

“GO WITH YOURSELF”: EVALUATING THE CREATIVITY AND CONTROL

OF

ANN AND NANCY WILSON OF *HEART*

THESIS

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by

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Lauren Ann Lyman

2011

To my mother and father

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ABSTRACT

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SUPERVISING PROFESSOR: KEVIN MOONEY

In September 1997, the pop culture artists of the American music industry reunited for the thirteenth annual MTV Video Music Awards (VMA's). That year, twenty-year-old recording artist, Fiona Apple, won the Best New Artist award for her video “Sleep to Dream.” She also achieved stunning success for her video for “Criminal,” where she was seen posing provocatively in her underwear. These tracks were on her debut album, *Tidal*, released in July 1996. Just at the start of her career, critics commended Fiona Apple for the rare maturity of her music. However, in her acceptance speech, she assertively proclaimed, “This world is bullshit... and you shouldn't model your life about what you think, that you think we think is cool, and what we're wearing,

and what we're saying and everything. Go with yourself.”¹ Fiona Apple accepted the award that night, but, arguably, she did not accept the illusion of pop culture and sexual stardom, or at least an image she could not control.

Susan McClary, writing on Madonna's legacy in popular music in *Feminine Endings* (1991) states that

In a world in which the safe options for women musicians seem to be either denying gender difference or else restricting the expression of feminine pleasure to all-women contexts, Madonna's counter-narratives of female heterosexual desire are remarkable. The intelligence with which she zeroes in on the fundamental gender tensions in culture and the courage with which she takes them on deserve much greater credit than she usually is given.²

Indeed, female performance in the music industry has evolved from the singing front-woman diva, to the political singer/songwriter, to the female rocker, to the recent commercialized pop star. Beginning in 1984, Madonna cultivated an art of sexuality in music. However, female musicians before and even today communicate their sexuality *through* music. Madonna's attempts were successful at exposing sexuality in her own medium, and her aim was genuine. When MTV first aired in 1981, it was a perfect time for Madonna and other pop artists to sell an image and promote sexuality. Yet, it seems that sexual performance in the industry today is standardized as a marketable tool, rather than an authenticity. Artists like Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera eventually turned

¹ Youtube. "Fiona Apple - MTV Video Music Award for 'Best New Artist' 1997-09-04 - Acceptance Speech (Full)" Last modified on September 4, 2011 <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xDM2uJWhg4>

² Susan McClary, "Living to Tell," in *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minnesota University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 165

to sexuality, both coming out of their own “teen pop” era in the late 1990s. While Fiona Apple suggested sexuality in her 1996 video “Criminal,” she was soon to reject the corrupted pop culture, once given the opportunity. Instead of aiming to be recognized for the art of posing in her underwear, she would rather be recognized for her music.

In this thesis, I will evaluate the evolution of female performance in the male-dominated world of rock through a case study of Ann and Nancy Wilson of *Heart*. From 1976 to the present day, Ann and Nancy Wilson fronted their own rock band, and throughout each album and each decade, they managed their band on different levels. These artists also controlled their careers over a span of thirty-five years, creating ways to express themselves in the industry when sexuality was already an issue that had to be negotiated. To highlight these issues, my case study will center on three topics: performance, repertory, and promotion.

Preceding the case study, I will discuss the importance of Janis Joplin in the history of female rock front-women by critiquing her creativity and control with The Waller Creek Boys, Big Brother and the Holding Company, The Kozmic Blues Band, and The Full Tilt Boogie Band. Janis, along with her contemporary Grace Slick, was one of the first female singers to lead a rock band, beginning in 1967. I will describe how Janis stimulated the front woman role in the music industry and thus inspired other female musicians to follow.

Ann and Nancy Wilson were female front-women who engaged in the writing and recording process and refuted sexual exploitation in the late 1970s. However, they were also persuaded to contend with commercialism during the height of Madonna’s career. In

order to “go with themselves,” they had to create and control their band repertory, performance contexts, and promotion. In this case study, I will draw on such sources as biographies, interviews, audio and video performances, life documentaries and studio documentaries, female rock articles, female rock dissertations, women’s studies, and rock history studies.

The *authenticity* of sexuality is a slippery notion. In this thesis, I will define authenticity as chosen by the *performer*, as opposed to the audience’s perception. In chapter four, I will specifically assess the authenticity of sexuality before Madonna in 1984, as well during and after her debut. Fiona Apple made a crucial statement in 1997, at a time when teen icons such as Britney Spears and Christina Aguilera were being promoted. I will evaluate how Fiona recognized the continuing spiral of sexual exploitation in the late 1990s, as well as suggest the extent to which this issue is overlooked in the present day music business and how sexuality is homogenized. Thus, this thesis will not only underline the changing factors of creativity and control, but also address how these women established an authentic means of performance in the socio-historical context of their time.

I. INTRODUCTION

In September 1997, the pop culture artists of the American music industry reunited for the thirteenth annual MTV Video Music Awards (VMA's). That year, twenty-year-old recording artist, Fiona Apple, won the Best New Artist award for her video "Sleep to Dream." She also achieved stunning success for her video for "Criminal," where she was seen posing provocatively in her underwear. These tracks were on her debut album, *Tidal*, released in July 1996. Just at the start of her career, critics commended Fiona Apple for the rare maturity of her music. However, in her acceptance speech, she assertively proclaimed, "This world is bullshit... and you shouldn't model your life about what you think, that you think we think is cool, and what we're wearing, and what we're saying and everything. Go with yourself."¹ Fiona Apple accepted the award that night, but, arguably, she did not accept the illusion of pop culture and sexual stardom, or at least an image she could not control.

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In this thesis, I will evaluate the evolution of female performance in the male-dominated world of rock through a case study of Ann and Nancy Wilson of *Heart*. From 1976 to the present day, Ann and Nancy Wilson fronted their own rock band, and throughout each album and each decade, they managed their band on different levels.

² Susan McClary, "Living to Tell," in *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 165.

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II JANIS JOPLIN AND THE FRONT WOMAN IN ROCK

A case study on two female rock artists such as Ann and Nancy Wilson cannot be discussed without reviewing the history of one of the first white, female rock musicians to *lead* an all-male rock band: Janis Joplin. In addition to singing in front of her band, Janis inspired the career path for many women in rock music. In the words of Alice Echols, “She invaded male turf, claiming herself the prerogatives typically reserved for men—artistic ambition, lust, and the right to live large.”³

The main focus of this chapter is to describe Janis as a front woman and how her roles in each band would change, as well as to highlight her influence on Stevie Nicks, Bette Midler, Joan Jett, Kim Gordon, Melissa Etheridge, Pink, and Ann and Nancy Wilson. In my discussion, I relied heavily on Alice Echols’s *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin*, because this work combines all biographies on Janis, includes secondary sources that help identify different perspectives on her career, and Echols analyzes this evidence and provides her own conclusions. Echols also describes the sexual element of Janis’s performances. In this chapter, as well as in the chapters that follow, I will begin to explore the counter-argument of sexuality in female rock performance. Indeed, the extent to which their sexuality is represented both musically and

³Alice Echols *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Henry Holt, 1999) 206

visually is different among Janis, Ann and Nancy Wilson, Madonna, and Fiona Apple. In the case of Janis, she was well aware of its power and appeal, but she was predominantly a vocalist and performer before being labeled as a sex icon of the 1960s.

Janis was involved with various groups whose members did not immediately choose her as the front woman. She was invited into The Waller Creek Boys and Big Brother and the Holding Company. She also faced issues concerning band leadership and the band's name. These tribulations undermined her gender and musical abilities.⁴ In Big Brother and the Holding Company as well as the Kozmic Blues Band her ability to lead the groups was questioned. However, in the last band before her death, The Full-Tilt Boogie Band, Janis was the front woman, and the members willingly worked for her.

Janis was criticized for her looks by her peers and in music reviews,⁵ but the sexuality and expression she would portray on the stage yielded a respect from fans and

⁴ Such as in Big Brother and the Holding Company, Janis did not decide the name, but she was known as a woman under a masculine band name. Toward the end of her time with Big Brother and then during her time with the Kozmic Blues Band, the press and venue marqueees referred to the band as "Janis Joplin." Therefore, her name was recognized as well as herself as a front woman, with the original band referred to as the backup band.

⁵ Consider a very critical review of Janis by Simon Frith "Big Brother And The Holding Company Cheap Thrills (CBS KCS 9700)," *Let It Rock* (April 1975) <http://www.rocksbackpages.com/article.html?ArticleID=366>. Also, the infamous Ugliest Man contest is another source of evidence. This contest was run by *The Ranger*, a University of Texas magazine sponsored by the Texas Student Publications. Janis was elected as a candidate for the ugliest man on campus, supposedly a fund-raising fraternity prank. Laura Joplin explains "For one day they erected a stage on campus and wrote names on a large board. Each vote cost a quarter, and there was fun competition among the frats to have their man win." Janis did not win the contest, but she clearly resented it. According to Laura Joplin, "Several recalled the event humorously, but Powell St. John remembered Janis coming into the Union with tears in her eyes because she was getting votes in the contest. Even if initiated in parody and jest, Janis resented the experience." Laura Joplin, *Love, Janis* (New York: Villard Books, 1992), 107. Throughout her time with each band, her talent seemed to overshadow any setbacks on her appearance. She had sexual relations with Powell St. John of The Waller Creek Boys, James Gurley of Big Brother and the Holding Company, and by the time she reached the Kozmic Blues Band and Full-Tilt Boogie Band, perhaps she had achieved a better acceptance of her looks through fame, but she was still very self-conscious. Laura Joplin remarks on Janis's audition into Big Brother "Her shy innocence shone in a face blemished by acne. Then she sang, and her pure notes captured the band's full attention. With her

her band members. She would also work obsessively on her vocal style, and sparingly on song-writing throughout her career.⁶ Janis encountered different issues concerning her role in each band, from inferiority to gender problems to musical differences. All of these concerns will be addressed in the next four sections, sorted by band name: The Waller Creek Boys, Big Brother and the Holding Company, the Kozmic Blues Band, and the Full-Tilt Boogie Band.

Indeed, Janis *evolved* as a front woman in the music business, rather than declare herself a front woman in the first band she joined. As one of the first white women in rock music, Janis had to build her rock personality, overcome all the barriers (musical and non-musical), and learn how to manage her female image that was so revolutionary and uncultivated at this time in rock 'n' roll history.⁷

The Waller Creek Boys

Janis arrived in Austin, Texas, in the summer of 1962, where she attended The University of Texas at Austin until December.⁸ It was during this time that she became involved with her first music group, the Waller Creek Boys. Powell St. John and Lanny Wiggins were primarily a duo, with the former on harmonica and the latter on banjo.

commanding voice, they knew that, everything else aside, Janis had the sound they wanted. The band was complete" (Joplin, 148)

⁶ Consider "Intruder" and "Women is Losers" from *Big Brother and the Holding Company* (Fall 1967). Although "Women is Losers" is not credited to Janis as the writer in the LP's liner notes, "I Need a Man to Love" co-written by Janis and Sam Andrew, "Turtle Blues," "Oh Sweet Mary," from *Cheap Thrills* (August 1968), "Kozmic Blues," co-written by Janis and Gabriel Mekler, "One Good Man," from *I Got Dem Ol' Kozmic Blues Again Mama!* (Fall 1969), "Move Over," "Mercedes Benz," co-written by Janis and M. McClure from *Pearl* (January 1971), also "What Good Can Drinkin' Do?" from Disc One of the box set, *Janis* (1993)

⁷ Janis's contemporary, Grace Slick, sang and fronted a rock band in San Francisco in the late 1960s, called Jefferson Airplane. She wrote two of the band's top hits, "Somebody to Love," and "White Rabbit." For more information of Slick, consider, "Slick, Grace" in *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 4th ed., edited by Colin Larkin, *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/epm/25991>

⁸ Echols, 45

Named after a creek that ran through the university campus, the Waller Creek Boys were performing songs already, but they were open to having a singer join the group. Lanny's brother, Ramsey, had heard Janis sing and, impressed by her voice, he immediately told his brother about her. The Waller Creek Boys were not interested in singing themselves, so when they first heard her voice, they invited Janis into the group. She would sing lead vocals and harmonies, but she was not considered the leader of the band. Janis was only a member, not a front woman, throughout her time with this group.

Her talent was already an advantage with the trio, however, a disadvantage was that the band was already formed before she joined. As a result, Janis performed with a group having a masculine name. A fellow friend, Wali Stopher, recalls the band name choices: "Even after she joined, they were usually called the Waller Creek Boys or the Waller Creek Boys Plus One. No matter, Janis had always been one of the guys anyway."⁹ The issue of being "one of the guys" was a continuing cycle for Janis, from her life in Port Arthur, Texas, to the subsequent bands she joined after her time in Austin.

During her semester at UT, however, Janis was able to grow musically with the Waller Creek Boys. They practiced such genres as bluegrass, jug band, blues, and country, and meanwhile Janis was resonating such influences as Bessie Smith and Leadbelly. Even though she was not very serious about pursuing her art degree at the University of Texas, she was persistent with music in the community. Indeed, the trio was active until she left in January 1963.¹⁰ Powell St. John also admits that Janis was

⁹ Echols 46. Echols's interview with Wali Stopher and "Waller Creek Boys Plus One" is from her interview with Ramsey Wiggins.

¹⁰ In the fall of 1962, The Waller Creek Boys began performing at the Student Union on Thursday nights as well as at the Cliché Coffeehouse on Guadalupe Street. The group also performed at Threadgill's on

very committed to the group “Janis was a ‘real scholar,’ St. John recalled, “She knew music I never heard way back then I’m continually running across stuff now and thinking, Oh, Janis heard that. She picked up things from all kinds of diverse sources. She acknowledged Bessie Smith, of course But there were others, too. Leadbelly, Memphis Minnie, and country music.”¹¹

Three months after the Ugly Man contest, Janis was persuaded by Chet Helms to hitchhike to San Francisco, “where, he claimed, her gutsy singing would be a huge hit.”¹² Her schoolmate, Tary Owens, recalled that Janis was ready, by that time, to pursue a career as a folk-singer and front woman. The Waller Creek Boys were rising in success, and Janis was already seeing a future in music. “By that time, the Waller Creek Boys had done a couple of semiprofessional gigs and she’d decided to be a singer.”¹³ Although Austin was a playground for Janis to practice and develop her singing, it was not a place to become famous. She was not set on singing the blues at first. She preferred folk-singing, because “that’s where the money was in 1962.”¹⁴ Powell St. John had agreed that she should go to San Francisco: “Janis knew she had to leave Austin to make it.”¹⁵

Janis’s time with the Waller Creek Boys was a developmental period. She learned songs, practiced with her band mates, performed in the early 1960’s Austin community and, most importantly, she sang the lead vocals in a group for the first time. She also

Wednesday nights, a converted gas station bar They also entered a talent contest at Zilker Park, held by the Recreation Department, and the group won first place in the singing category (Laura Joplin, 101-103). For more evidence, consider Echol’s biography and Myra Friedman, *Buried Alive: The Biography of Janis Joplin*. (New York William Morrow & Company, 1973), 101-103

¹¹ Interview with Powell St. John quoted in Echols, 48

¹² Interview with Ramsey Wiggins quoted in Echols, 66.

¹³ Interview with Tary Owens quoted in Echols, 66.

¹⁴ Interview with Ramsey Wiggins quoted in Echols, 66

¹⁵ Interview with Powell St. John quoted in Echols, 66.

furthered a lifestyle among men and music where they would “hang out and get drunk a lot, get in big fights, roll in the mud, drink beer, pick and sing, pick and sing”¹⁶ She was considered one of the guys and, therefore, she felt just as strong as men in personality. She may have sung lead vocals, but her abrasive nature and personality somewhat dampened the respect for which she aimed. She also did not establish a sexual image at this time but, in the bands that followed, she continued to find her voice, gaining more control and more creativity in the music.

Big Brother and the Holding Company

Big Brother had already been formed before Janis joined the group on June 4, 1966.¹⁷ Her male band mates considered her a member of the band, and she was the only female under an authoritative and perhaps masculine name, “Big Brother and the Holding Company.”¹⁸ Although the name was meant to be cutting-edge and impressive to San Francisco audiences, it did not give Janis a female image, even though she was eventually featured on six songs from the first album. Before Big Brother and the Holding Company, a live rock band had never accompanied her before. This was her first chance at becoming a front woman figure, but she was not declared the front woman until Big

¹⁶ Quoted in David Dalton *Piece of My Heart: A Portrait of Janis Joplin*, rev ed (New York Da Capo, 1991), 95 Quoted in Echols, 46.

¹⁷ “Chet unveiled Big Brother in December 1965 at Berkeley’s Open Theater, where the band played an almost entirely instrumental and improvised set .” The original lineup differs from the lineup with Janis Chuck Jones was on drums, Paul Beck on harmonica, Sam Andrew on guitar, David Eskeson on lead guitar, and Peter Albin on bass (switching from guitar to bass) When Janis joined the band in June 1965, Chuck Jones was replaced with Dave Getz earlier that March According to Echols, Getz was a “speed freak who couldn’t keep time, but eventually Dave Getz came onboard ” David Eskeson was replaced with James Gurley in November 1965 (Echols, 125)

¹⁸ The name was the result of a stoned group rap about the novel, *1984*, by George Orwell, which told the story of “monopoly capitalism, holding corporations, and holding in the sense of possessing drugs” From *The Haight-Ashbury: A History* by Charles Perry, quoted in Echols, 123 However, before the end of their first year, Janis’s name was being singled out on the marquees, and the band name was placed after “Janis Joplin.”

Brother was signed to a label. She had met James and Peter when she was performing in the North Beach coffeehouses in the summer of 1963, such as Coffee and Confusion and the Coffee Gallery. After auditioning other vocalists, Chet invited Janis to San Francisco for an audition.¹⁹ “James says he remembered her incredible voice ‘right off.’ Chet, however, remembers some resistance from James and Peter, who feared Janis would ‘give too strange an aura to the band.’ He himself thought ‘she was strange and weird and off-the-wall and she raised the hair on the back of your neck.’ But so, he reasoned, did the band.”²⁰ This unusual behavior was advantageously linked to her vocal style, where her changing moods and overt sexuality could deliver a song with conviction. According to Myra Friedman, publicist for Big Brother’s manager, Albert Grossman:

As many saw her, she was tough and loose, the intensity of her needs splurging out with astonishing directness. Alternately, she was warm and demanding, quiet and raucous, insecure and grandiose, the character of the moment so without disguise as to be interpreted as a special gift of honesty. Above all, she seemed without sexual inhibition, adopting the hippie ethic in caricature.²¹

Big Brother was very experimental, raw, and aggressive, a perfect fit as well as a challenge for Janis at this time. First, the influence of blues could be heard in San Francisco bands such as The Grateful Dead, Quicksilver Messenger Service, the Jefferson Airplane, and Country Joe and the Fish.²² “And it was blues, amplified and

¹⁹ Interview with James Gurley quoted in Echols, 128

²⁰ Ibid., “right off” from interview with James Gurley and “give too strange an aura” from Ellis Amburn, *Pearl: The Obsessions and Passions of Janis Joplin* (New York: Warner Books), 1992, 65

²¹ Friedman, 78-79.

²² By 1969, there was a “rebirth of the blues,” and this was a headline *Newsweek* in May 1969, with Janis on the front cover. Bands would perform songs by Muddy Waters and B B King. Michael Bloomfield, the Rolling Stones, Paul Butterfield, and Eric Clapton were following suit in this genre. However, Janis was with Big Brother before the *Newsweek* headline premiered. Big Brother’s goal was not to play the blues

transformed by the screaming colors and inward messages of acid, that shaped the San Francisco sound.”²³ Also, Big Brother and the Holding Company used spontaneity and raw emotion more than musical expertise in their blues music. Among their intake of acid, James Gurley’s guitar ideas and the overall “sheets of sound” were elements of their psychedelic sound. Bob Siedemann recalls:

James *was* the Big Brother sound. For a minute, James was Jimi Hendrix. For a minute he was *the* psychedelic guitar player in America. There was just nothing like it. He may have missed his string once in a while, or often, but it was all soul, all mood, all emotion, all pain, all suffering, all blues.²⁴

Furthermore, Janis would experiment with a different vocal style for this rock band. Indeed, she was listening to blues and soul music, and aside from the blues revival in the Bay Area, these styles inspired her to project and phrase the vocal melody. For example, in “Ball and Chain,” written by Willie Mae “Big Mama” Thornton, she combined the San Francisco raw emotion with these vocal techniques:

She began listening to soul music, in particular to Otis Redding, whom she worshiped. When Redding played the Fillmore that December [1967] she arranged for Bill Graham to let her into the auditorium hours before his performance so she could be right up front. . . . Janis and Sam Andrew planted themselves as close to the stage as they could get. Sam claims Janis “absorbed Redding’s every syllable, movement, and chord change.” She watched the way he made the song “visible” through his movements “I started singing rhythmically,”

classics faithfully. For example, according to Peter Albin. “We Big Brotherized [Erma Franklin’s] song ‘Piece of My Heart.’” Interview with Peter Albin quoted in Echols, 151

²³ Friedman, 73

²⁴ Quoted in Echols, 127.

she said, “and now I’m learning from Otis Redding to push a song instead of just sliding over it ”²⁵

Janis admits it is different from the more native style of folk, but as before, she was still inspired and encouraged by the feedback from her friends and audiences. Her first love was the blues, in fact, but now actually performing in front of a rock band was another craft for her to explore. “We rehearse every afternoon,” she revealed, “in a garage that’s part of a loft an artist friend of theirs owns and people constantly drop in and listen--everyone seems very taken with my singing although I am a little dated. This kind of music is different than I’m used to.”²⁶

After the successful performance at the Monterey Pop Festival in June 1967,²⁷ Big Brother and the Holding Company was approached by Elektra Records. Paul Rothchild was interested in signing Janis with his company to sing in a blues group with Taj Mahal and Stefan Grossman. This was a band with experienced musicians and on a

²⁵ Echols, 136 In endnotes, from Sam Andrew’s “Recollections of Janis,” *Blues Revue*, no 17 38, and from Richard Goldstein, *Goldstein’s Greatest Hits* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ Prentice-Hall), 1970, 55

²⁶ Entry from June 1966 in Laura Joplin, *Love, Janis* (New York Villard Books, 1992), 149

²⁷ Big Brother and the Holding Company performed on the second day of that weekend, June 17, 1967, during what became The Summer of Love in the 1960’s counterculture This performance became known as the event that launched Big Brother and the Holding Company into rock star fame, as well as “the pivotal event that brought the San Francisco hippie rock music movement to national attention” Lisa L. Rhodes *Electric Ladyland* Philadelphia (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 18, Newspapers and magazines such as *Newsweek*, *Time*, *The Berkeley Barb*, the *Houston Post*, and other publications had raving reviews on the performance Laura Joplin mentions in her biography, “This performance was the one that sparked Mama Cass’s overwhelmed response to their sound and Janis’s voice. Mouth agape, her ears were in music lovers’ heaven ” (Joplin, 195-196) This reaction can be seen in the film, *Monterey Pop* (1968) Other artists included Otis Redding, Ravi Shankar, The Jefferson Airplane, Jimi Hendrix, The Mamas & The Papas, and The Who Big Brother and the Holding Company did not have an album released at this point, but their successful performance yielded the group a cultural significance and higher-paying gigs. Laura Joplin explains “By the end of 1967, they were pulling in twenty-five hundred dollars a night without having released a significant album The business normally didn’t work that way! It could only have happened as part of a general revolution in the music business itself caused by a push for change from a new generation of listeners” (Joplin, 197).

more prominent label²⁸ At first, Big Brother was under the impression Rothchild wanted to sign the whole band, but he was only interested in taking Janis. Aside from the dispute with her group, Janis was immediately flattered, but conflicted. She wrote to her sister, revealing the issue:

Now I don't know what to do! I have to figure out whether R&R is going to go out, how deep my loyalties to Big Brother go (the band is very uptight at me for even going to the meeting & I can understand it) & just, in general, what to do. Blues is my own special love for one thing & for another, I'd be under contract to a record co from the beginning-I'd be starting on the top almost and I'm not sure yet whether the rest of the band (Big Brother) will, indeed want to, work hard enough to be good enough to make it. We're not now I don't think. Oh God, I'm just fraught w/indecision! And let's face it, I'm flattered.²⁹

This was a significant point in her career, where Janis realized that she could be a front woman in a successful band. Also, Janis faced a challenge in her musicianship, if not that of her members. Had Janis left Big Brother, her development might have been different. Sam Andrew believes she would have faltered. “.had she accepted Rothchild's offer she would most likely have been ‘relegated to a very conventional role,’ in Sam's view, ‘and not allowed to develop.’”³⁰ In Big Brother, Janis was growing *with* her band, musically, whereas with Taj Mahal and Stefan Grossman she would have been

²⁸ Elektra Records can be compared to Mainstream Records from New York, which was managed by Bob Shad, who had auditioned the band to sign them with this label, but the contract he offered was not very promising. Shad poorly promoted the band, but they were granted two singles, “Blindman” and “All is Loneliness” as well as the album, *Big Brother and the Holding Company* in the fall of 1967. Rothchild of Elektra offered extensive promotion, a house in Los Angeles for the group, and the company would fund the group until they were ready to record. This happened shortly before their four-week gig in Chicago and before Rothchild approached the band as well (Echols, 149)

²⁹ Entry from August 22, 1966 in Laura Joplin, 162.

³⁰ Echols, 155.

possibly upstaged. On the other hand, she might have responded to the encouragement just as she had before with The Waller Creek Boys and Big Brother. Sam Andrew believed she had a great advantage already, where she was able to step forward and voice her opinion. "We didn't know enough to tell anybody what to do," Sam says. "In that way, she was really lucky to find us."³¹ Their naivety was also a reflection of their music abilities, and Janis became frustrated toward the end of her time with Big Brother:

They don't help the words, they either fight 'em or just lay there like dead fish," she said. I want a bigger band with higher highs, a bigger ladder. And I want more bottom--I want an incredible amount of bottom. I want more noise. When I do a rock tune I want it to be so HUGE...³²

Big Brother and the Holding Company was a moderately successful band in their first year, but the critical consensus is that their aims were inadequate musically. The Elektra Records opportunity would have been an outlet for Janis, and she was perfectly aware of what she needed for a backup band. In spite of this and after much heated discussion with the other members, she finally decided to stay with Big Brother. She was already very close and comfortable with this band, and they provided her the two most important assets in her life, career and family: "Moreover, she had finally found a group--a family--that accepted her, and she loved the Haight scene, whereas L.A., despite its considerable allure, was an unknown. Big Brother had resolved, at least temporarily, the conflict between career and family that dogged Janis."³³ Janis waited to make a decision after a month-long gig in Chicago, but during this time, there was increased resentment.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Alfred G. Aronowitz "Singer With the Bordello Voice," *Life Magazine* (September 20, 1968) <http://www.janisjoplin.net/news/9/48/Singer-With-The-Bordello-Voice/>.

³³ Echols, 154.

Also, Big Brother signed to Mainstream Records while they were desperate in Chicago for those four weeks. The band was not making sufficient money, and they also did not have a place to stay.³⁴ The decision was already made for Janis, and Peter Albin even admitted “that we could lock Janis in by signing this deal ”³⁵

But by the fall of 1967, there was even more tension among the band members since the Elektra Records debate:

Inevitably, the band could hardly stay focused on the music when everybody treated Janis like the star and Big Brother like her backup band. This was not the deal the guys had struck two years earlier. While she was unhappy with their musicianship, they began to accuse her of thinking she was, “hot shit.” Janis started complaining to friends that the guys were trying to make her feel guilty for being more talented than they were.³⁶

This attitude was part of the reason why Janis left the band in September 1968. The band received negative reviews throughout the year, and Janis was also hearing comments from Albert Grossman, their manager.³⁷ The band would rush rhythms, play wrong chords, and as San Francisco bands normally preferred, they were out-of-tune. Peter Albin admits to their lack of focus, “We didn’t know our scales that well, and we

³⁴ “Motel clerks took one look at the scruffy group, with their long hair and equipment, and turned them away ” (Echols,150)

³⁵ Ibid., 152

³⁶ Echols , 211 “hot shit” is from Myra Friedman’s biography, *Buried Alive* Janis’s letter to Linda Gravenites

³⁷ “Once we left warm and cozy San Francisco, the critics attacked Big Brother because we were very limited musically. Ultimately, that’s what split up the band ” Endnote in Echol’s interview with Dave Getz; At the Newport Festival in August 1968, Big Brother received two encores after their performance, but Albert “took the band aside and told them the rhythm section was a problem ” (Echols, 213)

played a lot of wrong notes, a lot of clunkers.”³⁸ Clive Davis of Columbia Records also explained the situation ““The reviews were relentless saying again and again that she was superior to the musicians backing her.””³⁹ That September, Janis confided in Sam Andrew of Big Brother; she wanted him to go with her to another group. She wanted to use horns and have a soul band, as opposed to “Big Brother’s freak rock.”⁴⁰ Perhaps due to the band’s lack of focused musicality, Janis was ready for professional musicians. Also, since soul music was in vogue for artists like Aretha Franklin and Otis Redding, Janis aspired to sing like her idols in that style of a music group.

Nearing the end of 1968, Janis obviously *fronted* Big Brother and the Holding Company. Janis *indirectly* gained control of her rock band not only through her talent but also through outside appraisal. In essence, the critics’ reviews were a response to Janis’s talent, and her talent outweighed her bandmates’ stagnant skills and ambition.

The Kozmic Blues Band

In December 1968, Albert Grossman, Micheal Bloomfield, and Nick Gravenites assembled a new group for Janis. However, it was not named at this time as the musicians were hired about three days before they made their concert debut on December 21, 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee. Janis signed a contract with Columbia Records, and now Janis was the leader of her own band. Albert Grossman remained her manager and booked her gigs and tour dates. Janis was in a position of instructing what she wanted to hear in the

³⁸ David Dalton *Piece of My Heart: A Portrait of Janis Joplin*, rev ed (New York: Da Capo, 1991), 234. Quoted in Echols, 214.

³⁹ Clive Davis with James Willwerth, *Clive: Inside the Record Business*, p. 86 quoted in Echols, 211.

⁴⁰ Echols, 215.

music, but after emerging from the more inferior rock band, Big Brother and the Holding Company, it was quite a dramatic change

Consequently, the band lineup was unstable, which made it difficult for a front person to control. The players were hurriedly assembled, since Big Brother finished their last show three weeks before the new band's concert debut. There was not enough time for the band to become acquainted. The musicians were also professional, and perhaps they were superior to Janis. As the baritone saxophone player, Snooky Flowers, observed, "the band was better than she was, musically beyond her."⁴¹ Nevertheless, the band needed a leader to make musical decisions and sing as the front woman. Myra Friedman noted the band's need for a leader, "Albert had called on guitarist Mike Bloomfield, Elliot Mazer, and Nick Gravenites, to help find the musicians and assist at the rehearsals. The result was an aggregate of individuals who had no similarity of background. If Big Brother had been an eruption, its bond of unity a mangled primitivism that flashed and spewed without the necessity for a disciplined center, the new group was badly in need of a leader."⁴²

However, there were more barriers. The band's personnel was constantly changing, and the fact that Janis never chose the members herself from the start, certainly did not contribute to their success and to her role as a front woman. Gabriel Mekler also did not like the original lineup--Sam Andrew, Brad Campbell, Terry Clements, Bill King, Roy Markowitz, and Marcus Doubleday—and he wanted to hire his own musicians. He replaced the trumpet player, Terry Hensley (before him, Marcus Doubleday), with Luis

⁴¹ Interview with Snooky Flowers, quoted in Echols, 245-246

⁴² Friedman, 147.

Gasca and the drummer, Lonnie Castille, with Maury Baker. Janis was not in control of the lineup and she was perhaps more vulnerable, since she relied on Marcus Doubleday and Bill King for camaraderie. Other replacements had taken place before the recording sessions in June 1969.⁴³

Furthermore, the band was not named until after it was disbanded in December 1969, becoming known as the Kozmic Blues Band. Janis had written a song called, “Kozmic Blues”, for the album, *I Got Dem Ol' Kozmic Blues Again Mama!*⁴⁴ The band name was inspired by the album and, therefore, Janis *indirectly* contributed to the name.⁴⁵

Among personnel problems and musical differences, there were racial politics that were apparent from the Memphis show, in reviews, and among black audiences. Martin Luther King was assassinated in April 1968, and the band assembled in the aftermath of this tragedy. “King’s assassination destroyed the dream of inter-racialism as black power and its critique of integration gained greater support and credibility within the black community--a shift that reverberated culturally as well as politically.”⁴⁶ Jimi Hendrix and

⁴³ Even before Mekler’s intervention, the band’s personnel was constantly shifting, one reason the group never quite gelled. Only one musician-Terry Clements, the alto saxophonist-had been with the group from its beginning in December 1968. The bassist, Brad Campbell of the Paupers, a Canadian group Albert managed, joined the band after the Fillmore East gig, replacing a temporary bassist, Keith Cherry. Both the organist, Richard Kermode, who took over from Bill King, and the baritone saxophonist, Cornelius ‘Snooky’ Flowers-‘the ugly spade cat’ whom Janis had spoken of--were with the group almost from the start. But the band went through three drummers-Roy Markowitz, Lonnie Castille, and Maury Baker-and four trumpet players-Marcus Doubleday, Terry Hensley, Luis Gasca, and Dave Woodward. John Till came onboard as guitarist in July 1969. (Echols, 280)

⁴⁴ The words and music are credited to Janis Joplin and Gabriel Mekler. Copyright 1969.

⁴⁵ According to Echols, “During [the band’s] existence Janis sometimes called it Squeeze or the Band from Beyond and joked with the press about naming her group Janis Joplin and the Joplnaires (after Elvis’s Jordonaires), Janis Joplin’s Pleasure Principle, Janis Joplin’s Sordid Flavors, and even Janis and the Jack-Offs” (Echols, 245). Laura Joplin says the album’s name and “kozmic blues” was a “true Joplinesque missile” (Joplin, 254), Janis described her blues as a “kozmic blues” spelt with a K, about lost lovers and continuous loneliness and despair. She described it as “too down and lonely a trip to be taken seriously; it has to be a Crumb cartoon. It’s like a joke on itself.” (From *Piece of My Heart: A Portrait of Janis Joplin* by David Dalton, quoted in Echols, 240).

⁴⁶ Echols, 237.

Janis were icons of this cultural and racial integration. According to Echols, “Hendrix found himself confronted by Black Panthers demanding to be blacker, while Janis was scolded by white critics for trying to sing “black” music.. Martin Luther King’s assassination at the same Lorraine Motel [the same motel that Janis resided in Memphis] only months earlier had ended all sorts of possibilities, including the cultural hybridity Janis and Jimi Hendrix represented”⁴⁷ Indeed, “Snooky” Flowers, the baritone saxophone player, was the only black musician in the Kozmic Blues Band, and therefore, the band encountered racial problems in certain cities while on tour. In a 1999 interview by Gary James, Sam Andrew recalls the band’s tour through Florida, Georgia, and Alabama:

Being in the South, I was in Kozmic Blues with Janis. The saxophone player we took with us was black. At one place we pulled up to this fast food restaurant and he said, “You better, go in by yourself.” I said, “Why?” and he said, “Well, I don’t know if they’ll let me in there.” That just seemed so strange to me. I didn’t think at that day and age that that kind of thing would’ve been a concern for him. As it was, he could go in. It was fine. Just that there could be a question in his mind, things like that. There were some pretty backward ways of life going on I guess⁴⁸

Integration was one issue, but Janis also faced the issue of fronting a band that aimed to play soul music. In the late 1960s, soul music was identified with three main record companies: Stax (Memphis), and Fame/Muscle Shoals (Alabama) that identified the “Southern soul”, and Motown (Detroit) resembling a smoother, orchestrated soul

⁴⁷ Ibid., 232

⁴⁸ Gary James, “Janis Joplin Remembered: The Sam Andrew Interview,” *The Harbinger* (New York February 2, 1999) <http://www.theharbinger.org/xvii/990202/james.html>.

music⁴⁹ Soul music was, in fact, “an umbrella term for the black popular music of the time, with gospel music in particular providing a rich foundation for the singing styles of many stars.”⁵⁰ The gospel-styled piano and call-and-responses between the back-up singers and the lead vocalist were commonly used in early soul music. An example of this style is in Ray Charles’s recording, *What’d I Say* (1959).⁵¹ Ray Charles was famous for combining a gospel connotation with romantic lyrics. He was also inspired by Billy Ward and the Dominoes’ recording of “Have Mercy, Baby” (1953), which used a gospel plea for forgiveness from a lover. Similarly, when the Kozmic Blues Band covered Nick Gravenites’s spiritual song, “Work Me, Lord,” Janis’s voice grabs the word, “Lord” and pleads throughout the song for the intended lover not to leave her.⁵²

By 1969, *Billboard* changed the name of the Rhythm and Blues chart to Soul, a genre that the Kozmic Blues Band was still trying to encompass. The Kozmic Blues album actually reached number five on the Top 40 *Billboard* chart on October 18, 1969 and remained there for sixteen weeks.⁵³ However, it received mediocre reviews, and Columbia did not promote any Top 10 singles.⁵⁴ Also, the album never appeared on the R&B/soul music charts, where Aretha Franklin, James Brown, and other artists of the

⁴⁹ According to David Brackett, “As the term soul music began to enter mainstream usage, black popular music increasingly cut its ties with 1950s rhythm and blues to establish a distinctive 60s soul style. Between the years 1964 and 1966, the gospel techniques employed by lead vocalists continued, while the accompanying instruments acquired added definition through the use of rhythmic riffs. The bass in particular gained added prominence through the increasing use of syncopated patterns, and horns began to be used in syncopated, staccato bursts.” (David Brackett, “Soul Music,” *Grove Music Online* <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/80/subscriber/article/grove/music/26288>).

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Another example was “This Little Girl of Mine” was based on the spiritual “This Little Light of Mine,” which was often sung at protests during the Civil Rights Movement. For a complete account on soul music, consider Jennifer Ryan ““Can I Get a Witness?” Soul and Salvation in Memphis Music,” (Ph D. diss University of Pennsylvania, 2008)

⁵² ““Work Me Lord”” is a Nick Gravenites song, and it gives Janis a chance to present her own compelling version of gospel singing” (Amburn, 231)

⁵³ Ibid, 230.

⁵⁴ Echols, 247.

genre could be found⁵⁵ Indeed, Janis was inspired by the music of Stax (Otis Redding) and Atlantic (Aretha Franklin) Records, the funk and powerful bottom of the sound, but she also favored searing and elaborate vocal melodies, of which she was very capable. Therefore, how legitimate was their soul music? For example, “Try (Just a Little Bit Harder)” was co-written by Jerry Ragavoy, who was a white songwriter and producer, but he was a great asset to the soul music in New York, Philadelphia, and the east coast.⁵⁶ Indeed, this song has southern soul elements, such as beat subdivisions resembling funk as well as staccato bursts in the wind section. Yet, without a strong connection to the producers of Stax and Atlantic Records, the band immediately faced opposition, especially in their first performance in Memphis on December 21, 1968.⁵⁷ Also, the band covered “Maybe,” a doo-wop ballad originally sung by The Chantels and written by black singer-songwriter Richard Barrett, who was a contributor to the New York rhythm and blues sound. The Kozmic Blues Band’s cover version had a more full, funk bottom to its arrangement, which was apparently a “radically reworked version.”⁵⁸ Aside from facing the racial barriers between record companies and audiences, Janis believed she could sing her own version of the blues, a “kozmic” blues, at the same time offering her

⁵⁵ Joel Whitburn, *The Billboard Book of Top 40 R&B and Hip-Hop Hits* (New York: Billboard, 2006)

⁵⁶ Amburn writes that, “The soul sound she was after obviously required African-American expertise, but Albert inexplicably assigned an all-white team, composed of Michael Bloomfield and Nick Gravenites, to advise her” (Amburn, 188). Indeed, Gravenites and Bloomfield were familiar with African-Americans from the north and in Chicago, as opposed to the south; For evidence of white songwriters and producers involved in soul music, consider Peter Guralnick, *Sweet Soul Music; Rhythm and Blues and the Southern Dream of Freedom* (New York: Harper and Row), 1986

⁵⁷ The event was called “Memphis Stax/Volt ‘Yuletide Thing,’” and the band was on the same bill with professional African-American rhythm and blues bands “Janis wanted to emulate Aretha and Otis,” Sam Andrew said, “but before we even had the repertoire down, we were going to play in front of one of the most demanding audiences in the country, our heroes from Stax . It was intimidating, playing the blues for black people. . How dare we get up there and play their music? Naturally we were kind of nervous We just blew it” Sam Andrew quoted in Amburn, 190.

⁵⁸ Echols, 246

own approach on soul music. She believed that white performers do have soul, and that “there’s no patent on soul.”⁵⁹

Perhaps Janis was not considered an icon of the black popular music mainstream,⁶⁰ but she idealized her band as having the appeal. Unfortunately, there was an uncompromising imbalance between her voice and the instruments, another constant barrier in fronting the band. In the studio, the horn section was overbearing, and Mekler did not respond well to the instrumentalists’ suggestions.⁶¹ In truth, Janis went *against* Albert Grossman’s wishes by asking for a trumpet player and two saxophone players.⁶² The trumpet and saxophones were typical instruments in a soul band, but for this band specifically, the horn section was problematic. Music reviewers claim Janis would “screech” more than usual above the sound, even though this was her quintessential rock voice as heard with Big Brother. Apparently, this horn section was more aggressive, as compared to the more smooth horn players from Stax Records.⁶³ John Burks of *Rolling Stone* spoke negatively of the back-up band in his review of the *Kozmic Blues* album:

⁵⁹ Echols, 236

⁶⁰ Snooky Flowers comments that the *Kozmic Blues* Band received more criticism not only for playing music of the black audience, but also because Janis was already known as figure of the counterculture “Big Brother represented the sixties, and they thought Janis was in her purest form in that band. We had horns and sounded more like a polished R & B band, and they weren’t accustomed to that” (Echols, 247)

⁶¹ Echols, 246, Snooky Flowers resented the condescension from Mekler. He said, “We weren’t just a bunch of hippies running around playing three chords. Luis Gasca had left the Count Basie Band to play with Janis Joplin. And I had played with all the known R & B bands that came through the Bay Area” Interview with Snooky Flowers, quoted in Echols, 245.

⁶² “Janis had insisted on the horns, against Albert’s advice, and that of any number of others who were certain that their coloration would be wrong the texture of her voice. Moreover, the band was pulled together with nervous haste and the participation of too many people” (Friedman, 147)

⁶³ On “Try,” they stutter along like Stax rejects, thudding out a 16-to-the-bar quick-step so metronomic it defies you to pat your foot, let alone get up and dance. Quoted in John Burks, “*Kozmic Blues* Album,” *Rolling Stone* (November 1, 1969).

- “She sounds great. Just great. It's simply a matter of reaching the point where you are able to shut out the band--entirely--and listen to this woman sing”⁶⁴

In November 1969, Kozmic Blues released their album, but by January 1970, they disbanded. Janis was unhappy with the band on many levels, and since her experience at Woodstock in August, she had been losing interest. The festival ran ten hours behind schedule, and aside from Janis drinking heavily all day, the horn section was clumsy and over blowing the performance. Echols summarized, “Woodstock was something of a defeat for Janis... Indeed, Janis sang as if she were struggling to overcome the band’s sluggishness and her own weariness.”⁶⁵

Janis had, indeed, asserted herself in this band more than the previous groups, but as for the band chemistry, there was a negative effect. The members and staff resented her because they were being treated as employees. Perhaps this explains their sluggish playing or how they overpowered her voice on stage. Their roadie, Vince Mitchell, said a lot of the players, “would talk shit about her.”⁶⁶ She was verbally abusive with the first engineer the band hired, Jerry Hochman, and his replacement, Sye Mitchell, immediately stood his ground: “If I hear any of that from your mouth, I’ll walk out the door.”⁶⁷

The recording sessions only lasted ten days, as they were prompted by Albert Grossman to go on tour immediately. This left little time for the group to grow together

⁶⁴ John Burks, “Kozmic Blues Album,” *Rolling Stone* (November 1, 1969)
<http://www.rollingstone.com/music/albumreviews/i-got-dem-ol-kozmik-blues-again-mama-19691101?print=true>

⁶⁵ Echols, 265

⁶⁶ Ibid

⁶⁷ Interview with Sye Mitchell, quoted in Echols, 246

musically, understand each other's personalities or to fix the mistakes on the album. A 1969 *Rolling Stone* review remarks,

Janis herself has never sounded better on record, but it took me four full listenings to the LP before I could hear her. That's how bad her band is. When (and if) you get hold of this record, my suggestion is that you listen really hard to how awful the back-up is — everything from the arrangements to the level of musicianship.⁶⁸

As bassist Brad Campbell described the whole procedure, 'The *Kozmic Blues* recordings were chaos. Everybody was putting down everybody else. It was a mess, a total mess.'⁶⁹After this experience, Janis was more determined to find the members, the music, and the camaraderie she wanted in her next band.

The Full Tilt Boogie Band

The Full Tilt Boogie Band acquired its name from one of Janis's friend's Bobby Neuwirth. She mentioned the story on the Dick Cavett show: "It's called Full Tilt Boogie, man...From a friend of mine who walked in the dressing room one night and said, "Is everybody ready for full-tilt boogie?!"⁷⁰

During this time, Albert Grossman provided the professional guidance and support that she needed. Realizing that the *Kozmic Blues* Band suffered from a lack of direction from Janis as bandleader, she participated directly in selecting the next group along with Albert Grossman and Nick Gravenites. Laura Joplin states, "Albert and Janis

⁶⁸ John Burks "Kozmic Blues Album" *Rolling Stone* (November 1, 1969)

⁶⁹ Friedman, 164

⁷⁰ "Janis Joplin Last Interview on The Dick Cavett Show," last modified on July 18, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yybz0TcIgDk>. This segment also appeared in the documentary, *Janis*, Howard Alk and Seaton Findlay, Janis, directed by Howard Alk (Crawley Films, 1974), DVD

listened to tapes of prospective musicians, visited shows to see them in action, and discussed and discussed.”⁷¹ By May 1970, all band members were chosen Other than the drummer, Clark Pierson, whom Janis discovered playing with Snooky Flowers at a topless joint in San Francisco, the new guys were seasoned rockers, despite their youth. Ken Pearson, the organist, had played in Jesse Winchester’s band before joining Janis; Brad Campbell, the bassist, stayed with Janis from the Kozmic Blues Band, where he’d been from almost the beginning; Richard Bell, the pianist, and John Till, the lead guitarist, had played in Ronnie Hawkin’s legendary rock ‘n’ roll band, the Hawks, although Till had joined Janis earlier, days before Woodstock, replacing Sam Andrew.⁷²

She was satisfied with their musicality, saying their sound is “heavy” and “you could lean on it.”⁷³ This was the “bottom” kind of sound that she preferred in a band. She was also able to improvise onstage and the members could follow her. From May to October 1970, Janis finally had her ideal rock band. And most importantly, they were committed to Janis, and they resonated the “family” element that she desired.

The band went on tour in late May 1970, and the critics, the fans, Albert, and Janis were all satisfied. “The local newspapers couldn’t praise her enough. ‘Howling, screeching, and penetrating the air with...brilliance and force,’ Janis was phenomenal, raved the Louisville *Courier-Journal*”⁷⁴ In September, they began their recording sessions for the album *Pearl*. In the studio, working with the members was very easy. Janis was also more welcomed by Paul Rothchild, the new record producer, to work on

⁷¹ Joplin, 276

⁷² Echols, 279-280

⁷³ Ibid , 280-281, “heavy” and “you could lean on it” from Dalton’s biography *Piece of My Heart*, p. 88.

⁷⁴ Quoted in David Dalton’s, “Janis Joplin’s Full-Tilt Boogie Ride,” *Rolling Stone* (Aug 6, 1970), 10, quoted in Echols, 280

her music in the recording booth. Arguably, at this time that she was able to develop her knowledge of recording techniques. Rothchild recalls, “The minute I saw that there was any interest there at all, every time that she even looked curious I’d find out what she was curious about and I’d just fill her up with information. She had an amazing mind. She could absorb incredible amounts of raw material, store it and use it.”⁷⁵ Although Janis may have had more opportunity and more acceptance in the recording studio, Rothchild might have mythologized her personality and intelligence due to her death.⁷⁶ After all, Rothchild and the Full-Tilt Boogie Band continued to work on the album immediately after her death, while in mourning.

Nevertheless, whether in the recording studio or on stage, Janis had acquired a level of control that reflected leadership of her band. “‘I can do it!’ she crowed. ‘I can tell those cats what to do and they’ll *do* it! It’s *my* band. Finally, it’s *my* band!’”⁷⁷

Unfortunately, it was during those sessions for the new album that Janis overdosed on heroin mixed with alcohol (October 4, 1970 at 1.40 A.M). Just when she was in the most control of her band and career, she passed away.

⁷⁵ John Byrne Cook, Liner Notes from the album, *Pearl* (April 2004)

⁷⁶ Consider Freud’s “pathography” discussed in the dissertation Sarah Bartlett Churchwell, “Dead Metaphors: Writing Marilyn Monroe, Sylvia Plath, and Janis Joplin”. (Ph D. diss., Princeton University, 1998), Bartlett negotiates questions of the dead, in terms of identity, priority, influence, originality, truth, and death of the female body and of a woman’s life. Bartlett also discusses the concept of nostalgia, which Rothchild could have inhabited immediately after Janis’s death. Bartlett discusses how America had to initiate an immediate sense of nostalgia in order to mourn innocently, and she also discusses the case of women and how it can be perceived differently than men, “Uncertainty characterizes the sixties in America, at least in retrospect: male authority figures killed in public rest uneasily beside women whose authority derives primarily from having self-destructed in private. The crisis in authority, the indeterminacy that for many neatly characterizes an entire decade, may in this limited way be read as a new uncertainty about the singularity, the iconicity of death” (Bartlett, 12)

⁷⁷ Friedman, 203

Successors

Janis's life, career, and death profoundly affected succeeding female rock singers in rock 'n' roll history. In this section of the thesis, I will reference statements by female artists who have articulated a continued interest in Janis. Before proceeding to their comments, I will discuss the relevance of gender inequality and feminism during Janis's life. Female rock singers may have taken her example into account, but rock music critics as well as feminist writers glorified her presence in a male-dominated career.

Janis was in favor of denying marriage and discovering sexual liberation, but she was not so much a feminist enthusiast that she demanded equality of the sexes and issued political messages. While the second wave of feminism was rising, Janis's performances in the late 1960's were stimulating and littered with sexual energy, but also in the context of desperation and abandon, not for the sake of declaring a movement on female sexuality. It was a release of her emotions and a rebellion to convention. Friedman writes, "Her kick-out-the-jams sexuality is often still seen as freeing America of its hang-ups."⁷⁸ Essentially, the sexual revolution also inspired non-musician women to experiment, and it is not surprising that the rock music scene was a cultural foreground. "The groupies," according to Lisa Rhodes, "with their freewheeling sexuality, were also helping to reinterpret what it meant to be a sexually active woman in the music scene, as well as the roles of girlfriend, lover, wife, and whore."⁷⁹ Yet, Janis's persistence of sexual liberation was her own authentic aim, in accordance with her music and life itself.

⁷⁸ Echols, 306

⁷⁹ Lisa L. Rhodes *Electric Ladyland* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 2005, xii

Even before Janis had her debut, Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* was published (1963), and feminist topics surfaced. Friedan discouraged the values of heterosexual marriage that were so engrained in American homes during the 1950s.⁸⁰ Janis did consider marriage when she retreated back to Port Arthur, Texas, in 1965, yet she realized she could not conform to ordinary life and continued with her career. Of course, this was due to a calling to sing and become famous in the rock music scene, and to be a part of the hippie counter-culture in Haight-Ashbury, not to prove that middle-class families should follow the example; it was just not her prerogative.

In 1966, Friedan also helped to form the National Organization for Women (NOW), comprised of political women including Marguerite Rawalt, a former member of the John F. Kennedy's Presidential Commission on the Status of Women. "Its language, replete with calls for 'true equality' and 'equal partnership of the sexes,' indicated that NOW wanted to integrate women into the political and economic systems as they existed."⁸¹ Janis was not an agent in this feminist practice, as she was concerned with finding happiness in music and living an extreme lifestyle.

They were so crazy about "They're not giving me this, they're not giving me that." Well, good heavens, I just say, rock on out. I mean, I suppose I'm not getting a lot of things. I'm not getting peace of mind, I'm not getting a steady

⁸⁰ According to Rhodes, "A benchmark of the beginning of Second Wave Feminism is the publication of Betty Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* in 1963. Friedan described the effects of a life of compulsory marriage and motherhood on middle-class white women in America during the 1950s and early 1960s. She also discussed the dissatisfaction that many women felt in those roles and indicated that this dissatisfaction was not discussed in any forum or in any meaningful way. 'the problem that has no name'" (Rhodes, 9).

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 9.

home, I'm not getting a steady old man . . . but I'm having a good time. That's what I think is important⁸²

Overall, her life and music were arguably contributing to feminist writings in the case of unmarried and career-driven women. Also, if the anger in her songs resonated more than just the emotion itself, then her songs could be interpreted as having feminist connotations, indirectly. Echols elaborates:

Janis's success had a lot to do with timing; she expressed women's anger and disappointment before feminism legitimized their expression. Her refusal to sound or look pretty prefigured feminism's demolition of good-girl femininity, and much of her music, most notably "Women is Losers," protests women's powerlessness in matters of the heart.⁸³

As I stated above, her "kozmic blues" was her expression of abandonment and loneliness, and her songs were not aimed to express gender inequality.⁸⁴ Indeed, her emotional authenticity contributed to her rock personality and ability to remain as a front woman and finally achieve that position fully in her last band, The Full-Tilt Boogie Band.

Janis's contemporary, Grace Slick of The Jefferson Airplane, was also a very strong rock personality and front woman. More importantly, her career was already active in the San Francisco area before Janis debuted with Big Brother and the Holding Company in 1967.⁸⁵ Grace was seen as sarcastic and perhaps menacing, which was

⁸² Interview on Louisville, Kentucky, radio station, summer 1970. Tape courtesy to Echols by Myra Friedman. Quoted in Echols, 306

⁸³ Echols, 306

⁸⁴ Janis resisted feminism as well as other female artists that are mentioned in this chapter. This topic, covered extensively by Echols, will be discussed as well as sexism and sexuality in the next chapter

⁸⁵ Consider: Jeff Tamarkin, Jann Wenner, Paul Kantner *Got a Revolution!: The Turbulent Flight of Jefferson Airplane* (New York: Atria Books, 2003); Greg Gildersleeve "Grace Slick," *Jefferson Airplane*

different from the vulnerable and abandoned Janis. Nevertheless, Grace admired Janis for many qualities in her performance:

She has that rasp that I love, I'd love to have one of those. Plus a lot of soul. Soul isn't a matter of playing electric piano or acoustic piano. Or what color you are, race you are. It's a matter of revealing as opposed to concealing. If you are revealing it's soul, if you are concealing it's not. She was revealing. She pulled open her skin and said, "here I am." I remember Cass Elliot sitting in the audience looking at Janis, she was just wonderful, I remember going, "Whoa! Amazing!"⁸⁶

This passion and liberation Janis revealed was also stimulating for the aspiring female singers in the 1970s. Front woman, Stevie Nicks of Fleetwood Mac, also had a firsthand encounter with Janis as an audience member:

I only saw Janis one time, on a hot summer day in San Jose, California, at the Santa Clara Fairgrounds... She was extraordinary. She had a connection with the audience that I had not seen before, and when she left the stage, I knew a little bit of my destiny had changed, I would search to find that connection that I had seen between Janis and her audience. In a blink of an eye, she changed my life.⁸⁷

Actress and singer, Bette Midler, was initially not a rock personality or performer. However, she was cast in the 1979 film, *The Rose*, as a Janis figure; although it was decided in mid-project that it would be a composite character of Janis Joplin, Jimi

(1998) <http://www.jeffersonairplane.com/the-band/grace-slick/>, and an interview with Grace Slick in Marc Meyers "She Went Chasing Rabbits" *The Wall Street Journal* (April 29, 2011) <http://online.wsj.com>

⁸⁶ "Janis Joplin Tribute," last modified on August 3, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tz1Olyqlbvs>.

⁸⁷ "Life. Reflections," last modified in May 2011, <http://www.janisjoplin.net/life/reflections/>.

Hendrix, Jim Morrison, James Dean, and Marilyn Monroe.⁸⁸ The film was supported by Paul Rothchild, the musical director, John Cooke, screenwriter, and the Full Tilt Boogie Band. Bette Midler is a strong and emotional singer herself, but the challenge was to portray an intense and emotionally extreme *pop-singer* named Rose. Therefore, the film was meant to show the tormented Janis. Alice Echols reviews the film as weak in terms of Janis's artistic side.

Midler's impersonation of a boozy broad is a good one, but she captures little of Janis's intelligence, strength, or artistry; indeed, Midler's Janis could be any seventies rock star with a habit and tormented soul. The effect is to make Janis come across as simply a colossally fucked-up woman.⁸⁹

Upon viewing the film myself, the role is very chaotic and almost disturbing. However, it is a composite character and not just Janis alone. Other film projects have been started that would only center on Joplin, but none have debuted.⁹⁰ Janis's sister, Laura Joplin, did successfully promote an Off-Broadway play, entitled, *Love, Janis* in 2001. It was based on her 1992 biography, *Love, Janis*. The production went on a national tour and received very positive reviews.

⁸⁸ *The Rose* was directed by Mark Rydell and the screenplay was written by Bo Goldman. The movie premiered on November 9, 1979.

⁸⁹ Echols, 307

⁹⁰ Other film projects included *Piece of My Heart* starring Renee Zellweger, which began production in 2003, but was never completed. Also, *The Gospel According to Janis* (2005), starring Zooey Deschanel, began production, but this project was not completed. Another that is supposedly in production this year (2011) is *Janis Joplin. Get It While You Can*, starring Amy Adams. The big screen version was announced in July of 2010, and the project originates from a small biographical drama, directed by Fernando Meirelles.

With the film project aside, Bette Midler speaks highly of Janis as an entertainer: “Janis didn’t, you know, do steps or anything, but she had this fabulous way of using her body that was very original; very much her own. I loved her.”⁹¹

Lead vocalist and guitarist of The Runaways, Joan Larkin, aka “Joan Jett,” was inspired by Janis’s screams in her songs. Joan’s goal was to form a rock band, and women like Janis and Suzi Quatro of Cradle were her main inspirations:

I remember thinking that Janis sang like Mae West talked. When I first heard the primal scream in “Piece of My Heart,” I was hooked. “Cheap Thrills,” Janis “Live” with Big Brother and the Holding Company, was one of my all time faves. During the “whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa’s” in “Combination of Two,” I couldn’t help but go to the mirror and pretend I was a wild woman like Janis Joplin in a rock band.⁹²

Janis’s legacy also lived on through the punk years in the 1980s. Kim Gordon, bassist for Sonic Youth (begun in 1981), was not a front woman in this mixed-gender band, but she channeled Janis’s aggression. It was a means to be courageous in the spotlight, especially for an experimental punk band like Sonic Youth:

Janis was, and remains, beautiful. Hers will always be that bruised, yet strong voice that to me has no gender. It is so raw that it has gone beyond. Janis’s recordings have become symbols for the unselfconsciousness of that time, the 60’s. Women were creatively a little freer, they had yet to be commodified as “women in rock”. When I was a teenager, listening to her voice, I knew it as a

⁹¹ JanisJoplin.net. “Life Reflections” Last modified in May 2011
<http://www.janisjoplin.net/life/reflections/>

⁹² Ibid

model for not being afraid to do something which may be considered ugly in order to create something entirely original and beautiful⁹³

Pop-star and front woman singer, Alecia Moore, otherwise known as “Pink,” debuted in 1999 with her album, *Can't Take Me Home*. Her aspirations to be a singer were fueled by Madonna and Janis⁹⁴ Pink was also chosen as one of the lead roles for a potential Janis biographical film, *The Gospel According to Janis* (2005), but her role was later cast to Zooey Deschanel of the indie-pop duo, She and Him. Pink’s connection with Janis is significant, since along with Melissa Etheridge, she has been driven by this influence since the 1990s into the millennium.

I have a deep, spiritual connection to Janis. And I don’t know how, why or when. But, I’ve always been extremely attracted to her energy, and her pain, and her voice, and her life. I just think she is one of the most amazing women that ever lived.⁹⁵

Melissa Etheridge is one of the singers most closely related to Janis in vocal style and aggressive manner. Etheridge began her singer-songwriter career singing Janis covers in clubs and lounges, while attending the Berklee College of Music in Boston.⁹⁶ She sacrificed a day job in order to get experience with live music. “I knew there were lots of compromises to be made if I wanted to work five nights a week and not have a day

⁹³ JanisJoplin net “Life. Reflections” Last modified in May 2011

<http://www.janisjoplin.net/life/reflections/>

⁹⁴ This is a very significant argument for the sexuality topic. Therefore, it will be discussed in Chapter IV

⁹⁵ JanisJoplin net. “Life. Reflections.” Last modified in May 2011.

<http://www.janisjoplin.net/life/reflections/>

⁹⁶ According to Joyce Luck, “By far her most lucrative gig, however, was performing at Ken’s by George on Boylston Street, a subterranean bar-restaurant right across from posh Copley Square. Working five nights a week at \$50 per night, Melissa took on the role of lounge singer, playing piano and singing cover songs, many of which were show tunes” (See Joyce Luck, *Melissa Etheridge: Our Little Secret* [Ontario ECW Press, 1997], 34).

job. I knew I had to play other people's songs."⁹⁷ Etheridge inducted Joplin into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 1995, where she gave a moving speech on her idol

When I was 19, I discovered her other work, and it grabbed me. I wanted to explode like that, I wanted to feel like that, and I wanted to sing like that. . In 1967, Janis was strange and freakish, but I think today she would be pretty hip She would be alternative, I think so. She would do quite well. Because of what she did, I feel like what she did at that time enabled me when I was a young girl in 1976 growing up, not to feel so strange about wanting to do the things I wanted to do. She gave me power in my life. We didn't have to be secretaries or housewives, we could be rock stars⁹⁸

So much was the power of Janis's influence that Etheridge also recorded her version of "Piece of My Heart" for the 2005 album, *Greatest Hits: The Road Less Traveled*. At the Rock 'N' Roll Hall of Fame induction, Etheridge gave a thrilling performance of this song as well. Echols briefly discusses Etheridge's career:

Etheridge's raw voice and impassioned delivery set her apart from the other female singer-songwriters of the time as a true rocker in the gutsy manner of Janis, whose songs she performed. In her autobiography, Holly Near remembered her impression of first seeing Etheridge perform a Joplin song: "At first I thought, *Oh no, another girl with a guitar*. But she was tearing them up She ended with a Janis Joplin classic and did it no discredit."⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Etheridge interview in *Outlines*, quoted in Gillian G Gaar, *She 's a Rebel* (New York: Seal Press, 1992), 372

⁹⁸ "Melissa Etheridge inducts Janis Joplin Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductions." last modified on February 10, 2010, [http //www , com/watch?v=3Cx_fMeHaW4](http://www.com/watch?v=3Cx_fMeHaW4)

⁹⁹ Gaar, 372.

Etheridge also believes Joplin would have supported gay and women's rights if she was alive today, but of course, Janis was originally uninterested in female rights during the *beginnings* of radical feminism, and she preferred not to be labeled "gay" or lesbian."¹⁰⁰ Aside from political issues, Etheridge carries a front woman persona, much like Janis in vocal style and spirit

When Ann and Nancy Wilson of *Heart* began their group in the mid 1970s, they did not aim to be front women, as did Janis. They were members of a mixed-gender band, just as more women rockers were following the Janis legacy and thriving during the second wave of feminism. According to Gillian Gaar,

By working to avoid being presented as women first, and performers second, the Wilsons were more readily able to be seen as simply two members of the five-member group. Bands like Fleetwood Mac and ABBA also had female/male lineups, but not only did Heart's hard rock approach differentiate them from their contemporaries musically, the Wilsons' position in the band was more important creatively, with the sisters writing or co-writing the bulk of the group's material.¹⁰¹

The sisters were not self-proclaimed front-women, but their efforts in the band and their songwriting proved them worthy of front-women figures. Both Ann and Nancy have praised Janis for her liberation and her honest pain that she evoked in her performance:

¹⁰⁰ Janis Joplin had sexual relations with a woman named, Peggy Caserta (Echols, 63) But, she was also active in many heterosexual relationships. Again, this is another branch of sexuality to be discussed in the next chapter

¹⁰¹ Gaar, 222

Ann Wilson: The thing that really got me about Janis the most, was how liberated she was. She stood in that power even though it was kind of that platform of blues of being completely tormented, that enabled her to just stand there and let it go at a time when women were not doing that.. she just came out in the completely undone unwrapped way and I think spoke right out of a women's soul.

Directly.¹⁰²

Nancy Wilson: I think she allowed women to have their pain. Her thing was so borne from her pain. Her amazing talent was because of the pain she had...I think she was so misunderstood, and she was so intelligent, emotionally intelligent, and what came out of her was almost beyond what her physical body could even do as a singer, and what she was putting across.¹⁰³

Indeed, Ann Wilson had learned "Move Over" by Joplin when the original Heart lineup started in 1968. Her all-male band perhaps saw Ann Wilson as a "tough chick" in the early days. In the wake of Janis's death, perhaps Ann Wilson personified Janis as a front woman. However, she was not willing to become the "chick singer," so eventually she invited her sister into the band.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² JanisJoplin net "Life: Reflections." Last modified in May 2011
<http://www.janisjoplin.net/life/reflections/>

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Jake Brown, *Heart: In the Studio* (Ontario: ECW Press), 2008.

Go With Yourself

While exhibiting female sexuality and liberating herself of societal conventions, Janis was simultaneously revealing her true, authentic self. Janis was vulnerable and desperate, but she was also speaking directly from the soul. Gillian Gaar in *She's a Rebel* states that the vulnerability was “a lack of support that ultimately proved to be fatal for the singer who had dared to sing with an abandon no white female had ever attempted before.”¹⁰⁵ Indeed, perhaps Janis exceeded the boundaries of female rock stardom in the 1960s, and the drugs, alcohol, and extravagant lifestyle eventually ended her quest. But in order to create and control the rock star life that no other white female had done, Janis wanted to lead a rock band and reveal *herself*. In the acceptance speech for the induction into the Rock ‘N’ Roll Hall of Fame, Janis’s sister, Laura Joplin, spoke of rhetoric much like “go with yourself”:

One of the things that Janis said that I liked the most is that “you need to be true to yourself, cause yourself is all you got.” And, obviously what were most powerful and most important to Janis were music and her ability to find her emotion and share that with people. To hear from her public and the industry that she is still communicating and being there with them is very moving for me, and I thank you.¹⁰⁶

As Fiona Apple stated in her “Go With Yourself” speech, she believes one should not shape one’s life after what is seen in the media. Before the MTV era, Janis had believed one should not shape one’s life from learned social conventions. What is

¹⁰⁵ Gaar, 103

¹⁰⁶ “Laura and Michael Joplin accept for Janis Joplin Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductions 1995,” last modified on February 10, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJyQ-nxo-LY>.

astounding is that these two statements are the same when taken out of context, but of course they apply to two different eras of the music industry. “Be true to yourself” was Janis’s tool to surpass the narrow-minded gender outlook on rock ‘n’ roll in the 1960s. “Go with yourself” was Fiona’s tool to resist the exploitive gender outlook of the music industry itself today. The two statements are also the same, however, in terms of their purpose: to find authenticity as a musician. In the next chapter, I will evaluate Ann and Nancy Wilson’s authenticity through performance, repertory, and promotion.

III CASE STUDY—ANN AND NANCY WILSON

Introduction

Ann and Nancy Wilson began their music endeavors when they were teenagers in the 1960's, absorbing the current bands in rock music. Their two main influences were The Beatles and Led Zeppelin, but there were also many more prominent influences of this decade, such as Simon and Garfunkel, Elton John, Crosby, Stills, Nash, and Young, Joni Mitchell, Ray Charles, Aretha Franklin, The Who, The Moody Blues, Jackson Browne, and many others. Nancy recalled that, "it was such a rich time in music culture to be learning the trade! A revolution to be exact"¹⁰⁷ Heart has produced original songs, resonating these artists. For example, "Sylvan Song/Dream of the Archer" resembles "Battle of Evermore," "Even It Up" and "Rockin' Heaven Down" resemble the funk-rock of Led Zeppelin, and "Devil Delight" resembles the hard rock sound of the band.¹⁰⁸ The sisters show consideration for these bands even today, as they still perform covers by Led Zeppelin, Elton John, and The Who.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁷Jake Brown, *Heart: In the Studio* (Ontario: ECW Press, 2008), 18. Jake Brown's biography on Heart was very useful for this chapter and this thesis, since he includes songwriting details, and interviews with Ann and Nancy, band members, and recording engineers, and producers. A portion of this information cannot be found in interviews on Youtube or the Internet, therefore, it is substantial evidence.

¹⁰⁸ Reynolds and Press concur that Heart was heavily influenced by Led Zeppelin. "If their mimicry of Led Zeppelin was more feminine than most Zep-clones, it's because they could draw on the precious, fey side of Robert Plant. While they did convincing imitations of Zep's raunchy funk-rock in songs like 'Rockin' Heaven Down' and 'Even It Up', they could also 'legitimately' explore lacey, ornate zones of mock-medievalism—as in 'Sylvan Song' or 'Dream of the Archer'—without being dismissed as wimpy" (Reynolds and Press, 245). Furthermore, Michael Derosier was influenced by John Bonham, and preferred using the double-head on his drums like his predecessor. Also, Roger Fisher was a fan of Jimmy Page, which is evident from his riffs and solos in "Sing Child Sing" and "Devil Delight."

¹⁰⁹ On September 24, 2011, at the AT&T Center in San Antonio, TX, *Heart* performed "Rock and Roll" and "Battle of Evermore" by Led Zeppelin and "Love Reign O'er Me" by The Who.

Their parents were also music enthusiasts, and they encouraged Ann and Nancy to play instruments and sing folk songs at gatherings¹¹⁰ In their teenage years, Ann and Nancy discovered The Beatles in 1963. They analyzed their music in terms of songwriting, learned their hits, and even started writing their first songs right away. In Jake Brown's biography of Heart, Nancy states that, "right from the beginning, as soon as we saw The Beatles play on the Ed Sullivan variety show .. Ann and I started begging and pleading for guitars I was eight and Ann was twelve when we started learning our first chords from the trusty Mel Bay chord book With the basic chords under our belt, we would spin Beatles records and learn every song."¹¹¹ Ann and Nancy also found a fellow fan, Sue Ennis, who also became one of their co-writers for their *Heart* albums. Sue Ennis actually describes their mutual love for the songwriting of The Beatles, and how this band inspired them to learn the fundamentals of pop and rock music: "... The Beatles had been an object of serious scholarship, study and dedication on both parts. We both recognized a mutual expertise that we felt set us apart. I would say Ann was inspired by their singing, but was *blown away* by the way they put chords together."¹¹² Indeed, the sisters were very particular on chord choices in their own music, as I will explain in the Repertory section.

Nancy Wilson was also fascinated by the chord choices of Jimmy Page:

These guys were not just playing straight power chords... What Jimmy Page did was pretty inspiring for guitar players He married a lot of acoustic elements into

¹¹⁰ "As a family we spent plenty of time singing with grandparents, aunts, and uncles who all liked to pull out ukuleles and do funny old pub songs and Hawaiian songs that we still know to this day ." (Brown, 19)

¹¹¹ Brown, 19

¹¹² Ibid , 20

hard rock. The kind of chords he used were very left of center, with a lot of dissonance—I absorbed that like a sponge. It’s all over the music I write, always.”¹¹³

Ann and Nancy Wilson referred to their male counterparts as role models, but they also applied their styles and techniques to their original songs and cultivated their lives into their own rock personas. In a 2010 interview with The Grammy Museum, Ann describes their ambition as teenagers and their view of rock music before they started, “When it came down to people like Plant, and McCartney, Elton John, and stuff, they were doing the thing that we wanted to do and know, gender just didn’t even figure in, just out the window... why?”¹¹⁴ Nancy elaborated on their influences, “We didn’t want to be the *girlfriends* of The Beatles, we wanted to *be* The Beatles... it didn’t depend on being a girl or a boy, it was just a kid thing. .”¹¹⁵ This mentality was essential to their integration with male rock musicians in *Heart*. Their natural, gender indifference to rock music helped create a neutral environment for them.

During the early fame of their rock band, and especially during the making of the first album in 1975, Ann and Nancy Wilson claimed that *Heart* was a collective effort in spite of their roles as front women. In interviews, Ann and Nancy were referred to as the leaders of the band, and the media emphasized the novelty of their leadership. In a 1980 interview by *Backstage Pass*, *Heart* was labeled as “the first rock band dominated by women. The group is led primarily by Ann Wilson, with her sister Nancy second in

¹¹³ Brown, 21

¹¹⁴ “Musical Influences,” last modified on July 29, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8OdxDUgRS0&feature=related>.

¹¹⁵ “Heart—Early Days and Influences,” last modified on July 1, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Mw3BGXW9s4&feature=related>

charge The two striking Wilson sisters have an unusual relationship with the rest of the band and their road crew, which happen to be all male.”¹¹⁶ Ann Wilson clarifies that it is more of a collective effort, however “In the group, chemistry itself, with the guys and girls in the group, it’s a real dichotomy, real dichotomy, because Nance and I run the group. And so uh, there are these guys who are just these real, nice mellow guys who take it, who can handle working for women, with and for, especially with ”¹¹⁷ However, after almost ten years in the music business, during the promotion of their self-titled album in 1985, Ann concludes that it is hard for their group to be considered collective by the audience: “I think that the hardest part for the guys in our groups is that we get all the attention. Its hard for them cause they are out on the road working just as hard as we do...”¹¹⁸ Although the sisters believed they could manage a band and make it an equal share of creativity, the evidence in the following three discourses show many situations that required their control of the group. Under performance, repertory, and promotion, I will address the sisters’ leadership on stage and in the recording studio, I will identify Ann and Nancy as the core songwriting team of Heart, and finally, I will discuss their revolts against exploitative publications, music videos, and other sources of media.¹¹⁹ Due to lack of biographical information, I have gathered evidence from Jake Brown’s, *Heart: In the Studio* (2008), as well as live performances, interviews, and documentaries from Youtube. Brown’s work is a primary source, as it contains interviews and specifics on songwriting for each album of Heart. Yet, the live interviews from Youtube enhance

¹¹⁶ “Ann Wilson,” last modified on August 11, 2009,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=av50LB5uX0Q&feature=related>

¹¹⁷ Ibid

¹¹⁸ “Heart—Interview 85,” last modified on November 12, 2008,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vegg6OxUSJo&feature=related>.

¹¹⁹ At certain points in this case study, two or all three discourses will overlap in my discussion. For example, repertory problems will require promotion discussion, or promotional problems will require performance discussion, and vice versa

the band members' statements from Brown's biography. The band has created a total of thirteen albums, but I will focus on the following albums for this case study: *Dreamboat Annie* (1976), *Magazine* (1977), *Dog and Butterfly* (1978), *Bebe Le Strange* (1980), *Heart* (1985) and *Bad Animals* (1987)¹²⁰

Case Study

Performance

In 1976, Heart made their debut with *Dreamboat Annie* with Mushroom Records in Canada. Since they had limited track availability, Ann and Nancy trained themselves to perform with as few takes as possible. Recording engineer Mike Flicker described the recording process with Ann, ““With Ann, it didn’t take long, and at that point in time, we never had the luxury of keeping one or two takes at a time because of track availability. So once I’d got what I called my master take, then I would just start punching in, fixing any little flaws. Ann usually got a performance in one take, and it was usually 60 to 90 percent of the song, and then it was a matter of fixing this or that.”¹²¹ Their natural talents helped them perform and record efficiently in the studio, with Ann having a signature rock voice as long-time band member Howard Leese says, “without a doubt, the band’s greatest strength was Ann Wilson’s voice.”¹²² Also, Nancy already had a strong guitar sound, and she would readily bring her musical ideas to the studio. Howard Leese elaborates on Nancy’s abilities, “Nancy was an amazing acoustic player. She has hands

¹²⁰ Brown, 9-10; The others album were *Little Queen* (1977), *Private Audition* (1982), *Passionworks* (1983), *Brigade* (1990), *Desire Walks On* (1993), *Jupiters Darling* (2004), *Red Velvet Car* (2010)

¹²¹ Brown, 67

¹²² *Ibid*, 66

stronger than most men, she has very, very strong hands, and can really play the acoustic guitar.”¹²³

One can see this enthusiastic and strong acoustic guitar technique in an early “Crazy on You” video, where Nancy plays her fast introduction, with a very hard strum, and thus, starts the tempo of the song.¹²⁴ In the longer recorded version of the song, Nancy has a long solo, called “Silver Wheels,” which she recorded for the *Bebe Le Strange* album. She extends the fast part of the solo in a 1978 performance and shows off more of her technique.¹²⁵ Ann Wilson, in a 1976 performance at the KWSU-TV television station, showed more of her front woman abilities by communicating to the audience in an intimate setting. In this performance, Heart also performed “Soul of the Sea,” one of the songs off the record that is more “mellow,” according to Ann.¹²⁶ Nancy begins the song on acoustic guitar, and there is more concentration on the sisters’ harmonies. Also, there are no electric guitar solos for Roger Fisher or Howard Leese, but more emphasis on Ann’s vocal solo in this song.¹²⁷

In 1980, during the promotion of the *Bebe Le Strange* album, the band lineup changed. Roger Fisher was fired from the band, and his brother, Mike Fisher, left as

¹²³ Ibid , 63.

¹²⁴ “Heart-Early Crazy On You,” last modified on September 13, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/user/gusterous#p/u/6/Ig7Z4sd9X4k>

¹²⁵ “Heart—Crazy On You—Ann and Nancy Wilson Live 1978,” last modified on November 26, 2007, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whXeb7Ohfkk>

¹²⁶ When Ann and Nancy referred to their mellow side of songwriting, this included acoustic guitar, without electric guitar distortion. Other mellow songs on the record are “How Deep It Goes” and “Dreamboat Annie.” The sisters preferred a combination of soft and hard rock songs, as opposed to the men. This conflict, between the front women and the men in the band, stems from when Nancy first joined the group, in which I will elaborate in the repertory section.

¹²⁷ “Heart—Soul of the Sea,” *Second Ending on KWSU-TV* last modified on April 6, 2008, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSh_egFXrYg&feature=related.

well¹²⁸ This allowed Nancy to take over the electric lead parts for the recorded tracks and live performances. In the promotional video, *The Making of Bebe Le Strange*, one can see Nancy recording her parts for “Down on Me.” In an interview for the video, Ann agrees that Nancy had more of a role in the guitar performance once Roger was excluded from the group, “Well, I’ll just be frank, I mean it’s a dream come true for Nancy, I mean, now she’ll have the whole side of the stage to herself... She’s gonna stand there and people are gonna see what’s so amazing about this woman.”¹²⁹ In the song, “Bebe Le Strange,” Nancy plays the lead guitar riff, as well as the lead guitar solo on the song, “Even It Up.” Nancy says in the promotional video that it is a challenge, “I don’t consider it a real burden actually I consider it something that I’ve sort of been working towards for a long time, and yeah a big challenge, and uh I’ve already started practicing really hard, for you know, I’ve been playing guitar for a long time, so its not like its that unusual.”¹³⁰ Aside from making the band a collective musical effort, Ann and Nancy were still in charge of performance tactics as front women. Overall, the sisters acquired the performance skills to control their recording sessions, their intimate and large audiences, as well as to adapt to band lineup changes.

¹²⁸ Ann had a relationship with Mike Fisher and Nancy with Roger Fisher. Both relationships failed during this time, and Roger was fired in October 1979. Mike Fisher (co-producer of their previous albums) had relations with another woman, and decided to leave the band. According to the promotional video, Roger Fisher was assigned four songs to contribute lead guitar parts, but on the record liner notes, there is no documentation of Roger Fisher on electric guitar or any other instrument. “The Making of Bebe Le Strange (1980),” last modified on July 1, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=nyNWJ8_3HQY

¹²⁹ Ibid

¹³⁰ “The Making of Bebe Le Strange (1980),” last modified on July 1, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=nyNWJ8_3HQY.

Repertory

Gillian Gaar of *She's a Rebel* emphasizes the sisters' songwriting in comparison to other female front women of the 1970s, "not only did Heart's hard rock approach differentiate them from their contemporaries musically, the Wilsons' position in the band was more important creatively, with the sisters writing or co-writing the bulk of the group's material."¹³¹ Before I continue assessing their creativity and control in overall band repertory, I will address the sisters' co-writing strategies as a duo. On *Dreamboat Annie*, Ann and Nancy co-wrote all songs except for "Sing Child Sing," which was collectively written as a band in the studio.¹³² Howard Leese seems to credit Nancy as contributing to the chords and song structure more than Ann, "[Nancy is] a great writer—writes most of the music. When she and Ann get together to write, Nancy generally has some chords, and Ann would have a vocal melody. It moves around a little bit, but generally Nancy would come up with the germ of a musical idea."¹³³ However, co-writer and long-time friend Sue Ennis believes otherwise:

It's commonly thought that Nance comes up with the music, and Ann with lyrics, and I would say those are their natural inclinations. But back then, whenever Ann jotted down some lyrics, she always showed them to Nance, and Nance would give her two cents, or would say, "That's cool." Ann would always take Nancy's suggestions and incorporate them; it really was a partnership. It was the same

¹³¹ Gaar, 222

¹³² Nevertheless, the first recorded song on *Dreamboat Annie*, "How Deep It Goes," was actually written by Ann, as producer Mike Flicker says, perhaps before Nancy joined the group "months later, Howard came back to me and said Ann's sister Nancy was coming up to join the band. So I basically authorized them to do a demo based on just hearing that news, without even hearing Nancy, who had been down in Oregon going to school. So one of the tunes, a song called 'How Deep It Goes,' which Ann had written, caught my attention out of the batch, and so then I went back and listened to the band live, and it was a whole different band. They went from being just a stock rock 'n' roll cover band to Nancy's addition of the acoustic guitar and harmonizing vocals with Ann" (Brown, 37-38)

¹³³ *Ibid*, 63

thing for coming up with chord progressions, and music writing. Each person already knew what her strengths were, and it just naturally fell into place. I would say Ann was more active in the music side of the writing in those days. They'd work out the chords together, and then Nancy would go and just practice it.¹³⁴

Originally, the band was playing hard rock covers by Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple, and The Rolling Stones, but when Ann finally convinced Nancy to join, the acoustic element became a part of the Heart sound. Ann explains that the acoustic guitar was present even if the band members were already grounded in the electric guitar sound, "Of course that's what Nancy and I learned on. That's our main core instrument. Even when Heart's rocking, there's always an acoustic at the center of it and I think acoustic guitars are almost holy myself."¹³⁵ The men in the group were not accustomed to incorporating a mellow side of Heart's music. However, the acoustic guitar was clearly the core of the music and the tool for the core members to use. A good example of this acoustic twosome is the title song, "Dreamboat Annie." They both had written that song in their parents' living room. Nancy explains, "It was finished in about a half hour, the quickest we've ever written a song together. We were trying to be the Beach Boys, I think."¹³⁶ Ann says the idea came from a poem she had written, which appears on the sleeve of the album. Ann had a love of writing, and she had written poems and novels about life and romance in her teenage years. Nancy was inspired by the possibilities of the guitar, as she

¹³⁴ Brown, 47

¹³⁵ Ibid, 44

¹³⁶ Ibid, 47.

says in a VH1 special, “I just ate it up, I couldn’t stop playing . I slept with it. it was a romantic symbolic thing, it was my first boyfriend ”¹³⁷

Throughout the album productions of *Magazine*, *Little Queen*, *Dog and Butterfly*, *Bebe Le Strange*—as well the albums during the 1990s and the latest album in 2010—this twosome was the core of all the songwriting.¹³⁸ Especially in the original lineup—with Roger Fisher, Steve Fossen, Michael Derosier, and Howard Leese—Ann and Nancy had written songs that reflected their own lives and their own musical ideas. On *Dreamboat Annie*, the songs, “Magic Man” and “Crazy On You” were their best-selling singles for the album.¹³⁹ Ann and Nancy had created demos for both of these songs with their original ideas. On “Crazy on You,” Nancy had written the main guitar riff and showed it to Roger, and thus, the entire song was centered around that riff. Flicker recalls hearing the riff for the first time,

..when we got to the out section, Roger Fisher played the riff, and that was the first time I’d heard that. They’d written the song, and the first time I heard it with the band with that riff, I just loved it. And we sat in rehearsal and restructured the entire song around the riff Nancy had written that riff and played it for Roger on the electric guitar, and we created the beat for the song in the studio, Ann and Nancy had come up with the rhythm...¹⁴⁰

¹³⁷ “Heart band history part 1 of 4,” last modified November 20, 2008, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JqpgclG_yY0&feature=related

¹³⁸ I will explain below the songwriting credits for the album, *Heart* (1985) and *Bad Animals* (1987) and *Brigade* (1990). For these albums, Ann and Nancy did not write the singles

¹³⁹ The other singles were “Dreamboat Annie” and “(Love Me Like Music) I’ll Be Your Song ”

¹⁴⁰ Brown, 66.

“Magic Man,” in which Ann wrote the lyrics about her boyfriend/co-producer Mike Fisher, was modified in the studio with the other band members, but Ann and Nancy were still in charge of approving the changes. Flicker elaborates, “On ‘Magic Man,’ it was more like we took one part and expanded on it, and got different grooves into it. We did various takes that we all liked, and then I’d comp together different parts. . . I think they jammed it out a little more live, and we had a three-minute radio edit of ‘Magic Man,’ and I would go in and work on those things, and then Ann and Nancy would approve it.”¹⁴¹ On the album, the song is five minutes and thirty-five seconds, and the entire version is often played live.¹⁴² Ann and Nancy took into account the edits for radio-play, as well as the need for singles to be released to sell the album. On “Magic Man,” Flicker made the sisters aware of this, “ . . . you’re also focusing on radio at the time—I would do something different in 1976 than I would in 1980. The girls understood that game as well ”¹⁴³

Dreamboat Annie is an album with a central theme—since the title song is re-played three times with different arrangements—*Dreamboat Annie* with the inclusion of the banjo, *Dreamboat Annie (Fantasy Child)* with only the acoustic guitar, and *Dreamboat Annie (Reprise)* with a piano accompaniment and different drum beat. It seems that Ann and Nancy used a natural writing process to compose meaningful songs live in the studio and sell one or two of these as singles. This strategy worked for *Dreamboat Annie*, as *Rolling Stone* commented on the album, it “proved that . . . good

¹⁴¹ Brown, 66

¹⁴² Examples are the late 1970’s video recording and the 2003 concert performance in Seattle “Early Magic Man,” last modified September 13, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMzbsDAV_Q4, “Heart Alive in Seattle,” directed by Dave Diomed, Seattle, (Washington Image Entertainment, 2003), DVD

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 66

songs can go a long way commercially”¹⁴⁴ Unfortunately, making singles was not the sister’s priority when writing later albums, as I will explain in reference to the *Dog and Butterfly* record

In 1978, Ann, Nancy, and Sue Ennis composed a song called “Mistral Wind,” for the *Dog and Butterfly* album. The sisters included Sue Ennis on this album to help with writing the lyrics. The writing sessions for *all* the songs on the album took place over several weekends in San Francisco, where Sue was attending the University of California at Berkeley. Nancy describes the writing process, “We’d fly to Berkeley where [Sue] was a grad student and hole up with acoustic guitars and notebooks in a good hotel for the weekend. ‘Mistral Wind’ was written in this way, and even though I had most of the music in place, the lyrics took all weekend. The three of us wrote as an equal lyric team.”¹⁴⁵ The *Dog and Butterfly* record had another meaningful theme, where one side contained songs with a harder rock sound (*Dog*), and the other side contained songs with more acoustic elements (*Butterfly*). Since Sue was a childhood friend, she helped contribute to Wilson sisters’ authenticity in this song.

“Mistral Wind” is the last track on the *Butterfly* side, but it is different from the other acoustic songs, since it starts with an acoustic section and then builds up to a hard rock sound. The lyrics are congruent with the *Dog and Butterfly* theme. Ann Wilson explains the theme,

Looking out my window [I] saw my old sheepdog and she was trying to catch a butterfly and you know dogs can’t catch them that easily, especially big old dogs

¹⁴⁴ Billy Altman, “Review Little Queen,” *Rolling Stone*, (June 30, 1977)
<http://www.starbucks.ca/SunsetStrip/8678/heart2.html>

¹⁴⁵ Brown, 102

like that. But it struck me as being like I was in my quest for writing the perfect song or having success in the rock business, or what anyone's thing is that they're trying to achieve and it keeps evading them. So once again, I took a simple thing and put it on a higher level.¹⁴⁶

Lyrically, "Mistral Wind" is about waiting and hoping for the dream one is trying to achieve. Sue Ennis describes it as "waiting for inspiration," since the lyrics read, "I lay on that mirrored sky, a restless sailor, waiting."¹⁴⁷ The sisters acquired the concept from Sue Ennis, "the French wind I had read about which blows through the south of France, and the myth is that it makes people crazy. When that mistral wind comes, people go nuts. And we started to build that idea, and as we were sitting there, waiting for some sort of inspiration to come, we got the idea of being on a ship."¹⁴⁸ When Ann, Nancy, and Sue brought their demo tape to the rest of the band, the men would have to listen to songs already complete. According to Ann, once the other band members heard the songs, they did not respond with any feedback. Sue Ennis describes the situation,

Afterward, Ann and Nance called me and I'd say, 'So, what did the guys think of the song?' They told me, 'Well no one said anything' But I think they didn't want to acknowledge that the girls had written the song So that was something that was always hard for us, on every album after that, being the female writing team, bringing a tune to some dudes who figured they were strictly rock guys.

And maybe it was their job in a way to dismiss the girly lyrics and stuff; it gave

¹⁴⁶ Brown, 101

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 104, Liner Notes from, Heart, *Dog and Butterfly* Epic Records, 1978, LP.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 104; Nancy later identified the concept as "love, inspiration, insanity, kind of all at the same time," at the Seattle performance in 2003 "Heart. Alive in Seattle"

them a sense of power I should say that Howie was always the most open and collaborative¹⁴⁹

This statement by Sue Ennis is very crucial to the creativity and control argument This album was not only representative of the sisters' authenticity, but also of their complete control over songwriting. At the same time, it caused disturbance to their male counterparts in the group, except for Howard Leese It is interesting to note that Leese remained with the group until 1995, during the sister's acoustic project, *The Lovemongers*.

After *Dreamboat Annie*, *Little Queen*, and *Magazine*, the band was ready to release an album, without having to worry about providing a single, which was the same scenario that Led Zeppelin had done with their albums Leese explains their perspective during the production,

So by the time we went into record *Dog and Butterfly*, we could pretty much do what we wanted to do, whatever we felt like doing, in being more artistic, which is what the band had always wanted to do in the first place. So I think we would look at Zeppelin and go, 'Well, they don't even release singles.' We wanted to make a great album and put out the whole album and let people dig the record. People are going to listen to it, if there's a single, great, if not, we never thought 'Barracuda' was a single either. That was never intended ahead of time to be a single.

¹⁴⁹ Brown, 103

Indeed, “Barracuda” achieved commercial success on the *Little Queen* album, but for the *Dog and Butterfly* album, the band lacked a hit song after the other songs were completed. Mike Flicker and their manager concluded that the album “had a lot of good esoteric and musical qualities, but lacked a commercial hit.”¹⁵⁰ Nevertheless, Flicker decided not to mention this dilemma to the sisters and let them find out the news themselves. “Because, first, we felt it wasn’t good for them: that they needed to deal with this themselves. So we went to the record company, and voiced our concerns, but told them we felt it wasn’t our place to bring it to the girls, and turned them into the bad guys.”¹⁵¹ Consequently, Ann and Nancy found out at a listening party with Portrait, a division of CBS, that they needed to write a single. “And the girls took it the way I thought they would—which was not very well,”¹⁵² yet they agreed to write a single within ten days, and thus, created “Straight On” over the course of a weekend. Flicker continues, “And if it wasn’t for that single, I don’t think, I don’t think the album would have done well.”¹⁵³ It is interesting that their manager and producer let the sisters discover the news themselves because they allowed them to make the decision as front women and understand the pressure of the music business. While they did not agree with writing a single for the album, initially, they were able to quickly write a marketable song and finish the album in spite of the debate.

Ann and Nancy were not so fortunate with providing singles in their 1985 album, *Heart*, and *Bad Animals* (1987). After the commercial failure of *Bebe Le Strange*, *Private Audition*, and moderate success of *Passionworks*, Ann and Nancy finally allowed outside

¹⁵⁰ Brown, 114

¹⁵¹ Ibid

¹⁵² Ibid

¹⁵³ Ibid

writers to work on the self-titled record.¹⁵⁴ They also hired a new producer, Ron Nevison, to help the band with a new direction. Nevison believed the sisters wrote worthy album material, but their weakness was writing singles to sell their record. Nevison explains, “And I liked all their songs, but they needed some solid single material. And I had a mandate from their record label to do so. I wanted them to know that when we made a choice, it was a choice we were all making.”¹⁵⁵ However, it was *not* an easy choice for two female rock musicians, who originally believed in writing meaningful and self-reflective songs, not commercial-driven material for the audiences of MTV. Nancy comments on their production changes, “We never wanted to but there was a time when it looked like we faced an abyss. It’s just a real big budget lifestyle because there’s just so many people involved. And making the album, we paid for that, we paid for the videos.”¹⁵⁶ The music videos were a new task for Ann and Nancy, but they had the most difficulty adjusting to outside writers. When Nevison gave the band their new single to listen to, “What About Love”—written by Jim Vallance—“Nancy left the room,” Nevison said. “She wasn’t happy with that song at first for Heart. They hated the treatment and production of the demo, and I think it was more the vocal they hated.”¹⁵⁷ Another example was “Alone” from the *Bad Animals* album, where after rehearsing the demo, Nancy “walked out of rehearsal, “Howard Leese said, “and her own house she hated the song so much. So I said, ‘The demo is very pop. Let us play it our way as a

¹⁵⁴ After the promotion of *Bebe Le Strange*, Mike Flicker left the band and there is no clear reason why he chose to do so. Ann and Nancy were more confident in the studio and preferred to take more control in the studio. For the *Private Audition* album, the sisters decided to self-produce. Meanwhile Steve Fossen and Michael Derosier formed their own side group, and they were fired after the *Private Audition* album.

¹⁵⁵ Brown, 152.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 150.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 153.

band.”¹⁵⁸ “What About Love” and “Alone” were very successful singles from those two albums. Obviously, Ann and Nancy had difficulty accepting other writers and adapting to less control over their music. Therefore, when the songs were in the recording phase, the sisters were very much involved in the mixing process, to perhaps compensate for this loss of creativity and control. Nevison explains, “Ann and Nancy liked to sit in during the mixing of album vocals; they were around. But Nancy was certainly much more into the whole recording process than Ann was, I think possibly also because Nancy was the guitar player, which added dynamically to what she was contributing and had opinions on.”¹⁵⁹

While conceding to the era of MTV and pop music, Nancy, in particular, Martin Page actually claimed the biggest hit song of the *Heart* album, “These Dreams,” (lyrics by Bernie Taupin) as her own upon her first listening. Sue Ennis says she jumped off the couch and wrapped her arms around the speaker and told the band, “I want this song, I want to sing this song, I want this song...”¹⁶⁰ As Nancy says in a 1985 interview, “I just had like an instinctive, natural flip out for that song, I just went ‘I will take that song, thank you, I will put it in my pocket, no one will talk me out of not singing that song, thank you very much, that’s all we are going to say about it, goodbye.’ Cause that song just spoke to me, its like I wrote it myself, almost.”¹⁶¹ The song reached number one on the Billboard charts, which was a relief for Ann and Nancy.

¹⁵⁸ Brown, 174.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid*, 168

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 164

¹⁶¹ “Heart—Interview 85,” last modified November 19, 2008,

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=veqq6OxUSJo&feature=related>

The 1980s was a successful decade for Heart, but the female front women of the band were weary of corporate decisions, and after the 1990 album, *Brigade*, they asked their new producer, Duane Baron, to let them write their own songs for the 1993 album, *Desire Walks On*. Baron recalls, “when we met with Ann and Nancy first in pre-production, first off, at that point they were tired of having people bring in the Diane Warrens and Mutt Langes and say, ‘Okay, sing this, do that.’”¹⁶² The front women wrote all songs for the album, except for a Mutt Lange song—“Will You Be There (In the Morning)”—that Capitol Records required in the contract. Ann responded, “I don’t want to fucking do this, I’ve done this shit, I hate this”¹⁶³ Nevertheless, the song was recorded, and it was released as a single. The album debuted in the top fifty of the Billboard Top 200 that year.

With *Jupiter’s Darling* in 2004, however, the sisters came even closer to full credit on all album songs. The band recorded sixteen songs, and this was the first album in over a decade where they felt the authenticity of Heart. After taking a hiatus and forming the acoustic group, The Lovemongers, Ann and Nancy realized they just wanted to be *themselves*. Craig Bartock, their new guitarist and guitarist to date, believes *Jupiter’s Darling* was the album that brought the front women back to creativity and control, “And it took all those years for them to go, You know what, we just want to be ourselves. We don’t want to spend too much doing one song, and sit there listening to some producer go through snare drum sounds for a week... So I think the ultimate lesson

¹⁶² Brown, 191. According to Howard Leese, the song had been recorded for Def Leppard, but it was finished too late to make the band’s deadline. Ibid., 201.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 201.

that can be learned with *Jupiter's Darling* is finally let Ann and Nancy be themselves.”¹⁶⁴ Finally, in 2010, Ann and Nancy wrote ten songs for the album, *Red Velvet Car*, in which eight of the ten are centered on Ann's voice and Nancy's guitar. Ann told an interviewer in the summer of 2010, “Ten new songs written by us, and produced by Ben Mick, and um, it's just uh, it's everything of Heart...it's the essence of Heart, it's got Nancy's acoustic guitar at the center, but some of the songs are really.. rippin ”¹⁶⁵

In terms of songwriting and producing their records, Ann and Nancy proved to their audiences with *Dreamboat Annie* and *Dog and Butterfly* that they had complete creativity and control. While trying to redeem themselves as marketable musicians in the 1980's, the front women remained true to themselves and therefore eventually returned to their songwriting skills of the previous twenty years.

Promotion

Ann and Nancy had difficulty in songwriting promotion, as far as producing singles, to sell their albums; however, other promotional issues were involved already from the first album, such as sexual exploitation, ethical issues with record labels, and personal media attacks on Ann Wilson. I will explain in this section how the sisters reacted and fought for control of all these problems.

Ann describes how she and her sister have encountered promotional matters with every record label, “We weren't gonna be sold as cheesecake we were gonna be ourselves. And that was the beginning of *all* our problems, which manifest themselves

¹⁶⁴ Brown, 225-226

¹⁶⁵ “Exclusive Interview with Heart,” last modified May 24, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWdMh-bf0kE>

every time, with every label. You know, we always have trouble with the cheesecake thing.”¹⁶⁶ Ann believes the one truth that prevented the sisters from being recognized for musical ability and achieving success. to go with yourself. Nancy also elaborates, “How we look has never been important to us anyway. Hello! It’s about the f-in’ music, ya know?”¹⁶⁷

The first example of a “cheesecake” event was during the promotion of *Dreamboat Annie*, toward the end of 1976. The VH1 special, *Behind the Music*, explains the scandal:

The band had recorded the first four tracks for their second album, *Magazine*, when Ann and Nancy opened up an issue of *Rolling Stone* and saw a tabloid-style ad placed by their label, Mushroom Records in a disastrously unsuccessful publicity stunt. [Ann] “The headline was, it was only our first time, and of course the meaning was, we were lesbian lovers, sister lesbian lovers.” [Nancy] “We got our knickers in a big twist about it, and pitched a fit, ya know, and fired everybody.”¹⁶⁸

In response their firing the label, Mushroom Records still had their four tracks—“Heartless,” “Devil Delight,” “Just The Wine,” and “Magazine”—added live performances, and released 100,000 copies of the album. Since the band changed to Epic Records at this time, they were forbidden from getting their original tracks from Mushroom. Before the band attended the hearing for the tabloid scandal, they finished

¹⁶⁶ “Heart band history part 1 of 4,” last modified November 20, 2008, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jqpgc1G_yY0&feature=related

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid*

¹⁶⁸ “Heart band history part 1 of 4,” last modified November 20, 2008, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jqpgc1G_yY0&feature=related

the next album, *Little Queen*, since they were not sure if they were going to be allowed rights to their next album, and they had already been writing songs in between tours. Flicker elaborates, “So the lawyer said, ‘But, if you actually get the album on the streets before then, the chances are way, way in your favor that the judge is not going to stop it.’”¹⁶⁹ So the band finished *Little Queen*, which in turn, contained tracks that were originally intended for *Magazine*.¹⁷⁰ Mushroom relentlessly released the *Magazine* album, so Heart filed another lawsuit and managed to get the album pulled off the shelves. Ann explains the situation, “Mushroom had rushed out their own version of *Magazine* filled out with studio musicians and singers... The judge saw things our way, and the Mushroom version of *Magazine* was pulled off the shelves and replaced with ours.”¹⁷¹ The lawsuit lasted two years, and the *Little Queen* album was released in July 1977, and with the court’s consent, the *Magazine* album a year later. Nevertheless, the songs intended for the *Magazine* album were on *Little Queen*, and vice versa. Both records went platinum, but the material was rushed since they had deadlines for each—three weeks for *Little Queen* and one week for *Magazine* (which was a requirement of the lawsuit settlement). Pearl Jam manager explains the promotion of the albums, “That should have been one record the combination of *Magazine* and *Little Queen*, it would have been a very great album, a very important record for sure, in the end they ended with two kind of *okay* records.” Although Ann and Nancy were exploited and denied control of two albums, they fought for the integrity of their music and image by filing lawsuits and signing with a new record label.

¹⁶⁹ Brown, 80.

¹⁷⁰ These included, “Barracuda” and “Sylvan Song/Dream of the Archer”

¹⁷¹ Brown, 93

Indeed, the song, “Barracuda” was born out of this media outrage. It was in a response to the industry’s game of exploitation that was still plaguing the Wilson sisters, three albums later. Ann explains in the VH1 special, “It was during, after the show meet and greet, and one of these record company geeks, wearing a heart red satin 70s rock and roll jacket, comes up to me and says to me, ‘So Annie, how’s it goin’ babe? How’s your lover? And I went ‘oh Michael’s fine, he’s just fine, we’re great. And he goes ‘No no-no, not Michael, your sister, you and your sister?’ And that made me so mad that I went back to the hotel and wrote the words to Barracuda!” Although the lesbian scam eventually faded, the result was a new rock song that reached the *Billboard* charts top ten.¹⁷²

In the next major successful time of Heart’s career, in 1985, promotion was extremely important not only on stage, but in the music video. Nancy describes the shift from the 1970s to the 1980s, “We had just stepped out from the amazing cultural revolution of the late ‘60s where the focus was talent and imagination. By the ‘80s and MTV, it was mostly all over. But fashion and music always does need to mutate and shift focus. Big shake-ups seem to come along at the beginning of each decade.”¹⁷³ Their self-titled album, *Heart*, produced four top ten singles “Never” and “What About Love,” “Nothin’ At All,” and their number one single, “These Dreams.” However, during this time Ann gained more weight, and this posed a problem for the promotion of their albums. “You know we are a commercial world,” said former Capital executive Don

¹⁷² The song lyrics read, “You lying so low in the weeds, I bet you gonna ambush me You’d have me down, down, down on my knees. Now wouldn’t you, Barracuda?” Liner Notes from, *Heart*, *Little Queen* Epic Records, 1977, LP.

¹⁷³ Brown, 96

Grierson, “and everything is flashy and sexy, and I think it made it harder for Ann, and I think it made it harder for the record company to look at her in the same light”¹⁷⁴

In their music videos, there is almost complete focus on Nancy to where it almost seems as if she is the main front woman, as opposed to Ann. In the video, “Never,” Nancy appears for six to seven seconds at a time, while Ann barely is seen for two or three seconds. On the chorus, specifically toward the end of the song, the camera shows Nancy for eight seconds dancing with her guitar. The camera also focuses on Ann’s face, and she wears full black attire in the videos for “Never” and “These Dreams.”¹⁷⁵ In the video for “What About Love,” a fake pot of hot gold pours onto a flat surface, in which Nancy’s body emerges, while Ann is seen in the welder’s outfit immediately after that clip. Ann recalls, “It was idiotic, it was Nancy as a *body*. What outrageous body situations can we put Nancy’s beautiful body in?”¹⁷⁶ There is more focus on Ann in this song, but Ann is still covered up in a black outfit. Similarly, in the video for “Alone,” there is more emphasis on Nancy. She rides a horse in the video, and her outfit shows more cleavage. Also, on stage, she playfully kisses the other guitar player, even though the song’s lyrics are not at all playful and lighthearted: “Till now, I’ve always got by on my own, I never really cared until I met you.”¹⁷⁷ In the video for “These Dreams,” Nancy has the lead vocal solo, so obviously there is continued focus on her. Nevertheless, Ann is still wearing all black, while Nancy’s light-colored suit is exaggerated.

¹⁷⁴ “Heart band history part 4 of 4,” last modified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8kaBSh53SY>

¹⁷⁵ Ann also wears black in “Alone,” which was a single for the *Bad Animals* album in 1987

¹⁷⁶ “Heart band history part 4 of 4,” last modified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8kaBSh53SY>

¹⁷⁷ Liner Notes from, Heart, *Bad Animals* Capitol Records, 1987, LP

There are many more examples in Heart's mid 1980s music videos, but one can see the promotional change in interviews with the Wilson sisters. For example, in the 1982 interview on David Letterman during their Private Audition tour, Ann was the most communicative, smiling and making jokes with Letterman, while Nancy spoke little and followed along in the interview.¹⁷⁸ Three years later in an interview in the United Kingdom, Ann Wilson is wearing all black, while Nancy is in lighter colors. Nancy is not only the first sister to speak in the interview, she is also receives more attention from the camera than Ann.¹⁷⁹ In performance, during the *Bad Animals* tour, Ann began to have panic attacks after experiencing negative reviews about her weight. "I felt really insecure," Ann says, "it got on top of me somehow, and then I started having stage fright, and you know getting anxious on stage."¹⁸⁰ Nancy found ways to prevent her sister from having these attacks. "I'd figured out ways to snap her out of it," Nancy said, "like come straight up into her face and go, "Hiiii," you know like nose to nose, and touch her nose, and go "hi," and you know, kinda "hello, hello, come back, come back, come here come here, I'm *with* you, look at me, keep looking at me."¹⁸¹ Ann relied on her sister to find control in performance, but it was struggle for her throughout the *Bad Animals* tour. After their 1991 album, *Brigade*, Ann and Nancy began their hiatus to not only rest from touring and music videos, but also from the lifestyle that didn't allow their creativity and control. "So of course that meant letting a couple people go again," Ann said, "which we

¹⁷⁸ "Ann & Nancy on Letterman," last modified on July 1, 2009,

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_Q14zvd9CA

¹⁷⁹ "Ann, Nancy Wilson Heart "Rare" Interview 1985 - For UK TV," last modified on April 14, 2010,

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNgfYeCXZJQ&feature=related>

¹⁸⁰ "Heart band history part 4 of 4," last modified on November 20, 2008,

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8kaBSh53SY>

¹⁸¹ "Heart band history part 4 of 4," last modified on November 20, 2008,

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8kaBSh53SY>.

had to do, but we have never felt bad about that one, because, that was, we were saving ourselves, before we were saving the band, we were saving ourselves ”¹⁸²

The promotion discourse seems to resound the least control over the other discourses, performance and repertory. Indeed, songwriting and performance were the sisters’ biggest strengths and natural talents. If there was any adjustment needed in their creativity and control, it did not include issues directly related to the *music*. Ann and Nancy found authenticity in their recorded music and in their live music, which pardons any need for promotional boosts such as fame-craving behavior, sexual iconography, or explicit music videos.

Go With Yourself

Today, Ann and Nancy still believe that the human element, or real life, is an essential part of their music:

“This time I think it was pretty easy to write,” Ann said, ... I think maybe because we had a whole bunch of experiences since the last time we wrote, and um, all of the new songs, pretty much all of them are pretty much autobiographical, based on things that we feel, that have happened to us... we just kind of started with a groove, sometimes Nancy and Craig had something musically, and showed it to me, and I said how about these words and this concept... it was pretty darn easy .. ”¹⁸³

¹⁸² “Heart band history part 4 of 4,” last modified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8kaBSh53SY>

¹⁸³ “Heart—‘Red Velvet Car’ Influences,” last modified on July 14, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqVOPs2QH0U&feature=related>

The Wilson sisters apply this songwriting strategy to their most recent album, *Red Velvet Car* (2010). Also, in performance and promotion, the band is still persistent. Ann and Nancy have done two tours—one from 2010-2011 as the headlining group, and also in the summer and fall of 2011 with Def Leppard.

In a promotional video for *Private Audition* in 1982, Ann Wilson stated, “Well I’d like to be remembered as someone who opened the door for women to just do whatever the *heck* they want on stage.”¹⁸⁴ Indeed, female rock musicians have pursued many avenues throughout the 1980s and 1990s, whether as front women, lone bass players in a male setting, or in all-female rock bands. However, Ann and Nancy still believe female rock artists are very rare post-millennium. “There are lots and lots of women that are doing singer-songwriter,” Ann said, “and maybe all girl bands you know, but to be like women working side by side with men on an equal footing...” Nancy elaborates, “A *democracy* of a rock band with girls in it, along with guys, because we always had a different thing...”¹⁸⁵ The Wilson sisters were part of this democracy of a rock band, and this lineup was a test of whether they could perform, promote, and write their own music as front women. Through the evidence I have presented in this case study, I have shown Ann and Nancy’s approach to rock music—their aims to portray themselves as real women not only among a male patriarchy, but also as authentic musicians in the lineage of female rock music history.

¹⁸⁴ “Heart In the Studio 80’s,” last modified on June 24, 2009,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IpvzTwhPrqg&feature=related>

¹⁸⁵ “Women Artists in a Male Industry,” last modified on July 16, 2010,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TP9GUQdoe7I>.

IV. MADONNA, FIONA APPLE, AND SEXUALITY

While in chapters two and three, I discuss the sites of creativity and control, here I will assess the authenticity of sexuality. Throughout the history of popular music, sexuality has been presented with several degrees of authenticity.¹⁸⁶ However, to evaluate what displays of sexuality are authentic for female rock artists, I will first explain the roots of sexuality in male rock music and female rock music. Then, I will highlight the changing roles of authentic sexuality throughout four decades in the music business: the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. In this survey, Madonna and Fiona Apple serve as two important performers of sexuality—I will argue that Madonna introduced blatant sexuality into popular music in the mid 1980s and that Fiona Apple symbolizes a rejection of sexuality in performance in the late 1990s and early 2000's. Therefore, in the conclusions, I will conclude with perspectives on authenticity in the millennium, where the expression of sexuality has become increasingly homogenized.

¹⁸⁶ Ellen Willis makes a comparison during Janis Joplin's fame to the succeeding generations in female rock history "They demystified sex what's love (or utopia) got to do with it? They did not aspire to connect with some deeper cosmic reality but to play with the ubiquitous virtual reality of mass-mediated eroticism Pleasure was still the name of the game, but the fantasy they played out was not excess and abandon, it was autonomy, distance, power, control" from Liner Notes of the Janis Joplin Box Set (1993), quoted in Nona Willis Aronowitz, *Out of the Vinyl Deeps. Ellen Willis on Rock Music* (Minnesota University of Minnesota Press), 2011.

Sexuality and Gender

What is the importance of gender in sexual expression, specifically in rock music? Just as the youth culture in the 1950s first demonstrated, the rock musician sings of youthful rebellion and freedom from the constraints of parents.¹⁸⁷ In the late 1960s, this included “free” sex and spontaneity most commonly between man and woman. Simon Frith (1981) observed how sexuality changed in accordance with rock culture: “Sex was thus best experienced *outside* the restrictive sphere of marriage, with its distracting deceits of love and long-term commitment. This was, in principle, an ideology of sexual equality—men and women alike were entitled to set their own limits on their sexual experiences.”¹⁸⁸ But these experiences also included an immediate inequality if one sex was to triumph over the other. It was a rebellion of the man *against* woman, where the man escapes the limitations of marriage and the female nurturer and continues his nomadic journey as a rock musician. Simon Reynolds and Joy Press of *The Sex Revolts* (1995) discussed the sexual connotations of rock music but also the psychology of men and women: “The rebel is always running away from home. He defines himself against domesticity and dreads being house-trained; home is precisely where adventures don’t happen. Heroic life is only possible when the rebel has made the break, distanced himself from what Robert Bly calls the ‘force-field’ of women.”¹⁸⁹ To break from the force-field,

¹⁸⁷ “But the most important function of 1950s teenage culture wasn’t to ‘repress’ sexuality but to articulate it in a setting of love and marriage such that male and female sexuality were organized in quite different ways. The youth culture that developed in the 1960s was, in sexual terms, more rebellious, the family was part of the system under attack. Domestic ideology was subverted, sexuality separated from marriage, romantic love intercut with fleeting hedonism.” Kay S. Hoke, “American Popular Music.” *Women and Music: A History*, ed. Karin Pendle (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991), 403.

¹⁸⁸ Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock ‘n’ Roll*. (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981), 240.

¹⁸⁹ Simon Reynolds and Joy Press *The Sex Revolts: Gender, Rebellion, and Rock ‘N’ Roll* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995), 43.

male rockers would allude to their rebellion in their songs, on stage, and sometimes in their reckless personal lives

The authors of *The Sex Revolts* confirm that Jim Morrison of The Doors, Led Zeppelin, and Bob Dylan used this rebellion theme in their lyrics: Morrison in his psychedelic music, “Soul Kitchen” and “Strange Days,” Led Zeppelin with heavy metal songs like “Ramble On,” and Bob Dylan with his beatnik generational hit, “Like a Rolling Stone.” Morrison sings of coming to the woman for temporary sexual nourishment before he takes off to the road again in the morning in “Soul Kitchen” Robert Plant sings of the man as a hero who is “forever bidding farewell and heading off in search of an impossible ideal woman. He’s kinetic, won’t be tied down to any one chick or place.”¹⁹⁰ Bob Dylan, although more romantic (among focusing on poetic, worldly protests), was rebellious and crude to any restraints of a relationship ¹⁹¹ As Bono of U2 notes in a 2011 *Rolling Stone* tribute article about “Like a Rolling Stone,” “I don’t know or particularly care who this song is about—though I’ve met a few people who have claimed it was about them. . . .The real thrill for me was that ‘once upon a time’ in the world, a song this radical was a hit on the radio. The world was changed by a cranky voice, a romantic spirit, somebody who cared enough about an unrequited love to write such a devastatingly caustic- put-down.”¹⁹² I will not address Bob Dylan in sexuality of performance, but as one can see, the rebellion of male rockers also extended to poetic forms. I have chosen Morrison and Plant to represent the overt sexuality in rock

¹⁹⁰ Ibid , 52.

¹⁹¹ For evidence, consider the songs, “Don’t Think Twice, It’s All Right,” (The Freewheelin’ Bob Dylan, October 1962) and “Most Likely You Go Your Way and I’ll Go Mine” (Blonde on Blonde, January 1974)

¹⁹² Bono “The 70 Greatest Dylan Songs,” *Rolling Stone* No 1131 (May 26, 2011), 56.

performance. In my brief analysis, I will occasionally include Jimmy Page, since he was an equally important front man in Led Zeppelin.

The sexuality involved with rebellion of the male rocker is quite complicated. It is not so much a male musician's struggle, as it is the psyche of the man. While trying to resist his own mother's grasp, the man looks for a mother in his girlfriend, lover, or wife. Reynolds and Press describe this conflict: "He can long for the womb and for an idealized mother-lover, while shunning or abusing the flesh-and-blood women in his vicinity. In the rebel imagination, women figure as both victims and agents of castrating conformity. Women represent everything the rebel is not (passivity, inhibition) and everything that threatens to shackle him (domesticity, social norms)"¹⁹³ Morrison and Plant were musicians who reflected this ideology, yet they each take his sexuality into another context. Morrison associates his lyrics and stage performance with a phallic rebellion. Sex was a means to an end, rather than an end in itself, towards death. His journey was meant to lead to nowhere, into the unknown, using the woman's soul (and perhaps his own) as way to get there. " 'Light My Fire' linked love and the funeral pyre; light the fuse, demands Morrison, and my rocketship will hurtle us into incandescent fusion with the universe. 'Break On Through' is another allegory of sex as a voyage into a virgin, unknown terrain of the soul..." It was a psychedelic journey, inspired by Greek dramas, the poetry of William Blake, and Southern blues.¹⁹⁴ The woman does not even seem to play a role in his satisfaction, perhaps this is why his relationship was so turbulent and sex was disposable and not an act of love. Therefore, perhaps Morrison's

¹⁹³ Reynolds and Press, 3

¹⁹⁴ For information on the inspiration of the name, The Doors, consider Stephen Davis, *Jim Morrison: Life, Death, Legend* (New York: Gotham Books, 2004), 83

sexuality was more spiritual, more reckless and risky, but ultimately it was destructive.¹⁹⁵

It is not surprising that it was very much linked to his personal life Morrison had multiple partners while still keeping a relationship with his long-time girlfriend, Pamela Courson.

While Morrison is more obscene and grotesque, Robert Plant uses phallic rebellion with a similar connotation of evil and mysticism, except the evil spirit lies in the woman herself. Plant regards the woman as:

...bewitching, spell-binding, a spinner of illusions... Love is disorientation, debility and paralysis. Led Zeppelin's 'Dazed and Confused' (from the 1969 debut LP) is the definitive take on this scenario. Doomladen glissandos of blues guitar and a scabrous, burdened bassline conjure a sepulcher of sound for Robert Plant's languishing moans and tortured shrieks. Plant is prostrated on 'the killing floor', a standard blues metaphor that originally referred to an abattoir.¹⁹⁶

This metaphor is used in "The Lemon Song," in which he sings, "I'm gonna leave all my troubles down on this killing floor." Sometimes he would replace "troubles" with "children," referring to when a woman leaves him unsatisfied sexually.¹⁹⁷ Plant also sings "Squeeze my lemon 'till the juice runs down my leg" referring to a woman pleasuring him, yet in the "Lemon Song," she also abandons him: "... Ya take my money, and give it

¹⁹⁵ "I was less theatrical, less artificial when I first began performing. But now the audiences we play are much larger and the rooms are bigger. It's necessary to project more—to exaggerate—almost to the point of grotesqueness." Morrison quoted in Arnold Shaw, *The Rock Revolution* (New York: Crowell-Collier Press), 1969.

For more evidence on destructiveness of his concerts and personal life consider Davis's biography on Jim Morrison, page 108

¹⁹⁶ Reynolds and Press, 24

¹⁹⁷ LedZeppelinlyrics.org "The Lemon Song," *Led Zeppelin Lyrics: The Writings of the Gods* Last modified in 2011 <http://www.ledzeppelinlyrics.org/>

to another man, I should have quit you, such a long time ago” In “Traveling Riverside Blues,” Plant sings the “lemon” reference again, but also “She’s a kindhearted woman She studies evil all the time.” Therefore, Plant seems to be conflicted with the woman giving him satisfaction, yet he cannot seem to keep her with him. Although in some songs, Plant makes himself the victim and he either will not leave the woman, or he dreams of an impossible love—“Ramble On,” “Baby I’m Gonna Leave You,” and “Going to California.” From “Going to California”: “Made up my mind to make a new start, going to California with an aching in my heart. Someone told me there’s a girl out there with love in her eyes and flowers in her hair,” and also “Tryin’ to find a woman who’s never, never, never been born.”¹⁹⁸ These themes are paradoxical because the woman is idealized and loved, and yet she is evil and leaves him, or he leaves her because she is evil. There is never a clear message in Plant’s lyrics, but what is significant is the reality of his sexual performance and the band’s real sexual encounters and treatment of women.

With leather-tight pants and a shirtless performance, Led Zeppelin’s Robert Plant and Jimmy Page were blatantly sexual in their stage personae. *The Song Remains the Same* (1973), a documentary filled with the band’s performances and their backstage life, is an example of showing their live music personality. The opening song, “Rock and Roll,” really shows their aggression and connection to the audience. Simon Frith and Angela McRobbie describe their live performances and music as “cock rock,” which means “music making in which performance is an explicit, crude, and often aggressive expression of male sexuality—it’s the style of rock presentation that links a rock and

¹⁹⁸ Ibid

roller like Elvis Presley to rock stars like Mick Jagger, Roger Daltry, and Robert Plant”¹⁹⁹ This aggression, linked with the agonizing lyrics of women’s torture, attracted men to the audiences, also many women. Frith and McRobbie make the argument that the music was mostly for a male audience. “Cock rock shows are explicitly about male sexual performance (which may explain why so few girls go to them—the musicians are acting out a sexual iconography which in so many ways is unfamiliar, frightening, and distasteful to girls who are educated into understanding sex as something nice, soft, loving, and private).”²⁰⁰ But as can be seen in the crowds on the documentary and other live performances on video, there are many women in the audience and marveling at the front men. Frith and McRobbie’s argument is valid in the sense that men are identifying with the lyrics, but Robert Plant and Jimmy Page laced their songs and performances with so much sexual tension perhaps to heighten their message or portray an ambiguity

Susan Fast, in her 1999 article, “Rethinking Issues of Gender and Sexuality in Led Zeppelin A Woman’s View of Pleasure and Power in Hard Rock,” observes women in the audience of the documentary, *The Song Remains the Same*. She notices that there are women infatuated with the band members, but also other kinds of calm speculation, such as the hooded woman with her hands folded during the song, “Since I’ve Been Loving You.”²⁰¹ Fast also references Barbara Ehrenriech, Elizabeth Hess, and Gloria Jacobs and how they cited Beatlemania (1964) as the women’s sexual revolution, where young girls became enlightened with the raw and sexual nature of The Beatles’

¹⁹⁹ Quoted in Susan Fast, “Rethinking issues of gender and sexuality in Led Zeppelin A woman's view of pleasure and power in hard rock,” *American Music* 17, no 3 (October 1, 1999) 250

²⁰⁰ Ibid

²⁰¹ Peter Grant, *The Song Remains The Same*, directed by Peter Clifton and Joe Massot (Warner Bros, 2007), DVD

performances in the early 1960's²⁰² Although women were still grounded in the idea of sexual encounters as private acts of love, rock music became an exploration of public sexuality during this time. Therefore, it seems likely that women were just as much interested in a more obvious sexual performance on stage as perhaps their younger selves observed with The Beatles.

It is crucial that I mention the phenomenon of this relationship of female fans to rock musicians. The rock culture of Led Zeppelin, The Doors, and others like The Rolling Stones, inspired women in the audience but also to another sexual and psychological level. Women were sexually awakened but also persistent in finding that satisfaction with the band members themselves. These women became known by 1969 as groupies. The term was used loosely in newspaper columns in the mid-1960s, but when a column entitled, "Groupies and Other Girls" was published in *Rolling Stone* in February 1969, the term was renown.²⁰³ Consequently, the term was used in a more misogynist context:

²⁰² Fast, 249, This comparison is not meant to exclude Elvis's sexual performances in the 1950's David Brackett elaborates "Presley's uninhibited, sexually charged performances throughout the South-east provoked frenzied responses and influenced other musicians by the end of 1955 performers such as Carl Perkins and Johnny Cash had emerged with a style coined 'rockabilly' that bore a strong resemblance to Presley's" (David Brackett, "Presley, Elvis " in *Grove Music Online Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/22307>)

²⁰³ Authors of this article were John Burkes, Jerry Hopkins, and Paul Nelson, The term "groupie" was used in Tom Wolfe's "Girl of the Year" featuring Jane Holzer in 1965. However, the term was first used in print on June 16, 1966 in the *Village Voice*. The article, "Pop Eye" by Richard Goldstein, in which he described a screaming fan as a groupie at a Beach Boys concert Lisa Rhodes argues that Goldstein could have been describing the hysteria of the female fans, much like the ones at Beatles concerts during Beatlemania Yet, in her analysis, Rhodes agrees that the purpose was to identify the groupies as *females* "Despite these differences, and the fact that all the articles predate *Rolling Stone*'s groupie issue, these depictions of groupie life would not emerge as the most well known in the periodical literature on groupies during this period Instead they would be subsumed into the *Rolling Stone* approach and the journalism that it spawned" Lisa L. Rhodes, *Electric Ladyland: Women and Rock Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 137-157

The importance of such articles lies in establishing that *Rolling Stone*'s approach to groupies was just that: a single, but not singular, one. After the publication of *Rolling Stone*'s groupie issue, this fact became lost in all the hoopla surrounding the expose itself and eventually, these alternate visions of what a groupie was (or could be) were discarded in favor of that offered by *Rolling Stone* and its highly sexualized and misogynist approach to groupie and rock culture.²⁰⁴

Perhaps the most famous groupie in the history of the rock 'n' roll is Pamela Des Barres. Just as Jim Morrison had multiple partners, so did the front men of Led Zeppelin. Pamela was most commonly associated with the guitarist, Jimmy Page, and in her memoirs, Des Barres made detailed observations of the lifestyle and the response of the audience in the very year that the term, "groupie," was popularized:

Led Zeppelin live in 1969 was an event unparalleled in musical history. They played longer and harder than any group ever had, totally changing the concept of rock concerts. They flailed around like dervishes, making so much sound that the air was heavy with metal. Two hours after the lights went out, as the band sauntered offstage, the audience was a delirious, raving, parched mass, crawling through the rock and roll desert thirsting for an encore. Twenty long minutes later, Led Zeppelin returned to satiate their famished followers.²⁰⁵

For most groupies, their encounters with the band members were conquests, and many of them felt they were boosts to their sexual status. Des Barres made this very clear in her memoirs about her turbulent relationship with Jimmy Page:

²⁰⁴ Rhodes, 137.

²⁰⁵ Pamela Des Barres, *I'm With the Band: Confessions of a Groupie* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2005), 153.

I was exactly what I had always aspired to be the girlfriend of the lead guitar player in the world's biggest and best rock and roll band I was the only girl allowed backstage . . . I was on the left side of the stage where Jimmy entranced eighty thousand Led Zeppelin maniacs with his magic guitar fingers and black-satin suit emblazoned with gold dragons climbing up his long legs. The audience was in a frenzy, and from my vantage point, sitting up on Jimmy's amp, I almost felt like one of the group, I could see what they saw, and feel what they felt pouring from the frenzied fanatics. The wild-eyed girls looked up at me and wondered which member of the group I was sleeping with, and I was so proud.²⁰⁶

Another groupie of this time, Cynthia "Plaster" Caster was also aggressive in finding that sexual status among rock musicians. She referred to her men as persons on a "hit list." Rhodes elaborates on her approach, "Based in Chicago, she became well known among rock bands and groupies due to her approach to meeting bands. Cynthia made plaster casts of the erect penises of the rock stars and collected them as art objects."²⁰⁷

Although groupies like Des Barres and Caster enjoyed the adventures of the lifestyle and their persistence often granted them access, the male rock musicians were still in control. In this passage, Des Barres desperately waits for Jimmy to return to her. Following this quote, she includes her diary entries from August 18th to August 26th, which are full of hysteria: "I was a fool for him, and prayed to anyone who might possibly be told that I wasn't just a one-tour wonder. I could be true-blue to his image forever if I had a hinting hope of another healthy slug of him. More than anything, I

²⁰⁶ Des Barres, 161-162.

²⁰⁷ Rhodes, 142

ached to meet him somewhere on the road, which would be a miraculous accomplishment indeed”²⁰⁸ Led Zeppelin also gained a disturbing reputation with female groupies, due to their unrelenting sexual demands. Cynthia Caster described her experience with Led Zeppelin: “They basically raped and pillaged their way across the United States. They threw me into a swimming pool, tore off all my clothes. They beat up one of my girlfriends, and I will never forgive them for that.”²⁰⁹ Other incidents with Led Zeppelin were the shark incident, where supposedly one of the band members inserted parts of a shark or related fish into a red-headed groupie’s vagina.²¹⁰

Des Barres and Caster have wild, groupie accounts of their experiences with rock bands, but women like Pattie Boyd have a more devastating story. Boyd was the wife of both George Harrison of The Beatles from 1966 to 1974 and then Eric Clapton of Cream from 1979 to 1989. Boyd had seen the other side of the groupie experience; since she had to watch her husband, Eric Clapton, take women back to his hotel while he was on his American tour in 1974:

Musicians have so much energy when they are on stage but afterwards they are exhausted. When they get back to the hotel, though, they’ve found a second wind—and all those girls are throwing themselves at them, not considering for one moment that there may be a wife or girlfriend in the picture. If I was with him, Eric would tell me to go upstairs and warm the bed to get me out of the way. And I’d be so irritated, but I thought I had to accept that this was what happened on

²⁰⁸ Des Barres, 159

²⁰⁹ Quoted in Rhodes, 146

²¹⁰ For evidence of the shark incident, consider Stephen Davis, *Hammer of the Gods* (New York: Berkeley Boulevard Books, 1997), 67. There are re-tellings of this story and also possible false versions of the incident as well.

tour Often I would fly home and leave him to get on with it, but I knew what was happening in my absence²¹¹

In this passage, Boyd brings to light the infidelity involved with groupie/rock musician relationships. Clapton had wanted his wife on tour with him, just to have her at his side, but he somehow convinced himself that he could pursue other women while she was present. This is a great example of the male rock musician trying to turn himself loose from stability and convention, even though he is emotionally lost without it.

The nomadic rebellion of the male rock musician is apparent in their lyrics, sexual presentation on stage, and especially in their personal encounters. Therefore, the female musician was entering a ruthless territory in the 1960s and 1970s, since to be a woman in rock culture was to be categorized as the abandoned lover or abused groupie. Was female rock music a sexual and psychological response to male rebellion and media exploitation? Or, was it an attempt to write, produce, and perform authenticity? For the female analysis of this section, I will identify the roots of the female sexual revolution and how it was channeled through the rock music of women. This will lead the chapter into the changing roles of sexuality from the 1960s to the millennium.

What is the origin of female sexuality in rock? We know that rock is primitive, meaning it is sexual, and according to the male, a sexual rebellion. According to Frith, "Women are excluded from this 'rebellion' by definition; rock's anti-domestic ideology doesn't move women out of the home, but leaves them in it, as inadequate."²¹² Groupies

²¹¹ Pattie Boyd, *Wonderful Today: George Harrison, Eric Clapton, and Me* (London: Headlining Publishing Group, 2007), 205.

²¹² Frith, 242

and abandoned lovers obviously understood this concept, accepting the man's wish to leave in the morning and find another woman "with flowers in her hair"²¹³ Pamela Des Barres admits in her experience with Page that she knows he is with another woman in another city, and contemplates her next conquest to distract herself—Waylon Jennings. "I really wanted to avoid sleeping with someone new, to prove to Jimmy that I was dead serious about sleeping with *him*, but this pent-up passion didn't keep me from looking, gazing, staring, dribbling, and contemplating. Michele and I went to the Palamino and sat right in front of Waylon Jennings—the sexy country-stud he-man with the dirty look in his eye."²¹⁴ Again, groupies had a mission with not just one lover, but also many. Pamela Des Barres also pursued Frank Zappa, Jim Morrison, Keith Moon, and Noel Redding to name a few rock musicians.

However, this is not the case with Pattie Boyd, who had to accept that she was needed as a wife figure, or rather a crutch, for Eric Clapton. Also, his groupie experiences were to be tolerated. She felt manipulated to stay with her husband, watch his pursuits, and also take part in the band's heavy drinking:

For the most part touring wasn't much fun for wives and girlfriends—it was such a male thing, boys bonding, working hard and giving a lot of themselves through their music, then wanting to play hard. They'd laugh, drink too much and pick up girls. Often a musician will choose a pretty girl in the audience and sing to her,

²¹³ LedZeppelinlyrics.org "Going to California," *Led Zeppelin Lyrics: The Writings of the Gods*. Last modified in 2011 <http://www.ledzeppelinlyrics.org/>

²¹⁴ Des Barres, 167

then the roadies will invite her with a few other pretty girls to come back after the gig for a drink²¹⁵

If groupies, wives, and girlfriends also played and accepted the rock 'n' roll game, then how did female rock artists circumvent this stereotype and establish the beginnings of female rock performance? Simon Reynolds and Joy Press say the female sexual rebellion was blurred in its early development:

Turning our attention from what rock 'n' roll has made of women to what women have made of rock, it's immediately apparent that, whereas the prototypes and precursors of male rock rebellion are easy to locate, the ancestors for female rock rebellion are rather more elusive. Instead of clearly defined trajectories (e.g. the beats/ Jim Morrison/Iggy Pop/Nick Cave lineage), female rebellion is a kind of subterranean river that wells up unexpectedly from time to time, seemingly out of nowhere, then disappears below the surface again.²¹⁶

This statement could be relevant, but regarding the antecedents of female sexuality in rhythm and blues, for example, female black singers were well versed in sexual performance, since the early 1920's.²¹⁷ Prime examples include Willie Mae "Big Mama" Thornton's recording of "Hound Dog" (1952) and Erma Franklin's recording of "Piece of My Heart" (1967) indeed, before Janis transcribed the song over to hard

²¹⁵ Boyd, 205

²¹⁶ Reynolds and Press, 230

²¹⁷ The original phrase, "rock 'n' roll," was a "black euphemism for sexual intercourse," and musically it was a collaboration of "two basic but regional, or ghetto, streams of music the hillbilly songs of white rural folk of the Southeastern mountain regions with the r&b songs of urban Negro communities" The phrase was originally coined in a song written by J Berni Barbour, "My Man Rocks Me (With One Steady Roll)," sung by female black artist, Trixie Smith in 1922, "black euphemism" (Hoke, 397), "two basic but regional" Alfred Shaw *The Rock Revolution: What's Happening in Today's Music* (New York: Crowell-Collier Press, 1969), 13

rock²¹⁸ Was there a similar nomadic escape in the rhythm and blues as well as the white rocker performances? As described in chapter two, Janis Joplin wrote passionate and tormented lyrics in “Kozmic Blues ” She also admitted her aggressive side in “Turtle Blues,” where she sings of hiding her feelings behind a hard shell. She includes a feminine quality in her lyrics, which Reynolds and Press believe is a different approach “Another approach attempts to infuse rock with ‘feminine’ qualities; rather than imitate men, it tries to imagine a female strength that’s different but equivalent. Examples include the passion and torment of Janis Joplin and Lydia Lunch.”²¹⁹ Yet, if the performer is female and if a woman wrote the lyrics and/or music, feminine qualities in the music is already implied

Indeed, Janis’s rebellion was her own, and songs like “Get It While You Can” and “Try (Just a Little Bit Harder) themes of sexuality, which she exuded on stage through long-winded singing passages.²²⁰ She also had her own groupies backstage and lovers she kept in touch with on occasion, as Sam Andrew recalls:

Yeah, there was such a thing. She had them. I don’t know if people recognized that there was such a thing, but there was. There were a lot of androgynous little pretty boys that would come and hang around. That was one kind of man she liked. It was extremes. Then she liked kind of a mountain man; a bearded man dressed in leather who looked like he’d just come out of the north woods. But,

²¹⁸ Pop historians Sue Steward and Sheryl Garratt elaborate more on these antecedents, “Blues singers have been an all-time major influence on rock voices Bessie Smith and Mama Thornton were the revered inspiration of Janis Joplin” (Sue Steward and Sheryl Garratt, *Signed Sealed and Delivered* [Boston: South End Press, 1984], 96)

²¹⁹ Reynolds and Press, 233

²²⁰ JanisJoplin.net “Music. Lyrics,” last modified in May 2011 <http://www.janisjoplin.net/music/lyrics>

that's what she really liked. She always complained all I can meet is these pretty boys. But yeah, there were a few male groupies around.²²¹

Coincidentally, the groupie issue from *Rolling Stone* mentions Janis Joplin, but does not quote her on those experiences. Unfortunately, early female rock musicians like Janis had to face promotional extremes that still somehow remain in the music industry today—sexual exploitation and lack of coverage.²²² Twelve male rock stars were mentioned and their groupie associations, but no female rock star was interviewed:

The only one discussed by name was a seventeen-year-old male groupie named Pogo, whom they characterize as having been initially fixated on Jim Morrison and Mick Jagger. Pogo described both his infatuation and encounter with Janis Joplin. 'She got me so sexually aroused—the way Mick Jagger and Jim Morrison do, but without the guilt.' Pogo may have been aroused, but the extent of his contact with Joplin was one kiss (though he did boast that he kissed her using his tongue).²²³

It might have been a positive effect that Janis Joplin did not receive press on her personal life, knowing how it was one less possible sexual exploitation she had to endure. However, if she was sexually rebelling and experimenting in the rock culture, then perhaps she was also engaging in the same experiences as her band mates. I agree with Rhodes, who says that women rockers were possibly overlooked in this aspect of rock

²²¹ Gary James, "Janis Joplin Remembered: The Sam Andrew Interview," *The Harbringer* (Mobile, Alabama, 1999) <http://www.theharbringer.org/xvii/990202/james.html>.

²²² Consider (Rhodes, 51-88) for evidence of discrimination to Cass Elliot, Janis Joplin, and Karen Carpenter in early articles of *Rolling Stone*.

²²³ Lisa L. Rhodes, *Electric Ladyland: Women and Rock Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005), 163.

culture, “Once again, women were denied agency—and active participation in the process of self-definition—and the readers were left to decide whether women rock stars typically had, or availed themselves of, groupies.”²²⁴

Despite her conformity to the sexual revolution, Janis’s sexual rebellion in rock music was her own. Ellen Willis elaborates on this concept in her 1980 article from *Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock ‘N’ Roll*: “She was also the only woman to achieve that kind of stature in what was basically a male club, the only sixties culture hero to make visible and public women’s experience of the quest for individual liberation, which was very different from men’s”²²⁵ Not aiming to imitate the male rebellion and abandon her lover, she actually sings of the woman’s struggle on the other side—as the victim. This will be discussed further in the next section when I explore Janis’s authentic sexuality as a freedom.

Reynolds and Press describe three other strategies of female rock rebellion aside from Janis in *The Sex Revolts*. Although they are valid examples, these approaches are not relevant for my discussion of authentic sexuality.²²⁶ Nevertheless, highlighting the rebellion of female blues and rock singers is essential for determining their originality as well as how they included femininity in an established masculine setting.

For the survey, I will observe how Janis used authentic sexuality as a freedom, how Ann and Nancy used authentic sexuality as an implication, how Madonna used

²²⁴ Rhodes, 163

²²⁵ Aronowitz, 126

²²⁶ The four rebellion approaches are “can-do” approach or female machisma, fusing masculine with feminine qualities, iconography, and trauma of identity formation. For reference of these typologies, consider Reynolds and Press, 233-234

authentic sexuality as power, and how Fiona Apple used a lack of sexuality to convey her chosen authenticity. I defined authenticity in the Introduction to this thesis as a performance that is authentic in the sense that it is chosen and controlled by the female performer, as opposed to marketing managers or media experts. This definition adequately correlates with my evaluation of creativity and control, since the notion of authenticity can still be ambiguous if taken out of this context. Therefore, my analysis does not consider the audience's perspective of how authentic the artist performs, since examples like Madonna could be fictive in interviews or at any time on camera. Actor Warren Beatty, who was Madonna's boyfriend in the early 1990s, is an example of this concept as he said playfully during her *Truth or Dare* documentary, "[Laughs] She doesn't want to *live* off camera. There's nothing to say off camera, why would you *say* something off camera?"²²⁷ Indeed, the performer may show at specific times an authenticity on stage and off, especially Ann and Nancy, but for this survey, my analysis will center on their music performance.

²²⁷ "Madonna—VH1 Behind the Music 3/5," last modified on March 11, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5m_7uTV7II

Survey of Female Sexuality in the Music Business

1. Sexuality As A Freedom (late 1960s)

In observing the cultural and political events that took place in the 1960s, from what was Janis Joplin liberating herself in performance and in her music? Was her sexual performance an *authentic* release of her woes and relationships? Or was it a combination of these feelings, the beginnings of female rock stardom, second wave feminism, the counterculture, and/or the sexual revolution?

In the chapter on Janis Joplin, I briefly discussed the counterculture, the sexual revolution, and the second wave of feminism. Janis was indifferent. However, she was not in favor of marriage while enthralled with rock 'n' roll culture, and the feminist movement supported precisely that ideal.²²⁸ Alice Echols argues that a good reason for Janis's indifference was that women were not yet involved in feminism in the Haight-Ashbury hippie community "That period between 1960 and 1970, after the Pill was introduced and before feminism took off, afforded young men a window of opportunity Carl Gottlieb, an actor and writer with the Committee, knows men who to this day are nostalgic for this time, when women were sexually available but not yet politically assertive as feminists."²²⁹ Judging from Janis's own words highlighted in chapter two and the evidence I have presented here, it seems that Janis's sexual performance was more a product of her own experiences and her own frustrations rather than in support of the movement.

²²⁸ "[Betty] Friedan described the effects of a life of compulsory marriage and motherhood on middle-class white women in America during the 1950s and early 1960s. She also discussed the dissatisfaction that many women felt in those roles and indicated that this dissatisfaction was not discussed in any forum or in any meaningful way 'the problem that has no name'" (Rhodes, 9)

²²⁹ Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin*. (New York: Henry Holt, 1999), 158

I also explained in the previous section of this chapter the roots of female rock performance. These roots raised the question of the *double standard* for women in rock—what men can do in rock ‘n’ roll and the music business, women cannot. Rhodes analyzes the double standard: “The women who were musicians, music writers and groupies between 1965 and 1975 had two things in common: the double standard and a love of music. All of these women, solely because of their sex, faced obstacles that men in the same endeavors did not.”²³⁰ Was Janis aware of this double standard when she decided to become a front-woman in rock ‘n’ roll? During the turning point in Janis’s career, with Big Brother and the Holding Company, the members all believed it was a collective musical effort. Sam Andrew recalls the process in the early days of the band, “We talked about what a different drumbeat would do here or a guitar chord there. If there was any telling what to do, it would be coming from Janis. But we were in it together; she was delighted with our discoveries and so were we.”²³¹ The hippie culture and Big Brother and Holding Company created an egalitarian and family environment for Janis, so the musical double standard was not an issue for their band. Echols argues that perhaps the counterculture and sexual revolution suppressed the *sexual* double standard. The sexual revolution occurred, but it was not advantageous for women because perhaps they were not emotionally prepared “Women were having more sex (and with less guilt),” Echols writes, “but they were also more sexually vulnerable. Instead of undoing the deeply rooted sexual double standard, free love only masked it in countercultural pieties.”²³²

²³⁰(Rhodes, xi). Rhodes lists the following women as examples: Janis Joplin, Aretha Franklin, Laura Nyro, Joni Mitchell, Tina Turner, Grace Slick, Cass Elliot, Carole King, Carly Simon, Bonnie Raitt, Linda Ronstadt, Patti Smith, Chaka Khan, Gladys Knight, Patti LaBelle, Karen Carpenter, Cher, and Diana Ross.

²³¹ Echols, 136

²³² *Ibid.*, 159

With respect to relationships and sex, Janis was extremely vulnerable, but perhaps she was still aware of the double standard even though it was masked. What is significant is that through “free love,” the counterculture in Haight-Asbury, and her own experiences, her music was an explosion of vulnerability and desperate sexuality.

What musical techniques constituted this authentic performance? According to an early quote, Janis spoke of her initial reactions to performing rock ‘n’ roll with Big Brother and the Holding Company. “What a rush, man! A real, live, drug rush... All I remember is the sensation—what a fuckin’ gas, man. The music was boom, boom, boom and the people were all dancing, and the lights, and I was standing up there singing into the microphone and getting it on, and whew! I dug it. So I said, ‘I think I’ll stay, boys.’”²³³ At first, Janis was doing backup vocals and singing lead, and she would use a tambourine during Big Brother’s improvisational jams.²³⁴ Then she realized, as a solo singer, she couldn’t restrain any energy when singing in front of a rock band. “You have to sing loud and move wild with all that in back of you,” Janis said.²³⁵ Janis learned to use that volume combined with soul and phrasing of the notes, as well as shrieks and screams. This can be first heard especially around the time of the Monterey Pop Festival in 1967. Her vocal improvisation reflected the sexual passion, spontaneity, and vulnerability that she continuously suppressed, then released. Reynolds and Press describe the complexity of her vocal techniques, and support a claim by Myra Friedman on this subject:

²³³ Janis’s quote from David Dalton, *Piece of My Heart: A Portrait of Janis Joplin*, rev. ed. (New York: Da Capo, 1991), 99. Quoted in Echols, 134.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 135.

²³⁵ Myra Friedman, *Buried Alive: The Biography of Janis Joplin* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1973), 74.

She doesn't seem to be in control of her passion, but controlled by it. In reality, Joplin's singing, with its apparently improvised hollers and moans, was a carefully constructed simulacrum of spontaneity: according to Friedman, the singer planned every last throe and spasm of passion, plotting a precise place for each shriek and wail on her records.²³⁶

In conclusion, Janis was aware of the music as an outlet for her feelings, and she created a unique way to musically express them. The intensity she proclaimed on stage was effective for her own satisfaction and for the audience. Ellen Willis who attended a Joplin concert at the Fillmore East in 1969, comments on her sexual performance: "What makes me wonder is something I always noticed and liked about Janis: unlike most female performers whose act is intensely erotic, she never made me feel as if I were crashing an orgy that consisted of her and the men in the audience. When she got it on at a concert she got it on with everybody."²³⁷ Janis was inviting to the entire audience because she felt the audience's love was all she had. Indeed, she chose to perform, but it seems she also depended on the audience's reaction to continue performing that authenticity. The vulnerability she harbored was always a struggle after the show was over. "Onstage I make love to twenty-five thousand people, then I go home alone."²³⁸ Also, her performance was real and she may have had a connection to her fans, but her sexual vulnerability became a marketable tool as a result. She had to live with this image, cultivate it, and feed it to the media and her audience. Willis concludes, "Joplin's revolt against conventional femininity was brave and imaginative, but it also dovetailed with a

²³⁶ Reynolds and Press, 274

²³⁷ Aronowitz, 127-128

²³⁸ From Ellen Willis, "Musical Events," *New Yorker* (August 14, 1971), 81. Quoted in Echols, 261

stereotype—the ballsy, one-of-the-guys chick who is a needy, vulnerable cream puff underneath—cherished by her legions of hip male fans.”²³⁹ This is not complete creativity and control of her authenticity

2. Sexuality As An Implication (late 1970s-mid 1980s)

How did Ann and Nancy imply their sexuality in performance? Indeed, the sisters conveyed a rock rebellion similar to their male counterparts as explained in the case study, but their chosen authentic sexuality was not masculine, however. They included feminine qualities in their sexual performances.

When Ann and Nancy saw Led Zeppelin perform in the Seattle Aqua Theater as teenagers, they realized rock ‘n’ roll’s sexual power. Nancy credited Led Zeppelin with providing the girls their first glimmer of a creative vision that would eventually become Heart. “I saw Led Zeppelin live for the first time when I was 13 I remember sitting there with Ann, and we were blushing ‘cause they were so raw It was disturbing yet alluring. We were already doing music together, mainly because of The Beatles But when we got into Zeppelin, it really helped to form our identity.” These two women believed they could be the musicians themselves, but not an imitation of the males. Reynolds and Press define this imitation as the “can-do” or the “one of the boys” approach as “female machisma”—meaning “to make an impression at all, they had to imitate male rebels and define themselves against the ‘limitations of femininity.’”²⁴⁰ Gayle Wald (1994) argues this discourse, stating that female machisma “closes off the resistive possibilities of rock

²³⁹ Aronowitz, 128

²⁴⁰ Reynolds and Press, 236.

for women, and ultimately begs the question of rock's masculine hegemony."²⁴¹

Although I agree that Ann and Nancy were *influenced* by male rock musicians, I do not believe they were imitators, and, as I showed in the repertory section of the case study, they were not closed off from possibilities as female rock musicians either. Also, like Joplin, Ann and Nancy Wilson challenged the double standard but did not become rock musicians with that intention.

In order to create their own authentic sexual persona in performance and in repertory, Ann and Nancy's used implication. Rather than portraying their stage presence vulnerably sexual (Janis) or blatantly sexual (Madonna), Ann and Nancy achieved a balance, where they could be themselves as musicians. Asked in 1976 about the failure of previous women rockers to be accepted by the public on a large scale, Ann told *Melody Maker*, "They've either tried to be rockers in the sense that they're male, like Suzi Quatro being as male as they come, or they became super-sexual, so sexual that the normal person can't relate to them." Indeed, Ann makes a comparison of male and female performance, but she also presents her opinion on sexuality. Conversely, Ann told the *Los Angeles Times*, she and Nancy tried to project an image of being "real" women. "We don't try to be like men and we don't go in for the heavy feminine bit either."²⁴²

²⁴¹Philip Auslander, "I Wanna be Your Man: Suzi Quatro's Musical Androgyny" *Popular Music* 23, no. 1 (2004): 7.

²⁴²(Gaar, 226), Suzi Quatro was a female rock bass player, who became a representative of female "cock-rock" in the early 1970s. She is mostly noted for her extremely masculine stage presence, to where maybe she is seen as trying too hard to be "one of the boys." "In the early 1970s, Suzi Quatro was unique. Although there were many women in rock by the late 1960s, most performed only as singers, a traditionally feminine position in popular music. At the time of Quatro's emergence in 1973, no other prominent female musician worked in rock simultaneously as a singer, instrumentalist, songwriter and bandleader." Ann and Nancy Wilson debuted three years after Quatro, and it is interesting that Ann Wilson comments on Quatro's contributions, since she played an instrument *and* sang in performance. Quatro's only setback was that she was not as commercially successful as Heart. (Auslander, 1-2)

How did the sisters of Heart portray a balance of these “real life” elements and also imply their sexuality? In the lyrics of their first album, *Dreamboat Annie*, they wrote themes of love, real life, and innocence, and the sexuality was left for the live performances. For example, Ann Wilson created certain gusto in her voice when singing the higher notes of songs like “Barracuda,” similar to the range of Robert Plant. However, she also toned her voice down for the softer, acoustic songs they wrote such as “Just the Wine” and “Cry to Me.” Also, Nancy on guitar provided a hard, powerful strum on the acoustic guitar for songs like “Magic Man” and “Crazy on You” (until she added electric guitar to her performance in 1980, which created another sexual dynamic starting with the *Bebe Le Strange* album), but she would also play delicately for songs like “Dreamboat Annie” and “Silver Wheels.” In a very supportive review by *Rolling Stone* in October 1976, the author raved about Ann Wilson’s voice, stating that it was “strong, flexible and emotionally captivating . . . her phrasing is as confident as Helen Reddy’s, her timbre seductive as Christine McVie’s, and her scalding hard-rock attack not unlike Robert Plant’s; it is her performance which holds together the album’s sharply defined . . . themes of supernatural love and sexual hysteria.”²⁴³ Indeed, Heart would perform Led Zeppelin’s “Rock and Roll” for their encore at certain concerts, since the band was already versed in their repertory from the early gigging days. As far as the sexual power is concerned, the sisters of Heart felt enlightened even after initially being disturbed by Led Zeppelin’s performance. In a 2010 Grammy Museum interview, Ann and Nancy discuss their first concert experience:

When they started doing “The Lemon Song,” Nancy and “I thought oh we’ve had enough, this is too much, this is too scary, [To Nancy] ‘did you catch their

²⁴³ Brown, 51

innuendo?!’ That was like a life-changing moment, and we ended up leaving because we were so shocked. .they were so challenging to young girls of course then later when we were women, it was “yeahhhhh!”

These front women created their own identity aside from their influences, and they chose to use an implied sexuality in performance. Along with creating and controlling their repertory, performance, and promotion, Ann and Nancy also controlled their authenticity

3. Sexuality as Power (mid 1980s to early 1990s)

Madonna chose a re-invention and blatant sexuality as her authenticity. Her sexual performances involved erotic dress, control of the male gaze, ambiguity and paradox, and sexuality with religious connotations.²⁴⁴ Through all of these strategies, Madonna expressed her own sense of femininity and control. According to Susan McClary, Madonna “enables girls to see that the meanings of feminine sexuality can be in their control, can be made in their interests, and that their subjectivities are not necessarily totally determined by the dominant patriarchy.”²⁴⁵ Madonna makes a feminist statement herself, in fact. On ABC’s *Nightline*, Madonna said, “I may be dressing like the typical bimbo, but I’m in charge . . . people don’t think of me as a person who’s not in charge of my career or my life. And isn’t that what feminism is all about? Aren’t I in charge of my life, doing the things I want to do, making my own decisions?”²⁴⁶ Therefore,

²⁴⁴ Madonna also includes transgender connotations. See the music video, “Justify My Love,” last modified on September 27, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESxJJK3QsnM>

²⁴⁵ Susan McClary, “Living to Tell” *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minnesota University of Minnesota Press, 1991), 148

²⁴⁶ From ABC’s *Nightline*, December 3, 1990, quoted in Gaar, 323.

Madonna was contributing to third-wave feminism, where women are less victimized in their antics and where they find *power* through sexuality “These feminists argue that being an agent in the sexual encounter, or in the creation of one’s own public display of sexuality, can be liberatory because it challenges normative gender roles that prescribe repression and containment of sexual desire for women.”²⁴⁷ Madonna was definitely a central agent in releasing that repression through imagery.

In Madonna’s authentic sexual performance, she uses erotic dress and controls the male gaze. John Fiske elaborates on this idea:

Madonna knows well the importance of the look. This is a complex concept, for it includes how she looks (what she looks like), how she looks (how she gazes at others, the camera in particular), and how others look at her. Traditionally, looking has been in the control of men; Freud even suggests it is an essentially masculine way of exerting control through an extension of voyeurism, but Madonna wrests this control from the male and shows that women’s control of the look (in all three senses) is crucial to their gaining control over their meanings within patriarchy.²⁴⁸

The second sense—where she looks at the camera—is how Madonna obtains control of her sexual authenticity. In videos such as “Like a Virgin,” (1984) Madonna poses provocatively in a wedding dress and looks continuously at the camera. She also appears in casual attire with her midriff showing, while singing to her groom the words “Like a

²⁴⁷ Zaslow, 62

²⁴⁸ John Fiske, *Reading the Popular* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 112

virgin, touched for the very first time ” This song was very useful for Madonna, since it was sexual but also innocent. When Warner Brothers executive Michael Ostin first let Madonna listen to the demo, she responded with, “Sick and perverted always appeals to me there were so many innuendos in it, I thought, ‘This is great. This will really screw with people ’”²⁴⁹ It was in this video and in this song where Madonna first formulated her sexual philosophy along with the look and the music.

Another aspect of Madonna’s sexual performance is ambiguity and paradox; the correlation of the lyrics to the video is confusing. She may be aiming to “screw with people,” but confusion is also a way of maintaining power. Madonna poses provocatively in her erotic dress in “Express Yourself,” while muscular men are working in a factory and perhaps slaving for their female authority. “‘Express Yourself’ (which borrows its imagery from Fritz Lang’s *Metropolis*), she slips in and out of every subject position offered within the videos narrative context—including those of the cat and the tyrannical master of industry ..”²⁵⁰ In this video, she assumes a position of sexual power.

In terms of a paradox, the lyrics in the song are targeted to a female audience, but they are unrelated to the message of the video: “Long stem roses are the way to your heart, but he needs to start with your head. Satin sheet are very romantic, what happens when you’re not in bed. You deserve the best in life, so if the time isn’t right then move on.”²⁵¹ Madonna alludes to romantic love, but she is sexual in the video, and she is aiming for the male gaze. It is confusing, since she challenges the male attraction with

²⁴⁹ Lucy O’Brien, *Madonna. Like an Icon* (New York HarperCollins Publishers, 2007), 73

²⁵⁰ McClary, 150

²⁵¹ “Express Yourself (1989),” last modified on October 26, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsvUzP_O_8&ob=av3e

overt sexuality, but encourages her female audience to focus on non-sexual matters

Perhaps this scenario was created to give the male audience a disadvantage

Another aspect of Madonna's sexuality is intentional provocative and controversial material. In the video, "Like a Prayer," Madonna alludes to religious ecstasy, where she seems to have a relationship or sexual connection with a black priest. With the lyrics, "When you call my name, it's like a little prayer, I'm down on my knees, I wanna take you there,"²⁵² she seems to be asking for a spiritual union, but it is also sexual, according to the content of the video. "Featuring a racially motivated murder, Madonna kissing a black Christ, Madonna with stigmata and tears of blood, and Madonna dancing in front of a field of burning crosses, this was a bold, blaring statement about sex, race, religion."²⁵³ The song contains Madonna's solo singing, but also a black Gospel choir towards the end. The Catholic Church and the black Gospel choir are two different branches of Christianity, but Madonna fuses them together, as a way to incorporate a progressive style of church music with the former, traditional style. Just as Madonna combines sexuality—a secular practice—with Christianity—a sacred practice—she does the same in terms of musical style. Susan McClary elaborates on the secular inclusions of Gospel music:

Throughout its history (as preserved on recordings), Gospel has freely borrowed musical and poetic styles from the secular music of its day: witness, for instance,

²⁵² MTV.com "Like A Prayer." Last Modified in 2011
<http://www.mtv.com/music/artist/madonna/albums/jhtml?albumId=59743>

²⁵³ O'Brien, 134.

the mergers with jazz, blues, funk, and rap evident on present-day Gospel radio stations—or, for that matter, the entire career of Aretha Franklin²⁵⁴

Just as her sexual philosophy is a reinvention for her own identity, Madonna demonstrates in “Like a Prayer” that a spiritual union with Christ or the Catholic Church can be reinvented as sexual. Although it is controversial, Madonna aimed for that tension, and thus, she found power through another avenue of sexuality.²⁵⁵ “In ‘Like a Prayer’ the religious connotations of her entire project are reactivated and reinterpreted. But although this set of issues is finally foregrounded, her treatment of these highly sensitive themes is quite unexpected and, as it turns out, highly controversial.”²⁵⁶

Through this evidence, Madonna has control over her performance, but is she also involved in creating the music, such as the Gospel choir arrangement in “Like a Prayer”?²⁵⁷ Musicologist Susan McClary (1991) and popular music theorist Lucy O’Brien (2007) both commend Madonna on her involvement with her music, recording, and production:

²⁵⁴ McClary, 164

²⁵⁵ “Initially, she had signed a \$1 million deal to star in a commercial for Pepsi Cola. An innocuous commercial was made and aired just before the release of her ‘Like a Prayer’ single in March 1989. But before it could be fully exploited, Madonna’s video came out. The video was banished to late-night MTV, and there was a storm of protest from religious groups condemning Madonna’s ‘blasphemy.’ When church leaders urged their followers to boycott Pepsi, the commercial was swiftly pulled. Madonna’s contract was terminated, but she kept the \$1 million.” (O’Brien, 134)

²⁵⁶ McClary, 163

²⁵⁷ Like many artists, Madonna collaborated with other writers, but she also had many personal/professional relationships. Perhaps this was one of her tools for achieving fame. She actually learned about the music business, starting in 1981, through a close friend, Camille Barbone. She didn’t have a relationship with Camille, knowing that she was homosexual, but Madonna would flirt with her occasionally. “She knew I was a gay woman. She’d work it,” said Camille. Camille Barbone owned Gotham Records, and offered Madonna to be her manager. She moved her into a \$100 a week salary and convinced her to leave her rock band. (O’Brien, 43), Madonna had a relationship with Steve Bray, who was the drummer of her first band, The Breakfast Club. Steve Bray was Madonna’s old friend from Michigan, and as seen above, he remained a common collaborator on her albums. Madonna also had a relationship with Dan Gilroy before joining the The Breakfast Club, in which she played the drums.

Madonna writes or co-writes most of her own material. Her first album was made up principally of her tunes. She surrendered some of the writing responsibility on *Like a Virgin* (interestingly, two of the songs that earned her so much notoriety—'Material Girl' and 'Like a Virgin'—were written by men). But in her third album, *True Blue*, she is credited (along with her principal collaborators, Stephen Bray and Patrick Leonard) with co-production and with the co-writing of everything except 'Papa Don't Preach.' She co-wrote and co-produced (with Bray, Leonard, and Prince) all of the songs on her most recent album, *Like a Prayer*.²⁵⁸

Before collaborating with writers on her albums, Madonna initially had experience in a rock band, called The Breakfast Club. The band was originally started by Dan and Ed Gilroy. Madonna started playing the drums, but she was later moved to vocals, after two personnel changes,²⁵⁹ where she assumed her position as the front woman. Madonna actually named the band, "Madonna," after a few months of rehearsing together. Bray protested that "it sounded too Catholic," and that Madonna was only after her own image.

Despite her controlling personality and losing band members, Madonna was persistent in learning music any way she could. Biographer Lucy O'Brien states that,

²⁵⁸ Ibid, 152, Susan McClary analyzes "Live to Tell," written by Patrick Leonard for the *True Blue* album in 1986, as having two tonal tendencies—D Minor and F Major. McClary believes these tonal tendencies are reflective of Madonna's masculinity or femininity in the song, as well as reflective of the text. McClary says, "it is about staying in motion for the sake of survival, resisting closure wherever it lies in wait." Although the music does provide text painting, Madonna did not write the song, and these tonal ideas may be typical key transitions for the format of a pop song. (McClary, 160)

²⁵⁹ The Gilroy brothers recruited a female bassist, Angie Smit, but she was replaced, "partly because Madonna felt ill at ease sharing the spotlight with another attractive female," and Smit also lost interest in the band (O'Brien, 41-42). Then, Madonna left the Gilroy brothers and formed a band with Mike Monahan (the previous band's new bassist), and drummer Gary Burke, called Madonna & The Sky. Burke left due to Madonna's harsh criticism and impatience, and then Bray replaced him. (Ibid, 42)

“Her dancer’s rhythm meant that she had a knack for drums, occasionally darting out front to sing. They spent hours rehearsing, and she worked hard, picking up chords on guitar and learning enough to piece together a song.”²⁶⁰ This kind of work ethic would continue to the time of her debut and the albums that followed. In the *Like a Virgin* sessions, drummer Jimmy Bralower explains her contribution. “She could be headstrong and—I’m being very kind—rambunctious. But she was smart, she made her playground extreme. Very often artists show up to sing and then go shopping, but she was there the whole time. This was a very important record to her.”²⁶¹ While remaining headstrong with production and the music, Madonna was able to form a package of danceable music and controversial sexuality.²⁶²

Are all these aspects of her sexual performance—erotic dress, control of the male gaze, paradox and ambiguity, and religious connotations—signs of sexual authenticity? In *The Sex Revolts*, Reynolds and Press emphasized iconography as one of their rebellion approaches, and the authors list Madonna as one of the female artists who demonstrate this in performance. It is known as a “masquerade” or reinvention of self as inauthentic and misleading. Although I am focusing only on the authenticity that Madonna chooses instead of the audience’s perception, with “Like a Virgin” and “Express Yourself,” for example, there are mixed messages to the audience, and thus, Madonna is exuding creativity and control. However, how authentic is her approach? “Pop culture theorist Lawrence Grossberg has formulated the ostensibly paradoxical notion of an *authentic*

²⁶⁰ O’Brien, 41

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 73

²⁶² “She combined elements of punk style with underground dance and Europop disco to come up with the concept of Madonna” (*Ibid.*, 35). She started with a rock band in 1980, feeling that rock music was a genre that encouraged individuality, but then at the time of her first single, “Everybody,” (1982) Madonna started writing more dance-oriented material with Stephen Bray.

inauthenticity to explain the strategies of self-created icons like Madonna. Instead of the fraudulent posture of honesty (Grossberg's witty term is 'inauthentic authenticity', e.g. Bruce Springsteen, Tracy Chapman) this approach accepts the constructed nature of the performer's persona. 'Although [authentic inauthenticity] seems to celebrate the absence of any center or identity, it actually locates that absence as a new center. That is, it celebrates the fragmentary, the contradictory, the temporary.'²⁶³ Madonna's authenticity has a center for the sake of an album or promotional package, and perhaps viewers are seeing a sexuality that is staged, used as a weapon, and possibly unreflective of the artist's personality.²⁶⁴ Nevertheless, it is an authenticity that is chosen by the performer

4. Rejection of Sexuality (late 1990s to early millennium)

Fiona Apple controls her authenticity by refusing to express any sexuality in a performance. Indeed, Apple felt that her managers and her public relations personnel already determined her public image when she signed a contract with Epic Records in 1996. After winning the award at the MTV Awards in 1997, Apple believed her music was ignored and her sexual music video was the focus.

When I won, I felt like a sellout. I felt that I deserved recognition but that the recognition I was getting was for the wrong reasons. I felt that now, in the blink of

²⁶³ Reynolds and Press, 291

²⁶⁴ Arguably, Madonna suppressed her real self after experiencing a "rape" incident in New York, while she was taking dance studies with choreographer Pearl Lang. O'Brien explains: "She was grabbed on the street by, as she described to a friend, a heavysset black man, who led her at knifepoint up the steps of a tenement block to the roof. There he forced her to perform oral sex. When he was finished, he left her crying and shaking on the roof. For a long time she stayed there, too afraid to leave in case he was on the stairs. Eventually she made her way down and went home, profoundly shocked by the experience. It seems that rather than reporting the assault to the police, Madonna internalized it, burying deep her sense of shame and isolation. Years later she talked about it with a therapist, and then said in an interview: 'I have been raped, and it's an experience I would never glamorize.'" O'Brien concludes that, "It can be argued that her anger at the attack came out afterward in a need for complete sexual control. For a young woman who felt powerless, it was one way to show men that she was the dominant one and she didn't care. Sex became a mask, a way of psychologically turning the tables on her attacker" (O'Brien, 37-38).

an eye, all of those people who didn't give a fuck who I was, or what I thought, were now all at once just humoring, appeasing me, and not because of my talent, but instead because of the fact that somehow, with the help of my record company, and my makeup artist, my stylist and my press, I had successfully created the illusion that I was perfect and pretty and rich, and therefore living a higher quality of life . I'd saved myself from misfit status, but I'd betrayed my own kind by becoming a paper doll in order to be accepted.²⁶⁵

In the mid 1980s, when the music video was prominent and a fresh marketable tool, it was perfect for artists like Madonna to explore the boundaries of iconography. This created a disadvantage for those female artists who preferred musical substance to image. Gillian Gaar of *She's A Rebel* writes, "But the downside to achieving the wide exposure available from MTV was that an act had to be visually impressive in order to make an impact. . . Women who stressed substance over style were virtually nonexistent, or at best under-represented, in the realm of video. . ." ²⁶⁶ In the late 1990s, during the "girl power" era, sexuality in music video was the standard, and all female artist music videos seemed to become homogenized.²⁶⁷ Julie Andsager (2006) describes the evolution of sexual content in music video.

²⁶⁵ Chris Heath, "The Caged Bird Sings Fiona" *Rolling Stone* No. 778 (January 22, 1998) <http://web.ebscohost.com/libproxy.txstate.edu/ehost/detail?sid=31217fe2-9e23-43b6-a98e-84807ab946db%40sessionmgr112&vid=1&hid=125&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=46047>

²⁶⁶ Gaar, 324-325

²⁶⁷ Fiona Apple was perhaps being advertised like other young girls in the media. The Spice Girls, a group of five female singers, used the rhetorical phrase, "girl power," in the late 1990s to describe feminism as not having a derogatory connotation. " . . . girl power offers girls and women a sense that they can choose to be girly and when to be powerful, when to be mother and when to be professional, when to be sexy for male pleasure and when to be sexy for their own pleasure" (Zaslow, 2-3). Therefore, Fiona Apple did not want to be sexy for the sake of selling her music, but she did not promote the "girl power" message either, as did The Spice Girls.

The nature of sexual activity in music video has evolved over time in more or less the same manner that television—both cable and network—has, moving from a fairly traditional context to more overtly sexual portrayals. Early studies of music video noted that sexual content was often implied rather than blatant, focusing on flirtation among characters or innuendo such as strategically placed microphones or camera angles (Baxter, De Riemer Landini, Leslie, & Singletary, 1985; Sherman & Dominick, 1986).²⁶⁸

Andsager continues the article with statistics on sexual activity in music videos—that such content was present in 89% of music videos by 1990 as well as that homosexuality was in one fourth of music videos by the late 1990s. I include Andsager’s scholarship in this chapter and in this thesis to support my observations of female pop artists in the millennium.

After recognizing that sexual content was a strategy with her managers and video producers, Apple rebelled. By 1998, with the help of film director and boyfriend, Paul Thomas Anderson, she had more control of her music and video content. She made sure her next music videos for the album, *When the Pawn* (1999), such as videos “Limp,” “Paper Bag,” and “Fast As You Can” were less sexual.²⁶⁹ For example, Apple is depicted

²⁶⁸ Julie Andsager, “Seduction, Shock, and Sales: Research and Functions of Sex in Music Video,” *Sex in Consumer Culture* ed. Tom Reichert and Jacqueline Lambiase (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006), 33.

²⁶⁹ “Paper Bag” has more of a romantic connotation paired with her frustration of immature men. She was in her father’s car while driving to the grocery store, during the recording of her first album, and she was miserable, and looked up into the sky and thought it was a white dove, but it was a paper bag. “Oh there it is the rule of my life, it always looks like its going to be something great, but it’s just a damn, plastic bag. . . it didn’t make any sense in my life until later. . . I’ll notice something, I’ll ignore it and it’ll come back at some point.” “Fiona Apple Comments on her Career and Songs, Part 2,” last modified on April 4, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q69ZcJm90TY&feature=related>. In the video, there is a dance sequence with Fiona Apple and young boys, around the pre-teen age. She uses the boys to portray the lyrics,

as a restless and angry woman in the video for “Limp,” as she wanders about her house piecing together a puzzle in one room and then angrily viewing herself on the television—which seems to denote media retaliation. In the lyrics she makes this statement more obvious: “You wanna make me sick, you want to lick my wounds, don’t you baby? You want the badge of honor when you save my hide...” This lyrical content suggests that she did not accept her status as a pop and sex icon, and that she looks for honesty in her audience and personal relationships.²⁷⁰ Apple continues in her *Rolling Stone* interview, “I have problems, but everybody’s got problems, and I sometimes honestly have felt in my life that people have used me as a way to make themselves feel better, because I’m a very good subject to save. And sometimes I think: ‘I’m not that bad off; it’s really you that’s making me feel like shit.’”²⁷¹ Apple was concerned about having honesty and control in her songwriting, so she made her lyrics and piano-driven songs the focus.

Throughout her last two albums, *When The Pawn* (1999) and *Extraordinary Machine* (2005), the live performances seem to be concentrated on other emotions and less sexual tension. On March 1, 2000, Apple performed on David Letterman the song, “Limp,” where she flails her left arm while singing angrily into the microphone. In the

“I thought he was a man, but he was just a little boy ” “Paper Bag,” last modified on October 2, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BK30r_SIZ-g&ob=av2e

²⁷⁰ These lyrics were the first to be written since the *Tidal* album. Fiona explains her songs in the 1998 *Rolling Stone* article, “I’m very thrilled that other people can get something out of my songs, but I write them for myself ” Chris Heath, “The Caged Bird Sings Fiona ” *Rolling Stone* No. 778 (January 22, 1998) <http://web.ebscohost.com.libproxy.txstate.edu/ehost/detail?sid=31217fe2-9e23-43b6-a98e-84807ab946db%40sessionmgr112&vid=1&hid=125&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=46047>

²⁷¹ *Ibid*

song she is wearing a red coat with a scarf, and very well covered up in appearance.²⁷²

On the Today show in 2005, while promoting her album *Extradordinary Machine*, Apple sings “Paper Bag” from the previous album while covered up in a long dress and coat. In this performance, she dances casually with her microphone stand similar to the style of her music video.²⁷³

How much creativity and control does Fiona Apple possess in her music? During the production of her 2005 album, *Extraordinary Machine*, Sony Records management asked Apple to submit her tracks one at a time, which Apple did not prefer. In her interview from iTunes Originals in 2006, Apple discussed these recording conflicts for *Extraordinary Machine*:

So we put a budget together, we were all ready to go in and record, and at that point a representative of Sony told my manager that “wait a second hold on, we’re not sure that you should be doing this,” or basically “we’re not so sure we should be spend all the money on this because we spent so much money on it already, which is understandable, you’ll have to do one song at a time, and then we’ll hear the song, and then we’ll give you the money to do the next one.” I got so insulted really because...if I hand you in something that I’m happy with, and then you wait to give me money to do the next one, that implies that you are either gonna say “we’re not happy with this,” and then they own a master of something that I’m really satisfied with, which is unthinkable, and then they shelve that....or they say “we don’t like it, but you should change the chorus up a little bit,” and then

²⁷² “Fiona Apple, ‘Limp,’ Live on Letterman (2000),” last modified on February 15, 2006, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkZu5I5ORf0>

²⁷³ “Paper Bag,” last modified on October 2, 2009, http://www.com/watch?v=BK30r_SIZ-g&ob=av2e

I'm dead cause then they're starting to write the songs with me, and that's just the death of me.²⁷⁴

After refusing to concede with Sony, Apple also told her manager that she was not going to record the album under these conditions, and she literally unplugged her home telephone and didn't hear from her manager for several months: "I felt really good, I felt *incredible* about myself...it would have been wrong to do it the other way...I don't want to be anywhere where they're not *thrilled* to have me there so much that they trust me with *any* amount of money, which is ya know, egotistical of me, but fine.. I felt really good about living by my own principles..."²⁷⁵ Apple would rather have a trustworthy team that would help her to make her album and a team that would also allow her to create and control her own music. While she was comfortable with this decision, fans had already heard two of her tracks—"Extraordinary Machine" and "Better Version of Me"—which were leaked onto the Internet around June 2004.²⁷⁶ The album was officially released in October 2005, a year later after her manager, Jon Brion, announced that the album was shelved, after which Apple cut off communication with her manager. In early 2005, fans developed a petition website for Apple, in defense of the new album. Believing that it was Sony Records management that shelved the record, they formed the

²⁷⁴ "Fiona Apple Comments on her Career and Songs, Part 3," last modified on April 5, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q69ZcJm90TY&feature=related>

²⁷⁵ Ibid

²⁷⁶ Frere-Jones elaborates "Apple's decision to re-record her third album was hardly remarkable, artists tinker with their tracks all the time. But the rough mixes that she produced with [Jon] Brion were leaked anonymously on the Internet, where they were widely circulated, putting fans in the unusual situation of being able to choose between two versions of the same record" (Sasha Frere-Jones, *New Yorker* Vol. 81 Issue 31 [October 10, 2005], 88-89)

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=119&sid=c01a9a11-6c62-44c9-a799-0f8e86e0ecd8%40sessionmgr104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=18515058>

website, www.freefiona.com and protested outside Sony Records Headquarters on January 28, 2005. Apple explained in her iTunes Originals interview,

After a few months the Fiona people surfaced and they created through these protests... I love what they did, I'm really grateful to them, I thanked them in the album... I'm not organized and not goal oriented. but through what they did, through combination of the heat they did for Sony, and I also think that Steve Barnett, he's really cool, I think the combination of those two things... we went and we—and that took two and a half months—we recorded it.²⁷⁷

Apple thanked her fans in the inserts of the album, but she also made it clear to her audience that she was responsible for the album's delay. An article from the *New Yorker* made the distinction on October 10, 2005: "Sony is releasing the album this week, and, as Apple has made clear in interviews, she, not the label, was responsible for the delay." Fiona Apple took control of her work and was even beckoned by fans to continue with her songs, believing that she could withstand the patriarchy of Sony Records.²⁷⁸

Was the denial of sexuality an authenticity of its own, or was it also an "inauthentic authenticity" subsequent of a personal trauma? A 1999 article in *Rolling Stone* describes Apple's rape incident: "When she was 12, on the day before Thanksgiving, Apple was raped in the corridor outside her mother's apartment. She had

²⁷⁷ "Fiona Apple Comments on her Career and Songs, Part 3," last modified on April 5, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q69ZcJm90TY&feature=related>

²⁷⁸ "Apple's insistence on control should not come as a surprise to close listeners of her work. Apple, who is twenty-eight, is as musically sure-footed as she is emotionally labile. "Extraordinary Machine" is the confident extension of a rich and original musical language that she has been carefully fashioning for the past decade. Apple's fans sent Sony hundreds of foam apples as part of the campaign to win the album's release. It seems like going to a lot of trouble, but "Extraordinary Machine" repays that kind of love" (Sasha Frere-Jones, 2005)

walked home from school, and she figures the man must have followed her... He had some kind of screwdriver or tool knife, and he told her that if she screamed, he'd kill her. She remembers letting out a sigh, and her muscles falling ”²⁷⁹

The incident had humiliating effects on Apple's sexuality in private and in public. Apple describes herself as a woman concealing any sexual appeal, to where she even chooses to remain unconventionally thin. In her *Rolling Stone* interview, Apple says, “For me, it wasn't about getting thin, it was about getting rid of the bait that was attached to my body. A lot of it came from the self-loathing that came from being raped at the point of developing my voluptuousness. I just thought that if you had a body and if you had anything on you that could be grabbed, it would be grabbed. So I did purposely get rid of it.”²⁸⁰ This could have been a way to take control of her image, but for her personally, she knew it was a problem “I definitely did have an eating disorder. What was really frustrating for me was that everyone thought I was anorexic, and I wasn't. I was just really depressed and self-loathing.”²⁸¹ While she was trying to prevent maybe another sexually controlling incident or judgment, she indeed found herself creating an unhealthy image, to which the media gladly exploited as well.²⁸²

²⁷⁹ Chris Heath, “The Caged Bird Sings Fiona ” *Rolling Stone* No. 778 (January 22, 1998) <http://web.ebscohost.com/libproxy.txstate.edu/ehost/detail?sid=31217fe2-9e23-43b6-a98e-84807ab946db%40sessionmgr112&vid=1&hid=125&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=46047>

²⁸⁰ *Ibid*

²⁸¹ *Ibid*

²⁸² A 2007 article on Fiona Apple by MTV News repeatedly refers to her weight even three albums later, while reflecting on the “Criminal” video “The video for the latter, in which a rail-thin, hollow-eyed Apple rolled around in her underwear, drew criticism from some who saw it as verging on child pornography, and years later even Apple seems a bit conflicted about it ” Obviously, this exploitation was still a focus ten years after her debut. Gill Kaufman, “Fiona Apple The People's Champ,” *MTVNews*, 2007 http://www.mtv.com/bands/a/apple_fiona/news_feature_100305/index3.jhtml

Emilie Zaslow believes there is a duality of authenticity and sexuality, particularly in the “girl power” era—the late 1990s. “One is either an authentic sexual object,” Zaslow writes, “and true to her own sexual identity or she is an inauthentic pawn of a culture industry that objectifies her. The complexity of sexual identity and the public crafting of sexual persona are obscured by this simplistic assessment of authenticity.”²⁸³ So, what if the female artist is neither? What if there is no way to assess authenticity, if women reject sexuality altogether? I have concluded that just as Madonna chose inauthenticity as the new center of her authenticity, perhaps Apple’s *rejection* is the authenticity itself because it was specifically chosen.

Overall, having creativity and control does not necessarily reflect the authenticity of the female performer’s sexuality. Janis Joplin was authentic, but she did not have complete control over her promotion. Madonna controlled her ambiguous sexuality in promotion and performance, but she was not as active in the music. Apple persisted in remaining the head songwriter and exerting control over the production of her albums. Yet, she was not satisfied with the promotion of her unhealthy image. In the next section, I will evaluate these levels of creativity and control among recent female artists.

²⁸³ Zaslow, 78

Sexual Authenticity in the Millennium

While Joplin, Ann and Nancy Wilson, Madonna, and Fiona Apple exemplify sexuality over the course of thirty years (essentially 1967-1997), female pop artists in the millennium have created images of relentless and explicit sexuality. The advent of Madonna's sexuality as power and the "girl power" era in the late 1990s may have contributed to the sexual objectification in the millennium. In Zaslow's 2009 interviews of seventy teenage girls on girl power in her book, *Feminism, Inc.*, one of her interviewees, Meg, discusses objectification with her friend, Thea:

Meg: OK. Sex sells. It's a given but it doesn't mean that women should continue doing that. Think about it, if women weren't OK with objectif...of, of putting themselves out there like that, it wouldn't be so normal. They're not using their brains. Well, I guess you can say they're using their brains to sell things 'cause they know that sex sells so they use that but... Why can't you use your brain and come up with some other great way to sell things? You think, Thea, that if we sort of, like, accept it, we might be able to change it, but at the same time, it could get a lot worse. (Meg, seventeen years old, Caucasian).²⁸⁴

Meg's last statement about how objectification "could get a lot worse" is very significant because she is observing and predicting the homogeneity of sexuality: that sexual performance is apparent in all genres and media venues of the music business and that it will relentlessly continue to function in this manner. Also, her statement, "If women weren't OK with [objectification]...it wouldn't be so normal" suggests that female artists have accepted this homogeneity and perhaps they no longer use sexuality

²⁸⁴ Zaslow, 57

as an authenticity? Have female front women in the music business allowed themselves to become a sexual marketable tool? Meg also states that female artists *are* using their brains to sell their music, which supports my definition of authenticity—chosen by the performer. Yet, where is the line drawn when many performers choose this authenticity around the same time period, and thus, it seems sexuality is a product of conformity? For this section, I will briefly discuss the front women Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears, Shakira—contemporaries of the early 2000s—and Rhianna, Nicki Minaj, and Lady Gaga—contemporaries of the late 2000s.

As I discussed in the Fiona Apple section, one of the factors—music video—obviously stresses more image than musical substance in promotion, a strategy Apple did not support in 1997. However, Andsager (2006) further states in her study that both male and female artists have continued to capitalize on physical attractiveness in order to sell the video as a product:

Interestingly, music video effects the artist a means of “communicating an attitude toward the process of promoting one’s self” (Gow, 1996, p. 66). If this assumption is accurate, the images that artists construct through video often appear either to embrace or denounce this promotional medium. Physical attractiveness and the ability to convey sex appeal have proven the making of many artists.²⁸⁵

The female artists who convey this attitude in their music videos may be aware of the consequences of exploitation, as well as the lack of music approval. Are these female artists becoming objectified or choosing sexual authenticity? Andsager questioned how

²⁸⁵ Andsager, 31

much female artists portrayed their sexuality in music video in her study, “Although imagery and plots involving characters other than the artist may be based on the decisions of producers far removed from the artist’s original vision, the sexual imagery that the artist is willing to engage in is of particular interest.”²⁸⁶ Objectification is a concept perceived by the audience, and therefore, this is not relevant for my definition of authenticity. Nevertheless, one can easily obscure the notion of whether these artists have authorship, or whether they rely on their image handlers.

Pop singer Christina Aguilera, who is known for a very sexual video “Dirrty” in 2002, gave an explanation of the sexuality she uses in her music videos:

The message I try to convey is to be a strong female and not to be afraid of the flack that goes along with that. If I make a video where I am flirting with being sexually provocative, it can be seen in two different ways. To me, that is my expression of being very much in the power position. I’ve never backed down to a man in my videos. Nobody’s squirting champagne on me.²⁸⁷

The other way that Christina Aguilera believed her sexuality can be seen is as “a total slut,” which she didn’t believe to be true. It seems that Christina gave into objectification, but she is “not afraid of the flack that goes along with that ” She realizes that using sexuality as power is going to bring promotional consequences, but she sees it as representative of her independent self. Her statement is a reflection of her sexual authenticity.

²⁸⁶ Andsager, 38

²⁸⁷ Zaslow, 64

During her innocent years in the music business, *The Mickey Mouse Club* from 1993 to 1994 and even her debut self-titled album in 1999, Christina Aguilera transformed into a blatant sexual image in 2002 for her album, *Stripped*. The sexual single, “Dirrrty,” was actually released alongside an in-depth ballad, “Beautiful,” in which the video featured Christina sitting in a corner of an old house singing to the camera, “We are beautiful no matter what they say.”²⁸⁸ Aguilera wanted to appear independent of the “bubblegum pop” mainstream by claiming a place in the sexual realm.

Yet, an interesting aspect of this strategy is that her contemporary, Britney Spears, made the same promotional move. Andsager calls this strategy one of the “typologies” of artist sexuality: “...uses of an artist’s sexuality are purposefully introduced (by producers, directors, managers, or, occasionally, by the artist themselves) in order to tap a predefined target market.”²⁸⁹ Andsager believes Aguilera and Britney Spears were part of the Sexuality as Metamorphosis typology, in which a new version of the artist is “imbued with full-blown sexuality” as opposed to the female artist’s previous innocent image.²⁹⁰ Aguilera released her *Stripped* album at age twenty-two, while a year earlier in 2001, Britney Spears released her self-titled mature album at age twenty. Both artists released their “bubblegum pop” albums in 1999, and therefore, marketed themselves as grown women after only two or three years in the pop mainstream. I agree that this fast transition and promotional tactic is confusing for the female audience. “Much of the identification these girls have for the stars—and, thus, much of the attraction—may be lost, because ‘young girls do not see themselves in such a rapid metamorphosis

²⁸⁸ “Beautiful,” Last modified on October 3, 2009,
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAfyFTzZDMM&ob=av2e>

²⁸⁹ Andsager, 39

²⁹⁰ Ibid.

(Andsager & Roe, 2003, p. 90).”²⁹¹ Although, the sexuality was still chosen by the performers, one can argue that the fast transition alludes to inauthenticity.

Another contemporary of Aguilera and Spears took a different approach to authentic sexuality, that was neither metamorphosis nor blatant sexuality. Columbian pop and rock artist, Shakira, made her debut on the Latin Music Charts in 1995, and her crossover album debuted in 2001, *Laundry Service*.²⁹² Her music video, “Whenever, Wherever,” shows Shakira swaying her hips in a sexual way.²⁹³ Perhaps Shakira was seen as sexually authentic in her first American music videos. What is interesting is that she is careful to not be labeled as a sex icon as well. Emilie Zaslow analyzes a response by seventeen-year-old Juana, who has observed this:

In part because she has read and seen less about Shakira in the celebrity gossip mediascape, Juana perceives Shakira to have a lack of interest in making sure she is photographed by the paparazzi. This communicates an authenticity to Juana because Shakira appears to be uninterested in publicizing her sexual exploits of herself, in general.²⁹⁴

Again, although this is authenticity perceived by an audience member, Shakira’s promotional actions show her consideration for her sexuality only in performance and not for her sexuality controlled by the media or her record label.

²⁹¹ Andsager, 41

²⁹² "Shakira " In *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 4th ed , edited by Colin Larkin *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/epm/72910>

²⁹³ “Whenever, Wherever,” last modified on October 3, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weRHjJJ34ZE&ob=av2n>

²⁹⁴ Zaslow, 67

Another typology that Andsager defines as a tool for the target audience is the familiar “sexuality as power.” The author defines this approach, “Perhaps the most frequent use of sexuality in music videos is that of the third category of this typology. For female artists, the use of their sexuality as *power to* control their own fate (French, 1987) is relatively rare. *Power to* means that the artists “are very clearly in charge of a situation, and if their sexuality figures in the video, they seem to have wanted it that way (Andsager & Roe, 2003, p. 93).”²⁹⁵ Of course, Christina Aguilera falls under this category as she said in her comment—“To me, that is my expression of being very much in the power position”—and to some extent this is true for many female pop artists. However, another recent female artist uses sexual power in performance and relates to this power in a different way, Rihanna. In a *Rolling Stone* 2011 article on Rihanna, the headline reads: “‘Queen of Pain’: Spanking, Sexting, Spaghetti: One Hot Week With Pop’s Most Complicated Sex Symbol.” In her 2008 video, “Disturbia,” Rihanna is seen locked up in a cage and chained at the ankle and trying to release herself, as in struggling to be in control.²⁹⁶ However, recently she speaks differently of this control, where sexuality can be seen as submitting to a superior figure, and that submission is power:

I like to take charge, but I love to be submissive. Being submissive in the bedroom is really fun. You get to be a little lady, to have somebody be macho and in charge of your shit. That’s sexy to me. I work a lot, and I have to make a lot of

²⁹⁵ Andsager, 45

²⁹⁶ “Disturbia (2008),” last modified on December 13, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1mU6h4Xdxc&ob=av3n>.

executive decisions, so when it comes to being intimate, I like to feel like I'm somebody's girl.²⁹⁷

Rihanna's image *is* complicated, and perhaps she believes that submission to romantic love or abuse is what makes the complication powerful to her audience. The article continues on her image: "Imagewise, Rihanna has come a long way from the sweet-faced island girl in tank tops and jean skirts to, in her latest incarnation, a punky, kinky sex goddess, moaning on about 'sex in the air' and how 'I like the way you pull my hair.'" ²⁹⁸ Rihanna did not make a metamorphosis from "bubblegum pop" to R&B, however. Although she is a contemporary of Nicki Minaj and Lady Gaga, she made her first hit single "Pon de Replay" in 2005, which contained dance beats and sexual connotations. Rihanna's sexuality is ambiguous, but it is also consistent. Perhaps her sexual authenticity is more defined than Aguilera and Spears.

Nicki Minaj made her debut in 2010 with her album, *Pink Friday*, which features her rap style but also shows an influence of R&B. Aside from proclaiming an alter-ego on the debut album, an angry character called "Roman Zolanski," Minaj incorporates bright colors into her recent music videos and style, such as pink hair and a "Barbie" look.²⁹⁹ Minaj aims to be different, to take away the audience's attention from sexual appeal, which she recognizes as a common tool in pop star videos. "I made a conscious decision to try to tone down the sexiness," Minaj says in an interview with *Interview* magazine, "I want people—especially young girls—to know that in life, nothing is going

²⁹⁷ Josh Eels, "Queen of Pain: Spanking, Sexting, Spaghetti One Hot Week With Pop's Most Complicated Sex Symbol," *Rolling Stone* No. 1128, (April 2011), 42

²⁹⁸ Eels, 80.

²⁹⁹ "Nicki Minaj-Super Bass," last modified in 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JpHEz53sU&ob=av2e>

to be based on sex appeal. You've got to have something else to go with that."³⁰⁰ Minaj does include sexual performance, but it is not as blatant as perhaps her contemporaries' music videos. Minaj mentions in her interview that she wants to be herself: "There are a lot of people in hip-hop who are probably never going to get what I do. But, by just being myself, I end up touching a lot more people who might never have paid much attention to a female rapper."³⁰¹ The other female pop artists I have mentioned have probably remained true to themselves to some extent. In Minaj's statement, she believes controlling her sexuality and keeping it at a minimum in performance exemplifies a real self. Minaj recognizes the homogeneity of sexuality, whether authentic or inauthentic, in female pop music-making.

The image is very important in the life, music, and performance of Lady Gaga. This female artist is very representative of the iconography described by Reynolds and Press, as "living life a constant performance."³⁰² However, her sexuality is not as obvious as the previous pop artists I have discussed, since Lady Gaga favors the use of costumes and theatrics as one the most important variables in her performance. Also, she chooses to be sexual in performance, so therefore, it is authentic. Her influences are the music of David Bowie and Freddie Mercury and the iconography of Madonna. The sexuality is implied in the erotic dress and in the dance sequences, such as "Poker Face" (2008) and

³⁰⁰ T. Cole Rachel, "Music. Nicki Minaj," *Interview* <http://www.interviewmagazine.com/music/nicki-minaj/>.

³⁰¹ Ibid

³⁰² Reynolds and Press, 234. Off stage, Lady Gaga has carried on the masquerade. In attendance for the MTV Video Music Awards in 2010, Lady Gaga wore a "meat dress" designed by Franc Fernandez. Gaga made a statement about the meat dress and its significance in *USA Today*, "However, it has many interpretations but for me this evening. If we don't stand up for what we believe in and if we don't fight for our rights, pretty soon we're going to have as much rights as the meat on our own bones. And, I am not a piece of meat" (Ann Oldenberg, "Lady Gaga Explains Her VMA Raw Meat Dress," *USA Today*, September 2010 <http://content.usatoday.com/communities/entertainment/post/2010/09/lady-gaga-explains-her-vma-raw-meat-dress/1>)

“Judas.” (2011). In interviews, Lady Gaga emphasizes her music as an art form that is not attention-seeking or a way to have control over her audience. She has been quoted as saying that, “Perhaps it’s been a couple of decades since there’s been an artist that’s been as vocal about their opinions, as vocal about culture, religion, human rights, politics. I’m so passionate about what I do, every bass line, every drum fill, every EQ. Why is it that you don’t want more from the artist, why is it that you expect so little, so when I give and give, you assume it’s narcissistic?”³⁰³ Unfortunately, her artistry is overshadowed by the pop culture, but I would not consider Lady Gaga in the category of sexual homogeneity. She uses iconography to sell her image and music, but her sexual identity is not the focus (even though it is highly ambiguous). She concluded in the 2011 *Rolling Stone* interview, “I’m a real artist, a real musician, who happened to become a pop singer, who always wanted to be a pop star.”³⁰⁴ This female artist is worth mentioning, since other female artists in the future may take interest in pop music as an art form, and not regard it as music that requires blatant sexuality. According to *Rolling Stone*, she has influenced her contemporaries, “Gaga may, on occasion, draw heavily from the music and iconography of her heroes, but her influence on her own peers is even more obvious: Miley Cyrus and Christina Aguilera practically destroyed their careers trying to copy her; Rihanna and Katy Perry keep getting weirder (see Perry’s “E.T.” video); Ke\$ha is allowed to be famous.”³⁰⁵

³⁰³ Brian Hiatt, “Monster Goddess: Unicorns, Sex Dreams and the Freak Revolution. Deep Inside the Unreal World of Lady Gaga,” *Rolling Stone* (June 2011) 46

³⁰⁴ *Ibid*

³⁰⁵ *Ibid*

Go With Yourself

Christina Aguilera, Britney Spears, Shakira, Rihanna, Nicki Minaj, and Lady Gaga are examples of female pop artists who were not afraid of objectification and used sexuality in performance to promote their music. Shakira and Nicki Minaj show a slight indifference to the homogenization of sexuality. Whether they used sexuality as power or sexual ambiguity as power, there was no question to these female artists that “sex sells.” However, they all chose to use sexuality in performance, and thus, it is authentic sexuality. The seventeen-year-old interviewee, Meg believes that constant sexuality in pop music is unnecessary, “It’s a given but it doesn’t mean that women should continue doing that.” Perhaps there could be a new direction surfacing with pop artists like Lady Gaga. Fiona Apple said in her 1997 speech, “go with yourself,” and perhaps she was not only speaking to the fans, telling them to not model their life after the glamour of MTV, but also to other performers, claiming “this world” is unreal. “And it’s just stupid that I’m in this world, but you’re all very cool to me...”³⁰⁶

Ann and Nancy Wilson of Heart chose their sexual authenticity when they started their rock band in the early 1970’s. Only during the promotion of one of their pop-oriented albums, *Bad Animals* (1987), were the Wilson sisters weary of the lifestyle and demands of the music business because their sexuality was chosen for them. Their image was exaggerated in music videos and photos. “We’ve always been sexual beings on stage,” Nancy said. “But then when it becomes an *expectation*, then you want to rebel, then you don’t want to be a sex symbol, then you don’t want to put on the corset, then

³⁰⁶ Chris Heath, “The Caged Bird Sings Fiona” *Rolling Stone* No. 778 (January 22, 1998) <http://web.ebscohost.com/libproxy.txstate.edu/ehost/detail?sid=31217fe2-9e23-43b6-a98e-84807ab946db%40sessionmgr112&vid=1&hid=125&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWwhvc3QtG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=46047>

you don't want to play dress-up."³⁰⁷ Ann and Nancy still seem very indifferent to this subject on their recent tours. At a concert in March 2011, Ann Wilson paused for a moment between songs to tell the audience about her perspective on women in rock. She believes women in rock today are bound by rules and also their energy is not the same rock rebellion as she experienced. "How about hysteria? Too many rules, too many rules, I can't stand it!" In the early 1990s, Ann noticed a lack of "real life" in the music business already. "I'd like to, um, incorporate music into real life, rather than being in a band the way bands are at this moment in time, is very, it can be very unreal and hard to have a real ordinary life, you know, and I've never had one, I'd like to have one in ten years."³⁰⁸ Nevertheless, Ann Wilson believes after her thirty-five year presence in the music business, that there are less front women in *rock music* today due to promotional struggles and the demands of fame, "I think part of the reason is that in order to be in rock, you really have to sacrifice a lot ... It's very hard to make this much sacrifice ... It's very hard on relationships. Then there's the whole image of hypersexuality thing, which women in rock have yet to sort out. Rock is something that women have to recreate in their own image, and it takes a while."³⁰⁹ Ann and Nancy emphasize that sexuality *is a choice*, but it should not be an expectation or homogenization. If the artist can create and control their sexuality, then she is portraying an authentic performance.

³⁰⁷ "Heart band history part 3 of 4," last modified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vf4ng58ls0Q&feature=related>.

³⁰⁸ "Hear Us Then Promoting Desire Walks On Album-Pt 2 (1994)," last modified on November 25, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53t1zIJ2U10>.

³⁰⁹ Christy Karras, "Heart's Ann Wilson—No Auto-Tune Please!," *The Seattle Times* (September 9, 2011) http://www.heart-music.com/articles.html?n_id=515

V. CONCLUSIONS

In chapters three through five, I evaluated five female figures in the music business: Janis Joplin, Madonna, Fiona Apple, Ann Wilson, and Nancy Wilson. Each has exemplified an authentic sexuality and different levels of creativity and control, but in determining authenticity in performance, repertory, and promotion, more specifically Ann and Nancy prevail. I chose to conduct my evaluation in this angle not only due to the lack of scholarly material on this subject, but also because I intended to show a comparison of authenticity with a focus that other sources have yet to document.

In chapter two, I addressed Joplin as one of the first female musicians to front a rock band and described how she progressed to this front woman role through The Waller Creek Boys, Big Brother and the Holding Company, The Kozmic Blues Band, and The Full-Tilt Boogie Band. In The Waller Creek Boys, Joplin was a solo and backup singer and she was “one of the boys.” In Big Brother and the Holding Company, Joplin sang backup vocals but eventually claimed the lead singer position and recorded original and co-written songs such as “Turtle Blues” and “I Need to Man to Love.” Joplin contributed original material in The Kozmic Blues Band, such as “Kozmic Blues” and “One Good Man,” and she was the front woman of the group from its beginning in December 1968. Unfortunately, she was unprepared to conduct her band mates in the recording studio as

well as keep a stable band membership throughout their tours. For the Full-Tilt Boogie Band, Janis actively pursued the members with her manager, and she was more involved with production of the *Pearl* album. On this album, she wrote “Move Over” and “Mercedes Benz,” and also returned to folk and country music, which was a style she originally practiced in her days with The Waller Creek Boys. I also correlated these sites to the 1960’s counterculture, the second wave of feminism, and the sexual revolution in order to show Janis’s control over her promotion. After identifying elements of creativity and control of the front woman, I listed her successors in order to show her influence of authentic performance. Through Joplin, I highlighted the initial struggles of female rock stardom, as well as suggested how these findings contributed to the “go with yourself” decree in the context of her time. I concluded that Joplin believed in a vulnerable, authentic performance in spite of the barriers she encountered in all four of her bands.

In chapter three, in the case study, I analyzed the ways in which Ann and Nancy created and controlled their authenticity in rock music through performance, repertory, and promotion. I evaluated the sisters as front women and conductors of the stage performance through videos, identified their songwriting abilities through use of a discography and Jake Brown’s *Heart: In the Studio* (2008), and observed the band’s promotional issues through interviews, periodicals, and documentaries. Due to lack of scholarly material on Heart, specifically Ann and Nancy Wilson, I collected research from these sources in order to prove their creativity and control, their authenticity in the context of “Go With Yourself,” and to indicate their relevance among the lineage of female rock music history.

Although authenticity of sexuality is a slippery notion, I defined it as chosen by the performer. In chapter four, I first analyzed the roots of sexuality in male and female rock music. This sexuality in rock music is often associated with rebellion. In male rock music of the 1960's and 1970's, psychological factors correlated to their sexuality in performance. For example, nomadic male rock musicians like Jim Morrison long for a mother figure and nurturer, but refuse to remain stagnant in a relationship. Other examples, like Robert Plant, sing of a woman's evil spirit as a justification for leaving, but out of weakness he remains at the woman's side. In female rock music of the 1960s and 1970s, rock artists cultivated sexuality from their female predecessors of rhythm and blues in the 1920s. In addition, Joplin, Ann, and Nancy incorporated feminine qualities into the male-dominated genre. In the 1980s, Madonna's blatant sexuality changed the barometer of authenticity. Record labels capitalized on "sex sells" in the popular music realm, but that marketing tool infiltrated all avenues of the music business. In my survey of female sexuality, I observed how this marketing tool evolved as well as how sexual authenticity changed with its evolution. Hence, I emphasized Fiona Apple's speech, "Go With Yourself," at the 1997 MTV Video Music Awards, in which she lamented that her singer-songwriter music was overlooked for the selling of a provocative music video. With these conclusions, I suggested in this chapter that sexuality became an expectation post-Madonna and homogenized by the turn of the century, in the sense that is a product of conformity in the music business.

The evidence I have presented in chapters three through five strongly suggests that future research should be implemented on the songwriting details of Janis Joplin and Madonna. Such sources by Luck, McClary, and Echols, for example, focus more on

songwriting credits and some lyrical contributions than the complete compositional process, which is evident in Brown's study of Heart. I believe more in depth research on songwriting and the greater compositional process should be taken into account for all female artists in the music business. Due to a lack of print secondary sources, the data I collected from the Youtube videos fortunately contained more helpful primary sources than what I gathered from interviews in periodicals. I also must note that my evidence on sexuality in performance may or may not imply authenticity in performance, and thus, perhaps it is an ambiguity that requires further comprehensive data. Finally, my initial motive for doing a thesis on Ann and Nancy Wilson was to distinguish these front women from their counterparts as competent, authentic beings, despite the lack of scholarly and biographical material on these artists. Indeed, there is a need for authentic female personas in the music business, in a world where their creativity and control will stand higher amongst the corrupt nature of homogeneity.

APPENDIX A:
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The following entries annotate the sources most relevant to my evaluation of creativity and control, gender and sexuality, and authenticity in female rock music. Thus, I have organized this bibliographic essay as such: Popular Music Studies: General; Women in Popular or Rock Music; Autobiographies and Biographies; Interviews, Audio Recordings, and Concert Videos; and Secondary Sources.

Popular Music Studies: General

The following studies discuss history of popular music, popular culture, gender in rock music, and sexuality in sources of media. Philip Auslander describes the artistry of Suzi Quatro, and her female approach to “cock-rock” music. This study was relevant for my sexuality argument and explores how Quatro was one of the first female rock musicians to play an instrument as well as front a rock band.³¹⁰ John Fiske analyzes popular “texts” such as commercials, rock music, and the music video, and suggests that these industrial capitalistic mediums can be interpreted by audiences in an entirely different and beneficial way. For example, in his discussion of Madonna and the music video, Fiske relates that Madonna’s “boy toy” tactic, which portrays her as a sexual

³¹⁰ Philip Auslander, "I Wanna be Your Man. Suzi Quatro's Musical Androgyny," *Popular Music* 23, no. 1 (2004). 1-16

subject in a male patriarchy, is empowerment to her female audience.³¹¹ Simon Frith's account of rock music from the 1950's to the 1980's is not a valid musicological discussion in terms of gender, but his sexuality discourse was useful for my thesis.³¹² Tom Reichert and Jacqueline Lambiase evaluate the exclusive use of sexuality in the media, such as commercials, the music video, video games, magazines, and other sources. The authors emphasize the increased sexual content in music video since the dawn of MTV in the early 1980's. This work was helpful when referring to the homogeneity of sexuality in the music business.³¹³ Simon Reynolds and Joy Press assess the psychological implications of sexual performance in rock music in both male and female contexts. I extracted their discussions of Jim Morrison and Led Zeppelin, as well as the four approaches to female rock rebellion for my thesis.³¹⁴ Arnold Shaw's history of rock music, published in 1969, is significant in terms of quotations by rock artists, but his original material is not as valid as it is outdated.³¹⁵

Women in Popular or Rock Music

These sources were written by women, whether feminist or non-feminist, and were vital for gender issues, sexuality discussions, and other arguments of my thesis. Two of the sources on this list, however, are more scholarly biographies—*Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* by Alice Echols and *Madonna: Like an*

³¹¹ John Fiske, *Reading the Popular* (Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989)

³¹² Simon Frith, *Sound Effects: Youth, Leisure, and the Politics of Rock 'n' Roll* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

³¹³ Tom Reichert and Jacqueline Lambiase, *Sex in Consumer Culture: The Erotic Content of Media and Marketing* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2006).

³¹⁴ Simon Reynolds and Joy Press, *The Sex Revolts: Gender, Rebellion, and Rock 'N' Roll* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995).

³¹⁵ Arnold Shaw, *The Rock Revolution* (New York: Crowell-Collier Press, 1969)

Icon by Lucy O'Brien.³¹⁶ For information on musicological approaches and women in music, consider Murray Steib's *Reader's Guide to Music: History, Theory, Criticism*.³¹⁷ Jane Bowers and Judith Tick, Susan McClary, and Carol Neuls-Bates are discussed in this guide, as they are innovative and significant, collective sources on women in music.³¹⁸

Nona Willis Aronowitz is the daughter of Ellen Willis (1941-2006), who was the first rock and popular music critic for *The New Yorker* in the late 1960's. Nona collected all of her mother's best works from 1969 to 1981, and published them in *Out of the Vinyl Deeps: Ellen Willis on Rock Music* in 2011. I used Ellen's reviews of Janis Joplin and her comments on second-wave feminism and gender issues regarding rock music for this thesis.³¹⁹ Sarah Bartlett Churchwell wrote a dissertation on Marilyn Monroe, Sylvia Plath, and Janis Joplin, in which she explains the concepts of nostalgia and the iconicity of death. This is helpful for when referring to friends of Janis Joplin, who may mourn her death, but as a result, romanticize her life in their interviews.³²⁰ Alice Echols is a feminist music scholar who published one of her studies on feminism in *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America 1967-1975*. I used this source when briefly describing the feminist movement in the Janis Joplin chapter. On the other hand, I found immense

³¹⁶ Alice Echols, *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Henry Holt, 1999), Lucy O'Brien, *Madonna: Like an Icon* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007)

³¹⁷ Murray Steib, *Reader's Guide to Music: History, Theory, Criticism* (Illinois: Fitzroy Dearborn Publishers, 1999), 479-480

³¹⁸ Jane Bowers and Judith Tick, editors, *Women Making Music: The Western Art Tradition, 1150-1950*, (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1986), Susan McClary, "Living to Tell: Madonna's Resurrection of the Fleshly," *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 1991), Carol Neuls-Bates, ed, *Women in Music: An Anthology of Source Readings from the Middle Ages to the Present* (New York: Harper & Row, 1982), revised edition, (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1996).

³¹⁹ Nona Willis Aronowitz, *Out of the Vinyl Deeps: Ellen Willis on Rock Music* (Minnesota: University of Minnesota Press, 2011)

³²⁰ Sarah Bartlett Churchwell, "Dead Metaphors. Writing Marilyn Monroe, Sylvia Plath, and Janis Joplin" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1998)

amounts of evidence for my thesis in *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin*, from which I chew the biographical information as well as details of Joplin's musical abilities. This source is a critical and thorough account of the life and culture of Janis Joplin.³²¹ Susan Fast wrote an article for *American Music* in which she focuses on the responses of the female audience to the rock band Led Zeppelin. Preceding the study, Fast published a survey in *Proximity*, a Led Zeppelin fan magazine, and posted the survey on fan websites, in order to collect female fan perspectives as well as male responses to the band. Also, in the study, Fast analyzes the documentary *The Song Remains the Same* (1973), which she believes shows numerous female responses that correlate with her gender argument.³²² Gillian Gaar first released her history of women in rock music in 1992, but the most recent edition in 2002 discusses the female artists who debuted toward the end of the century and in the new millennium. The entries for Janis Joplin, Heart, Madonna, and Fiona Apple were very helpful in terms of biographical information and gender-related issues.³²³ Kay S. Hoke wrote a section entitled, "American Popular Music" in her collective work, *Women and Music: A History*. This source provides surface information on female artists, but also an analysis of sexuality in popular culture.³²⁴ Susan McClary is mentioned in reference to *Feminine Endings: Music, Gender, and Sexuality* in the aforementioned source on women in musicology. In the last chapter of this book, "Living to Tell: Madonna's Resurrection of

³²¹ Alice Echols, *Daring to Be Bad: Radical Feminism in America 1967-1975* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), *Scars of Sweet Paradise: The Life and Times of Janis Joplin* (New York: Henry Holt, 1999)

³²² Susan Fast, "Rethinking Issues of Gender and Sexuality in Led Zeppelin. A Woman's View of Pleasure and Power in Hard Rock," *American Music* 17, no. 3 (October 1, 1999) 245-299, Peter Grant, *The Song Remains The Same* DVD Dir by Peter Clifton and Joe Massot Warner Bros, 2007

³²³ Gillian G Gaar, *She's a Rebel* (New York: Seal Press, 2002)

³²⁴ Kay S Hoke, "American Popular Music," in *Women and Music: A History*, ed Karm Pendle, 258-281 (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1991)

the Fleshly,” McClary not only analyzes the artist’s songs in music theory terms, but also highlights Madonna’s persistence of control in a male-dominated patriarchy.³²⁵ Lucy O’Brien’s biography on Madonna is a product of research derived from interviews with producers, managers, and colleagues of the artist. O’Brien attempts to clearly define Madonna’s ambiguous image as a performer and as a person, from 1983 to 2005.

Although a journalist firsthand, O’Brien teaches Media & Communications at London’s Goldsmith’s College and Westminster University, and she studies feminism, music, and popular culture.³²⁶ Lisa Rhode’s intelligent work on feminism in rock music combines the history of female rock musicians, rock journalists, and rock groupies from 1965 to 1975. In this work, she emphasizes the misogynistic work of *Rolling Stone* and other exploitative magazines, which was useful for my sexuality argument. This book is an adaptation of her dissertation at the University of Texas in Austin, “Groupies, girls, and chicks: Articles on women musicians and fans in “Rolling Stone” and selected other mainstream magazines, 1967—1972.”³²⁷ Jennifer Ryan’s dissertation on soul music was essential for defining the roots and describing its development in the 1960’s in reference to the Janis Joplin chapter.³²⁸ Finally, Emilie Zaslów’s recent study not only outlines the beginnings of feminism and girl power, but also recognizes the antagonistic Fiona Apple in her rejection of girl power, exploitative media, and sexuality in performance.³²⁹

³²⁵ McClary, 1991.

³²⁶ Lucy O’Brien, *Madonna: Like an Icon* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2007)

³²⁷ Lisa L. Rhodes, *Electric Ladyland: Women and Rock Culture* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005)

³²⁸ Jennifer Ryan, “‘Can I Get a Witness?’ Soul and Salvation in Memphis Music,” (Ph. D. Diss. University of Pennsylvania, 2008).

³²⁹ Emilie Zaslów, *Feminism, Inc.: Coming of Age in Girl Power Media Culture* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).

Autobiographies and Biographies

In order to gather personal information about the core topics as well as lightly mentioned subjects of my thesis, I collected non-scholarly autobiographies and biographies of Janis Joplin, Heart, Pattie Boyd, Jim Morrison, Led Zeppelin, Pamela DesBarres, and Melissa Etheridge. Ellis Amburn published her biography of Janis in 1992, one of the most recent sources before Echol's *Scars of Sweet Paradise* (1999). Like Echol's biography, Amburn's account also contains musical insight concerning Joplin's life and interviews with important witnesses. I considered this a valid source, as did Echols, since some of her quoted material is from Amburn's interviews.³³⁰ Laura Joplin published the biography of her sister in 1992 as well, which includes the letters Janis wrote to her family as she was progressing in fame. Although Janis's letters are primary sources, which I used for evidence of her reactions to events, Laura Joplin's interpretations are not always reliable, since she was not present at all of her concerts or was not a witness to Janis's everyday lifestyle.³³¹ Myra Friedman reveals a personal adaptation (1973) of Janis's life; since she was the singer's publicist and close friend. Friedman's biography is reliable and provides quotes by Janis that aided my discussion of her not only as a person, but also as a front woman.³³² David Dalton published his first edition of this book in 1985, but the source is a reconstruction of *Janis*, published in 1972. Dalton, a former *Rolling Stone* journalist, provides extensive interview evidence, although he is poetic and sensationalizes Janis for his articles.³³³

³³⁰ Ellis Amburn, *Pearl: The Obsessions and Passions of Janis Joplin* (New York: Warner Books, 1992)

³³¹ Laura Joplin, *Love, Janis* (New York: Villard Books, 1992)

³³² Myra Friedman, *Buried Alive: The Biography of Janis Joplin* (New York: William Morrow & Company, 1973)

³³³ David Dalton, *Piece of My Heart: A Portrait of Janis Joplin*, rev. ed. (New York: Da Capo, 1991)

Jake Brown wrote a recent and detailed biography of Ann and Nancy Wilson, and it traces the art of their songwriting through each Heart album. This book was very useful for this thesis, as it not only provides comprehensive information for each discourse (performance, repertory, and promotion), but also the sisters' beliefs about the history of women in rock music today. In the Heart chapter, I use Brown's biography quite often, as it contains statements by band members, producers, and some valid quotes by Ann and Nancy. Yet, the most substantial primary sources on Heart can be found through Youtubes under Secondary Sources, which include interviews with Ann, Nancy, band members, and record label executives. These interviews discuss repertory and promotion, and they also show performances that were essential for my case study.³³⁴ Pattie Boyd revealed the true lifestyles of her rock musician husbands, George Harrison and Eric Clapton, in her 2007 autobiography. She also explained her own adjustment to their touring schedules when she accompanied them at events, as well as her own infidelities and struggles as a stay-at-home wife. This source was essential for discussing the sexuality argument of male rock musicians.³³⁵ Stephen Davis wrote *Jim Morrison: Life, Death, Legend* using a collection of interviews, journal entries of Morrison, sources on the 1960's counterculture, and other previous works on the artist. Although the author provides some primary sources, I have only used a small portion of Morrison's personal life to cite him as an example of male rock musician sexuality. Davis also wrote *Hammer of the Gods*, which I consulted to describe Led Zeppelin's treatment of their groupies in

³³⁴ Jake Brown, *Heart: In the Studio* (Ontario: ECW Press, 2008)

³³⁵ Pattie Boyd, *Wonderful Today: George Harrison, Eric Clapton, and Me* (London: Headlining Publishing Group, 2007)

my thesis.³³⁶ Pamela Des Barres was arguably the most famous American groupie of the 1960's, and she is known for associating with Led Zeppelin. Her autobiography retells her experiences and includes journal entries during her time with the band, as well as many others during the late 1960's and early 1970's.³³⁷ Joyce Luck released the first full-length biography on Melissa Etheridge, a female musician who was heavily influenced by Janis Joplin. The work provides interviews with the artist's friends and colleagues and anecdotes from fans. I obtained her personal information from this source to include at the end of the Janis Joplin chapter.³³⁸

Interviews, Audio Recordings, and Concert Videos

I used the website search engine for three main functions in my research: for song lyrics—janisjoplin.net, ledzeppelinlyrics.org, and mtv.com; for news articles or news-related material on artists—mtv.com and usatoday.com, janisjoplin.net, and facebook.com; and for music videos, interviews, documentaries, and live performances—youtube.com. While some lyric websites can contain errors, I have checked these specific websites for accuracy in accordance with audio recordings of the songs.³³⁹ The articles on Fiona Apple and Lady Gaga also contain valid information and were written by current news reporters of their respective publications. Also, janisjoplin.net provides quotes from

³³⁶ Stephen Davis, *Jim Morrison: Life, Death, Legend* (New York: Gotham Books, 2004), *Hammer of the Gods* (New York: Berkeley Boulevard Books, 1997)

³³⁷ Pamela Des Barres, *I'm With the Band: Confessions of a Groupie* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2005)

³³⁸ Joyce Luck, *Melissa Etheridge: Our Little Secret* (Ontario: ECW Press, 1997)

³³⁹ "Music. Lyrics," last modified in May 2011, <http://www.janisjoplin.net/music/lyrics>, "The Lemon Song," last modified in 2011, <http://www.ledzeppelinlyrics.org/>, "Going to California," last modified in 2011, <http://www.ledzeppelinlyrics.org/>, "Like A Prayer lyrics," last modified in 2011, <http://www.mtv.com/music/artist/madonna/albums/jhtml?albumId=59743>.

female front women inspired by Janis Joplin.³⁴⁰ Facebook.com was helpful for news updates by Heart, while on their 2011 tour in America.³⁴¹ The audio-visual website, youtube.com, was enormously helpful and cost effective for observing live performances and music videos, and for transcribing interviews and dialogue from documentaries.³⁴² I

³⁴⁰ Gill Kaufman, "Fiona Apple The People's Champ," *MTVNews*, 2007, http://www.mtv.com/bands/a/apple_fiona/news_feature_100305/index3.jhtml, Ann Oldenberg, "Lady Gaga Explains Her VMA Raw Meat Dress," *USA Today* (September 2010), <http://content.usatoday.com/communities/entertainment/post/2010/09/lady-gaga-explains-her-vmaw-raw-meat-dress/1>, JanisJoplin.net "Life Reflections," last modified on May 2011, <http://www.janisjoplin.net/life/reflections/>.

³⁴¹ "Heart," last modified on October 13, 2011, <http://www.facebook.com/heart>

³⁴² "Ann Wilson," last modified on August 11, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=av50LB5uXOQ&feature=related>, "Ann & Nancy on Letterman," last modified on July 1, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3_Q14zvd9CA, "Ann, Nancy Wilson Heart "Rare" Interview 1985 - For UK TV," last modified on April 14, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kNgfYeCXZJQ&feature=related>; "Beautiful," last modified on October 3, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAfYFTzZDMM&ob=av2e>, "Disturbia (2008)," last modified on December 13, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E1mU6h4Xdx&ob=av3n>, "Early Magic Man," last modified September 13, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uMzbsDAV_Q4, Youtube "Exclusive Interview with Heart," last modified May 24, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mWdMh-bf0kE>, "Express Yourself (1989)," last modified on October 26, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GsVcUzP_O_8&ob=av3e; "Fiona Apple Comments on her Career and Songs, Part 2," last modified on April 4, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q69ZcJm90TY&feature=related>, "Fiona Apple Comments on her Career and Songs, Part 3," last modified on April 5, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q69ZcJm90TY&feature=related>, "Fiona Apple, 'Lump,' Live on Letterman (2000)," last modified on February 15, 2006, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkZu515ORf0> "Fiona Apple - MTV Video Music Award for 'Best New Artist' 1997-09-04 - Acceptance Speech (Full)," last modified on September 4, 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2xDM2uJWhg4> "Hear Us Then Promoting Desire Walks On Album-Pt. 2 (1994)," last modified on November 25, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=53t1zIJ2U10>, "Heart band history part 1 of 4," last modified November 20, 2008, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jppgc1G_yY0&feature=related, "Heart band history part 4 of 4," last modified on November 20, 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o8kaBSh53SY>, "Heart—Crazy On You—Ann and Nancy Wilson Live 1978" last modified on November 26, 2007, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=whXeb7Ohfkk>, "Heart-Early Crazy On You," last modified on September 13, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/user/gusterous#p/u/6/1g7Z4sd9X4k>, "Heart—Early Days and Influences," last modified on July 1, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Mw3BGXW9s4&feature=related>, "Heart In the Studio 80's," last modified on June 24, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IpvzTwhPrqg&feature=related>, "Heart—Interview 85 "(1985). last modified on November 12, 2008, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vegq6OxUSJo&feature=related>, "Heart—'Red Velvet Car' Influences," last modified on July 14, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LqVOPs2QHou&feature=related>, "Heart—Soul of the Sea " *Second Ending on KWSU-TV* last modified on April 6, 2008, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eSh_egFXrYg&feature=related, "Janis Joplin Last Interview on The Dick Cavett Show," last modified on July 18, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Yybz0TcIgdK>, "Janis Joplin Tribute," last modified on August 3, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TziOlyqlbvs>, "Justify My Love," last modified on September 27, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ESxJJK3QsnM>.

used youtube com exclusively for those purposes; however, the original sources of these videos are not always accurate. Therefore, I did not take those sources into full consideration, and instead searched for their original documentation and tried to collaborate with other evidence.

For the discography, I have chosen the albums most useful for the chapters, Janis Joplin and the Front Woman in Rock and Case Study—Ann and Nancy Wilson. Heart’s albums—*Bad Animals*, *Bebe Le Strange*, *Dog and Butterfly*, *Dreamboat Annie*, *Heart*, *Little Queen*, and *Magazine*—each contain songs that are fitting for the three discourses in the case study: performance, repertory, and promotion.³⁴³ Janis Joplin’s albums—*Cheap Thrills*, *I Got Dem Ol’ Kozmic Blues Again Mama*, *Pearl*—as well as her compilation albums—*Janis Joplin Box Set* and *18 Essential Songs*—contain songs suitable for discussion of her duties as a front woman in rock music.³⁴⁴

“Laura and Michael Joplin accept for Janis Joplin Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductions 1995,” last modified on February 10, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VJyQ-nxo-LY>, “Madonna—Live to Tell (Official Music Video) (1985),” last modified on May 10, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hQLrTb4GjVc&feature=related>, “Madonna—VH1 Behind the Music 3/5,” last modified on March 11, 2011, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y5m_7uTV7II Youtube “Melissa Etheridge inducts Janis Joplin Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductions,” last modified on February 10, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Cx_fMeHaW4, “Musical Influences” *The Grammy Museum* last modified on July 29, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C8OdxDUgRS0&feature=related>, “Nicki Minaj-Super Bass,” last modified in 2011, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4JipHEz53sU&ob=av2e> “Paper Bag” *Sony BMG Entertainment* last modified on October 2, 2009, http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BK30r_SIZ-g&ob=av2e, “The Making of Bebe Le Strange (1980),” last modified on July 1, 2010, http://www.youtube.com/watch?NR=1&v=nyNWJ8_3HQY, “Whenever, Wherever,” last modified on October 3, 2009, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=weRHjJ34ZE&ob=av2n> “Women Artists in a Male Industry,” last modified on July 16, 2010, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TP9GUQdoe7I>

³⁴³ Heart *Bad Animals*. Capitol Records, 1987 LP, Heart. *Bebe Le Strange* Epic Records, 1980 LP, Heart. *Dog and Butterfly* Epic Records, 1978 LP, Heart. *Dreamboat Annie* Mushroom Records, 1976. LP, Heart. *Heart*. Capitol Records, 1985 LP, Heart. *Little Queen* Epic Records, 1977 LP, Heart. *Magazine*. Epic Records 1977, LP.

³⁴⁴ Joplin, Janis and Big Brother and the Holding Company. *Cheap Thrills* Compact Disc. Columbia Records, 1967, Janis Joplin *18 Essential Songs* Compact Disc. NY, NY Sony, 1995, Janis Joplin and the Kozmic Blues Band *I Got Dem Ol’ Kozmic Blues Again Mama*. Compact Disc NY, NY Columbia Records, 1986, Janis

Although I used several videos through Youtube, three sources are live performances, in their entirety, of three different performers that are crucial to this thesis: Led Zeppelin, Heart, and Janis Joplin. *The Song Remains the Same*, a documentary filmed in 1973, covers the band's repertory from 1969 to 1975 (songs for their *Physical Graffiti* album were already performed at this time.) The documentary shows a three-night performance at Madison Square Garden.³⁴⁵ *Heart: Alive in Seattle* is the band's last performance of their 2002 "Summer of Love" tour at the Paramount Theater in Seattle. The video shows a compilation of their 1970's and 1980's songs, covers by Led Zeppelin and Elton John, as well as their current working songs at the time.³⁴⁶ *The Monterey Pop Festival* features live performances by Janis Joplin with Big Brother and the Holding Company. This documentary contains the groundbreaking performance of "Ball and Chain," sung by Janis Joplin, which was essential to the band's forthcoming fame.³⁴⁷

Joplin *Janis Joplin Box Set* Compact Disc NY, NY: Sony, 1993; Janis Joplin and the Full Tilt Boogie Band *Pearl* Compact Disc. NY, NY Columbia Records, 1970

³⁴⁵ Peter Grant, *The Song Remains The Same* DVD Dir. by Peter Clifton and Joe Massot Warner Bros, 2007.

³⁴⁶ "Heart: Alive in Seattle." DVD Directed by Dave Diomed. Seattle, Washington. Image Entertainment, 2003

³⁴⁷ Kim Hendrickson, *The Complete Monterey Pop Festival* DVD Directed by D A. Pennebaker Festival Directors John Phillips and Lou Adler 1968 Pennebaker Hegedus Films, Inc Criterion Collection, 2002

Secondary Sources

I used *Grove Music Online* articles briefly for biographical information on Fiona Apple, Heart, and Shakira two artists who have been documented in few scholarly texts. I also consulted David Brackett's article on soul music for further evidence in the Janis Joplin chapter.³⁴⁸

The articles in *Rolling Stone*, *Life Magazine*, *The New Yorker*, *Let It Rock*, *The Harbringer*, *Mojo Navigator*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Interview*, *The Performing Songwriter*, and *The Seattle Times* were essential for several functions: to find substantial biographical information that otherwise could not be found due to lack of material, to observe the exploitation of the female artists, to take note of interviews of the artists, and to find surface information on tours, albums, and promotion. I gathered some rather ignorant critiques on female rock musicians in the 1960's and 1970's, as well as evidence of excessive exploitation on pop artists from *Rolling Stone*.³⁴⁹ However, the article by

³⁴⁸ "Apple, Fiona," in *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 4th ed, edited by Colin Larkin *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/epm/774>

"Apple, Fiona – Tidal," in *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 4th ed, edited by Colin Larkin *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/epm/76595>

"Heart" in *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 4th ed, edited by Colin Larkin *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/epm/11984>

"Shakira," in *Encyclopedia of Popular Music*, 4th ed, edited by Colin Larkin *Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/epm/72910>

David Brackett, "Soul Music," *Grove Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/80/subscriber/article/grove/music/26288>

³⁴⁹ Female rock musicians [Heart] Billy Altman, "Review Little Queen," *Rolling Stone* June 30, 1977, <http://www.starbacks.ca/SunsetStrip/8678/heart2.html>, [Janis Joplin] John Burks, "Kozmic Blues Album," *Rolling Stone* (November 1, 1969), <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/albumreviews/i-got-dem-ol-kozmik-blues-again-mama-19691101?print=true>; David Dalton, "Janis Joplin's Full-Tilt Boogie Ride," *Rolling Stone* (August 6, 1970), 10,

Female pop artists. [Rhianna] Josh Eels, "Queen of Pain. Spanking, Sexting, Spaghetti: One Hot Week With Pop's Most Complicated Sex Symbol," *Rolling Stone* No. 1128 (April 2011), 40-45, 80-81; [Amy Winehouse] Jenny Eliscu, "Amy Winehouse A Troubled Star Gone Too Soon," *Rolling Stone* (July 24, 2011), <http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/amy-winehouses-death-a-troubled-star-gone-too-soon-20110724>

[Katie Perry] Erik Hedegaard, "Little Miss Sunshine Inside the Cotton-Candy, Day-Glo World of Katy Perry, The Unstoppable Princess of Pop" *Rolling Stone* No. 1134 (July 2011), 68-74, [Lady Gaga] Brian

David Dalton is more accommodating Janis Joplin in its content. Also, the in-depth articles on Adele and Amy Winehouse reveal an authenticity about the pop artists, which was supportive to my thesis. Andy Green's article on Heart is legitimate, although short, but precise.³⁵⁰ *Rolling Stone*, in some cases, was essential for finding interviews, as well as tributes to early male rock musicians.³⁵¹ Chris Heath's article sensationalizes Fiona Apple, but the valid information can be found in the artist's responses and statements.³⁵² In contrast, Karen Valby's article on Apple in *Entertainment Weekly* is more direct and less biased.³⁵³ *The New Yorker* article by Sasha Frere-Jones is the most legitimate on the artist as it contains more serious literature, such as politics, culture, and high art.³⁵⁴ *Life Magazine*, *The Harbringer*, *Let It Rock*, and *Mojo Navigator* include biased sources on Janis Joplin, but they provide a perspective on the way the female artist was portrayed in the media, during the 1960's.³⁵⁵ In the Sam Andrew interview from *The Harbringer*, one

Hiatt, "Monster Goddess. Unicorns, Sex Dreams and The Freak Revolution: Deep Inside the Unreal World of Lady Gaga" *Rolling Stone* No 1132 (June 2011), 40-47, [Adele] Touré, "Adele—Best Soul Superstar: Pop's biggest voice of 2011 runs on cigarettes, red wine and high-octane heartbreak," *Rolling Stone* No. 1129 (April 2011), 52-56

³⁵⁰ Andy Greene, "Heart Still Beating With New LP, Tour," *Rolling Stone* No 1112 (September 2, 2010), 23, <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=107&sid=361fee98-1e5d-4b40-8c2e-3e425a5c6399%40sessionmgr115&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=53040022>

³⁵¹ Bono, "The 70 Greatest Dylan Songs," *Rolling Stone* No 1131 (May 26, 2011)

³⁵² Chris Heath, "The Caged Bird Sings Fiona," *Rolling Stone* No 778 (January 22, 1998),

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=12&hid=119&sid=c01a9a11-6c62-44c9-a799-0f86e0ecd8%40sessionmgr104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=460472>

³⁵³ Karen Valby, "The Extraordinary Truth," *Entertainment Weekly* No 842 (September 30, 2005), 28-33,

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=10&hid=119&sid=c01a9a11-6c62-44c9-a799-0f86e0ecd8%40sessionmgr104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=18455012>

³⁵⁴ Sasha Frere-Jones, "Extraordinary Measures," *The New Yorker* 81, No 31 (October 10, 2005), 88-89, <http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=3&hid=119&sid=c01a9a11-6c62-44c9-a799-0f86e0ecd8%40sessionmgr104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=18515058>

³⁵⁵ Alfred G. Aronowitz, "Singer With the Bordello Voice," *Life Magazine* (September 20, 1968), <http://www.janisjoplin.net/news/9/48/Singer-With-The-Bordello-Voice/>, Gary James, "Janis Joplin Remembered: The Sam Andrew Interview," *The Harbringer* (New York February 2, 1999), <http://www.theharbringer.org/xvii/990202/james.html>, Simon Frith, "Big Brother And The Holding Company: *Cheap Thrills* (CBS KCS 9700)," *Let It Rock* (April 1975), <http://www.rocksbackpages.com/article.html?ArticleID=366>; Greg Shaw, "Big Brother & the Holding

can find valid statements in his responses. *Interview* magazine has a substantial interview on Nicki Minaj, where she discusses her opinion on sexuality in the music business today.³⁵⁶ The publication, *Performing Songwriter*, is a helpful source on Heart, as the authors engage in questions about developing rock styles and constructing songs.³⁵⁷ The most recent source on Heart, in 2011, that I used is from *The Seattle Times* by Christy Karras, Ann Wilson Ann Wilson explains her views on women in rock today.³⁵⁸

Company ” *Mojo Navigator*, September 1966,

<http://www.rocksbackpages.com/article.html?ArticleID=1986>

³⁵⁶ T. Cole Rachel, “Music Nicki Minaj,” *Interview* <http://www.interviewmagazine.com/music/nicki-minaj/>

³⁵⁷ Russell Hall, “Ann Wilson,” *Performing Songwriter* 15, No. 104 (September 2007), 38,

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=6&hid=107&sid=361fee98-1e5d-4b40-8c2e-3e425a5c6399%40sessionmgr115&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d#db=a9h&AN=26601210>, Chris Neal, “Nancy Wilson of Heart,” *Performing Songwriter* 15, No. 111 (July 2008), 66-68,

<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=6&hid=119&sid=c01a9a11-6c62-44c9-a799-0f8e86e0ecd8%40sessionmgr104&bdata=JnNpdGU9ZWhvc3QtbG12ZQ%3d%3d>
³⁵⁸ Christy Karras, “Heart’s Ann Wilson—No Auto-Tune Please!,” *The Seattle Times* (September 9, 2011), http://www.heart-music.com/articles.html?n_id=515

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