating personal

preferences with the realities of a local area. More than this, however, it shows that efficient and

advance planning, and efforts made to manage the expectations of musicians, can ease the daily

lives of tour managers.

Aftershow food generally needs to be placed into the dressing room, production office or

bus, prior to or just after the concert ending, which creates a particular time frame for it to be

ordered and picked up. The volume of food requires orders to be placed with sufficient time for

preparation and pick up, and it should still be warm (if applicable) upon arrival at the venue. At Venue A, the hospitality coordinator generally placed the food order via phone from within the local production office. Simple orders, such as pizza, did not create problems, and were a regular choice for TMs due to ease and limited room for error. More complex orders came with challenges, such as requested items no longer being on the menu, the restaurant running out of certain items, or not enough information being provided by the touring party regarding preferences for side items or toppings. In such instances, the hospitality coordinator had to locate the TM on the premises and subsequently reiterate the revised information to the restaurant. This could result in delays in food orders which had a domino effect on the rest of the schedule. Another challenge of aftershow food was with its distribution. Requests were sometimes made to restaurants for the individual names of musicians and crew members to be written on food boxes, which was not always respected. Even when it was, the process of locating specific boxes and organizing them for delivery to the appropriate party was time consuming and usually needed the assistance of two or more people.

The ordering of food also revealed that artists can take priority over crew, and that support personnel compromise in musicians' favour or attempt to manage their expectations. One TM was unsure as to the exact request for a band member, and ordered a couple of items in his name as backup, stating that he could just have the other one depending on the band member's choice. In another case, the TM completely forgot to order aftershow food for the crew, resulting in their food being delivered much later. The artist is sometimes given more choice and specificity while the crew is generalized. For example, a sushi order included variety and an itemized list for the band, with a special request for "extra ginger, like 7 extra containers." For the crew, the order was "1 sushi boat" to be shared. Several tours had environmental

concerns that affected particular preferences around food and drink packaging. A TM who made special requests for food packaging when ordering from a restaurant was concerned with ensuring that the singer's food arrived in the type of packaging he expected. For the crew, however, any mishandlings "could be dealt with." This suggests that as long as the singer's packaging arrived intact it gave the impression that everyone else's did, also, which likely had less to do with the environment and more to do with keeping the peace and maintaining a reputation.

These daily communications demonstrate that the various documents, including the rider, generated by a live music event "constitutes the event … of which it is itself a part" and structures the identities of personnel (Prior 2003: 72, 108). As such, these documents function as key social actors (Latour and Woolgar 1986, Latour 1990, Riles 2006) that help produce the everyday life of live music. The chapter will now close with a summary and conclusion.

Conclusion

Chapter 3 has presented findings that illuminate how daily labour activities, specifically the combined efforts of the TM/PM and the local crew, play a significant role in making a concert happen. The enactment of these activities is directly intertwined with how these support personnel maintain a living and serve as systems of evaluation for their job performances. The manner in which they handle these responsibilities also relates to their experience and positioning on the crew given the trust accorded from longer tenure with an artist. TMs move between positions of authority and subordination that change with context, including their dependence on the local crew and as a result of their seniority with an artist. TMs delegate to, and are dependent on, the venue's local crew whose assistance in turn directly affects the nature of a given working day, the quality of the outcome, and has the potential to reflect on the TM's

job performance and reputation. Support workers' reputations can be interwoven with the quality of an unknown group of local crew with whom they must quickly establish rapport and trust. In these ways, their ability to maintain a career depends on navigating uncertainty, not only in the labour market, but due to the normal practices of the touring workplace itself.

Findings presented here have also revealed the influential role of status in the daily working lives of musicians and, likewise, to the manner in which TMs support them. Exploring the labour of TMs in the live setting shows that being a support worker involves privileging the working needs and comforts of superiors. It emphasizes an expectation to be adaptable so that those being supported are less likely to have to compromise. TMs encounter vastly different spatial configurations, and their responsibilities are enabled or limited by the resources of a local area, which requires troubleshooting and consideration. They rely on their own knowledge and judgement of an artist to manage these uncertainties, a skill in and of itself that presents challenges. In this way, it shows that efforts involved in attending to the needs of artists reproduce the special privileges they are accorded (Becker 1982). The broader efforts of the local crew and the number of labour hours involved in attending to the rider further substantiate this factor.

This chapter has theorized the information, personnel and resources, or the rider, local crew and local area, as a tour's supply chain. It has nuanced the understanding of the rider by foregrounding its practical purpose, and by suggesting it is more usefully characterized as specific and as a source of potential waste. It has explained that the rider is based on an ideal, and that its specificity is necessary but entirely subject to the resources of a local area. As such, a tour's supply chain is subject to the realities of a given venue and city. Related to this, the importance and usefulness of the best practices and communicative documents of a tour are most

clearly understood when they fail, which emphasizes the need for organization in a mobile workplace.

Participant observation and interviews conducted for this study have shown that doing whatever is necessary to make a concert happen is a circumstantially dependent and subjective notion. Just as there are particular needs and requirements there are situational limitations, complications and exceptions. It also does not mean doing whatever is necessary to please the artist. In the same way that TMs define the boundaries of their roles with artists (see Chapter 4) they must also make judgement calls to serve the interests of musicians and the tour alike. Making a show happen can mean engaging in power struggles, dissenting or refusing requests as much as it involves adhering to a routine practice to maintain comfort and morale and orient personnel to a venue.

All of these practices and uncertainties that are understood as part of doing whatever is necessary to make the concert happen constitute the everyday life of live music. Chapter 3 has shown that everyday life is constructed and maintained by support personnel on tour at the same time that doing so is part of the everyday life of live music. It has given some insight into the taken-for-granted aspects and activities that are minimally understood and rarely accessible outside of the industry, and has recognized that they are integral to the realization of live music.

Chapter 4

Looking After Musicians

As the name suggests, the tour manager is responsible for managing the tour. If live music is the purpose and daily objective of a tour, musicians are its central component. In this way, the most significant aspect of the TM's job is to look after musicians. The TM is the "person who goes on tour to … look after the administration of the band day-to-day" (Andy 2017). A TM at Venue A summarized his job as being "primarily" based on managing musicians while the author of a guidebook on tour management stressed that "first and foremost, a [tour] manager gets paid to take care of the band" (Workman 2012: 312). To "look after" or "take care of" artists is to effectively attend to the necessary tasks that relate to their working lives on tour that enable the realization of live music events. The proximity in which TMs work with musicians symbolizes this vital aspect of their roles. They work alongside musicians throughout the duration of the tour, travel in the same transit vehicle with artists, and accompany them to venues and on off-site promotional tasks. On show days, the efforts of TMs have been realized the moment the house lights go down, the crowd cheers and the artist walks onstage.

Chapter 4 examines how TMs look after musicians and the attributes of their working relationship. It argues that the tour manager's efforts in relation to musicians is a significant factor in the realization of concerts and to understanding the everyday life of live music. It shows that the parameters of the TM's role are adjustable and, at times, ambiguous, and provides insight into the type and nature of activities that mark their working relationship with musicians. The chapter begins by discussing various factors involved in defining the TM's role, and outlines key characteristics and their significance. It then moves to analyze the ways that TMs look after

musicians on tour through an exploration of essential daily activities. The section that follows examines the use of the term "babysitter" that is commonly applied to TMs to gain further insights about the work they do in relation to musicians. The chapter then concludes with a summary of findings.

Defining the Role

The role of the TM is versatile. It is not standardized nor presented in a formal job description and the exact responsibilities vary with and are shaped according to context. The role is defined, first, on the basis of the size and requirements of a tour, and therefore its division of labour, as stated in Chapter 1. Second, it is determined by the specific needs and preferences of the artist for whom a TM works. In this way, their roles are *artist specific* as they are defined by and change according to the particular musicians for whom they work on a given tour, and to which TMs correspondingly adjust their practices. Tour management is essentially a custom-designed service based on individual artists and the features of their tours. Third, the role can consist of a wide range of tasks and responsibilities that vary in kind and shape the working lives of TMs (see Hart 2011: 1). In this way, TMs negotiate and establish boundaries to define the limits of their roles prior to accepting a position and the start of the tour.

TMs view flexibility as a necessary attribute of their roles and artists as a determining factor in defining them. Adaptability is an asset as it allows for differences between musicians and creates the possibility of tailoring the role. TM Glen (2019) does not "think my role should be heavily defined as in 'a TM does this.' Yeah, I don't think a TM should always do this, I think you should define your own role with whatever artists." Former TM Mark Workman (2012: 315) explained that "every artist is "different from the last. Each one of them is a different personality with different needs and expectations." TM Amy (2018) likened the role to

project manager would be like the best description … you're kind of overseeing a lot of people, you're making sure all the components work … it's kind of a little bit of psychologist and stuff thrown in … because that is part of project management to handle different personalities.

Equating tour management with project management substantiates that the former changes on a case-by-case basis. These quotes confirm the artist-specific nature of the role and underscore its adjustability. Research on support personnel in the film industry helps to further illustrate the malleable nature of their roles. Makeup artists, for example, as the first people who work with actors every day "must also manage each performer's professional concerns and personal sensitivities, sometimes playing the role of confidante and therapist while also crafting a countenance that will be projected across millions of screens" (Curtin and Sanson 2017: 3). Such "excessive labour" is the "hidden, voluntary, unrecognized, and often unwaged aspects" (6) — and "persistent pressure for 'more'" — that can characterize work in the cultural industries. Workers in the film industry see such responsibilities as an unavoidable part of their jobs and "grudgingly accept" them (7).

The notion of excessive labour highlights the possibility for such types of activities to infiltrate the working lives of cultural workers and calls attention to the array of tasks that are unknown or taken for granted. However, the idea of excessive labour is useful for understanding tour management not because it is the same but due to the fact that it is different and does not easily map onto the ambiguous job description of a TM. While in the film industry such activities are deemed in excess of usual job duties, for TMs, the types of activities and responsibilities, and the degree to which they take on particular tasks is defined and determined. In other words, what may be considered an act of excessive labour to a makeup artist could be understood as a normal part of the TM's role, and would not be considered in excess of their job expectations. As such, TMs do not view nor accept those tasks as unavoidable. The potential for

excessive labour does exist, and the nature of it falls into similar categories. The difference is that the definition is fluid and efforts are made to prevent excessive labour through advance negotiations, as this chapter will discuss. The nature of their roles means that what is in and outside of acceptability changes with context. This is related to the TM's own comfort level and tolerance for specific responsibilities and personalities, and to the boundaries they set and learn to determine.

Defining the role is significant because expectations influence the TM's working practices. Artists may want or need more involvement from the TM. Others are more "self-sufficient" in research respondents' terms. Different types of demands may be placed on the TM in terms of the nature of activities and interpersonal conduct. In terms of working with musicians, the aspect of the job that varies and requires defining is typically related to personal considerations. TMs expressed a range of views as to what is acceptable and expected of them.

> …it'll often be on the more personal side of things, like … you need to be a TM but on your days off you're expected to go shopping or you'll be expected to look after the artist in this way or that way … Or … this artist is explosive and difficult, can you cope with that, can you be a punching bag without just losing your shit and shouting at them? You will be expected to be a brick wall that gets shouted at occasionally (Glen 2018).

Amy (2018) took a clear position on the personal elements she considers to be the TM's job, which implies that she believes that she has a degree of responsibility for musicians.

> Aside from business aspects of the gig, it's our job to keep an eye on the people on the tour and know what's going on, assist with resolving any conflict, get people out of sticky situations if they get in one, try and make sure they get some sleep, call doctors if they're sick.

Such activities require a much more personal involvement on the part of TMs in maintaining the everyday lives of musicians. The notion put forth in Chapter 3 that support personnel must do whatever it takes to make a show happen extends into the interpersonal context in such cases. However, TMs may change their perspectives during their careers, and perceive musicians as

being responsible and accountable for their own lives. The extent to which TMs believe they need to monitor musicians' behaviour may diminish with experience.

> … as a TM of a young, successful band who are having a great time, I thought it was my job to crack the whip and make sure that …you know, go and drag them out of clubs when they had to get on a bus, that kind of thing, cause it was my responsibility to make the show happen. What I never took on board for a long time was that if they want to stay out partying until 5 and then the bus is four hours late the next day that's their fault, not mine. If they can't get up and get on a plane and you have to buy new plane tickets for 12 people because your transport hasn't been able to leave until they got on it, that's their fault, not mine (Glen 2019).

Such activities that were previously seen as an essential part of the job later come to be recognized as outside its expectations. The views of artist management may also influence the TM's tasks in the personal aspects of working with an artist. Some may state their opinion while others will not; in the case of the former, "some would say 'no that's your responsibility get them on that plane' whatever. So there's an elastic dynamic between management, tour management and the artist that you have to find the balance is right" (Glen 2019). The ability for artist management to overrule the TM highlights the ambiguous relationship the latter have with power and authority, which will be discussed in more detail. Regardless of the nature of their artist-specific roles and expectations, it is ultimately the TM's decision as to whether they are willing to adapt through their choice to accept the position or not. "I think if you get warned about it in advance, you've signed up for it … Take the job or don't take the job, it's up to you" (Glen 2018).

The parameters of their roles are initially discussed and determined during the hiring process in consultation with artist management. It is necessary to briefly explain the latter role in order to understand and differentiate it from the TM. The artist manager oversees all aspects of musicians' careers (Reynolds 2012: 154). They represent artists in all business affairs and advise them on logistical and financial decisions (Reynolds 2008: 12). Musicians hire them as a

competitive strategy and in order to gain access to music markets (Jones 2012: 96). Artist managers are not fully involved in the daily activities of a concert, and are typically not part of the touring party but may attend specific shows (Reynolds 2008: 11). Returning to the hiring process, the TM's goal is to become aware of an artist's particularities, understand the types of activities that will be required and establish the acceptable tasks and limits of the role. Amy (2018) stated that TMs must "draw your lines, draw them early and don't cross them." This is particularly important because "especially [with] touring, whatever you offer to do" will become part of the TM's job (ibid.). Workman (2012: 313), in his guidebook about tour management, similarly expressed that TM's "should be honest up front" about what they are and are not willing to do before being hired. They should also avoid making assumptions about the types of duties an artist expects (ibid.). Artists may be accustomed to the practices of a previous TM, but a new person in that role may have a different approach. Research respondents explained that artist management will usually offer some insights and guidance, but that it is fundamentally dependent on TMs' initiative to ask questions.

A serious and extreme example demonstrates how the artist-specific nature of the role, the need to set boundaries and the degree of a TM's comfort level come together and operate in practice to define the role. TMs may be offered positions that would involve working for artists with substance abuse problems. The topic of alcohol and drugs as a component of musicians' lifestyles has been minimally examined (Raeburn 1987, Groce 1991, Forsyth, Lennox and Emslie 2016, Bennett [1980] 2017). It has not, however, been considered as a mediating factor between musicians and the personnel who work around them. Working for artists with substance abuse problems can create a stressful and exhausting work experience for TMs. Early in his

career, Glen (2017) worked for an artist with long-standing and well-known addictions. He recounted the experience of ultimately choosing to leave the tour due to the difficulties it created.

> …till I couldn't take it anymore. His substance abuse or addiction is not a secret. And just exhausting dealing with it … Yeah. It's just tiring, you know. I very quickly said to him, and he's been touring for years … 'if you want to do that, I'm not getting it for you.' Long conversations with the management who had taken him to Harley Street[*] and they'd looked at getting him clean for years, and he was just having none of it. I don't think he was ready for it at the time. His alcoholism alone is pretty extensive, so … one show in three would be spectacular … And one show in three would be a car crash cause he was just in the wrong cycle of up and down … storming off the tour a couple times and I'd talk him back, I'm quite good at that. It just became tiring. Didn't want to do it anymore.

Workman (2012: 312) wrote that dealing with an artist's substance abuse can be a "scary situation … especially when you're in charge of taking care of them." Part of this is related to how TMs are not "drug and alcohol counselors[s]" and are likewise not equipped with the methods or trained to address the needs of people confronting such difficulties (313). TMs also potentially put their legal status at risk if they are involved in the process of acquisition of illegal substances.

The close proximity in which TMs work with musicians can also raise questions about responsibility and the degree and nature of their involvement in aspects related to substance abuse in artists' lives. High-profile cases such as Amy Winehouse have generated debates about the extent to which people around an artist, including those in management positions, can seem enabling, neglectful and ultimately exploitative by failing to help musicians get the care they need or recognize the extent of their problems (see Gross and Musgrave 2020: 2, 130). Scholars have noticed consistent viewpoints held by workers in the music industries that "imply that the health and wellbeing of musicians was not just their own personal responsibility but should … be shared by the formal organisations and structures of the music industries … and that this should

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[*] Harley Street is a street in central London that is well known for its variety of private and specialized healthcare clinics.

be embedded within working practices" (ibid.: 129). It has even been debated whether a strict, all-encompassing legal liability that covers all personnel working directly with artists should be put in place in the form of a "duty of care" (128–134).[71] The risk inherent in the music industries, the nature of long-term working relationships, and the unpredictability of musical work make the development of best practices a more likely solution, however (134).

The working relationship between TMs and musicians on the road puts them in direct contact on a daily basis. Glen (2018) spoke to having reflected on such concerns in relation to his own role. He described "putting myself in [Winehouse's TM's] situation," contemplating how he would feel and asking himself a variety of questions regarding responsibility, awareness and intervention. The distinction between "trust" and "care" usefully characterizes the TM's position in such cases. A "climate of trust assures that persons will have the right trustworthy intentions" but does not make certain that they will do what is needed nor does it provide that "persons are proficient at meeting the needs of the vulnerable" (Held 2006: 57).

Research respondents agreed that TMs are ultimately not responsible for protecting or enabling artists in such circumstances. Amy (2018) stated that "if you're knowing that [a musician's] gotta take something to get onstage, I don't think it's a TM's responsibility." Her approach to dealing with such situations is to try not to engage in the first place. She "just won't take the job. Like if I know somebody is … well known as being a drug addict or just whatever, I would just be like no." Choosing not to work with such artists prevents any risk to both parties. Glen (2018) says the "best thing I think to do in those situations is openly discuss it with management, who will be aware of the situation. I think it's much more of management's side of

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[71] Gross and Musgrave (2020: 129) provide the following definition: "In legal terms, the duty of care confers a legal responsibility to act in accordance with an ideal of reasonable care so as to prevent the occurrence of 'foreseeable' personal harm to others, which can include mental as well as physical harm."

things whether they intervene." Workman (2012: 313) also does not "believe it's the tour manager's job to play wet nurse to a musician who's abusing drugs or alcohol" but notes that it "usually ends up in the tour manager's lap whether he likes it or not." The artist management may be aware and able to offer guidance but "when it comes down to it, they're in an office in London and you're in South America" (Glen 2018) meaning that on tour it is the TM who is ultimately the person working with an artist on a daily basis.

Rather than TMs directly intervening, should artists have substance abuse problems any course of action "has to be artist-led, they have to make the decision that they want to change their behaviour if it's not working for them" (Glen 2018). As the support personnel hired specifically for the purposes of a tour, TMs may subtly call attention to the issue if it is having an effect on the concerts themselves.

> So you talk to them and see what they want and then try and support it. It's difficult from your point of view to point out that the shows are going a bit raggedy, might be worth taking [artist] to the side and going 'how you feeling, that wasn't the best was it?' Try and get them to make that decision themselves. But, yeah, you just have to … get them from show to show with as little fuss as possible. It doesn't involve taking their booze away if they're asking for it (Glen 2018).

TMs' responsibilities ultimately are based on looking after musicians in order to ensure that live music events happen. In this way, the specific habits of an individual musician only require attention if they negatively impact the quality of the shows and the continuity of a tour, of which TMs are in charge. Trying to intervene or mitigate more generally could also risk or compromise the ability for musicians to do their jobs successfully, which could create further problems for the tour. The issue of substance abuse further illuminates the difficulty of and significance in defining the TMs role and its boundaries. It also further clarifies that the TM's role is artist-specific and determined by their own willingness to adjust, and by how they choose to or refrain from working with particular musicians.

When TMs take a position, they must get to know and understand the particular

musicians for whom they work. This practice is an extension of the artist-specific nature of their

roles as it allows them to more accurately tailor them to meet the artist's needs. As they come to

understand the musicians for whom they work and can base their practices around them,

knowing an artist well enables greater proficiency and efficiency in their working lives. TMs try

to "understand their psyche, what do they need from me as a …tour manager" (Glen 2017).

Doing so is also an investment that creates greater potential for a sustained working relationship.

To "last with any band, you must learn what makes them happy and content and, even more so,

what does not" (Workman 2012: 315). Glen (2019) described the process of making travel

decisions and arrangements in coordination with the artist he works for.

> They're often very compartmentalized about what they're thinking about … there'll only
> be very specific times when you can talk to her about this stuff. She'll go 'no I can't think
> about it just now, can't think about it just now.' And she's not necessarily doing anything
> else, but … she'll go 'no, my head's not there.'

Glen learned to discern when the artist is ready to have such conversations and approaches her to

discuss it then. This demonstrates that TMs tailor their practices around artists and that they

come to do so by getting to know them.

> And then I can recognize when she's okay and I'll go '… can I talk to you about this' and
> then she'll go 'right, go.' And … it'll be something about six months away, 'right, we've
> got two days off there, would you rather go to New York or Boston' or whatever it is and
> she'll try and put herself in that place and think about it and give me an answer to that.

While TMs are responsive to artists, they also work to foresee their needs and prevent problems

from arising. The better a TM knows and understands an artist the more it is possible to

anticipate their needs, manage their expectations and troubleshoot problems, and to do so before

or even without musicians being aware or needing to know (see Chapter 3). A TM is "not only a

problem solver but a problem detective" (Workman 2012: 315) and has a responsibility to "try to

foresee problems arising before they actually occur" (Cook 2011: 78). Working to get to know

artists "better than [they] know [themselves]" means they can "detect when a problem is brewing

… long before it manifests" (Workman 2012: 315). Rather than wait for the artist to tell TMs

what they need, TMs should "[f]igure out what [the artist's] personal needs are" by themselves

and ensure they are dealt with (ibid.). Knowing the artist well facilitates greater initiative on the

TM's part by allowing them to act without needing to consult the artist first and therefore

contributes to the overall smooth running of the tour. Gerry Stickells, the longtime TM of Queen,

described, prior to his death, that understanding and acclimating to an artist's disposition means

"you can usually stay a step ahead" (Sandomir 2019). TMs do so in accordance with the artist's

needs and preferences, but actions and decisions are also based on what the TM *perceives* the

artist wants, or on the TM's own inclinations for dealing with particular situations (see Chapter

3). Their working relationship can involve the negotiation of a power dynamic that is based on

musicians' preferences and the TM's assessment of a situation.

A successful working relationship depends on creating common ground and mutual

understanding. The ability to build trust between the TM and the artist is an essential component.

Glen (2017) recalled an example in which a self-managed duo he worked for provided lists of all

tasks they wanted him to do and would check it over with him. He explained that they would ask

"have you done A, B, C, D, now you're on E.' 'No I haven't done E,' 'why not?'" Their actions

implied that they questioned the TMs' authority and competence, and their lack of trust made the

working relationship difficult and unbalanced. In another case, Glen worked with an artist who

he stated "fully" understood the relationship between the TM and musician.

> …he really appreciated what I was doing and if I said to him, 'no we need to do this
> today and not that' he'd go 'yeah whatever, you've made the choice I trust you.'
> Sometimes we'd chat about it afterwards but he wouldn't question what I was doing. And

I think we fell into that fairly quickly, I think he found that he liked what I did so it just clicked.

The working relationship between an artist and TM works best when the former believes the latter to be competent and trusts the decisions that are made. TMs try to achieve balance and understanding while maintaining authority and autonomy. Trust between them is an essential factor that shapes their working lives and can make the TM's job more or less difficult.

Such examples also highlight that TMs have an ambiguous relationship with power and authority. On one hand, this can be understood in relation to their position as managers. The role of the TM can be equated with "middle management" in an organization. Generally speaking, middle managers are "located below top managers and above first-level supervision in the hierarchy" (Wooldridge, Schmid and Floyd 2008: 1192). In the context of a tour, the TM works for the artist, and though the latter are not managers, their centrality to the live music event and role in shaping the TM's job put them in a position of influence. The TM reports back to artist management and oversees the rest of the touring party, though, as stated, roles can be further divided depending on the size of the tour, as when production-related tasks are delegated to the PM. TM Andy (2017) described the role as "I'd say you're not a manager in terms of a position of authority like in a more conventional workplace, you are managing the activities and the timeline … and the money." As example, the TM has responsibility for expenses associated with the approved budget, but if an emergency occurs, the TM should "definitely seek the [artist] manager's approval before spending any more money" (Reynolds 2008: 16). Even though the TM does make important financial decisions, the artist manager oversees expenses incurred (ibid.). Glen (2019) described a relationship with management that contrasts slightly with that outlined in the statement by Reynolds. The latter's statement was primarily in relation to new artists while Glen works for established musicians, which suggests the former needs to be more

cautious and that TMs are granted more autonomy with experience. As middle managers, TMs

can and do have a degree of autonomy, and are trusted in decision-making, yet artist

management may want to simply verify or maintain awareness of the rationale.

> … I can spend money without having to have everything approved, they trust me just to
> get on with it and make it work, and 'oh suddenly we're 50,000 over budget,' they might
> ask me why and I'll say 'this is the reason' and they'll go 'fine.' … my autonomy on the
> road isn't questioned.

More important than hierarchy to middle management is their combined access to top

management and knowledge of operations (Nonaka 1994). This combination means they

"function as mediators between the organization's strategy and day-to-day activities" (ibid.).

TMs manage expectations and handle the challenges and uncertainties of the everyday life of live

music while working to realize the goals of musicians and the requests of artist management.

Clem Gorman (1978: 39) gave a relevant example of a TM who described that he gets

> involved in management-type decisions sometimes, in fact I'm the middle-man between
> management and road crew, and sometimes between management and band, because
> I have to have a say in what venues we can and cannot do, whether they're too small,
> acoustically unsuitable, or whatever.

Similarly, middle managers "work as a bridge between the visionary ideals of the top and the

often chaotic reality on the frontline of business … They even remake reality according to the

company's vision" (Nonaka 1994: 32).

TMs ultimately move between positions of authority and subordination. Like middle

managers, they have some ability to influence decisions and, as stated, negotiate their job content

(Kankkunen 2014: 341). As a type of middle manager, their working lives are marked by "role

conflict" given the relative incompatibility of the norms and expectations associated with being a

leader with those of being a subordinate (Anicich and Hirsh 2017a, b). Such conflict or

contradiction in the notion of management was also observed by Raymond Williams (1983) and

applied to artist management by Mike Jones (2012: 89). It is also useful for understanding TMs. Williams (1983: 189) found that the first usage of the term was from the Latin *manus* ("hand") and was adopted in English from "maneggiare" a medieval Italian word that refers to handling horses or driving horse-drawn vehicles. This can be linked to such terms as "taking the reins of power" and "being in the driving seat" (Jones 2012: 89). The second usage is also from Latin and comes from *mansionem* or "a large dwelling or early form of hotel" and was adopted in English from the medieval French terms *ménage* or *ménager*, referring to "household" (Williams 1983: 190). This meaning of management aligns it with "housekeeping" or a more "hands-off" form concerned with attention to detail that differs from the "hands on" usage based on the idea of leading (Jones 2012: 89). The usages have merged, but each are still evident in practice (Williams 1983, Jones 2012). Jones (2012: 89) notes that artist management is "not a clearcut undertaking" as the role can involve the expectation to "be a leader while checking constantly that there are always guitar strings, valid passports; and that there is always money in the bank." Such contradiction in a context that is "light on rule-bound behaviour" can be "an unrecognised source of irritation and tension" (ibid.). In other words, these disparate sets of responsibilities put the TM in a position that moves between opposite ends of the hierarchical spectrum and can create difficulties in defining their occupational identities.

Middle managers have a "complicated relationship" with power because it is "activated and experienced in the context of interpersonal relationships" (Anicich and Hirsh 2017a, b). The relationship between the TM and musicians is marked by the potential for conflict between them based on the question of authority. In turn, this creates "role strain" on the former that can affect role performance. The TM is essentially hired to perform a specific service, which lends to the notion that "the customer is always right." As outlined in the Introduction, musicians typically

have a higher social status than TMs. However, like that of a tour guide in the tourism industry, the "competent performance" of the TM's role relies on "temporary authority over his clients for the length of the tour, in a manner similar to that enjoyed by most professionals, such as physicians or lawyers" (Cohen 1985: 23). In the case of tour guides, the potential for conflict is based on an absence of clear professionalization. For TMs, this would unlikely be a cause given the accepted informal practices in the music industries. Rather, it is based on the implicit effects of musicians' status and the payment arrangement between them. TMs are paid from the tour's budget, and their fees are understood as a reduction of the artist's earnings. Musicians hire and pay TMs directly and, in this sense, are relative authority figures as their "boss." Like artist managers, TMs are essentially "service provider[s] to musicians" and confront the "dilemma that a servant is hired to effectively be a leader" (Jones 2012: 90). This arrangement raises questions about authority and TMs and musicians may engage in power struggles "with no clear guidelines for their resolution" (Cohen 1985: 23). The financial arrangement and the working dynamic between TMs and musicians reveal that the relationship is marked by an inherent tension. Glen (2017) recounted an incident that illustrates this tension. He lost his job with an artist over a disagreement about a birthday party being held on the tour bus.

> I lost my job … because I refused to let the guitar player have a birthday party with a load of strangers on the tour bus. I went 'no they're not coming on,' put my foot down, just went 'no.' I have a crew upstairs who need to go to bed for starters, they all start work at 8 in the morning and you want these guys on who we don't know on the bus all night, travelling to the next city. And then I'm gonna have to kick them all off in the morning and they're gonna ask me where the train station is.

This shows a clear disconnect between the responsibility of the TM, the interests of the tour and the desires of the artist. He was working in what he perceived as the best interest of the band and tour, but this was at odds with the artist's interpretation of the situation. As the tour bus functions as a temporary home, security concerns and the wellbeing of the rest of the touring party are

essential considerations. Allowing strangers on the bus is a practice that is generally discouraged by TMs. However, if the touring party decides that visitors can be brought onto the bus, they should establish rules regarding why and to what extent guests are permitted (Atkins 2007: 257).

> I didn't believe that was the best thing for the tour, I think that would have been really disruptive, could easily potentially even resulted in a broken bus, a very pissed off bus driver, lost or stolen money or lost or stolen laptops or crew that could quit cause they didn't get a wink's sleep and they have a job to do in the morning (Glen 2018).

He suggested a compromise with the artist instead, offering to arrange a hotel for the party and a train to the next city the following day, but the artist did not comply and "burst into tears." The artist resisted the TM despite the latter being hired to provide a service that is intended to work in the interest of the tour and the artist. TM Iain Williamson affirmed that it is "in the band's interest for the TM to be in charge" (Simpson 2010). A lack of clear definition of authority can present problems, and TMs ultimately use their best judgement without having a clear sense of the boundaries.

> They're the boss, it's their job, it's their gig, they're paying you, but … I refuse to say yes to everything. I won't say yes to dangerous things, that's the hardest line and that's the nub of being good or bad at it, is finding that line. It moves, the line moves and you've got to watch it all the time and decide what you're comfortable with and what you aren't (Glen 2017).

This also suggests that the grounds for firing a TM are unclear and subject to an artist's discretion. TMs are accountable for both the tour and the artist, and such an occurrence demonstrates that they can conflict. The fact that this role is defined in a relationship with the artist at once enables TMs to do their jobs while it can also present risk. Though they attempt to define their roles in advance, the expectations can be complicated by incompatible interests and interpersonal disagreements. Foregrounding the overall interest and safety of the tour and the touring party is the TM's responsibility; being dismissed for doing so suggests that the boundaries of the role are open to interpretation. TMs make their best judgements but the tension

between providing a service and being a leader means they can be overruled by those in a more clearly established and consistent position of power. The next section will provide an overview of the significance of the TM's role in the everyday life of live music.

<center>**The Significance of the Tour Manager's Role**</center>

The TM's role on a tour can be divided into three stages. The first is to organize the tour, which happens prior to the tour actually starting. TMs generally become involved once the tour dates have been booked, which is a process handled between the artist management and the booking agent. The booking agent is in charge of finding remunerated performance work for musicians, negotiating with promoters and booking concerts (Reynolds 2012: 156, Reynolds 2008: 17, 19). They are not amongst the personnel who comprise the touring party. This position works in liaison with the promoter and artist management to plan the specific dates. The next stage is to advance the tour, which is a dynamic process that begins prior to the tour's commencement but continues on a daily basis as it progresses, as discussed in Chapters 1, 2 and 3. Third are the activities involved on a daily basis on tour and the closely related working relationship with musicians during that time, which are the central focus here. TMs both formulate and implement aspects of the tour, which further reflects their role as middle management.

The previous section established that TMs' roles are artist specific insofar as they are shaped and defined in relation to specific musicians. Looking after an artist day to day means that TMs' jobs are also *artist centric*. The attendant set of tasks and responsibilities fall into four categories. TMs work to *provide* a conducive and comfortable environment for musicians on tour that enables focus on and preparedness for live performance. This includes the coordination and communication of all necessary information to facilitate the realization of live music events. TMs *protect* musicians from conditions and circumstances that have the potential to negatively

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affect them. They *support* musicians in their endeavours, live music career goals, personal preferences and to meet their daily needs on tour. As some of their activities have effects that "actually sustain persons" and involve work that "responds to their vulnerabilities" (Held 2006: 57), TMs *care* for musicians to some extent. Some of the findings presented in Chapter 3 are applicable here. Glen (2018) summarized the goal of the TM's responsibilities as follows:

> Ideally you are there to facilitate their shows as smoothly as possible with as little friction, as little difficulty for the artist as possible. You need to get them and the crew and the equipment from place to place with the least fuss in the most efficient manner. And produce the shows that they want with the least fuss … to be as invisible as possible while negotiating and solving problems and generally making their life easier, easy as possible, take as much off their shoulders so that they only have to think about the show and doing a presentation.

TM Malcolm Cook (2011: 15) similarly characterized the role as being to "ensure the smooth running of the show … and generally ensure that the tour was as trouble-free as possible." TMs are hired to carry out duties that "free executants from normal household chores" (Becker 1982: 4). Making art — or playing live and touring — is time and energy intensive and "has to be diverted from other activities" (3). TMs alleviate an expenditure of energy and enable its direction toward live performance while also ensuring that musicians do not go without certain services and that necessary tasks are being dealt with. Brian Hracs (2015) has shown that entrepreneurial musicians encounter difficulties organizing and designating time and energy to the core creative aspects of their working lives due to the number of tasks they must attend to. Applied to the live setting, musicians would risk compromising performance without the assistance of TMs. TMs create, and protect, the space for musicians to ensure their focus on and readiness for performance. As Chapter 3 established in the context of a show day, they work to maintain consistency for the artist.

Tour management is "a compassionate understanding of the stress of being on the road" that can help, or hinder, an artist (Atkins 2007: 253). Glen (2017, 2019) characterized the "principal role" and a motivating factor of his job as being "the satisfaction about taking stress away from artists so that [the] performance happens." TM Paolo Francesco identified that the primary part of his role is "making sure your artist is comfortable while they are doing their job" (Raven 2015). In the same way that a porter bringing coffee to writer Anthony Trollope each morning was seen by the author as integral to completing his daily literary work (Becker 1982: 1), the variety of tasks TMs carry out are essential to musicians' working practices. As discussed in Chapter 1, in the early stages of musicians' careers, paying a percentage of earnings to road crew members is deemed worthwhile because it reduces the physical work of touring (Bennett [1980] 2017: 75–76). This pattern continues and evolves at later and more successful stages with a larger division of labour and the efforts of the TM. Musicians hire artist managers to "broker relations with music companies" and, in doing so, they transfer "much operational responsibility to them" (Jones 2012: 78). The same applies to TMs in the context of touring and in daily dealings with live music industry personnel. Musicians rely on TMs to attend to these essential tasks (Small 1999: 9–10), as does the live music industry. If the recording industry depends on the distance between creative managers and musicians to facilitate the latter's autonomy and innovation during the creative process (Stahl 2013: 233, Hesmondhalgh 2013: 32), the concert industry depends on the proximity of TMs to assist musicians for the success of live performance.

The centrality of touring to musicians' careers, as both promotion and remuneration, means live music is a pressurized workplace. Playing live is an important space in which musicians market recordings, test and develop new music and work to establish and maintain a

fanbase (Shuker 2008: 55, 57, Black, Fox and Kochanowski 2007: 154–156). The lucrative

economic value of concerts, ticket prices, competition for audiences, and the site of live

performance as a source of evaluation and authenticity are further contributing factors

(Auslander 2008, Frith et al. 2013, McKinna 2014). Live performance itself is a demanding

endeavour that must be repeated in different locations continuously throughout a tour (McKinna

2014). For musicians, it is a challenge to "maintain freshness at each performance" as each event

can blend into the next (Shuker 2008: 57). Physical stress is also placed on musicians in the live

setting, as was observed and described by TMs. During participant observation, a TM talking

with the promoter at Venue A cited the exhaustion that musicians experience after a concert as a

reason that it is important for him to understand the artists he works for. Glen (2019) observed

the intensity of live performance for various types of musicians.

> Physically it can be extremely demanding as well. You know, a two-hour show five or
> six times a week is can really take its toll. Especially for drummers and things like that
> that are just physically giving their all … I had [artist] at [venue] recently and … it got
> more and more intense and more and more intense as it went on and you know, the last
> few songs … she's just giving it her all and she had to be helped down the stairs
> afterwards, she didn't come across as that onstage but she left it on the field if you like
> and then, just coming off she's like 'just get me to a seat' and straight to the car and just
> like shattered, you know.

Simon Frith et al. (2019: 168–169) have shown that hard work is a common theme in rock

memoirs and much of this discussion is in relation to touring and live performance. They

highlight that the challenge of touring is not only the repetition of live performance but also the

daily promotional efforts such as press interviews and photo shoots. In turn, the attention and

anticipation generated by the press adds pressure on musicians to meet expectations in the live

setting (ibid.). Further, the demands of live music are distinct from those placed on other workers

in the entertainment industries. Film actors may travel to work "on location" and work long and

irregular hours, but they have the safety of retakes and edits. Theatre performance involves a

gruelling schedule of eight shows a week, but actors have understudies should they fall ill or be absent due to other circumstances. Professional athletes also have replacements should they be injured or need to sit a game out. The same conventions are not part of the practice of touring. Musicians, in general, do not have backups. An inability to perform means cancellations or the complications of rescheduling shows. In these ways, looking after musicians and their needs is in the interest of the overall success of a tour. The next section of Chapter 4 will discuss the daily activities TMs engage in while looking after musicians.

Daily Activities on Tour

A TM's daily activities are very similar to those of a tour guide in the tourism industry. The context in which they work and the purpose of their tasks contrast, but they share essential responsibilities that shape their working practices. To frame them, this thesis adapts Erik Cohen's (1985) four major components of the tour guide's role to our examination of the TM. The first, the instrumental component, relates to the TM's purpose in ensuring the "smooth accomplishment of the tour" and in "leading the way" (11). After the advanced determination of the itinerary, the TM handles the "spatio-temporal direction" of the tour, which involves properly following its direction and adapting when necessary (ibid.). The duties that involve handling the tour's logistics means they are hired to guide the touring party for the overall purpose of realizing live music events.

In doing so, the TM is responsible for the "safe and efficient conduct" of musicians (12). On one hand, this means ensuring, to the degree possible, their security, safety and comfort. On the other, the TM should "exercise control" by preventing them from breaking away from the tour or group, collecting stragglers and monitoring the pace of movement (ibid.). TMs have to be concerned about musicians' whereabouts because live music events depend on their presence. In

the tourism industry this practice is sometimes called the "shepherding and marshalling" (Holloway 1981: 380) function of the guide. TMs engage in similar practices when necessary. Glen (2018) described having to "chase" musicians when they became distracted by local amenities near a venue. Former Coldplay TM Glen Rowe expressed a similar experience on his Twitter account when he described being in New York City with a different artist and having "no idea where any of the band members are." The practice is "very much like herding cats. It's like every time you turn around and one of them is wandering off doing something" (Glen 2018). Former backline technician Ken Barr (2009: 51) similarly characterized TMs as "like the farmer chasing all his chickens and trying to get them together." Such circumstances suggest a sense of distraction on the part of artists and create additional tasks and greater obligation in the daily working practices of TMs. In this context, their function as leaders or guides is to some degree compromised and their role becomes a struggle to control or hold a situation together. The role of the runner, discussed in Chapter 3, functions as an extension of this responsibility when accompanying musicians in the local area. The runner is knowledgeable about the local area and is the touring party's connection to it, which means it is both logical and convenient that they should accompany musicians. However, it is also another means by which the latter are "marshalled," and knowledge of artists' whereabouts is maintained. It is a way of knowing where they are and ensuring that they will return. At Venue B, a runner accompanied the lead singer and keyboard player to visit the city and it was announced in the green room when the musicians returned.

A more extreme example involved an early tour during which Glen (2017) described having to assist heavily intoxicated musicians in boarding an airplane. Here, he equates the

experience with the acquisition of tour management skills, which implies the commonplace

nature of such activities and the extent to which TMs must be able to handle them.

> That was just me, a sound guy and thirteen musicians and no money and a lot of booze. That's where I learnt a lot of my tour management skills, it was like trying to herd cats. Drunk cats, carrying musicians onto a domestic internal flight in such a way that they appear to be awake and sober, marched on past, boarding card, sit down, got away with it.

Musicians' age and the extent of their touring experience can be a factor. Younger, less

experienced musicians tend to need more oversight. The reason for this is connected, in part, to

the backgrounds and life circumstances of musicians. "Young people who are in a band, usually

come from a background of they've not had money and they've been working shitty jobs just to

make this band thing work and they have to watch every penny" (Glen 2019). Musicians have a

long history of having to cobble together a living from multiple types of work and of being

associated with a lower social status (Attali 1985, Ehrlich 1985). Relative success, upward social

mobility and the practices of touring create a change, sometimes suddenly, that introduces new

and unfamiliar circumstances into their lives and likewise has an effect on them.

> …young bands who just start to make it have many different shiny baubles and lights [that] are distracting. They are suddenly in this world, maybe they've been working really hard as a nobody band for years and suddenly they're touring and people are paying them attention and they're having a good time and they're going to places they've never been to before, some of them have never been out of the country before and it's like woah … [their] limits have been taken away … they don't get the chance to necessarily … travel the world in the sort of style they suddenly get access to, so you throw these people into a situation where they're suddenly successful … they can go partying, they can get a bit debauched. It often takes them a long time, and certainly some of the artists I've worked with never necessarily learned it, or learnt it quite late in life when they're health started deteriorating that they need some self-imposed limits in order to run it properly as a business (Glen 2018, 2019).

This situation is not unique to the process of touring. Musicians working in recording studios

have been subject to the same concerns around distraction. In the 1970s and 1980s, residential

recording studios, facilities situated in remote locations in which artists lived temporarily while

recording an album, were deemed particularly attractive settings because musicians could focus rather than be distracted by urban life (see Kielich 2015). The efforts that TMs make to familiarize and acclimatize musicians to the realities of touring, particularly during the early stage of a career, means that TMs are integral to helping artists learn how to tour.

In the same way, older, more experienced musicians need less oversight. Glen (2018) demonstrated the differences, and implied the effect on the TM's role, when he expressed being "lucky" to recently work with an artist who has been touring for several decades.

> They understand that 'hurry up and wait' is touring. So with this lot, there's very little cat-herding as long as you keep the information flowing to them, as long as they know what's going on. They show up on time, they get in the van, they get out of the van, you know. There's an understanding of the routine as well, they like a certain routine, for example.

A major difference is in the artist's response to the TM's communication and the degree to which they follow directives. Instead of needing to be reminded, they simply need to have the information made available to them. The artist's understanding of the nature and realities of touring, and their preference for adhering to a routine show that experience can shape their practices and the TM's experience.

A tour's itinerary means that TMs are under pressure to keep to schedule. They are in charge of ensuring on-time arrivals and departures and maintaining awareness of the amount of time spent during stops on the road. Adhering to the schedule can become an "important source of strain" between TMs and musicians and a source of stress for the former (Cohen 1985: 12). Otherwise routine and mundane tasks can become time consuming and ultimately frustrating for TMs. They also reinforce the time constraint imposed by the itinerary and capture the pressure that TMs' experience in adhering to it. Glen (2018) described an example of stopping for gas while traveling on tour:

If you stop for gas everybody has to think about 'right, do I have to go to the loo or do I need something to eat?' get out and go for it … this happens especially with young bands, somebody goes to the toilet, gets a sausage and comes back and then somebody else goes 'oh, that looks nice' and then they come back and its twenty minutes later and 'actually I need the toilet' and before you know it you've spent an hour in a gas station, which could have been 10 minutes, so your blood pressure tends to go up as a tour manager, fucking get it together. That writ large is everything you know.

He elaborated that musicians gradually come to realize the inconvenience this creates when they see the effects of such delays, and will modify their practices.

Once the first guy starts realizing he's been sitting in the van for 45 minutes after he's been to the toilet they start to get it together, they stop being late for lobby calling because it becomes less stressful at the airport, where you have to hurry and check in. They start trusting you as a tour manager.

The significance of adhering to an itinerary, and the importance of the "instrumental component" of the TM's responsibility in ensuring the smooth progression of a tour, are further evident when musicians defy the latter's communications, and their actions impact a live music event. Such a situation also reiterates the complicated power dynamic between the two parties. The local production manager at Venue A recounted a relevant incident. During a day off in the United States Midwest, a keyboard player flew to Los Angeles to spend the day with his family though the TM had advised against it. In trying to return to the Midwest for a concert, he encountered several flight delays and was also unable to communicate with the touring party because he forgot his phone in LA. He arrived after his own concert had already started and walked onstage during the performance. The efforts of the TM are intended to prevent such problems.

The specific nature of touring, and the manner in which it shapes and affects everyday life, can become a determining factor in organizing an itinerary. It can involve making adjustments in order to meet the needs of specific musicians.

The artist I'm working with at the moment can't sleep, very bad at sleeping on buses, so what I have to do is try and make the drives as short as possible or day drives or fly when possible. Anything up to 4:00 in the morning it'll be, aftershow, drive, anything up to 4:00 in the morning, it'll be get off the bus and check in to the hotel at the next place, which kills everybody else. It's really bad for me, once I get off the bus and check in to the hotel, I can't go back to sleep again. You know, I don't sleep properly for days at a time. But she'll check in at 4:00 in the morning, sleep till noon and she'll be fine (Glen 2019).

TM Ben Price also highlighted an artist's sleep schedule as a significant factor in planning an itinerary based on how the pace of "travelling inevitably means having little time to sleep" (Raven 2015). His approach is that "when booking travel you have to plan to allow [the artist] the most amount of rest possible." In this case, the artist being well rested was also of particular importance in order to ensure that he was able to look after his newborn after returning home (ibid.). These examples demonstrate that TMs arrange travel itineraries in order to accommodate the artist's needs and preferences. It also shows that doing so ultimately benefits the artist while, in the first case, negatively affecting the rest of the touring party. Making such an adjustment for the artist disrupts the lives of the people who work to make musicians comfortable. However, such a trade-off is deemed necessary in order to realize live music events. This activity highlights that being support personnel means foregrounding the interests and meeting the needs of others while those of the TM are compromised and their status as secondary is reinforced.

Cohen's (1985: 12) second component of the tour guide's role involves "responsibility for the cohesion and morale of the touring party." TMs, along with PMs, are involved in making sure the relations between the various members of the touring party work properly and problems that arise are handled. Findings about TMs deviate slightly from Cohen's framework here, however. The extent to which TMs work to keep musicians in "good humor and in high morale" varies (ibid.). TMs are concerned to "keep them happy" by meeting their needs, working according to their preferences, and managing their expectations when circumstances fall short

rather than through the performative tactics or emotional labour utilized by a tour guide. They do not need to agree with artists' particular needs but must also not dismiss them. Rather, they need to take them seriously and recognize them as an essential component to an artist's comfort; the particular reasons such needs exist may emerge during the tour (Atkins 2007: 253). TMs also try to "prevent the emergence of tensions" between musicians, recognize when problems may arise and manage conflicts that occur (Cohen 1985: 12). Doing so strongly depends on their ability to get to know and understand the musicians for whom they work.

Third is the interactional component, which has to do with the ways in which the TM operates as an intermediary between musicians and the local area. These responsibilities include acquiring necessary services and amenities during the tour, which involves working with the local population (i.e., the local crew). This was addressed in Chapter 3 in regard to the rider. Operating as an intermediary also involves integrating the artist into a local setting as well as insulating them from it (13; Schmidt 1979: 454). Doing so is accomplished by positioning themselves between the group and the environment to make it non-threatening (13). During participant observation, TMs demonstrated this aspect of their roles in relation to the availability and features of artists' dressing rooms.

Upon arrival at the venue, usually between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., the TM (or PM if onsite first) will meet with a member of the local crew, usually the hospitality coordinator, and do a "walk through" to assess and assign the available space. Rooms are assigned based on a combination of the venue's particular available space and the number and needs of the artist and larger touring party. A touring party's spatial requirements are specified in the rider. A venue may easily accommodate an all-male four-piece rock band with extra rooms available for hospitality, a production office and the crew. That same venue may present challenges for a six-

member R&B group that features a principal or star performer, a backing band and female backup singers. Spatial arrangements, and the efforts put into them, are indicative of the dominant factor of status in the division of labour, both in the entire touring party and within the individual musical group. As explained in the Introduction, musicians may be "particular sorts of workers" who are "people seeking to do jobs," but in the backstage environment their status as "performers, celebrities, and stars" (Williamson and Cloonan 2016: 8, 10) is central. Dressing rooms tend to be prioritized by the individual status of members of a group, role in the group, and by gender. It is based, in essence, first on the people deemed most important to the performance (e.g., the lead singer, who is also a famous rock icon) and then by gender. Lead or principal/star singers, male or female, are customarily given a private dressing room. If several members of the band have similar status (e.g., they are both primary instrumentalists and comparably famous), they will usually each request a private room in the rider, but the available space may not be sufficient. The remaining members who constitute "the band," or the group of musicians who back the lead singer, often share a room, but genders will not be mixed. Existent studies have indicated that the backstage conditions women encounter on tour are inhospitable and lack privacy (Bayton 1998: 133–134, Kearney 2017: 159–160). Observations contrast significantly with those research findings. Women who are considered part of the primary group of performers, who may or may not have the same status as the principal, are given a private space, though two female backup singers may be allocated a shared room. The privacy accorded women backstage is one of the rare instances where their exceptional place in the male-dominated nature of touring and the music industries more generally works in their favour. Dressing rooms also represent and reinforce the power and respect that women of status occupy in the music industries. In one case at Venue A, male band members were lounging in the

dressing room of a prominent female singer and upon being told that it had been assigned to her, they made panicked exclamations, quickly jumped out of their seats and fled the room.

Dressing room space creates consistency and stability for musicians within the continuous mobility of touring. Ensuring these rooms are suitable and comfortable is likewise an important part of the daily tasks for TMs. Ideally, dressing rooms and green rooms offer musicians privacy and space for relaxation, socializing and preparing for performance. The quality, features and ambiance of dressing rooms vary drastically, however, and the multipurpose nature of venues and quick turnover of concerts mean their facilities may fall short and feature inadequacies. In one case at Venue A, a touring party carried their own amenities, and the TM recreated a "home environment" by temporarily installing turntables and games in the dressing room. Others converted the dressing rooms into rehearsal spaces for artists. More commonly, however, once a venue's available space is assessed and rooms are assigned, TMs will delegate tasks, if and as needed, to the local crew to make any necessary adjustments to the room in time for the artist's arrival. TMs may encounter challenges if the needs of the artist are at odds with the character or resources of the local environment, but they are also in a position to negotiate and manage expectations. The earlier the rooms are assessed and assigned the less of a time constraint is involved in addressing and troubleshooting issues. These requests can be as simple as removing an unused cooler from a dressing room to create more space or as impossible as eliminating the noise emitted from a building's internal ventilation system. TMs pay attention to such details, and make adjustments accordingly, because they can affect not only the artist's comfort during the day, but also the longer trajectory of a tour. Issues such as air conditioning in a dressing room are monitored for the adverse effect they can have on a singer. At Venue B, the

TM explained that the excessive use of air conditioning at some venues during a period of

extreme heat had gradually affected the singer's voice and resulted in the need to cancel a show.

This aspect of a TMs job closely resembles that of a producer's role in a recording studio.

Negus ([1992] 2011: 84) states that producers must create conditions in a recording studio

"which are most conducive to the working style of a particular act." They use several techniques,

ranging from "subtle psychological and social skills involved in creating a dialogue and a

repartee between those involved to physically creating a particular environment" (ibid., Stokes

1976). This directly reflects the selection, and adjustment, of the most suitable rooms for

individual members and the delegation of tasks to the local crew to modify them as needed. In

relation to the touring world, however, Negus's view that producers "create" conditions should

be nuanced. Creating particular conditions can suggest novelty, whereas what TMs are doing is

trying to prevent potential issues or remove noticeable differences. They want space that is

consistent and comfortable so that artists know what to expect. The local production manager at

Venue A, a fifteen-year veteran of the live music industry, captured the difference in comments

toward the end of the concert season. He expressed perplexity at the "obsession" he observes that

touring crew have with *controlling* their environment. His analysis is a useful means to convey

the importance of maintaining consistency and that this is the ultimate purpose of the TM's

actions when assessing and delegating dressing rooms. Creating consistency, or controlling the

environment, is a means to construct and maintain everyday life.

The selection of rooms, and how to adjust their particularities for the duration of the day,

is one of the key moments when a TM's knowledge and understanding of an artist are crucial.

TMs must anticipate the needs of musicians in view of the character of the room. Their ability to

do this effectively can come from years of working with the same artist and clearly

understanding the distinct personalities in a group. TMs use different approaches to determining

suitable rooms and demonstrate variation in the confidence of their choices. At Venue A, one

TM, in charge of a large touring party with multiple artists, took the realistic view that the

number of people to please means it cannot be done all the time. Her method was to look at the

various dressing rooms and imagine how the different acts would react to each room. Another

changed his mind several times, prior to the artist's arrival, about where to put the various group

members. He was particularly concerned about the wardrobe person who he believed would

"freak out" about the ventilation noise in her proposed room and needed a solution to prevent

this.

   Some TMs are less familiar with or completely misjudge an artist's preferences.

Reflecting the evaluative criteria of the local crew, Anastasia, the manager of guest services at

Venue A, observed that the character of a day can be completely changed in such circumstances;

an artist can be "easy," but problems occur if the TM is not capable. This was evident on a show

day with a group consisting of two principal women and two men, one of whom is also a lead

vocalist. They requested three dressing rooms plus a crew/hospitality room. The TM was filling

in for another tour manager and arrived at the venue ninety minutes later than planned, which

generated a time constraint. She initially decided to put the primary woman principal in Dressing

Room 1 and to divide Dressing Room 2 (see Chapter 3) between the men and the second woman.

Doing so meant that the local crew and the promoter had to create a physical divider in the room,

but this could only be fabricated with six-foot moveable dividers. The result failed to create a

truly private space, which the TM was adamant was necessary for the second woman and her

assistant. She also casually yet confidently stated that the men in the group would not mind

which room they were in because they would simply adapt to the space they were given. Upon

arrival in Dressing Room 2, the male principal, in contradiction to the TMs interpretation, was dismayed at having to share space with the second woman principal, especially in such a makeshift manner. He exclaimed that "this sucks" and expressed confusion as to whether he was in the correct room or the crew room. His association of inadequate space with the crew suggested a sense of hierarchy. The TM was noticeably shaken by his unexpected reaction and changes were quickly improvised and coordinated with the promoter and the local crew.

The manner in which space is handled seems to be affected by the relative popularity of an artist. Some performers were older, very well-established artists in their sixties and seventies who have continuously worked, remained household names, and achieved a certain iconic status while experiencing fluctuating popularity across a career. Others were musicians with careers of more than twenty years who were most closely associated with a short period of perhaps one or two album cycles during which they were most well-known and are best remembered for those few songs. TM Mark Workman (2012: 314) explained in his book that one of the most difficult jobs a TM can have is "working for a veteran band that was once much bigger than they are now." He elaborates that the difficulty arises from the fact that such artists have a hard time adjusting to a lower level of touring (ibid., see also Webster 2011: 131).

Venue A held several concerts by bands that experienced their peak popularity during the 1990s, but whose success subsequently diminished, and now generally maintain visibility on tours primarily associated with the nostalgia market, some of them as co-headliners with other artists of the same calibre. Their TMs were particularly dissatisfied with the available space, and their complaints and requests could be interpreted as attempts to cope with their boss's diminished musical relevance. Just as the quality of cultural products reflects on the workers that created them (Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011: 181–199), the popularity and relevance of an

artist is intertwined with a TM's reputation. In one instance, the TM insisted that his band was to receive the bigger room and the "bigger everything." Though the tour was billed as co-headlining, he countered that the other group was actually the support band, and that they were not to share space. This was particularly significant due to the fact that the band relegated to support status had once been the most prominent band to come out of the local area. The TM criticized the appearance of the dressing rooms and articulated that he wanted the band to feel comfortable rather than as though they were in a lunch room. After requesting furniture to replace the large table and chairs in Dressing Room 2, he learned that the only available furniture in Dressing Room 1 could not be moved due to the unit being one interconnected, large, heavy piece. In response, he stated that he "gives up" and instructed the local crew to remove some of the tables from Dressing Room 2. He then complained about the walk from the dressing rooms to catering, concluding that it was a personal affront because the closer placement of the facilities' meeting rooms meant that the touring party got "the short end of the stick." The same distance to catering was interpreted much differently by the TM of an influential band whose lead singer is considered an icon. The second TM was concerned about the singer's privacy and inquired about the closing time of the facility's public area in order to determine the best time for the singer to walk there.

In another instance of a band with diminished popularity, the TM noticed some discolouring and stains on the sofa in Dressing Room 1 and became very concerned about the band seeing them. He requested that the hospitality coordinator re-upholster the sofa before the band arrived three hours later. To make that happen, the hospitality coordinator went to a store, purchased a set of black sheets and attached them with safety pins to the sofa, which met the approval of the TM. Upon inspection after the show, it was unclear if anyone had actually sat on

the sofa or noticed it at all. Enacting power through the management of space gives the illusion that the artist's relevance has continued past its peak by creating a false sense of "star treatment." These TMs use the labour of the local crew to protect the artist, and themselves, from the realities of the artist' career positioning. These instances further indicate the omnipresent influence of status in the working lives of musicians, and how that positioning is negotiated and reflected in the actions of their support staff. Compensating for diminished status requires more effort whereas consistent status is ordinary. In both cases, TMs are aware of the ways that status can or does affect the artists they support and perform their roles accordingly.

Maintaining control over the environment also involves regulating the behaviours of musicians as needed. In the backstage area at Venue A, the handling of alcohol acquired for the rider, and its placement in dressing rooms, was a concern for TMs and other members of the touring party. In some cases, placing alcohol in the dressing room was completely acceptable and not seen as a potential problem, while others did not want any or all of the alcohol to be readily available. In one case, after Dressing Room 2 was set by hospitality staff, the TM removed two bottles of wine from the room during the afternoon, saying he did not "want to encourage excess." A road manager asked the local crew to leave all of the alcohol in her production office except beer, which was allowed to be placed in the band room. She kept the principal singer's liquor and wine with her until she determined the suitable time for placement in Dressing Room 1. Regulating alcohol also occurs outside of the dressing room space, and the need to do so does not necessarily diminish with age. The TM for a band, the majority of whose members are in their 70s, requested an additional supply of alcohol to be purchased for transport to the next city. When the local crew returned with the alcohol, the TM and the PM immediately hid it in the

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bottom of a flight case, burying it beneath other items. The TM stated that if they did not do so, "it will all be gone."

Dealing with alcohol is among the considerations and judgement calls TMs make when attending to musicians' requests, based on the acquired knowledge of their personalities and habits. TMs appear to take these decisions upon themselves, without the input or request of the artist, meaning that they effectively say no to musicians in a non-confrontational manner. This regulation is ultimately based on trust between the two groups, as part of the larger function of the TM's role to attend to the tour and the artist's needs, but it is also a key component of the TM's aim to make the concert happen by preventing an undesirable outcome. These examples also show that the regulation of musicians does not only fall onto the TM, but is a collective effort on the part of the touring party to maintain consistency in the working day.

The interactional component can be additionally applied to how TMs manage relations between fans and musicians in cities across a concert tour. Part of the everyday life of a TM involves interacting with the fans of the musicians for whom they work. This activity also reveals the ways that TMs protect musicians. The majority of this interaction occurs on show days when the artist and TM walk in and out of a venue as they arrive or leave. Arrival at a venue is a carefully coordinated activity, and the logistics of it vary with type and location of venue. The arrangement of an arena, for example, can greatly inhibit fans' access to musicians as buses tend to pull into enclosed areas or inside the venue. The TM will notify the PM, who is already on site, of the impending arrival of the TM and artist to the venue. The PM will help to prepare the stage door by communicating with venue security and, if possible or necessary, ensuring that there is a barrier set up to facilitate smooth entry to the venue for the artist. When artists have offstage contact with fans, TMs oversee and manage the interactions between them.

As TM Tom Begley told *The Guardian*, "most bands want to meet the fans" (see also Baym 2018) and for the TM, it is a "juggling act between allowing some access and autographs and ensuring privacy when they want it" (Simpson 2015b). These types of situations usually include autograph signing and occur because the artist wants to and has agreed to do so. Artists' willingness to sign autographs, and the amount of time they spend doing so, varies enormously.

> Meeting 500 screaming fans certainly isn't for everyone. I've had musicians say, 'I don't want to take 700 selfies with the fans. I've just put on my pyjamas.' On the other hand, whatever needs to be done is the tour manager's job. If the singer wants to stand in the cold for an hour and a half signing autographs, I'll stand there with them (Tom Begley in Simpson 2015b).

Signings tend to occur upon arrival and/or departure from a venue, at the stage door, and are often mediated with the assistance of venue security, who are briefed in advance by the TM about an artist's signing practices, and the physical barrier that is set up between musicians and fans, though there are exceptions to this arrangement. This is typically a relatively straightforward process during which time fans get autographs and TMs oversee and help manage the interaction between them and the artist. They also try and prevent situations that are at odds with the artists' wishes. These include excessive requests for autographs from the same person, or "autograph hounds" or eBayers who are not fans and are only interested in autographed materials in order to sell them.

Fans seeking autographs can create unintended problems in the working day of a TM. At Venue B, a fan mailed a guitar pickguard to be signed by the band's frontwoman, who agreed to the request. However, while the sender included a return address, there was no pre-paid return envelope. The TM was annoyed and frustrated by this as it put the touring party in the position of having to take the time and spend money to return it to the sender. The TM explained that had

they included a pre-paid envelope, it would not be a problem.[72] Such small instances create

unanticipated and additional tasks for TMs that become further complicated because they require

the resources of a local area that may not be familiar.

TMs also function as gatekeepers between fans and musicians. They are commonly given

gifts and letters from fans to deliver to artists. The handling of such items, consistent with many

aspects of the touring world, varies greatly. Research findings for this study suggest that many

times such items that are given to TMs do not actually reach musicians. The TM's role as a

mediator in this sense can be seen in how fans will give gifts and letters directly to musicians

when possible, but musicians may not receive them when given to the TM. Glen (2018) stated

that the TM may discuss having received items intended for the artist with them, and the

musician may be compliant in not receiving them. In some cases, the artist is simply

uncomfortable with or embarrassed by such gifts and letters, while other artists do welcome the

receipt of such items while on tour.

TMs at times exhibit a sense of reluctance or awkwardness at handling such items and

fan encounters, which is based more on their own reactions and feelings about a given situation

than it is to do with managing artist's preferences and expectations. Part of this has to do with the

nature of some of the letters and encounters. Glen (2018) described his experience:

> …every night when you hear about my sister's got leukemia it gets pretty depressing. It's
> a constant thing … I've got somebody with a fatal illness that needs a request from the
> stage or would like to meet [the artist] or, just all the time … With every artist I work for.
> So you start to be a bit hard-hearted about it, ignore all of it … Sometimes you get a
> picture of them with a drip and a ventilator. It can be quite upsetting.

In some cases, TMs protect the artist from such interactions with or correspondence from fans. In

contrast, Nancy Baym (2018: 42–43) indicated that musicians encounter "all sorts of bleeding

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[72] See Cavicchi's (1998: 67) study of Bruce Springsteen fans for further evidence that a pre-paid return envelope is an effective
way to acquire an autograph.

heart situations" through correspondence and meetings and take "particular joy in feeling they had soothed people who were suffering from illnesses." This further supports how the practices of touring and its management vary according to artist preferences. However, the practice of gatekeeping for TMs means confronting difficult and delicate situations. TMs risk exposure to sensitive subject matter with which they are not trained to deal with and which can be a source of stress. This shows that the kinds of activities TMs encounter in an effort to do their jobs also come with effects, and that the act of supporting another person has the potential to put them in situations they find uncomfortable. Such occurrences indicate the extent of the support given to artists while potentially leaving TMs vulnerable. In doing so, status and hierarchical differentials between musicians and TMs are reinforced and expressed by who gets protected and who does the protecting. While many TMs, based on their own experiences with music during their youth, "understand the feeling" (Begley in Simpson 2015b) of fans wanting to meet or have some type of contact with musicians, Glen's quote also reveals that TMs learn to protect themselves as a result of situations that surpass their limits and comfort levels by developing a detached approach to interacting with fans. A veteran TM at Venue A also expressed reluctance about having to engage with fan correspondence. He summarized his feelings by scrunching up his face, as if cringing, as he made a comment about "when you open something from fans." However, their frame of mind about interacting with fans also relates to the kinds of personal relationships and familiarity that develops over years of working with the same people, as discussed in Chapter 3. Such familiarity creates a normalcy that greatly differs from the special status accorded musicians by fans, and that is maintained by distance and anonymity. This further indicates that an artist's status, and their differences with others, is a normal part of the everyday life of live music.

The uncertain nature of fan-artist interaction that TMs encounter has a longer history. As an example, the former TM for The Animals, Tappy Wright (2009), recounted a 1964 incident at the Ed Sullivan Theatre in New York. As the band and touring party entered the venue, a girl had three of her fingers severed after being slammed in the backdoor entrance to the theatre as she tried to meet the band. The girl was brought into the building and Wright and the band tried to comfort her while the drummer called an ambulance. Wright noted that she seemed more attentive to having met the band than to her bleeding hand (23–24). While this is an extreme example, it demonstrates a breadth of the spectrum of kinds of situations which TMs encounter and must attend to when working with artists in the everyday life of live music.

TMs are also involved in facilitating pleasant and enjoyable situations for fans. Requests are made, and sometimes granted, for onstage marriage proposals, and some artists permit and encourage fans to dance on the stage during parts of the concert. In these cases, TMs are involved in making necessary arrangements with venue security, arranging a route for fans to access the stage, and ensuring safety during the activities. TMs also work to ensure the safety of artists who leave the stage to interact with the audience during a show. At Venue A, one artist regularly walked through the crowd, playing guitar and singing along with fans. At times, he would stand on top of chairs or the cement dividers that separated sections of the amphitheatre. Throughout this process, the TM followed him and watched him closely. In these circumstances, TMs take on a role more closely associated with security, and such acts quite literally reinforce the centrality of looking after artists to their roles.

At Venue A, after show VIP meet-and-greet events were another site of interaction between TMs and fans. These events are part of a higher priced ticket category that usually includes preferred seating along with the opportunity to meet the artist. These events are in

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distinction to guests or fans that may receive aftershow passes from the artist or TM. VIP meet-and-greets that are built into a ticket are paid for, whereas aftershow passes are given out for free. The VIP events were held in the employee lounge next to the dressing rooms (see Figure 5 in Chapter 3). TMs are responsible for explaining to the group of fans, prior to entry to the backstage area, what will happen and what to expect during the event, and then escorting them to the designated area. During the event, the TMs stayed in the room and quietly monitored the activities.

One TM at Venue A recounted problems that occurred with fans following paid VIP meet-and-greets on a solo tour of a member of the group he has long worked for. The events were limited to six people per night and, to facilitate ease and address any issues that may arise on the day of the event, the TM gave his cell phone number to each of them and directly asked them to delete it afterwards. The next time that the full band was on tour, some of the fans who attended the meet and greets on the solo tour kept the TM's number against his wishes and called to ask if they could get a backstage pass for after the show. The conventions around these VIP meet and greets, and the fans' actions, further position the TM as a gatekeeper. However, the fans' blatant disregard of the TM's instructions suggests that they see tour managers solely as a means to an end based on their access and proximity to an artist, and attempt to take advantage of them on the basis of their roles. This example highlights the conflict between authority and subordination, and the notion of support as secondary is reinforced.

The fourth and final element of Cohen's major components of the tour guide's role is the communicative component, and it is the most important. The "kernel" of the TM's responsibilities is to provide accurate, up-to-date and specific information to musicians and the wider touring party (Cohen 1985: 15). For tour guides, providing information involves giving

informed knowledge about the local area being visited, and also interpreting it for tourists. For TMs, this component is much more functional in nature and aimed at the overall goal of realizing live music events. They need to be knowledgeable about the logistics of travel rather than the area. The communicative component includes providing information about arriving and departing from all relevant locations on a tour, such as hotels ("lobby calls"), transportation ("bus calls") and venues, and communicating details about the schedule of show days. Tour management is all "about the communication and keeping people aware" (Glen 2019). The process works because the TM sets the itineraries, communicates them and provides reminders when necessary. Doing so successfully also requires that musicians are punctual and "get into the right habits."

Adhering to an itinerary and the need to coordinate a group of people involves careful planning in order to ensure travel is smooth and on-time. One illustrative example is arrival times at airports. Traveling to the airport can mean going as a group or, such as at the start of a tour, coordinating the arrival of musicians from different locations at the same time. The crew may be responsible for getting themselves to the airport, whereas the TM will arrange ground transport for the members of the group. If the TM does not allow for ample time any type of accident on the way or problem at the airport could result in missing a flight which has the potential to result in missing a show. Some musicians are "furious" if they have to arrive at the airport too early and others "know that two hours before your flight is perfectly acceptable and indeed a great idea" due to the way that it creates a time buffer (Glen 2019). Stress and time pressures are also reduced by traveling the day before a show, and by avoiding taking the last flight out. If musicians have press engagements, the TM will handle the arrangements to make sure they get

to and from radio stations or other locations at the appropriate times, and may or may not accompany them depending on the artist.

The TM makes decisions about travel, accommodations and other necessities based on the personal needs and preferences of musicians. Glen (2019) described the process of informing the artist he works for of her daily schedule.

> …[artist] [is] quite technophobic or at least she doesn't want other stuff on her phone, so I've got to copy and paste everything … and put it in her iCal. So I've just got to adapt, so that information flow I've got to really make sure she knows what's going on, but she's really good at it, she'll get something and read it and everybody gets it emailed as well … and usually within two minutes of reading it she'll come back with any questions she's got, so she does pay attention to it and does want to know.

This example also shows the artist-specific nature of the role and that TMs adapt based on their preferences. Artists generally have preferences regarding flight times and when they arrive somewhere in relation to the start of their work responsibilities. TMs take any choice in the matter away and "book the flights that they like. You don't even have to think about it, you just send them some flight details … once you know their preferences" (Glen 2019). The same practice applies to hotels. In her autobiography, TM Kim Hawes (2019: 206) recalled having to alter hotel reservations for guitarist Marc Moreland, who did not like elevators. She had to ensure his room was always on the ground floor or find another hotel that had such availability.

The TM makes arrangements and relays the information via the day sheet the day before or in the tour itinerary. The communication of relevant information also has the ability to be challenging for TMs when musicians fail to comply. The conflict in their roles can be further observed as the question emerges as to which party is actually in charge.

> …[musicians] don't always listen either, you say to them the night before [that] lobby call is at 9:00 a.m. and you've given them an email and you might even have put it on a paper and shoved it under their hotel door, but sometimes it just doesn't occur to them to think about it until … And they won't do anything till you ring their phone. 'We're

leaving in half an hour,' you know, or 'we're leaving ten minutes ago, where are ya?' Then it's a bad habit to get into (Glen 2018).

Ken Barr (2009: 51) noted a similar pattern amongst musicians during his career as a backline technician and stated that "some of the most talented people in the world cannot get the concept of time, schedules, being on time." In turn, the TM is "constantly having to remind them of what their routine should be" (Glen 2018). Kim Hawes (2019: 212–213) gave an example of this practice in her autobiography. She recounted an incident in which the guitarist for Concrete Blonde, Jim Mankey, knocked on her hotel door at 10:00 a.m., and woke her up, complaining that he had not received a wake-up call and feared he was late. When she asked if Mankey had seen the schedule she left under his, and everyone else's, hotel room doors that stated the touring party would not be leaving till 3:00 p.m., it was clear he had not consulted the document. Mankey had already checked out of the hotel and Hawes had to ask reception to return his room key, which they agreed to do. Hawes noted that after this incident, Mankey always followed his schedule (214).

The practice of reminding artists of their schedules has effects. Such communication creates a "bubble" around musicians.

> What day is it? Where am I? You know because you can just let go and someone else will take care of absolutely everything, they'll hand that boarding pass to you, they'll, you're off stage they'll say get into that car, you're going to that hotel, here's your hotel room key, you know. You need to be at the lobby at 9:00, if you're not in the lobby at 9:00 you'll get a phone call getting you down to the lobby at 9:00, you know. There's no independent thought needed should you choose to be that way. And some people like that cause then they come alive at five to nine when they walk on stage (Glen 2017).

While the TMs' role in alleviating musicians from "normal household tasks" is intended to facilitate focus on live performance, it can also have unintended effects. Frith et al. (2019: 176) observed that a tour's itinerary is indicative of "the complex logistics of a corporate tour" but that it also "hints at the way successful rock musicians were infantilised" (ibid.). They mention

the day sheet given to members of the touring party that provides information about the city, date

and schedule. It is often distributed by being placed under hotel room doors and "was laid out

with great clarity." Their emphasis suggests that this is another component of infantilization. In

and of themselves, documents intended to communicate important information about the plan

and organization of a tour to the entire touring party, insulting in their extreme clarity as they

may be, are not infantilizing. Keeping track of a schedule is an essential component to the

success of a tour. Rather, it is the repetition and extent of this practice that can be understood as

infantilizing. What the itinerary and day sheet represent are part of the wider effects of handling

tasks for musicians and reminding them of their responsibilities. Road crew members are

expected to keep themselves informed and should not expect such reminders. They will "get

barked at" and cause the TM to be "extremely annoyed" if they are not aware of information that

has been communicated via the day sheet because it is "their responsibility to check that" (Glen

2019). Musicians become "used to having somebody around them fixing everything for them"

(ibid.). Wendy Fonarow (2006: 136) made similar observations about the more generalized

practice of support or assistance provided to musicians by members of the touring party.

> …musicians learn to not attempt to solve problems at shows. Most successful performers
> are infantilized at gigs from their experiences of being on tour, where all matters are dealt
> with by tour manager and crew. Most musicians have the expectation that if they just
> stand there and do nothing, their problem will be solved by other industry professionals—
> and it usually is.

Research findings support the idea that TMs engage in practices that can have enabling effects,

and that musicians come to depend on them for a variety of tasks. A TM at Venue A explained

that he is the person who reminds the band members of people they are supposed to call in a

particular city. However, if they do not make the calls, he does it for them. TM Iain Williamson

told *The Guardian* that "bands do turn into children — you have to make sure they're all on the

bus and all in the hotel" (Simpson 2010). In another instance at Venue A, observing a TM

discuss lunch options with an artist in the dressing room was striking in that the interaction

seemed to position the latter as a child. The musician, in her early 70s, sat on a sofa with her

hands tucked under her legs as the TM read selections from a menu to her. However, the same

musician often personally calls the hospitality coordinator to discuss available food options in

the local area. In his book about touring, Martin Atkins (2007: 253) acknowledged a tension

between understanding and accommodating the needs of artists and treating them like children.

He used the example of his youngest son needing a specific stuffed animal and pacifier in order

go to sleep, and that he provides them without question, as a way to illustrate how TMs should

accommodate the needs of musicians. The "trick" is to do so without "treating the artist like a

two-year-old" and to avoid disrespecting an artist's "pre-show set-up psychology" (ibid.). The

choice of example strongly reinforces notions about infantilization, and also suggests a particular

view of musicians. It also implies that TMs are aware — or should be — of the potential

implications of their working relationship and work to avoid such treatment through sensitivity

to the nature of their interactions. While dependency can develop, it can also vary and stop.

Effort and awareness on the part of the TM can play a role in deterring dependency, and

musicians may naturally outgrow this aspect of the relationship.

> … I've seen people go through phases of it and then kind of shift, especially maybe a
> new kind of session musician in a band will suddenly get really reliant on me and 'oh
> Glen here's my washing' and 'oh Glen can you do this and can you do that' and then I'll
> enable it and then gently rebuff them if and I think most people, after awhile, start to not
> like that relationship anyway and become more independent themselves. You know, days
> off they're not going 'Glen, what can I do and can you get me a cab' it's just I just don't
> hear from them and they don't want to hear from me either (Glen 2019).

Such activities, and the related infantilization of musicians, are part of a wider set of conventions

in the music industries of which touring is only one component. Outside of live music, musicians

may develop an emotional investment and come to rely on their artist managers (see Jones 2012: 80) who can fulfill tasks that resemble those of a personal assistant and who have a payment arrangement similar to that of TMs. Keith Negus ([1992] 2011) highlighted that support personnel at record labels are involved in similar practices that can be linked to the same effects. He described how publicity officers

> must respond to the needs of the various acts who are signed to the label or handled by the company. This can involve preparing artists for interviews, photo sessions and performances; giving them morning calls, making sure they turn up where and when they are supposed to; booking them into hotels and health clubs; arranging transport and generally being at their beck and call (117).

This shows that other types of workers take on the same responsibilities as TMs in contexts outside of live music, and musicians are regularly surrounded by people who attend to tasks on their behalf. These activities are also an extension of musicians' status as artists and stars and the associated treatment they have been deemed worthy to receive. The following section will analyze the term "babysitter" commonly applied to the TM.

Being a Babysitter

As discussed in Chapter 3, TMs are often referred to colloquially or facetiously as "babysitters" due to the nature of their working relationships with musicians. During participant observation at Venue A, a TM stated, in reference to his career as a tour manager, that he had always been a "babysitter." In his guidebook about tour managing, former TM Mark Workman (2012: 312) noted that his ex-wife used to refer to him as "the highest-paid babysitter in the world." As "babysitters" TMs' related work activity is likewise called "babysitting."

Generally speaking, babysitting refers to the act of providing nonfamilial childcare "on a temporary basis for pay, typically in the home of their employer" (Forman-Brunell 2009: 15). The use of the term problematically equates musicians with children and insinuates that, as

adults, they require the supervision of other adults in the same way that a child does. It aligns the TM's role with a type of labour commonly associated with female teenagers and undermines the skillset and its significance in the realization of live music. The job of a babysitter does have characteristics that support reasons for the term's use in relation to TMs. The analogy mirrors the work arrangement between the two parties as TMs work for the duration of the tour, and do so in close proximity and shared living space. A babysitter may fulfil the role temporarily, but can also do so routinely and consistently over a long period of time, just as tours are short-term but the same TM may repeatedly occupy the role for an artist. The use of the term "babysitter" also reveals the nuanced power relations between them. Babysitters are usually paid by a parent, meaning a third party is hired to look after someone younger who requires supervision. In contrast, musicians directly pay TMs to look after them. A babysitter, for the duration of their job, is considered the authority figure and is likewise granted a degree of power in the relationship, which suggests that TMs are also granted authority over musicians as needed. TMs do exercise some power and authority, but as indicated, the limits can also be unclear and difficult to establish. The similarity is further evident in the ways musicians will disregard the communications provided by TMs. This mirrors those situations in which children being babysat may perceive the babysitter as less of an authority than their parents, and therefore less threatening, and as facilitating greater opportunity to "get away" with inappropriate behaviour.

The term "babysitter" draws attention to the ways that the notion and activity of care factors into the dynamics of the working relationship between TMs and musicians and plays a part in shaping the character of the former's role. Babysitting is defined by the act of childcare, and the idea of "mothering" is the "paradigmatic act of caring" (Tronto 1993: 109). At its most essential, care is a concern for, or action directed toward others. It suggests a "reaching out to

something other than the self" and positions another person's needs as the "starting point for what must be done" (102, 105). The relationship between TMs and musicians is based, in part, on actual activities of "looking after and looking out" rather than solely on predetermined tasks (Alacovska and Bissonnette 2019: 138). Such descriptions map neatly onto the artist-specific and artist-centric nature of the TM's role, and more generally to their positions as support personnel. These factors problematize the pervasive notion of creative work as "individualized" by offering insight into the significance of care and interpersonal relationships in the cultural industries (Alacovska and Bissonnette 2019). At the same time, a key component is that the people being looked after are adults that arguably would otherwise not require such oversight in a context outside of the particularities of live music and the status accorded artists. The notion that some people "need" such care speaks to a "difference in the relative value of different peoples' needs" (Tronto 1993: 116), which is evident in the working practices of touring. In turn, subordination, or the secondary status of support personnel, is maintained and reproduced in the everyday life of live music on the basis of who is cared for and who does the caring. This notion is further observable in the working lives of TMs, and road crews more generally, as my findings have shown, in how caregivers will "find that their needs to care for themselves come in conflict with the care that they must give to others" (109). In this way, people who have their needs cared-for by others are privileged, and privilege is determined, in part, by caring (116). The ability for musicians to have their needs attended to by others symbolizes and reproduces the privileged status accorded them. Being a babysitter highlights the presence of care in the working relationship, and positions the TM in a caring role, however ambiguous or undesired it may be.

In the context of touring and the working relationship between TMs and musicians, the character of "babysitting" is difficult to precisely establish. The "lines for a babysitter are very

blurred and I misunderstood them for a long time. I'm not saying I entirely understand them"

(Glen 2019). Amy (2019) defined it as a "catch-all term in attempting to describe the part of our

job that is not strictly day to day business and logistical activities, but more the 'personal' taking

care of the people on tour end of things." In other words, those personal aspects of the job that

TMs try to define and limit. The term can also suggest how "difficult" an artist is and how much

"care" or "attention" they need, as well as invoking the types of activities that require such

attentiveness. Some use it to refer to the general practice of looking after musicians, inclusive of

all aspects of the job, while others' use implies that babysitting refers to the need for a greater

amount of effort or involvement on the part of TMs when attending to artists. Being a

"babysitter" and "babysitting" can be understood as having a referential function that allows

TMs to know their field, make sense of their working experiences and daily lives, and

understand their respective places (Conor 2013: 54). In "small-scale but important ways [they]

reflect on the multiple functions and meanings of their work" (53). Such terms indicate that

particular work activities are the "norm … and always have been" (44) but the manner in which

they are used can also function as a critique of such practices. Rhetorical devices apply to the

notion of the babysitter specifically and the experience and status of support personnel more

generally because they are "used to understand … particular marginality" (53). While work

associated with care, and those providing it, is often devalued (Tronto 1993: 114), the use of

such terminology can function as a means to cope or resist. These terms create collegiality and

shared purpose by encouraging professionalism while confronting marginalization (Conor 2013:

53–54).

In the everyday life of live music, TMs use "babysitter" in several different contexts. The

term functions as an expression of humour between TMs, and therefore as a marker of insider-

outsider status. It is self-deprecating and facetious and used to refer to and make fun of key aspects of their job. The term is symbolic of an exclusive understanding and also functions as a coping mechanism and form of solidarity. Amy (2019) elaborated on how the term is used in this context:

> Tongue-in-cheek and used humorously between TMs. We joke all the time with each other and other people we work closely with on the touring side, who understand our jobs, about being 'glorified babysitters' but probably wouldn't use it in that particular context with someone who wasn't another touring person, or who we thought might take it as a complaint about our job.

Her caution about who she uses the term with, out of concern that it could be misunderstood or interpreted as a complaint, suggest the potential for it to be viewed as a criticism of the nature of the TM's job and of the artists with whom they work. This highlights that they use the term to invoke shared understanding within the safety of insider boundaries but are sensitive to how it can be taken out of context and reflect negatively on them. It also shows the importance of maintaining a reputation and the significance of the TM's working relationship with musicians in doing so.

Amy also stated that the term operates as a translatable reference point to explain the TM's role to people outside of the touring world:

> For example, I've described my job as a TM before as 'part project manager, part travel agent, part accountant, part babysitter (or parent)' or something along those lines, because I can't think of a better way to encompass looking after the more personal aspects of the traveling party on a tour.

While Amy (2019) viewed the term as a suitable descriptor, Glen (2019) also spoke to the convenient use of the term in this context but emphasized the repercussions of its use. "When I'm trying to describe my job to somebody that doesn't understand it at all, I might use it but I would qualify it quite quickly, cause it patronizes both them and me, it belittles what I do." As Amy did in reference to the term as an expression of humour, Glen also expressed caution when

using the term, but for its potential to be offensive to both parties it addresses rather than perceived as a complaint about the role. The term also circulates as a means to define the parameters of a TM's job. It is here that various interpretations of the term can be observed. Glen viewed the amount of babysitting that a particular artist requires as a factor in a decision to take a job. "When I take on a job I ask, you know how much babysitting … do I have to do and get a sense of it before agreeing to take it. You know 'what's this artist like'." Consistent with the personal responsibilities associated with the job, Andy (2017) positioned babysitting as an element of the TM's role that needs to be clearly defined, and saw it in black and white terms.

> … I think as a tour manager then you'd be looking to the … artist management to say you know, okay, I'm not a babysitter, and that's the expectation, are you a babysitter or aren't you. On a different subject, I think when tour managers are being hired they need to define those roles, they need to define 'I am not a babysitter, I am managing the accounts, I'll get the band where they need to be, I'll take care of the promo, I'll sell merch.'

Amy (2019) recounted that it is used to clarify the nature of the tasks involved when working for a particular artist. She also described a clear separation of duties, but the lines of what constitutes babysitting differ from Andy's perception.

> … if, for example, a management company had a TM job they were looking to hire for — if the job didn't involve any kind of advance coordination, or require me to do any tour accounting or technical work, but just look after the band and make sure they got from place to place per a schedule and making sure their day to day needs were covered, the person hiring would most likely describe the job along the lines of 'all the advance work has been done, you won't be settling shows, etc — you'd just be babysitting the band.'

The activities Amy described here, and outlined in the previous section, are among the most significant aspects of the TM's role. Andy sees getting a band to where they need to be as separate from babysitting whereas Amy's description suggests otherwise. A TM at Venue A also referred to the communicative aspects of the job as babysitting when he described how he tells musicians to "be here at this time, no you can't do that, yes you can do this, be in the lobby at

this time." It is important to note that his tone was heavily sarcastic when recounting such information. TMs have contrasting understandings of the same term but collectively utilize it to convey different points. The term functions as a convenient, if problematic, shorthand, a comment on and means to define the nature of the work, and as self-deprecating humour, which is consistent with the broader workplace culture of touring. In this way, the term's functional usage is underpinned by how it can also "embody the … frustrations and disappointments" that they encounter (Conor 2013: 53). It also shows that, despite the association of care with the TM's role, doing "caring work" does not require a "caring disposition." Rather, the act of care can be thought of "only in terms of a job" (Tronto 1993: 105).

The facetious use of the term suggests that TMs may find attending to such types of tasks unsatisfying. Glen (2019) explained that he prefers "working for somebody who is very definite about what they want, what they want to achieve, knows how to take care of themselves, knows how to take care of the business and sees me as a partner in making that happen." In other words, a position in which both parties are on more equal ground than the position of "babysitter" would imply or afford. He described how this is realized in his experience with the artist he currently works for:

> … working with an artist who certainly doesn't need a babysitter. She needs somebody to enable all the things she wants to do and she needs constant attention to what she needs and what she needs to achieve. But she has very very strong ideas about herself and her career and her life and how she wants to live her life and how she wants to spend her money. Whether that's on her free time or on what crew she wants to spend it on or how she wants to tour or what hotels it is, it's her cash, it's her business and I manage it for her (Glen 2019).

The TM is not there to "babysit" but to function as an assistant to help the artist realize goals. Musicians may need and want the attention and involvement of the TM in the enactment and management of their live music careers. Such business-oriented and professional concerns

benefit from the assistance of a knowledgeable and experienced TM and are markedly different than the kinds of activities that babysitting implies.

TMs are careful not to use the term in front of musicians, not even in the context of humour. This shows again that they make efforts to protect musicians. Artists could "take that really badly" (Glen 2019) and "it's one of those things that maybe an artist might take personally, or think you're being disparaging about them" (Amy 2019). Artists also do not refer to TMs as babysitters and it is unclear the extent to which they are even aware of the term.

The issue of the artist's perspective represents a reversal to that of musicians seeing TMs as parental figures. Musicians will call TMs their "tour mom" or liken them to a "parent," particularly those with whom they have worked for a long time and come to trust. For example, members of the band Queen referred to TM Gerry Stickells, following his death, as a "father figure, great friend and teacher, and an island of calm in the midst of chaos" (Sandomir 2019). Guy Garvey, of the band Elbow, positioned the band's TM, Tom Piper, in a parental role by describing him as "dad to about 15 people. Anything we don't know, we go to him" (Pattenden 2002: 84). Amy (2019) described it as a "term of endearment" and as a signal that the TM is doing well and is trusted. A feature in *Q* magazine supported this statement, articulating that the "best" TMs "become father figures to their bands" (Pattenden 2002: 84). Moving from the temporary status of babysitter to one of parent is an interesting discursive switch that indicates change and continuity in the nature of the relationship. It also represents further similarity between TMs and tour guides, who have been referred to as "surrogate parents" (Reisinger and Steiner 2006: 482).

Such language is also evident in other sectors of the music industries. PR staff use similar language to describe responsibilities that involve being at musicians' "beck and call" and as

having to "'nanny people' … it was just like running a bloody kindergarten, except that the people you were dealing with weren't as nice as kids" (Steward and Garratt 1984: 68; Negus [1992] 2011: 117).

The term babysitter has deeper associations and connotations. It invokes gendered perspectives on work and correlates with ideas of youth, popular music and musicians' identities. Its use amongst TMs, and their perceptions of and responses to it, refer to, reproduce and problematize these associations. As discussed in Chapter 3, though tour management is male-dominated, aspects of the job involve tasks that are traditionally gendered feminine. Care, also, is often thought of as the domain of women and is associated with service and people occupying marginalized or secondary status (Tronto 1993: 112–113). The gender imbalance in live music, and its continuity, can distance or obscure the feminine aspects or associations of work activities. The term babysitter makes those elements explicit. Babysitting is a job that both young girls and boys do, however it is primarily considered a form of feminized labour given its emphasis on childcare (see Forman-Brunell 2009). In this way, the term refers to feminized labour and the manner in which TMs engage with it provides a comment on and insights into how gender functions on tour and in their occupational identities. Amy (2019) utilizes the term facetiously as a form of workplace humour, while expressing concern over the term being misread as a complaint about her line of work and was sensitive to how it could offend artists. She also took for granted the notion of babysitting as a normal and expected part of her role. Glen (2019) and Andy (2017) did not take such activities for granted nor accept them as an inevitable part of their jobs. Glen was critical of the term and described it as "patronizing" though also admitted that he does use it as an "easy handle" despite not liking it. He elaborated that he is "not comfortable with that and I don't like that role." This statement, along with the manner in which he and Andy

described negotiating the place of babysitting in a given job, can be seen as a potential resistance to performing or being associated with feminized labour. It is another means of creating and maintaining "distance from the feminine" (Pullen and Simpson 2009: 564). The very act of the term as a form of humour also functions this way, as a means to reappropriate its use and mask its meaning, similar to the wider use of humour in the workplace culture of touring.

However, the connection between babysitting and care also reveals masculine associations with the TM's role. The notion of "taking care of," which is a key component in their daily working lives with musicians, is more strongly linked to men and masculinity (Tronto 1993: 115). TMs do not so much focus on the needs of musicians — as in "caring about" — but rather act to address them (106) in the context of their roles. Through daily activities on tour, TMs "take care of" musicians in the sense that they assume "some responsibility for the identified need and determin[e] how to respond to it" (ibid.). In this sense, care is a practice and activity that involves agency and obligation (106). However, their proximity and direct involvement in the everyday lives of musicians realigns them with forms of feminized labour. To illustrate how this operates in the working lives of TMs, doctors, a typically male-dominated position, "take care of" patients, and gain prestige from their status. Following this, TMs are at the top of the touring party's hierarchy, are knowledgeable and experienced, make the plans, give directions and solve problems when necessary — and can maintain detachment by resisting a caring disposition. In contrast to doctors, nurses, traditionally gendered feminine, or orderlies and lab technicians, have the duty of hands-on care (115). TMs also engage in a type of "care-giving" through actions that satisfy needs and involve physical work and direct contact (107). TMs simultaneously "take care of" and are tasked with attending to the everyday activities, or the actual "care."

The term can also be understood within the broader context of rock and popular music. Its usage is significant in view of musicians and their identities and can be seen as an extension, reflection and reproduction of the connection between youth and popular music. In the specific context of rock music culture, "growing up" has been viewed as a life stage that is best avoided. Rock represented an "expressive context for strategies of youth identity" where "growing up" was only desirable as a means to access sex, drugs and rock and roll, but was deemed undesirable because becoming an adult risks becoming boring (Grossberg 1987). Musicians have often cited this as a motivation to form a rock band. In the Rolling Stones documentary *Crossfire Hurricane* (Morgen 2012), Mick Jagger explained that getting into a successful band was about "not growing up." This notion can be further observed in media coverage that summarizes musicians' autobiographies as "Boys' Own Tales: Four Rock Stars Who Refused to Grow Up" (Maconie 2014). In addition, bad or youthful behaviour became subsequently associated and accepted. In other words, it is desirable to grow up just enough to access particular interests, and then the status of musician functions to preserve the youthful identity and permission to behave accordingly. One can wonder, however, if being free and young are concerns specific to men, and if male musicians in particular are invested in the idea of not growing up.

As a category, rock stars are "to a greater or lesser extent, exempt from the rules of adulthood in that they are expected to be rebellious and badly-behaved" (Strong 2016: 129). In the context of touring, such exemption is not strictly related to "bad" behaviour but can be seen in more generalized terms around what is expected and accepted. As such, it follows that related behaviours would be tolerated and accommodated by personnel around musicians, in the same way that artists are granted special privileges based on their status (Becker 1982). In this way, TMs unintentionally reproduce these notions through participation in some of the conventions of

touring and the usage of the term "babysitter." Further, the potential for musicians to be infantilized by the conventions of touring interacts with these ideas, which also create conditions for such effects to be taken for granted. At the same time, such behaviours are those that TMs often try to avoid having to attend to when negotiating and accepting a position. In this way, the term babysitter can be understood as a comment and critique. Its potential to have a negative connotation amongst TMs is another reminder of the insider-outsider boundaries of touring and road crew members. Such notions of youth, behaviour and musicians' identities are among the myths and clichés of rock music yet the realities of them are a normal part of everyday life for insiders. The chapter now concludes with a summary of findings.

Conclusion

Chapter 4 has explored and examined how TMs look after musicians on tour and has showed that doing so is an integral component in the realization of live music events. Following on from live music being the purpose and objective of a tour, it has established that the artist is the most important focus of a TM's job. The role is both artist-specific and artistic-centric and TMs' working lives are shaped by the activities that accompany the needs and preferences of musicians. The chapter has demonstrated that the TM's daily activities are integral by highlighting that they protect, provide, support and care for musicians. The instrumental, social, interactional and communicative components of their roles illustrate how they do so. TMs' ability to alleviate tasks, enable focus and reduce stress for musicians are essential factors in a pressurized and mobile workplace. These efforts are not without effects and they can enable musicians to become dependent on the personnel around them, which is part of a larger pattern in the music industries. The TM's role is at once important to supporting musicians at the same time that it reinforces musicians' importance to live music. Yet their centrality to live events also

means that the efforts of TMs benefit musicians while creating compromise in their own working lives. As such, the effects on the people responsible for such integral tasks are taken for granted. The everyday life of live music is based on activities and conventions that reproduce the special status accorded musicians and the secondary status of TMs. At the same time, musicians and the live music industry ultimately depend on the efforts of TMs to realize events which further substantiates that they are primary workers in supporting roles.

Following this, TMs have an unstable relationship with power and authority that is both a product of their positions as middle managers and based on the nature of their working relationships with musicians. The role of the TM ultimately moves between positions of authority and subordination. Their dual role as a service provider and as a leader can be at odds with musicians' position as their "boss" due to the ways in which this creates an inherent tension that is difficult to overcome. The working dynamic can, however, be successful if mutual trust and understanding exist between them. This chapter has established that the TM's role is adjustable, ambiguous and open to interpretation. As such, it is essential for TMs to define the parameters and set limits as to the types of activities it will entail. TMs use the term "babysitter" to joke about — and as shorthand for — the nature of their roles yet also express ambivalence or dislike of the term. It has the potential to undermine their positions and illuminates gendered aspects of their tasks that are otherwise masked by the male-dominated workforce. As such, the term in its use and resistance highlights important features that reflect and shape the working lives of TMs and their occupational identities.

In analyzing the manner in which TMs look after musicians, Chapter 4 has shown that such tasks are necessary to make a concert happen and that the manner in which they do so is a significant aspect of the everyday life of live music.

Conclusion

As this is being written, the COVID-19 pandemic has made the future of live music uncertain. Live music and concert tours are at a stand-still and road crews have been out of work for over a year. Speculation about when live music events will once again occur with pre-pandemic regularity, and debates about the best way to safely stage concerts and integrate audiences, are the central conversations in the contemporary music industries. Following this, it can be said that live music is more relevant than ever at a time when it is also the most threatened.

Road crews have perhaps received more attention in the press and on social media in recent history than ever before. *Rolling Stone*,[73] *Billboard*,[74] *The New York Times*[75] and *The Guardian*[76] have featured articles detailing the experiences of crew members during the pandemic and how to support them. It is during their absence from what they normally do that they have become more fully recognized and appreciated as a result of their inability to do it.

Further, the pandemic has also created a situation in which the manner by which artists and audiences are brought together is changing, at least temporarily, as are the everyday activities that are integral to the realization of a concert. The immediate future of live music will likely represent a time when "mundane" tasks and activities, in the form of public health measures, become essential prerequisites that cannot be taken for granted and will function as a

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[73] Available at these links: https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-features/music-in-crisis-marty-horn-tour-manager-rolling-stones-stevie-nicks-995835; https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-features/music-in-crisis-karrie-keyes-soundgirls-pearl-jam-1005034; https://www.rollingstone.com/pro/features/roadie-clinic-live-music-touring-advocacy-1035731; https://www.rollingstone.com/music/music-news/covid-19-music-industry-charities-help-1122999/

[74] Available at these links: https://www.billboard.com/articles/business/touring/9340968/coronavirus-concert-cancellations-touring-gig-economy; https://www.billboard.com/articles/business/9348011/live-nation-crew-nation-coronavirus-fund; https://www.billboard.com/articles/business/touring/9357092/protect-touring-crews-coronavirus-over-tom-ross

[75] Available at these links: https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/arts/music/concerts-cancelled-coronavirus.html

[76] Available at these links: https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/mar/21/coronavirus-leaves-roadies-and-events-crew-devastated-its-the-first-industry-to-stop-dead; https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/aug/15/the-terrible-plight-of-music-event-staff-coronavirus-pandemic?mc_cid=21913aa5d5&mc_eid=305aa65491; https://www.theguardian.com/music/2020/dec/04/one-two-one-two-the-scottish-bands-teaming-up-to-support-roadies

type of gatekeeping. In other words, it will mark a time when everyday activities are the most vital and most visible aspect of concert events.

The practice and conventions of touring further complicate the challenges confronting the return of live music. The pandemic has of course been a moment in time during which people have been separated out of necessity. It may be feasible to devise solutions in venues, but broader uncertainties remain in terms of the logistics involved in moving between them. Most difficult is the question of transportation. Working and living on a sleeper bus — an iconic symbol of touring that was once taken for granted — is currently unthinkable and impossible. The experience of life on the road may temporarily transition to a series of one-off dates that are realized by the same personnel but experienced as individual rather than collective movement.

The effects of the pandemic — the relative absence of concerts and efforts to generate industry support — have reinforced the cultural value of live music (Behr, Brennan and Cloonan 2014) and have raised concerns over the survival of the spaces necessary for live music to occur. Yet without such events taking place, the pandemic has also clearly demonstrated that live music is about much more than concerts. The numerous fundraising campaigns for members of road crews have pushed to the fore that live music is about the working lives of people and that there are a wide range of roles and activities necessary for its realization. The pandemic has provided awareness of the fragility that characterizes working in live music and has further shown that this fragility is an important factor in people's working lives when they are both on and off the road.

In addition, this pause in live music has served as a time to reflect on and question existent working practices. The process of touring and the characteristics of the everyday life of live music may undergo major changes when concerts resume. In this respect, this study can serve as a snapshot that captured some of the features of touring and the everyday life of live

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music for a group of road crew members at a particular time in history (see also Webster 2011).[77]

More broadly, the effects of the pandemic draw attention to two key issues that are of significance in the wider music and cultural industries.

The first is the relative precarity that can characterize freelance work. The pandemic has clearly illustrated that working in live music is marked by uncertain conditions and a range of challenges. In recent years, discussions of the "gig economy" have pointed to a labour market distinguished by the "prevalence of short-term contracts or freelance work as opposed to permanent jobs" (OED, Cloonan and Williamson 2017) in which workers are subject to precarious and exploitative employment conditions. Uber drivers and food delivery services are common examples of work in the gig economy. Scholars have observed how a term rooted in popular music culture has been generalized to refer to wider societal and economic trends, but that, despite the relatively recent application, the "economy of gigs" has long characterized musicians' working lives (ibid.). My findings indeed establish that the working lives of members of road crews, like many types of cultural workers, are characterized by holding multiple jobs and self-employment, and that they encounter irregular work patterns and short-term contracts (Hesmondhalgh 2013: 254, Towse 1992). Working on a road crew also means contending with job insecurity and uncertain career prospects.

At the same time, findings presented throughout the thesis chapters have shown that freelance work is also marked by relative stability that is the product of accumulated experience and forms of capital that are generated through reputation and networks of contacts. As Becker (1982: 86) notes, while workers may be judged on the basis of their last job (see Faulkner 1971) and are not protected from the effects of a poor work performance, some "manage to work

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[77] Emma Webster's (2011) PhD thesis, which provides rich ethnographic data on concert promoters, can similarly serve as a snapshot of a particular time that pre-dated the COVID-19 pandemic.

regularly, moving from one project to another." The research sample has demonstrated that self-employed road crew members can and do work consistently in the live music industry for decades and establish long-term work relationships with musicians. Short-term labour can therefore be the site of relative privilege and a setting in which workers rise to the top of their field (see Faulkner 1971: 45, Peterson and White 1979).

Freelance work can also enable access to a relatively comfortable lifestyle. In what is perhaps an obvious absence, the topic of money was not addressed, and pay figures were not a regular or explicit component of interview questions asked of research respondents. This was a deliberate decision based on the sense that such questions can be perceived as intrusive and could have affected the willingness of respondents to participate. Estimated pay figures for road crew members are available, but they vary drastically. Reynolds (2012: 145) stated that there is "no international standard pay scale for touring road crew" but added that the average tends to be between $151–$200 USD or £151–£200 per day. Berklee College of Music (2016) indicated a range for TMs between $2,500 to $10,000 USD per week, $1,500 to $8,000 a week for PMs, $60,000 to $120,000 annually for FOH Engineers, and between $35,000 to $60,000 per year for Monitor Engineers. Comments during interviews and participant observation, and supporting archival documents in the David Russell Collection, gave a strong impression that members of road crews can be and are well paid professionals. Passing remarks were made about the locations of homes and the comforts and privileges their line of work has provided, remarks which support this perception. Crew members also made reference to learning to navigate uncertainty over the course of a career with careful attention to money management. Such factors are often lost in discussions of freelance work but are important considerations in studies of cultural workers.

The second issue that the pandemic has drawn attention to is that of mental health. The shift in the norms of everyday life during the pandemic has generated widespread concern about wellbeing and has been a catalyst for an open dialogue about mental health. Though this issue was already garnering attention in the music and cultural industries (see Chapter 2), the events of recent history have further centralized its relevance. In the absence of touring, attention has been redirected toward supporting crew members off the road and addressing aspects of the workplace culture in an effort to debate and improve them when live music returns. The significance of mental health, and the efforts to raise awareness and provide support, is clearly observable in the social media accounts of organizations focused on and run by road crews. Roadies of Colour United[78] features posts promoting "The Soundtrack of Mental Health," a virtual panel organized by Sony Music Publishing[79] and non-profit Silence the Shame[80] that features a number of experts offering education, support and training. This Tour Life[81] and Your Tour Support[82] post guidance on methods for maintaining good mental health, awareness of the ubiquity of mental health challenges in the music industries and access to resources. The Tour Health Initiative[83] offered several virtual group forums and talks about mental health and wellness support during the pandemic, and Tour Mgmt 101[84] offered a webinar on similar subjects.

The music industries have often been "characterised as a 'pleasure dome'; a site of hedonism, enjoyment and self-actualisation, full of creativity and self-expression, excess and glamour" (Gross and Musgrave 2020 1–2). The effects, or damages, of popular (mostly rock)

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[78] See https://www.instagram.com/roadiesofcolorunited/?hl=en
[79] See news article at https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/sony-music-publishing-partners-with-silence-the-shame-to-launch-the-soundtrack-of-mental-health-301239769.html
[80] Website is available at https://silencetheshame.com/
[81] See https://www.instagram.com/thistourlife/?hl=en
[82] See https://www.instagram.com/yourtoursupport/
[83] See https://www.instagram.com/tourhealthinitiative/?hl=en
[84] See https://www.instagram.com/tourmgmt101/?hl=en

music are typically thought of in terms of the excess of the lifestyle. However, the pandemic and findings in this thesis have demonstrated that they come as much from the stresses, role uncertainties and power dynamics of the work which live music involves. Such factors make questions of mental health in relation to music less a "special" issue than one which joins live music to other kinds of work and precarity in the creative industries.

Existent research has indicated that there are higher rates of anxiety and depression amongst musicians than other workers in the music industries (ibid.: 34). However, lower rates of occurrence must not undermine the importance or deter attention from this issue in relation to the lives of support personnel. Secondary status should not be reproduced by disproportionately prioritizing musicians' mental health over the wellbeing of those that look after them. The mental health of all workers in live music should be taken seriously. Research findings presented here, and the response of road crew members more broadly to this issue suggests that much more is to be learned from their everyday working lives. When findings from The Tour Health Initiative survey[85] become available, they will no doubt provide a more balanced understanding of mental health in the music industries. Including road crews in this conversation creates an opportunity for deeper insight into the relationship between mental health and working on tour and in live music, and in the creative industries more generally.

A major aim of this thesis was to provide groundwork and expand the area of live music studies by widening the scope of the understanding of live music and analyzing a broader set of activities that are integral to its realization. In particular, this conclusion puts forth three major points about live music and its study. First, we need to see the ways in which live music events, particularly those that "fall[] [within] a wider temporal series of events … called [a] tour"

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[85] https://www.tourhealth.org/

(Weinstein [1991] 2000: 203), are brought into being through work that is both well-defined and negotiated on a daily basis. Live music events are realized, to some extent, through legal contracts and formal agreements at the same time that they are the result of informal, off-the-record discussions and disagreements. They are brought about through careful planning and last-minute decisions. Clearly established conventions and expectations matter as much to understanding the live music sector as do sudden, unanticipated circumstances and the manner in which they are handled. Particular work activities may be presented one way on paper, but in practice be enacted according to very different criteria. The significance of interpersonal relations in the live music industry renders daily negotiations between workers a central site of analysis in understanding the labour involved in concert events. In addition, ambiguous and contextual job descriptions, the place of artist's preferences, and changing personnel within crews and at the local level, mean there is much to be learned from factors that are difficult to systematize.

Second, live music is so often understood as involving special, magical moments (Black, Fox and Kochanowski 2007: 154–155, Frith 2007: 14, Brown and Knox 2017: 238–241), but is, in fact, realized through the most repetitive and mundane of activities. The mobile nature of touring means that venues function as hubs to sustain basic needs and everyday life. Successfully putting a show together depends on access to a supply chain, the circulation of documents and effective communication. The smooth continuity of a tour places importance on mutual respect and tolerance given the close proximity in which personnel live and work as they move from one show day to the next. Being on tour is also enhanced by maintaining morale, a repetitive act in and of itself given the ubiquitous use of humour within the workplace culture. In these ways, the unspectacular activities that constitute live events are rich sources of understanding. While some

may argue that awareness of such tasks diminishes the effect of the spectacle (see White 2014: 1), it can also be said that looking behind the curtain ultimately makes the result more impressive.

Third, tours are particular ways of moving through the world by groups of people brought together in sets of relationships that are worked out along the way. We must recognize the activities that occur both within and between venues as important sources of analysis, as well as the role of mobility in shaping the lives, experiences and identities of workers on tour (see also Nóvoa 2012). Understanding live music means making sense of its workplace culture, and the norms, expectations and ambiguities that touring personnel encounter. It means locating the power dynamics, gender imbalances and interpersonal relations that are significant to the everyday conditions of working on tour, and how personnel make sense of and address them. The efforts and experiences of workers on tour are part of live music events and are influenced by the process of touring.

In its goal of providing groundwork, this study could not be comprehensive nor address all aspects related to road crews, touring and the everyday life of live music. Some of the research conducted revealed additional interesting insights about the working lives of road crews that could not be included. Among them are the notion of crew members as "unsung heroes" and, related, questions of respect, appreciation and general treatment by the musicians for whom they work. An aspect that was largely unexplored during the research process is the frequent comparison made between road crews and military personnel. Such an examination could potentially reveal additional understanding of their work experiences both on and off the road, or destabilize the association all together. As indicated, there was not a substantial amount of data

on pay rates and related financial conditions. An in-depth study that focuses on these aspects of the working lives of road crew members would make a valuable contribution.

Looking to the future, it is hoped that others will find road crews and touring both inspiring and stimulating objects of research. Aside from the aforementioned, there is much room to further develop these topics. This study was a contemporary one, but recent developments mean that the past, present and the immediate future are all worthy of a more comprehensive study. A historical account of road crews — or "roadies" — and how their working lives have changed or stayed the same, along with the terminology used to describe them, would extend the scope of understanding and create insightful connections. It is already clear that the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on live music will make this period in history, and the return of live music, substantial sources of analysis. In-depth studies of specific roles on road crews, such as production managers, guitar technicians or riggers, would enhance the understanding of support personnel broadly, and their individual character and significance specifically, in the music and cultural industries. Such research would contribute further understanding of the individual and collective natures of road crews in the realization of live music events. Additionally, a study that explores the working relationships between road crews and musicians from the perspective of the latter, as well as their experiences in the everyday life of live music, would offer useful comparison and insights.

Future studies can also add depth to broader themes and issues connected to the research presented here. The issue of mental health and the significance of working relationships in live music and touring demonstrate the far-reaching relevance of the question of care to studies of cultural labour. The study of live music can find new directions in the recent turn towards the "moral economy" and the "ethics of care." Scholars working in these areas foreground

community and relations in creative work, put forth alternative perspectives on precarity and the individualization of cultural labour, and explore ways of "responsibilizing creative economies" (Alacovska and Bissonnette 2019: 137, Banks 2006, Sandoval 2016, Banks 2017, Umney 2017). Such concerns and approaches have the potential for wide applicability to studies in a variety of cultural sectors.

To end, we will return to where it all began. October 2013. A concert at Terminal 5 in New York City. During the "roadie cabaret," it was striking that no one in the crowd, not even the front row, paid any attention to the members of the road crew working on stage. How something so interesting, and so important to the show, could be so completely ignored was perplexing. The purpose of this thesis has been to bring those workers and practices that usually go unnoticed or are hidden backstage to the forefront. It is based on the recognition that the taken-for-granted, routine and mundane daily activities and experiences of road crews are integral to, and constitutive of, the realization of concerts and central to a more complete understanding of live music. And it has shown that what all of those people "apparently wandering aimlessly or marching purposefully about as a gig is put together are actually doing" (Behr et al. 2016: 19) is actively contributing to the everyday life of live music.

Appendix A: Research Respondents and Interview Schedule

Name	Role	Date of Interview(s)	Location
Andy	Tour Manager, Sound Engineer	April 18, 2017	London, England
Jennifer	Tour Manager	April 28, 2017	Glasgow, Scotland
Glen	Tour Manager, Production Manager	May 2, 2017 May 15, 2018 August 28, 2019	Glasgow, Scotland Glasgow, Scotland Skype
Daniel	Monitor Engineer, Sound Engineer	May 4, 2017	Glasgow, Scotland
Tony	Close Protection Security, Head of Security	August 4, 2017 March 16, 2018	Skype Skype
Duncan	Guitar Technician	May 10, 2018	Phone
Michelle	Owner, Events Agency; Booking Agent, Artist Management	May 15, 2018	Glasgow, Scotland
Adrian	Guitar Technician	May 24, 2018	London, England
Michael	Manager, Live Music Association	May 25, 2018	Bath, England
Amy	Tour Manager	July 9, 2018	Skype
Ange	Production Coordinator	August 14, 2018	Phone
Ryan	Sound Engineer	September 24, 2018	Skype

Appendix B: Job Posting and Description

JOB OPENING – HOSPITALITY COORDINATOR*

Posted Date: February 23, 2018   Post Until: Position Filled
Department: Guest Services   Reports To: Guest Services Manager
Pay Type: Seasonal, Hourly, Non-Exempt
Hours: Vary due to concert schedule – very flexible schedule is required

Position Description: Assist with hospitality activities occurring in conjunction with all summer concerts. This position will be point person for all onsite hospitality needs day of concerts.

Essential Functions:
- Responsible for the hospitality/catering riders for each contracted concert after review from Food and Beverage Manager; day of show may also include artist Tour Manager.
  o Will obtain all rider items, from shopping list, for each concert.
  o Maintenance of an inventory of all rider items purchased.
  o Manage cash advance needs for purchasing rider items with accounting department.
  o Organization and execution of all rider items according to where they will be needed on day-of-show (i.e. Green Rooms, Dressing Rooms, Production Office, Buses, Dining Room, etc.).
- Responsible for catering set-up and food service for artist and crew.
  o Monitor all the rooms being used by contracted artist and related personnel.
- Clean all rooms of hospitality items, as needed, during and prior to show time.

Other Functions:
- Be available to assist Guest Services Manager on day of show should all other duties have been completed or been managed.
- Other related duties as assigned by Manager of Guest Services.

Education and/or qualifications preferred:
- 2-3 years hospitality experience with a working knowledge of food production and bar service
- Must be 25 years or older in order to drive rental car
- Ability to work in a fast-paced, multi-disciplinary environment comfortably and professionally
- Skilled with computers; preferably WORD and EXCEL
- Skilled in establishing priorities and managing workload but able to follow directions
- Must have a valid driver's license with acceptable driving record and able to work most, If not all of the concerts

If you are interested in working for one of [local removed] premier cultural institutions and with a highly-motivated team… send your cover letter and resume to [email address removed].

*Job posting has been anonymized and excludes name of company and location

Appendix C: Road Crew Autobiographies and Guidebooks

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