The Music Never Stopped: Shifting Notions of Authenticity Amongst Deadheads

Nathaniel Gray Chapman

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John W. Ryan, Chair

Michael D. Hughes

Anthony Kwame Harrison

Karl R. Precoda

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to explore the concept of subculture and its meanings in today's discourse. I will also examine the post-subculture concept of neo-tribe and the differences between the two concepts. It is also my intention to show how subcultural groups undergo crises of authenticity in membership. By analyzing the Deadheads, the group of loyal fans surrounding the band the Grateful Dead, as a case study I will explore several factors contributing to a crisis of authenticity in membership within the subculture: the internet, the death of Jerry Garcia, and commercialization. I will also examine how the concept of subculture has evolved over time and been replaced with concepts such as the neo-tribe.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

A key concept in sociological studies of deviance and culture is the notion of "subculture." Originally the concept was used "to highlight the symbolic normative structure of groups smaller than society as a whole" (Jenks, 2005:6). However, in today's post-modern world subcultures have been conceptualized as much more loosely defined groups that are primarily based on consumption. Post-subculture theorists such as Bennett (1999) have abandoned the concept of subculture altogether and developed the term neo-tribe to describe current youth culture groups. In contrast to the traditional concept of subculture neo-tribes are characterized by more fluid membership boundaries that result in "extensive internal diversity and continual flows of multi-affiliated individuals between one group and another" (Hodkinson, 2004:287). According to Chaney (1994), neo-tribes are groups whose members have constructed highly individualized identities through consumption practices, and whose lifestyle reflects meanings employed by choosing certain commodities and patterns of consumption. So, post-subcultural theorists see subcultures as being replaced by the neo-tribe. In this thesis I will examine this proposition in light of developments in the music world.

I will use Grateful Dead fans, known as Deadheads as a case study to examine the concepts of subculture and neo-tribe. In particular I will focus on such factors as the internet, commercialization, and the death of Jerry Garcia, a pivotal figure within Deadhead culture.

1.2: Statement of the Problem

As noted above, some observers believe that the concept of subculture is no longer relevant (Bennett, 2009; Bennett and Kahn Harris, 2004; Maffesoli, 1996; and Muggleton, 2000). They argue that subcultures, at least those associated with popular culture, have evolved into neo-tribes (Bennett, 1999). The argument is that membership in these groups is based more on consumption than values and identity, and that membership is more fleeting. Using the Deadheads, as an example, throughout

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this paper I will examine the degree to which the Grateful Dead fans, known as Deadheads, may have at

one time constituted a true subculture and whether this has shifted over time to something more akin

to the neo-tribe concept.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

2.1: Subcultures

The Chicago School:

The concept of subculture has its roots in the Chicago school and later work was done by the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS). The Chicago School was very important to subcultural studies in the early 1920s as sociologists began to study "marginal social groups and 'deviant' social behavior" (Gelder, 2007:27). The Chicago school employed the concept of subculture "to highlight the symbolic normative structure of groups smaller than society as a whole" (Jenks, 2005:6). From its origins the concept was approached with a very microsociological perspective. Following in the tradition of Anthropology the early Chicago school began by doing ethnographic research on immigrant populations.

Much of this early work was done by Robert Park. Park studied the city of Chicago and the way immigrant groups interacted with each other. He noted that within the city there were certain segregated areas. These areas, or colonies, were often divided by race, "the isolation of the immigrant and racial colonies of the so-called ghettos and areas of population segregation tend to preserve and, to intensify the intimacies and solidarity of the local and neighborhood groups. Where individuals of the same race or of the same vocation live together in segregated groups, neighborhood sentiment tends to fuse together with racial antagonisms and class interests" (Park, 1925:9-10). The community now becomes a distinct area of study from the city as a whole, as these small colonies begin to display shared identities based on race, ethnicity, and class. For Park the community imposes discipline and provides an accepted moral code, however, in doing so it suppresses divergent impulses that leak out to produce "eccentricity" (Gelder, 2007). The eccentric find like minded people and moral support and develop their own moral code and inhabit their own moral region. Park developed a "social-psychological"

perspective, or microsociology which saw people as organically tied together (Jenks, 2005). The city of

Chicago became the basis for most of the school's research and became a template of study for any

large metropolitan city. This has led many to criticize the Chicago School for developing a theory of

Chicago rather than a greater social theory (Gelder, 2007). Other notable Chicago School researchers

include Milton Gordon, (1947), and Albert Cohen, (1955).

As an example of a study in the Chicago tradition, Paul Cressey studied "taxi-dance halls." His

studies focused entirely on women, which was unusual at the time, who were paid to keep men, who

were often immigrant workers that were isolated from their families, company by dancing with them at

these halls. Cressey viewed the taxi-dance hall as existing in "moral isolation, with its own ways of

acting, talking, and thinking…its own vocabulary, its own activities and interests, its own conception of

what is significant to life, and – to a certain extent – its own scheme of life" (Cressey, 1932:31-32). This

echoes the Chicago tradition in that Cressey viewed the dance halls as a colony of sorts, to use Parks'

terms. His view of the taxi-dance hall as a "social world is the key to its value as a subcultural study"

(Gelder, 2007:38). In his study he took after Park and focused on migration and mobility in relation to

the city. In doing this he found that while a taxi-dancer may migrate from city to city, the dance halls

were all essentially the same (Gelder, 2007). This gave the concept a much broader scope and allowed it

to be applied to other sites and social phenomenon.

Another Chicago sociologist to expand on the concept of subculture was Milton M. Gordon.

Gordon stressed the need to look beyond conventional sociological categories such as ethnicity and

class to more nuanced collective arrangements – recasting Park's "marginal man" as "marginal

subcultures" he emphasized the social aspects of difference in the modern United States (1947). This

shifted some of the focus of the Chicago School to the development of criminology. The view of criminal

activity as social practice was just as important for criminology as it was for subcultural studies (Gelder, 2007). Deviance began working its way to the forefront of subcultural studies.

Cohen applies this to his study of youth gangs writing "every society is internally differentiated into numerous sub-groups, each with ways of thinking and doing that are in some respects peculiarly its own" (1955:12). Youths became involved with gangs in an effort to find what Cohen refers to as "a subcultural solution" that is they seek to interact with other people with similar problems of adjustment. Cohen viewed delinquency as a social phenomenon citing, with "gangs of boys doing things together…deriving their meaning and flavor from the fact of togetherness and governed by a set of common understandings, common sentiments, and common loyalties" (1955:178). Here is where we begin to see the concept of subculture being applied to youth, and in general collective behavior that is not defined by ethnicity or class necessarily.

Arnold (1970) notes that the accelerated use of the concept of subculture has caught us unawares. He claims that subcultural studies no longer confines itself to "deviant behavior; rather, it seems to belong to most, perhaps all, of the subfields of sociology" (Arnold, 1970:3). This is furthered by Irwin (1977) who responded to the sense that subcultures might not necessarily be deviant and that one's involvement in them might be more of a choice of lifestyle, rather than a result of conflict and delinquency. Irwin uses the term scene, or a certain place where people do certain things, to help explain how people form emotionally sustaining relationships. All of this work followed in the symbolic interactionist tradition set forth by other Chicago scholars like Erving Goffman. Irwin (1977) was also one of the first to recognize the role of media in subcultures, "television, cinema, literature: they all contribute to the distribution of information about different subcultures and thereby help to objectify them into recognized styles" (1977:59).

The Birmingham School and the CCCS:

The Birmingham School and the Center for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) continued to shift the focus from immigrant life to "youth culture." The CCCS was a group of researchers including: Hall and Jefferson (1975), Cohen (1972), and Hebdige (1979). In many ways the CCCS began to employ a more macro level approach by shifting emphasis from locality and community to social class. Subcultural studies gained some clarity and definition through the work of the CCCS which began by looking at British youth movements and social class. The goal of the CCCS was to explain Youth Cultures as a phenomenon and to explain their appearance in post-war Britain.

 In modern society the most fundamental groups are social classes and within these social classes are inherent class cultures. The CCCS began by redefining class culturally rather than economically, in other words they began to define class around shared rituals and traditions. Hall and Jefferson (2006) define culture as "the way, the forms, in which groups 'handle' the raw material of their social and material existence…culture is the practice which realizes or objectivates group-life in meaningful shape and form" (4). The school built upon the earlier work of the Chicago School by focusing on English working class communities as a Gemeinschaft. The CCCS perception of subcultures was filtered through four things: the English working class, a binary of "us and them" established through prehistories of the English working class, a cultural emphasis on rituals, traditions, practices, and the meanings they conveyed, and contemporary life as defined through mass media (Gelder, 2007).

By filtering these four factors the CCCS focused on working-class youth and how they were affected by class relations and the parent culture. According to Hall and Jefferson (2006), relative to these cultural-class configurations are subcultures, which are smaller "more localized and differentiated structures, within one or other of the larger cultural networks" (Hall and Jefferson, 2006:6). Brake (1980) states that "membership of a subculture necessarily involves membership of a class culture, and

the subculture may be an extension of, or in opposition to, this. It may also closely merge with the dominant class culture, or may form a miniature world of its own" (1980:8). According to the CCCS subcultures allowed working-class youths to win back space from the ruling class by claiming their own space territorially and investing it with subcultural value, and by using commodities, or the signs of the dominant culture differently (Gelder, 2007).

From this perspective subcultures have a relationship to the dominant culture that has been made unavoidable due to their pervasiveness and transmission through the mass media (Brake, 1980). Not every social group who deviates from the norm can be called a subculture however. A subculture "must exhibit a distinctive enough shape and structure to make them identifiably different from their 'parent' culture" (Hall and Jefferson, 2006:7). In other words, this literature suggests that subcultures must establish an identity that in some way acts in opposition to the dominant culture while reflecting its own shared values. It must also remain connected to the parent culture in some way. This is often achieved through social institutions and the ways in which they recreate the social structure, namely the institutions of family, religion, and education.

Subcultures exist "where there is some form of organized and recognized constellation of values, behavior and action which are responded to as different from the prevailing sets of norms" (Brake, 1980:9). Although a subculture differs in many ways from the parent culture, such as its focal concerns and activities, it will also share some things in common with the parent culture (Hall and Jefferson, 2006). Blackman also notes that the concept of subculture "is concerned with agency and action belonging to a subset or social group that is distinct from but related to the dominant culture" (2005:2).

In addition to these criteria scholars in the CCCS tradition argue that subcultures, in addition to being identifiably different from their parent culture, must also "be focused around certain activities,

values, certain uses of material artifacts, territorial spaces etc. which significantly differentiate them from the wider culture…there must also be significant things which bind and articulate them with the 'parent' culture" (Hall and Jefferson, 2006:7). Scholars from both the Chicago school and the CCCS have noted that membership in a subculture is chosen by an individual and the reason for membership is to reclaim something that he/she has lost in the parent culture.

For example, in his study of the Mod subculture Hebdige (1979) adds that, "the mods were negotiating changes and contradictions which were simultaneously affecting the parent culture, but they were doing so in the terms of their own relatively autonomous problematic – by inventing an 'elsewhere' which was defined against the familiar locales of the home, the pub...the neighborhood" (1979:79). Or as argues by Brake (1980), before a collective can be labeled a subculture it "has to develop new group standards and an essential aspect of its existence is that it forms a constellation of behavior and values which have meaningful symbolism for the actors involved" (Brake,1980:9).

Cohen argues that the latent function of subculture is to "express and resolve…the contradictions which remain hidden and unresolved in the parent culture by attempting to retrieve some of the socially cohesive elements destroyed in the parent culture" (1972:23). Hebdige adds to this by saying that the presence of cohesion itself represents an attempt at retrieval of socially cohesive elements in that it is "the expression of a highly structured, visible, tightly bounded group identity" (1979:79). According to these scholars, contrary to the popular myth which presents subcultures as lawless forms, subcultures in fact are extremely ordered with each part being organically related to the other parts and through this relationship subcultural members make sense of their world (Willis, 1978).

The concept can also be applied to different patterns of behavior and alternative values that are acted out as cultural solutions (Blackman, 2005). Membership in subcultures represents an answer to a particular problematic, "each subcultural 'instance' represents a 'solution' to a specific set of

circumstances, to particular problems and contradictions" which a subculture member feels are

addressed through membership (Hebdige, 1979:81). These cultural solutions are manifested through

"dress, activities, leisure pursuits and lifestyle, they may project a different cultural response or

'solution' to the problems posed for them by their material and social class position and experience"

(Hall and Jefferson, 2006:8). Hall and Jefferson (2006) point out that membership in a subculture does

not protect one from the problems of the parent culture. Members of a subculture "experience and

respond to the same basic problematic as other members of their class who are not so differentiated

and distinctive in a 'subcultural' sense" (Hall and Jefferson, 2006:8).

Of course, not every working-class youth has been or will ever be involved with a subculture.

The CCCS notes that "the great majority of working-class youth never enters a tight or coherent

subculture at all…Individuals may in their personal life-careers, move into and out of one, or indeed

several, such subcultures" (Hall and Jefferson, 2006:9). Not all group activity can be considered

subcultural as Maffesoli states, "each person enters into a series of group situations each of which has

some degree of self-consciousness and stability" (1996:ix). Individuals or, "actors, then, attracted by

subcultural reference groups, select those within the parameters set by the social structure, which

contain an attractive self-image, and an apparent solution to structural problems" (Brake, 1980:18).

CCCS literature suggests that individuals' relation to subcultures may be "fleeting or permanent,

marginal or central" (Hall and Jefferson, 2006:9). This follows their statement that "some subcultures

appear only at particular historical moments: they become visible, are identified and labeled (either by

themselves or by others): they command the stage of public attention for a time: then they fade,

disappear or are so widely diffused that they lose their distinctiveness" (Hall and Jefferson, 2006:7).

These are some of the main ways the CCCS has defined the concept of subculture.

Definition of Subculture:

After reviewing the literature on the subculture concept it is apparent that a clear definition does not exist. Drawing on elements of the literature, for the purpose of this study I will use the following definition of subculture. A subculture is a group of like-minded individuals seeking to resolve a shared problem within the parent culture, who inhabit a world of social segregation around which the group has developed a coherent and deviant culture of its own that is focused around common activities and rituals, shared values, solidarity, and material artifacts, and where membership is a freely chosen lifestyle that can be fleeting or permanent. In short, a subculture is a group of individuals who value a more holistic way of life that is not fulfilled by the parent culture. This more holistic way of life represents what Cohen refers to as a "subcultural solution" (Gelder, 2007).

2.2: Post-Subcultures

Much of the recent literature on subcultures today has attacked the concept citing its lack of relevance to modern cultural studies (Bennett, 1999; Maffesoli, 1996; Heatherington, 1992; Bennett and Khan-Harris, 2004). Post-subcultural critics have identified the CCCS's "unqualified equation of post-war patterns of youth consumerism with notions of working-class resistance" (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004:7). Muggleton criticizes the CCCS for assuming that all members of subcultures were exclusively, or even predominantly working-class (2000). Others note the difficulty in accepting the CCCS's argument that consumer goods were used in strategies of resistance (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). Critics also question the CCCS approach which concentrates on symbolic aspects of subcultural consumption rather than the actual meanings that young consumers have for the goods they consume (Miles, 1995).

A major opponent of the subculture concept is Andy Bennett. He views subculture as problematic "in that it imposes rigid lines of division over forms of sociation which may, in effect, be

rather fleeting, and in many cases arbitrary, than the concept of subculture, with its connotations of coherency and solidarity allows for" (Bennett, 1999:603). Similarly, Jenkins (1983) suggests that the concept of subculture implies a "determinate and often deviant relationship to a national dominant culture" (1983:41). Also McRobbie notes the absence of discussion on shifting behavior patterns of members of subcultural groups as they move between subcultural setting and family home (1984). These criticisms bear in common a critique of the CCCS attempts to depict subcultures as tight, coherent social groups.

Other scholars have argued that the CCCS fails to consider local variations in youth's responses to music and style, asking why adolescents in the same class location often adopt different forms of negotiation (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). Similar to the Chicago school's early theories of subculture the CCCS has been accused of developing a British concept that cannot be adapted to other youth cultural studies. The acknowledgement of the role of style, music, and other popular cultural resources in creating rather than confirming communities has led many to reject the concept of subculture and to seek other theoretical frameworks (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). This has led many to view youth groupings as "taste cultures." For example, Lewis (1992) argues that musical taste "dramatically cuts across standard indicators such as social class, age, and education in creating groupings with common musical expectations and symbolic definitions" (Lewis, 1992:141).

The CCCS has also been criticized for its failure to recognize the role of media in the creation of subcultures and subcultural identity (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). Thornton (1995b) argues that the mass media are responsible for "providing youth with many of the visual and ideological resources they incorporate into collective subcultural identities" (p. 117). Additionally the CCCS have been criticized on their limited definition of youth as an age category rather than an ideological category or state of mind (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). The increasing fragmentation of youth style since the 1980's has given

rise to an analytical approach loosely termed "post-subcultural" theory (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). Redhead (1990), in developing post-subcultural theory, argues that a breakdown of subcultural divisions occurred as the relationship of style, musical taste and identity has become weaker and articulated more fluidly.

To provide a new framework Andy Bennett uses Maffesoli's (1996)notion of *tribus* to develop his theory of Neo-Tribes. Underpinning Maffesoli's concept is the notion of fluid and unstable social relations in contemporary society (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). Bennett and Khan-Harris argue that even the most committed groups of youth stylists are not in any way as coherent or fixed as the concept of subculture implies. This echoes Maffesoli when he states that "in contrast to the stability induced by classical tribalism, neo-tribalism is characterized by fluidity, occasional gatherings and dispersal" (1996:76). Additionally Bennett (1999) suggests, that the term group can no longer be regarded as having a permanent or tangible quality as the lifespan of a group depends on its forms of interaction. The tribe is "without the rigidity of the forms of organization with which we are familiar, it refers more to a certain ambience, a state of mind, and is preferably to be expressed through lifestyles that favour appearance and form" (Maffesoli, 1996:98). He argues that the shifting nature of collective associations between individuals are increasingly consumer driven (Bennett, 1999). As Heatherington points out tribalization involves "the deregulation through modernization and individualization of the modern forms of society and identity based on class occupation, locality and gender… and the recomposition into "tribal" identities and forms of sociation" (1992:93).

Bennett uses the notion of "lifestyle" to define how individuals construct their identity within neo-tribes. This term is preferred over subculture as it provides a more "accurate theoretical model through which to address and interpret the shifting identity politics and stylistic associations of contemporary youth" (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004:13). Chaney (1994) suggests that the term

lifestyle describes the way in which youth choose particular commodities and patterns of consumption. This is defined so that it will not be confused with "way of life" which is typically associated with a more-or-less stable community. In looking at culture in this way Bennett is suggesting that neo-tribalism provides a much more adequate framework as it "allows for the shifting nature of youth's musical and stylistic preferences and the essential fluidity of youth cultural groups" (Bennett, 1999:614). Bennett is speaking of a lack of coherency or solidarity within subcultures and is implying that subcultures are merely consumption based youth collectives.

The term "scene" has also been used to describe local sites of cultural, particularly musical cultural, production and consumption (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004). According to Straw "scenes actualize a particular state of relations between various populations and social groups, as these coalesce around specific coalitions of musical style" and scenes may be both local and translocal phenomenon (1991:379). Literature on scenes has fueled the debate over the CCCS's use of subculture. CCCS approaches stress the visibility of subculture as an identifiable space, or a space that can be analyzed (Bennett and Kahn-Harris, 2004).

Post-subcultural studies have attempted to replace the concept of subculture with several new concepts that address the shifting nature of consumerism in today's society. According to the literature a neo-tribe is a group characterized by fluid membership boundaries that result in "extensive internal diversity and continual flows of multi-affiliated individuals between one group and another," whose members have constructed highly individualized identities through consumption practices, and whose lifestyle describes sensibilities employed in choosing certain commodities and patterns of consumption (Hodkinson, 2004:287, Chaney, 1994). A more concise definition of the concept is a neo-tribe is a consumption based collective with fluid boundaries that does not provide a holistic experience for members of the group.

Neo-tribes are evidence of an individualistic society where community is never achieved. This differs greatly from the concept of subculture where members participate in a subculture almost exclusively for the sense of community they achieve. The diversity among members of neo-tribes suggests that membership would not be a good predictor of behavior. The diversity greatly intensifies the dissolution of group boundaries and identity. Members individually construct their identity through consumption therefore the group lacks collective thought or common beliefs at least compared to subculture. One example of a neo-tribe is the electronic dance scene studied by Andy Bennett (1999). He notes that individuals are often involved in many different groups and lack the coherency and solidarity expressed in subcultures.

2.3: Summary of the Literature

In summary the literature suggest several differences between subcultures and neo-tribes. The first difference is that subcultural membership can be permanent, whereas neo-tribal membership must always be fleeting. In addition, membership in a neo-tribe does not necessarily solve a problem members experience in the parent culture. The definitions are similar in that members develop identities through the consumption of goods, but in subcultures this is not the only requirement for membership. Another key distinction is that subcultures present a way of life and neo-tribes present a lifestyle. The difference between way of life and lifestyle is that in choosing a way of life subculture members choose to adhere to the norms and values of a group and share an identity outside of common consumption of goods, whereas neo-tribal membership is based almost solely on the consumption of specific goods and therefore is not as holistic as a way of life and all encompassing.

In the following sections I will outline my methodology for exploring the subculture concept as it may apply to the followers of the Grateful Dead. Following my methodology I will give an historical account of the Grateful Dead and their fan culture known as the Deadheads.

Chapter 3: Methodology

To explore issues of subculture among Grateful Dead fans I have employed several qualitative methods including: content analysis of Relix magazine articles and a documentary film chronicling the final years of the Grateful Dead, participant observation, and semi-structured interviewing. Some of the strengths and weaknesses of using qualitative methods are that "virtually all qualitative research is heavily grounded within the local context in which the phenomena of interest occur" and that "qualitative researchers explicitly and overtly apply their own subjective interpretations to the understanding of organizational phenomenon" (Lee, 1999:7-8). These facts become even more important when conducting research on subcultural groups as they often act out of view of the public and their behavior can often be labeled controversial.

Qualitative methods were chosen for this study to better help me to understand the meanings and value that subcultural members place on different items and behaviors. As Bryman (1984) notes, qualitative research looks not so much for 'causes' as for 'meanings,' this is achieved by rejecting the natural science model and seeing the task of social research as finding the meaning of social events and processes, while understanding the lived experience of human society from the actor's point of view. As described in greater detail in this study I will utilize four types of data the first being a content analysis of articles and letters in Relix magazine, a Grateful Dead fanzine. The second source of data was an analysis of the documentary film "The Grateful Dead: The End of the Road – The Final Tour '95" and the third was semi-structured interviews with Deadheads, and fourthly participant observation of Grateful Dead and Phish shows. I discuss each of these in greater detail below.

3.1: Relix Magazine

In the early 1970s Les Kippel was busy collecting Grateful Dead concert tapes. His drive to collect these "relics," as they were often referred to, spurned the "First Free Underground Grateful Dead

Tape Exchange," which was a newsletter aimed at connecting tape traders with other tape traders around the country (Brown, 2009). The original mailings of what would be named "Dead Relix," started with less than 200 subscribers. After the first issues were received enthusiastically the subscriptions began to increase dramatically. Deadheads were now reading "Dead Relix" for information about tours, tapes, and the culture surrounding the Grateful Dead. Unexpectedly the Grateful Dead took a hiatus in 1975. During this break "Dead Relix" became the official voice of the Deadheads and provided them with information on other bands that were similar to the Grateful Dead such as Little Feat, Hot Tuna, to name a few (Brown, 2009). However, these bands were not a solution to the Grateful Dead's lack of touring, but were an alternative that could offer a little of what the Deadhead experience could. Most notably these other bands provided a similar musical experience, but not necessarily the same communal experience the Deadheads were craving. When the Grateful Dead began touring again in 1976 "Dead Relix" had become the full fledged publication of the Deadheads. As David Gans notes, "the magazine serves a valuable purpose…Being published by Deadheads, it is by very definition, a voice of the Deadhead community" (Brown, 2009:246).

For this project I analyzed every issue of Relix magazine from 1977-1999 totaling 135 issues. It should be noted that this magazine is primarily a music magazine with reviews of shows, setlists, tour dates, and new music information. There were, however, substantive articles in each magazine that only accounted for a small portion of each publication. These articles were focused on topics such as: Deadhead subculture (for example "What A Long Strange Trip It's Been," Trainor, 1977:17), vending (for example "Don't Let That Deal Go Down," Clark, 1990:20), taping and the internet (for example "Heads on the Web: The Scene Continues Into the Digital Era," Devaney, 1997:36-37), interviews with artists and musicians (for example "Phish Out of Water: No Fear of Flying – An interview with Mike Gordon," Brown, 1995:33-40), and general knowledge about the current state of the tour (for example "The State of the Deadhead Scene," Allen, 1985:51-55).

When looking through each issue I selected any articles that covered the issues of culture, subculture, identity, the Deadhead "scene", the death of Jerry Garcia, the internet, and commercialization. These categories were chosen based on my literature review and my key research question which seeks evidence supporting or refuting whether the Deadheads at one time met the definition of a subculture. In total there were 20 articles that discussed these topics over a 22 year period. As noted earlier, the main goal of this publication was originally to inform Deadheads about what was going on in the scene, however, the focus shifted in the late 1970s and the magazine became a full on music publication. Most of the articles appearing in the magazine were album reviews, interviews with varying artists, or a review of a particular concert. In addition to articles related to my core content categories I also collected letters to the editor. These letters proved to be valuable as they were the voice of the Deadheads from all over the country, and sometimes the world.

Included in the magazine is a section called "Dear Relix" which included letters to the editor. These letters were written by Deadheads from all around the country expressing their concerns over issues like the scene (for example "Every Silver Lining's Got a Touch of Grey," 1988:vol. 15(1) pp. 6-7), police brutality (for example "Tent City Farewell," 1990:vol 17(2) pp. 6), environmentalism (for example "Eyes of the World," 1994:vol 21(2) pp. 8), taping (for example "Taping," 1990:vol. 17(2) pp 4), vending (for example "Vending," 1990:vol. 17(3) pp. 5), and behavior at shows (for example "Deadiquette," 1990:vol. 17(2) pp. 4). I collected 103 letters covering my content categories.

When conducting my analysis I looked for keywords such as: scene, subculture, culture, Deadhead culture, internet, Jerry Garcia (post August 1995), commercial, corporate, vending, etc.. I analyzed and examined each issue looking through every page and spotted several of the keywords. I then examined each article looking for evidence of subcultural or neo-tribal elements. In the following paragraphs I describe my operationalization of each of these terms.

Commercialization:

Articles and letters addressing the mainstream success of the Grateful Dead after the release of *In The Dark* (1989) were coded for commercialization. I chose to code these articles for commercialization as they dealt primarily with the influx of new fans that resulted from the new mainstream success the Grateful Dead was experiencing in the late 1980's. Most of these discussed how the scene was being infiltrated by "new heads" that did not know how to behave in the scene. Others items coded for commercialization addressed merchandising and vending in the parking lot at shows.

Jerry Garcia:

Items were coded for Jerry Garcia if they referred to his stints in and out of rehab and the effects of his death in August of 1995 on the Deadhead community. It should be noted here that the fall issue of 1995 and the winter issue of 1996 were completely dedicated to the life of Jerry Garcia and were not included in the analysis. This was due in part to much of the content being old stories from past playing partners and other musicians and not containing material relevant to the issue of subculture.

Culture:

Articles and letters dealing with culture, the scene, subculture, new heads, vending, shows, drugs, police, and other issues were coded as Culture. These issues seemed to be the most important to readers and authors alike and therefore have the most occurrences in the sample. These items begin to appear more commonly in the years prior to *In The Dark* (1989) and continued to increase up to the point of Jerry Garcia's death in 1995. It should also be noted that articles about other bands were not included unless they specifically referred to the Grateful Dead and the surrounding community as well.

For instance, several articles appeared about Phish, however, only the ones referring to Phish as a new source of the Deadhead experience, Phish and commercialization, or Phish and the internet were included. These articles were not included in my analysis as they did not directly address the issues of authenticity within the subculture, but future research would benefit from a much more thorough content analysis.

Internet:

Finally, articles regarding the internet or online message boards were coded as Internet. Initially I had planned to post questionnaires on Grateful Dead and Phish online message boards. Upon receiving approval from the IRB I began to post some general questions about the current state of the scene. Posts were made to rec.music.gdead and phantasytour.com. From the beginning I stated my position as a member of the community first and a researcher second. Within the first four hours of making my first post I was bombarded with emails and threads questioning my intentions, challenging my position as a researcher and member of the culture, and attacking me as an intruder on the scene. It appeared that membership might be more of an issue on the internet due to a lack of face to face interaction. It seemed as though the adherence to the norms and values of the Deadheads were more important on the internet than I had expected. Due to the poor response and difficulty accessing information I decided to abandon my message board data source and began to focus on the internet as a challenge site for membership.

3.2: Documentary Film: The Grateful Dead: The End of the Road – The Final Tour '95

As I have noted earlier (Lee, 1999), documentary films provide a unique look into organizations and culture that most people do not have access to. I chose this film as it is one of only a few documentaries about the Grateful Dead. Additionally, this documentary provides an in-depth look at the last few years on tour with the Grateful Dead. Pauwels (2010) points out that depicting processes of

"rituals and other highly prescribed activities" may benefit from a visual approach because of its ability to "capture the richness and complexity of the event, its capacity to cope with the semiotic hybridity of the depicted including its cultural specificity and development over time and space" (2010:554). Liebenberg (2009) notes that "visual media offers marginalized groups an opportunity to reproduce and understand their own world as opposed to dominant representations" (2009:7). This makes documentary film a valuable resource as provides the viewer an opportunity to see the culture in action. According to Pauwels by studying visual media "sociologists may acquire insight into the social functions of the cultural product itself, but also gain access to broader and more profound aspects of society to offer a (not unproblematic) window to the depicted world, but at the same time they invariably constitute cultural artifacts in themselves, and may offer a gateway to the culture of the producer and that of the implied audience" (2010:550).

The use of visual media in qualitative research is not without its problems however. Pauwels (2010) notes that when using visual media "sociologists as 'image collectors' often lack sufficient background knowledge or contextual information with respect to the exact origin, the production circumstances, and the representative character of the acquired visual data set" (2010:550). As Stott (1973) points out "documentary tries to influence its audience's intellect and feelings… It persuades in either or both of two ways, directly and by example" (1973:26). This is problematic because the filmmaker can express his opinions and attempt to persuade the audience to see things from his/her point of view. Stott also refers to this as propaganda (1973).

Another aspect of visual media is capturing "naturally occurring or spontaneous behavior" (Pauwels, 2010:553). Pauwels (2010) explains that the main issue with this type of source is the adjective "naturally occurring," "which seems to imply nonreactivity, a requirement that is hardly attainable when the researchers and their recording equipment are visible to the research participants"

(2010:553). This is also problematic in that researchers can influence the behavior or subjects with their physical presence alone (Pauwels, 2010).

Despite these limitations documentary film is a valuable data source. While there are problems with point of view of the director and interference by the researchers and filmmakers, documentaries provide a visual tour of areas that are often hidden from public view. They provide an excellent opportunity for outsiders to gain access into a world that they may never experience. It is also an excellent method for capturing visual evidence of cultural activity. This film is of particular importance as it is one of the only documentaries about the Grateful Dead. It is also important because it was filmed during one of the most tumultuous times in the band's history. These factors make this documentary one of a kind and a valuable resource.

Meeske followed the Grateful Dead for several years leading up to the final tour in 1995. Throughout the film he interviews several individuals involved in the scene. Most of the interviews conducted in the film are with Deadheads who have been following the band on tour for some extended period of time. He interviews everyone from a plastic surgeon who follows the Dead in the summers, to a Deadhead that saw his first show in 1965. Several interviews ask direct questions about participation in the culture and opinions on the scene. Most individuals reported some sort of negative issue relating to "new heads," or what is often referred to as a noob, vending, police, gate-crashing, and more generally, the decline of the scene as a whole.

I watched the film several times and pulled quotes from interviews dealing with the topics of authenticity, culture, commercialization, and life on the road. From this analysis I was able to further identify the factors contributing to the a conflict over membership in the community. Several Deadheads made references to the commercial success of *In The Dark* (1987) and a gate-crashing incident at Deer Creek in 1995 that resulted in the cancellation of the show. There were also several

scenes in which Deadheads read letters from band members sent out via the Grateful Dead mailing list regarding poor behavior at shows and the band's negative opinions of outsiders who did not want to abide by the rules of the subculture. The film also included personal accounts from Deadheads discussing why they had chosen to participate in the scene for so long.

As I have mentioned earlier, the release of *In The Dark* (1987)*,* was a pivotal moment in the history of the band. It is at this moment that the influx of new fans was at its peak. Some of the results of this are incidents such as occurred at Deer Creek in 1995. During this event thousands of fans showed up without tickets to the show. As the show time approached these fans began to try to gain entry to the show. What resulted was a small riot during which the fans crashed the gate and destroyed property around the venue. This led to the band hosting a free show out of necessity, not out of kindness. The backlash from this event was felt throughout the entire Deadhead community. The band wrote letters warning fans that their behavior may cost them the good time they loved so much. With threats of quitting forever the Grateful Dead were taking a stand against the behavior of those not acquainted with the subculture.

The ending of the film is footage from Jerry Garcia's funeral in California. These closing scenes provided an excellent view of how Deadheads were coping with the loss of their leader. This moment in the history of the Grateful Dead also marks the end of the band and subsequent end of touring. The film shows that Deadheads were left to wander and wonder about their identities as Deadheads. Some expressed interest in other bands while others decided it was time to return to "normal" life, that is life in the parent culture.

3.3: Participant Observation and Field Notes

The Deadhead scene and the Jamband community represent a sector of society that is not well understood by the mainstream culture. Many of their activities are viewed as controversial, involve

heavily coded interpersonal interactions, and are often hidden from public view. As Lee notes,

participant observation is an excellent methodological tool to study these sort of phenomena (1999). By

placing oneself inside of the culture the researcher is afforded a much closer look into the inner

workings of the culture.

The purpose of participant observation and its use as an ethnographic research method is to

gain insight into a phenomenon that is not normally easily accessed. Wacquant (2003) defines

ethnography as "social research based on the close-up, on the ground observation of people and

institutions in real time and space, in which the investigator embeds herself near (or within) the

phenomenon so as to detect how and why agents on the scene act, think and feel the way they do"

(Wacquant, 2003:14). As Harrison (2009) notes, "ethnographic knowledge is the product of a network

of situated social relationships and the events (observed and experienced) that they simulate" (Harrison,

2009:6). Generally speaking participant observation "requires a careful balancing of securing

information on prespecified items of interest with an ear for novelty, spontaneity, and the

unanticipated" (Anderson, 2009:186).

There are several advantages and disadvantages to this method of research. Lee (1999) notes

that "the primary advantages of participation and observation studies derive from first-hand knowledge

gained about organizational phenomena as they occur (a) in a real-world context, (b) in real time, and (c)

without the prompting of potential distortions (or discomfort) from post hoc verbal descriptions" (99).

The primary disadvantages of this method "stem from the potential for conflict between researchers'

efforts to establish trust and their possible observation of unethical situations and acts" (Lee, 1999:99).

There are also several other constraints on the researcher that can limit his/her ability to conduct

research or revisit a site such as travel costs and proximity to location. Most importantly, the researcher

must identify the phenomena they wish to study and the opportunities they have available to observe the phenomena in a natural setting.

3.4: My Personal History

The first time I heard the Grateful Dead's music I hated it. It was around 1996 and I was watching VH1 and saw the music video for "Touch of Grey." I remember thinking the video was kind of cool, but the music just wasn't my thing. At that time in my life I was listening mostly to grunge, alternative rock, and hip-hop. As I became older I found newer music less and less appealing to me. I had grown tired of the stale one-hit wonders that were calling themselves rock acts so I totally immersed myself into classic rock. My favorites at the time were bands like The Doors, Jimi Hendrix, Led Zeppelin, and The Who. Little did I know that somehow this would lead me back to the Grateful Dead, a band I knew almost nothing about aside from a cheesy video with dancing skeletons.

One night during my freshman year of college (2002) a friend and I were unaccountably hungry during the wee hours of the morning and decided to satisfy our craving for tacos. This friend was a fraternity brother of mine and happened to listen to a lot of the same music as I did. I remember sitting in the passenger seat of my friend's car listening to a band unlike anything I had ever heard before. It sounded like classic rock, but I could not quite put my finger on the band. I remember hearing a "twangy" guitar riff coupled with a driving bass line and an R and B beat from the drums. I was completely blown away by this music.

After putting my pride aside and giving up on impressing my friend with my knowledge of classic rock I finally asked him "what band is this, this is awesome?" He replied, "this is the Grateful Dead man, Europe '72 (a popular live Grateful Dead album)." "The Grateful Dead?!" I replied curiously. I began to recall that awful video and thought to myself "these guys are not the same band I saw on VH1." We continued to listen to the first side of the album and after inhaling my food I went straight home and

began to scour the internet for any music I could find by the Grateful Dead. I remembered my

Grandmother bought several vinyl records for me at a yard sale several years back and one of them

happened to be "Europe '72." Needless to say I wore the vinyl and my record player out. After several

weeks of intense searching and listening to shows I was hooked. I wanted to experience this music live!

Unfortunately, the Grateful Dead had been finished for some time. It had been almost eight

years since Jerry's death and the remaining members did not tour together as often as in the past. I was

in a conundrum. I was becoming obsessed with a band that had not made any new music in almost

fifteen years. I turned to my friends and started listening other jambands like Phish, Widespread Panic,

and String Cheese Incident. I began to notice many similarities in the style of the Grateful Dead and

these other jambands. I used the Grateful Dead as a springboard and then began to listen to Phish and

several other Jambands by suggestion from my friends. Needless to say my life was changed forever.

During the summer of 2003 several of my friends mentioned that they were going to a few Phish

shows in the area. Now was my chance to experience this music live and participate in the culture I had

heard so much about. I immediately bought a ticket and prepared for what would be my first

introduction to the culture. I did not know what to expect. I had heard stories about the Grateful Dead

and other jambands and the sense of community surrounding them and their fans, but was excited to

find out for myself. I remember arriving in the parking lot and seeing all of the vendors and people

tailgating. I thought to myself, "these people aren't dirty hippies, they just wanna party and listen to

good music like me." I left that first concert impressed and hungry for more.

The following year Phish announced that they were taking a break and 2004 would be their last

tour. I remember being disappointed because I was new to the scene and was not ready to give up this

part of my life. IIn an effort to maintain this new lifestyle I had chosen I purchased a ticket to the

Bonnaroo Music and Arts Festival in Manchester Tennessee, where the Dead were the headliners, and a

two-night pass to see Phish at historic Alpine Valley Music Center in East Troy Wisconsin. That summer I was completely engulfed by the culture. I felt like I finally "got it," like I belonged. I began to appreciate all aspects of the experience not just the actual live music. The communal values of the culture were finally becoming clear to me. I felt welcomed by other members and no longer received strange looks from other members. I learned how to behave at shows from my friends and watching others as they danced to the music and sold burritos in the parking lot reminiscent of the Deadheads before them. I thought this would be my last chance to experience the Jamband scene, luckily I was wrong.

After the Phish breakup I began to listen to other bands like Widespread Panic, String Cheese Incident, and moe.. I noticed that the scene was very similar to the one I had experienced on Phish tour. I also noticed that there was a distinct difference between myself and what are commonly referred to as "noobs," or new people in the scene. Suddenly I was looking at new-comers and shaking my head in distaste when someone talked through the entire first set, or constantly yelled out the name of a song in attempt to get the band to play it. I can remember several older Deadheads complaining about the behavior of this younger crowd and how they "didn't get it, they don't understand the scene." To "understand the scene," or to "get it," meant to adhere to the norms and values of the community and to appreciate the music above all else, as it was expected to be the central focus. As a budding sociologist I wondered why this was. What made them any different from myself or a Deadhead for that matter. In 2009 I sought out an answer to that question.

The spring of 2009 was a very busy with working on a Thesis topic and continuing my graduate education. I took a seminar on culture and realized that I could answer my Jamband identity questions with the help of sociology. I came up with a research proposal and after receiving IRB approval began to take notes at shows that I attended. Lucky for me, Phish got back together in 2009 and announced an extensive tour schedule. They also were scheduled to play the Bonnaroo Festival that year, something

they had never done in the past. I thought this would be the perfect opportunity to conduct my

research. After checking the dates it worked out that I could attend both the festival and a four night

stint on tour with Phish. Over the course of eleven days in June I attended the Bonnaroo Music and Arts

Festival (including two performances by Phish) and traveled across seven states to see Phish four nights

in a row.

3.5: Field Notes

This tour schedule allowed me to collect some field notes. The Bonnaroo festival provided an

excellent look into the culture due to it being a four day festival, rather than one singular show. During

this four day period I walked through the massive campsite casually talking with people about where

they were from and if they were going to continue on tour after the festival. Most of them replied that

they were only attending Bonnaroo, but might be going to other festivals throughout the summer. I

woke up the morning of the third day of the festival and borrowed some coffee from my camping

neighbors. They were listening to electronic music which had been featured in the past, but was not as

prevalent at Bonnaroo as in years before. I was curious to see what their opinion was of the festival or if

they would mention Phish at all.

> **NC:** Pretty sick festival so far huh?
>
> **BF:** Yeah but Rothbury [a music festival] is gonna be the shit!
>
> **NC:** So you're headed up there after this?
>
> **BF:** Yeah we are leaving straight from here, then catching All Good [another music festival]

However, there were several individuals that said, "Bonnaroo is my first stop, I'm catching seven [Phish]

shows after this." I knew I was on the right track. While waiting in line for the restroom I struck up a

conversation with someone wearing a Phish shirt.

> **NC:** Who are you most excited to see?

PF: Oh dude Phish for sure! Two shows man!

NC: Yeah that's the main reason I'm here too

PF: How many shows are you going to this summer?

NC: I'm doing Pittsburgh, Deer Creek, and both nights of Alpine. You?

PF: That's awesome man I'm doing Deer Creek then catching the second leg of tour out West

After the festival I came home to rest then headed out two days later for a four day Phish run. During this run I attended a show in Pittsburgh PA, Indianapolis IN, and two shows in East Troy Wisconsin. A few friends that I was travelling with and I arrived in the parking lot a few hours before the show and began to walk around and check out "shakedown street" where all the vendors were located. I remember noticing a guy that was printing personalized Grateful Dead shirts. I wanted to buy one, but didn't have enough cash with me.

NC: Hey man I like your shirts are you gonna be around after the show?

SG: Yeah for sure, I'm doing the rest of the tour so I'll be around

I thought I would never see him again but, as I continued my mini-tour I saw the same guy at the next three shows. I also noticed several other vendors and people I had met at the other shows along the road.

This tour was very valuable to my research as I was able to see how the culture acts from city to city. With each new concert site came a new set of fans with varying levels of involvement in the culture. Also, I was able to see many of the same faces from venue to venue. The next year (2010) I again followed Phish for several days in the summer. Once again I was observing the culture and trying to find the differences between members of the culture and the "noobs" and outsiders. I noticed that most outsiders did not follow the band and only attended shows near their area. Some of them said

they did not like Phish, but knew there would be a party when they came to town. In a conversation with someone on the lawn – the general admission area of the concert venue – I asked briefly about his involvement. Based on his loud behavior and general disrespect for others around him, I assumed that he had not been involved for very long.

> **NC**: How many shows have you been to?
>
> **PF**: This is our first one. She [female companion] doesn't even like Phish, but I made her come a anyways (laughing)
>
> **NC:** Oh that's cool man, I saw my first show in Charlotte as well. Are you guys going to anymore shows?
>
> **PF:** Nah I live in Charlotte so it was just something to do. I'm really more of a Panic guy anyways.

 I took all of this information in and recorded it in my notes. I used these notes to come up with questions for my interviews.

3.6: Semi-Structured Interviews

My last method was to interview two Deadheads who had been involved with the culture for a very long time. As I have mentioned earlier I was denied participation when I tried to recruit people for study online so I was considerably pessimistic when asked about conducting interviews. Then one day I was bartending wearing a Grateful Dead hat. A gentleman noticed the hat and we began to talk. He told me that he began seeing the Grateful Dead in 1978 and followed them until the end in 1995. I told him that I was currently working on a project about subculture membership and was using the Deadheads as a case study. He informed me that he was in academia as well and asked me if I wanted to interview him for my research. I jumped at the opportunity to finally go in-depth with some Deadheads. During this time I was introduced to another gentleman who had attended over 150 shows

and heard through a mutual friend about my research and wanted to be interviewed as well. There are obvious limitations to having only two interviews and in no way do these interviews provide a representative sample. However, the two interviews are still valuable as each of the interviewees were highly involved with the culture for extended periods of time and at different time periods, chronologically speaking. Further research would also benefit from interviewing individuals not as highly involved in the subculture to gain a better perspective on how outsiders view subculture members.

I was fortunate that these individuals had in fact recruited me and were more open and willing to share their experiences than the message board users. The interviews were conducted in two locations: the dining room of an interviewee's home and a local pub with a quiet back room. Each interview lasted around an hour and a half and were not tape recorded in an attempt to create a more casual and candid atmosphere. I asked several questions about their experiences in the culture, what changes they had noticed over time, when they felt accepted into the culture, how they viewed outsiders, how the death of Jerry Garcia affected them personally, and what their thoughts on the current state of the scene were. By conducting these interviews I hoped to gain further access into the scene and further explore the crisis of authenticity. Since these two individuals had been involved in the scene for so long the information I received from them was extremely valuable and an excellent complement to the data I had already collected. It should also be noted that these two individuals are in no way a representative sample of all Deadheads. These individuals were involved with the culture, but just as any member of the culture will tell you, their experience has been one of a highly personal nature and therefore cannot be applied to the greater Deadhead community.

Chapter 4: Case Study: A Brief History of the Grateful Dead

The history of the Grateful Dead has its roots in the Haight Ashbury scene of San Francisco in the late 1960s. San Francisco and the Haight Ashbury became the nexus of the counterculture movement. The 1960s were a time of great social change and the music of the period began to reflect the changes in society. This period was also marked by heavy drug use, as Garofalo (2005) notes, "for the counterculture, the focus on mind-expanding drugs seemed to offer the possibility of greater self-awareness and consciousness, which would in turn lead to a world without war, competition, or regimentation" (Garofalo, 2005:182).

Amidst the social change that was occurring, rock and roll was also changing with the times. By the late 1960s many different types of music became emblematic of a larger cultural change occurring in the US (Garofalo, 2005). During this period many new bands formed in the San Francisco bay area playing a new form of rock and roll called "psychedelic rock." Psychedelic rock was a new form of rock and roll that emphasized long improvisational "jamming," extensive lighting and effects, and was often heightened by large scale drug use. It was a "significant musical and cultural departure from contemporary popular styles, seen in the distorted, extended guitar improvisations, which paralleled the emerging sixties blues revival and took on more major scale melodic character than their blues counterparts" (Friedlander, 2006:187). The music of psychedelic rock bands began to symbolize the goals, or ultimate quest, of the hippie movement. As Friedlander notes, "this quest manifested itself through music that tested existing boundaries and lyrics that were highly critical of mainstream society" (Friedlander, 2006:187). These new psychedelic rock acts would provide the soundtrack for the hippie movement.

The 1960s represent a period of great social change in America's history. San Francisco, and more specifically, the Haight Ashbury district quickly became a haven for individuals seeking solace from

the problems of society. Individuals from all over the country began to travel to the Haight Ashbury in search of answers, "many who flocked to the Haight were baby boomers who had grown up in educated middle class homes" (Friedlander, 2006; Garofalo, 2005; Szatmary, 145:1996). Following in the footsteps of their beatnik predecessors the hippies criticized the bourgeois values with which they had been raised. They began to grow their hair long and dress in Victorian style outfits and Native American style dresses. This was done in an effort to rebel against "straight" culture, or what scholars have called the parent culture (Cohen, 1955; Hall and Jefferson, 2006).

One of the most significant practices of the new youth culture was drug use. Many, including most notably Timothy Leary, viewed drugs as essential to the agenda of freedom, love, and sharing that the hippies had adopted (Friedlander, 2006). The hippies used psychedelics, such as LSD and mescaline, and marijuana to expand their minds and enhance their individual potential and strengthen group bonds. Through this practice LSD came to define the hippie experience. Drugs were a large part of the musical experience as well. In the late1960s many dance halls were used for large "acid tests" during which any number of people, sometimes several thousand, would "drop out" and experience the moving sounds and colorful lights of San Francisco area bands such as Jefferson Airplane, Quicksilver Messenger Service, and the Grateful Dead (Szatmary, 1996). These experiences were heightened by advances in audio technology and intense light shows that projected psychedelic imagery on the walls of the venue and even by the concert posters themselves which often featured psychedelic artwork (Garofalo, 2005). In many ways San Francisco was at the forefront of these technological advances. The area was quickly developing a signature "sound" that was fueled by drugs and state of the art technology.

In addition to providing a more intense personal experience, psychedelic drugs were also believed to create a sense of being that could be shared with others. Through the use of drugs and

other communal events many hippies began to develop a sense of tribalism and community that became the ethos of the movement. Garofalo (2005) notes that the story of many of the San Francisco area bands "is one that combines the anti-commercial tendencies of disaffected white middle-class youth with the mind-altering properties of lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD, acid)" (Garofalo, 2005:182). The middle class youths that comprised the hippie movement furthered the notion of the tribe through their collective anti-corporate ideology and adopted a noncompetitive lifestyle centered on sharing resources with others (Szatmary, 1996). They began to cultivate personal appearances, or what Hebdige (1979), would refer to as style, that reflected the elements of their culture. This new culture began to produce cultural artifacts such as magazines and newspapers, and perhaps the most long-lasting artifact, their music.

The music that would emerge from the psychedelic experience came to be known as acid rock (Garofalo, 2005). Ralph Gleason of Rolling Stone noted that "rock and roll is more than just music. It is the energy center of the new culture and the youth revolution…rock and roll is the *only* way in which the vast but formless power of youth is structured" (Szatmary, 1996:151). Psychedelic rock would provide the outlet these youths needed and would come to the forefront in the movement for cultural change. The new sound of psychedelic rock was created by middle-class youths and addressed many of the social issues of the day such as: civil rights, the Vietnam War, police brutality, and many others (Friedlander, 2006). Much like their hippie followers these psychedelic bands renounced the competitive corporate structure of American society and the recording industry in particular (Szatmary, 1996).

One way in which bands acted out toward the corporate machine was to hold free concerts. Throughout the late 1960s Golden Gate Park served as the backdrop for many free concerts hosted by several bands such as: Jefferson Airplane, the Grateful Dead, Moby Grape, Hot Tuna, and many others.

The day long, sometimes longer, events were called "be-ins" and usually involved collective use of LSD and other drugs (Jackson et al., 2003). The Grateful Dead were at the forefront of these events. They gave to the hippie culture so much that they performed more free concerts than any other band (Garofalo, 2005). The sole purpose of these events was not just to listen to music, but also to raise awareness and consciousness in the community. This emphasis on sharing and community was not only lived by the individuals in the movement, but also by the bands that produced the music of the movement.

The importance of sharing in the community also determined the role of band members. David Getz, drummer for Big Brother and the Holding Company remembered that, "the whole philosophy of the psychedelic scene was to consciously avoid making anyone the star, focusing more on the interaction between the audience and the band and trying to create something together. That's how the energy happened" (Szatmary, 1996:155). As Friedlander (2006) notes "the musicians artistic output strongly reflected the community's escape from the straight world and its idealistic search for a different set of values and existence" (Friedlander, 2006:187). Here we can see a shift in musical performance. Live performances were more desirable than static studio recordings because they were an interaction between the band and the audience.

Of the popular groups of the time, the Grateful Dead were quickly on the move to the forefront. Shenk and Simon classify the music of the Grateful Dead as an amalgam of American popular music from bluegrass to country to pop music to jazz, as well as atonal "space" music and the "signature psychedelic riffs that characterized most San Francisco bands of the late 1960's (Shenk and Simon, 2000:55). They were constantly pioneering new audio and recording equipment in attempts to maximize the experience. Their endorsement of drug use and embracing of technology made them the archetypes of the San Francisco sound. In addition to their San Francisco sound the Grateful Dead closely adhered to

the hippie ethos. One of the most endearing qualities of the band was their commitment to a sense of

community (Garofalo, 2005). This notion of equality also translated into the way they treated their

audience, "since everyone was family, the audience deserved the best; for the Dead, the best translated

into a lengthy show full of improvisational inspiration" and "on many good nights and the occasional

great one the group and the audience celebrated a musical and spiritual communion" (Friedlander,

2006:192-3).

As the sixties and the hippie movement came to an end so too did most of the bands from the

San Francisco Bay Area. Jefferson Airplane split up into Jefferson Starship and Hot Tuna, and many of

the other bands such as Sopwith Camel, Quicksilver Messenger Service, and many others simply faded

away with time. The Grateful Dead, however, seemed to flourish in the seventies. To many in the

1970s, the Grateful Dead were the only contemporary musical performers who "symbolized idealism,

purity, and the integrity of the sixties" (Friedlander, 2006:202). Many of their songs expressed

communal values that echoed their roots in the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco, the nexus of

the hippie movement. One of the biggest reasons for their continued success in the seventies is the

community of followers surrounding the band known as the Deadheads.

4.2: The Deadheads

There is much debate in the Deadhead subculture and academic arena about the true definition

of a deadhead. Some have given overly simplified definitions such as "Deadheads are characterized as

individuals who enjoy the music of the Grateful Dead and enjoy spending time with like-minded others

(Hunt, 2008:358), while others have theorized more detailed definitions involving types of Deadheads

based on adherence to ideals of the subculture and involvement within. As Sardiello (1998) notes

"Deadheads will tend to refer to themselves communally, and emphasize the unity inherent in this

identity, especially when differentiating themselves from non-Deadheads. However, they will also

distinguish among themselves. The nature of this identity differentiation is based partially on the degree of one's involvement and participation in the social world" (130). One thing scholars can agree on is that the Deadheads are a dedicated community of followers surrounding the Grateful Dead that emphasize the hippie ethos of the 1960s and value a communal way of life that can be manifested in the shared concert experience (Adams, 2000; Sardiello, 1998; Hunt, 2008; Shenk and Simon, 2000). But where did all of these followers come from?

Historically, the term Deadhead appears in 1971. The first mention of the term appeared in the jacket cover of "Grateful Dead" (1971) aka "Skull and Roses" (Jackson et al., 2003:137). In a small corner of the jacket appeared a picture of a "steal your face," one of the most widely recognizable Grateful Dead symbols, and the words "DEAD FREAKS UNITE! Who are you? Where are you? How are you?" (Jackson et al., 2003:137). This message was followed by a contact information form with the return address "Dead Heads, PO Box 1065, San Rafael, CA 94901." Many fans answered this calling and the first Deadhead "mailings" were released containing valuable information about tickets, taping, and the culture in general. The question still arises, however, why did the Grateful Dead develop such a strong community as compared to many other bands?

By the mid 1970s the band had essentially attracted a second generation of fans. Jackson et al. note that the Grateful Dead provided "Deadheads for whom the Acid Tests, the Haight, and the big festivals were legendary events, and for whom the arrival of "tour" was not just the chance to hear great music and party with old friends and new, but also a sign of a bygone era" (2003:174). In many ways Deadheads were trying to reclaim their youth from the sixties, for others it was a time machine that could transport them to San Francisco in 1967. From their beginnings in the San Francisco Bay Area the Grateful Dead sought to create a distincive experience to be shared with the audience. But the question remains, was this distinctive experience capable of creating a subculture?

Chapter 5: The Grateful Dead as a Subculture

The effects of subculture membership include the finding of a solution to a shared problem in the parent culture, the adoption of shared norms and values of the subculture, and also the label of deviant. But what made the Deadhead scene so unique, what problem were they seeking a solution to? Pearson (1987) points out that new members of the subculture are drawn in because "they view the band's music as a refreshing alternative to the formulaic Top 40, MTV, and heavy metal fare offered by the mass rock media" (1987:428). This is symbolized by efforts on the part of the Grateful Dead to control the means of production of their music. At one point the Grateful Dead tried to start their own record company to avoid the problematic nature of the popular music industry which they viewed as counter to what they stood for. Scholars have used the term "underground" to refer to music that "implies the presence of strong political sentiment emanating from subjugated positions within the social hierarchy" (Szemere, 1996:27). Harrison (2006) notes that "in addition to operating outside commercial music arenas, this understanding of what is authentically underground assumes an ideological orientation against what is perceived as the exploitative practices of major record labels and big businesses more generally" (2006:290). In addition to going underground and starting their own record label the Grateful Dead attempted to provide a concert experience unlike any other.

Jennings (2000) notes that "while the Grateful Dead were performing the focus of Deadhead culture was seeing and hearing them perform" (2000:204). The Grateful Dead were famous for playing a different setlist every night; from 1965 to 1991 the Grateful Dead never played the same setlist twice (Shank and Simon, 2000). This made every show a unique phenomenon and caused Deadheads to try and attend every show. This added to the communal identity that was being produced through the improvisational music. The Deadhead's identity was formed by the shared experience of seeing a different show every night. By attending as many shows as possible Deadheads were able to constantly

relive the sixties through the music and concert experience of the Grateful Dead. The desire to see as

many shows as possible had a profound effect on the Deadhead subculture. Deadheads were known for

traveling great lengths to see the band play, even venues like the Great Pyramids of Egypt (Jackson, et

al., 2003).

The Grateful Dead played more than 2000 shows in 45 states and 13 foreign countries. Since

the innovations in modes of playback such as the cassette and compact disc, fans have recorded and

archived vast amounts of live musical performances. The practice of taping and the bands'

encouragement of it add value to the experience. A fan can take away some of the experience or

capture the aura of the show by taping it and listening to it later. As Thornton (1995b) notes in her work

on club cultures recordings of live shows began to transform from second-rate reproductions of live

performances, to treasured staples of the culture (1995:27-9). In Thornton's (1995b) view live

recordings were beginning to take on the aura of an original and authentic concert. Tapes provide a way

of reliving the experience of the concert, or for those who were unable to attend, tapes are a close

substitute to being at the show.

Playing a different setlist each night had other effects on the culture as well. Eventually fans

began to develop schemes and patterns to predict what the band would play on any given night, often

recalling past experiences or patterns within song variation. Often, fans will group songs into styles such

as bluegrass, folk, or country and base their predictions on who is the lead singer at the time (Shank and

Simon, 2000). These predictions by fans allow members to participate in what Dollar refers to as speech

events (1999). Dollar notes two types of speech events revolving around the setlist: by employing

"deadspeak," or the language of the Deadheads, members engage in "show talk," talk regarding the

quality of the performance, or past performances, "show talk" also includes a ritual speech event

referred to as "calling the opener" during which fans try and determine the first song to be played that

show (1999). Some status is afforded those who can call the opener successfully. Pearson notes that these events commonly serve as initiations into the subculture (1987).

Another way in which subcultures solve a problem in the parent culture is through the development of what Hebdige (1979) refers to as a style. The style of a subculture has several functions, but the most obvious is to distinguish between a member of a subculture and a non-member. Physical factors such as a specific type of clothing, tattoos, or length of hair can provide great indicators of an individual's affiliation with a group.

However, they do not necessarily mean that one belongs to a subculture. In today's technology driven society it is very easy to purchase these items from a retail store or the internet, or simply walk in to a tattoo parlor. The increased number of the items available makes important in-group symbols available to out-group members. The Grateful Dead have several logos to which they are attached, most notably the Steal Your Face, the Dancing Bears, and the Skull and Roses. Vendors in the lot would affix these icons on everything from t-shirts to handbags. All of these goods then become subcultural artifacts that display membership in the community. These artifacts can also be looked at as what Thornton refers to as subcultural capital (1995). Subculture members most often purchased these items in the parking lots before shows. These items display membership and manifest the values of the community through their embodiment and objectification (Thornton, 1995). Embodied subcultural capital can be viewed as the norms and values of a particular subculture, and objectified subcultural capital is simply the style of dress and other physical aspects of subculture members.

Since the early 1970s fans have been creating a "bazaar-like community" in the parking lot. What would become known simply as "the lot," was a throwback to the open air markets of the middle east. The bazaar was a marketplace that sold goods and wares from street side carts and tables to the townspeople. Most of these items were handmade clothing and food products. This was transformed

in the parking lot of Grateful Dead concerts. Carts and tables were replaced with pickup truck beds and trunks of cars, and tables were replaced with rugs on the ground.

Pearson has described the lot scene as "an apparent vestige of the 1960s communal lifestyle… this mobile community provides a backdrop against which other activities at the concert site occur, providing atmosphere and a sense of continuity with the 1960s counter culture" (1987:427). Pearson further notes that there is a "strong anticorporate ethos that pervades all this economic activity, something that has been perpetuated by the band members themselves" (Pearson, 1987:431). In this portable community fans will share, barter, and buy and sell from one another to acquire items such as: jewelry, shirts, hats, beer, food, and tickets. This community displayed itself at every concert before and after thus creating a ritual component of the subculture (Hunt, 1996).

As Sheptoski (2000) has noted, vending functions as a cultural and material support for the construction of an identity as a member of the subculture. Vendors are the ones who make the handbags or t-shirts or stickers and distribute them. In a sense the vendors are some of the gate-keepers of membership. Most merchandise bought at shows is seen as more authentic, as it was produced by members of the culture and not purchased commercially, and therefore would display membership. It is usually bought from individual vendors operating out of their car or simply walking around with a makeshift sign advertising his/her goods. These goods are usually handmade or original designs and often are produced rather inexpensively. By selling the authentic merchandise vendors provide subcultural capital that is highly prized by members. This has been challenged over time with commercialization and the internet.

As I have alluded to previously, there are several ways in which an individual is socialized into the Deadhead subculture. Another form of socialization is emphasized in the work of Howard Becker and the adoption of deviant behavior. In his studies on becoming a Marijuana smoker Becker identifies

three stages of learning deviant behavior that coincide with different levels of involvement within a deviant group (Becker, 1953). These levels are the novice, the occasional, and the regular. The classifications are drawn based on an individual's usage and understanding of Marijuana and will be operationalized as an individual's involvement within the Deadhead subculture.

The novice is an individual whose participation in the subculture is something new and relatively limited. Novices have not had enough experience to fully understand the subculture, nor do they possess the necessary subcultural capital to be full members of the community. The occasional is someone who has been participating in the community and has begun to embody the values and ideals of other members. He/she is someone who understands the effects, or gains of subcultural membership, but does not fully appreciate them and has not converted over to full membership. The regular is someone who understands the effects of subcultural membership and has made this behavior a major part of his/her lifestyle.

This is similar to the experiences of the two Deadheads I conducted interviews with Daniel and Drew. In their experiences most young heads were mentored in some abstract way. They learned how to act by watching others and talking with them in the parking lot. In the same letter to the fans regarding vending the band addressed the role of old heads in the education of new heads "it's up to you as Deadheads to educate these people and to pressure them into acting like Deadheads instead of maniacs" (Meeske, 2005). Many heads refer to this as "new school" and agree that because they did not police themselves newer fans think their behavior is the norm.

The unique concert experience that the Grateful Dead provided caused their popularity to rise in the late 1970s. Due to their rising popularity, the Grateful Dead were forced to hold concerts in larger arenas rather than small theaters like they were accustomed to. This had a tremendous effect on the band and its nation of followers the Deadheads. One of the most obvious effects of the shift to arena

performances was the increase in drug busts and police intervention on the scene. Now that the band was drawing larger crowds the drug enforcement agents began targeting Deadheads because of their open drug use. This new attention from law enforcement saw the arrest of many heads on the road. The problem became so great that Relix magazine began posting a column called "Deadheads Behind Bars" that provided correspondence information for heads who were arrested on tour to be able to keep in touch with their friends and family on the road.

Another effect of the rise in popularity was the increased difficulty in getting tickets to shows. A controversy arose among Deadheads and resentment surrounded the new fans. The scene began to fragment and problems arose with too many people showing up to concerts without tickets. This new problem was actually addressed by the band in several letters to the Deadheads pleading with them to not follow the band on tour unless they had tickets to the show (Brown, 2009; Meeske,2005). The parking lot became the site where all the ticketless fans would congregate during the shows. It was perhaps the area most affected by the intrusion of the new fans.

The behavior of new fans led The Deadheads to being labeled deviant by mainstream society. As Hebdige (1979) notes, being labeled deviant is the last phase of a subculture. After a subculture develops a style and it becomes popularized through mainstream consumption the next step is for the subculture to be labeled deviant. This creates problems for the subculture and its authentic members. In the following section I will outline several factors contributing to a crisis of authenticity in the Deadhead subculture.

*Chapter 6: Elements of Crisis in the Deadhead Subculture*

A key part of maintaining a subcultural way of life is boundary maintenance. That is, controlling who is defined as an authentic member and who is not. As long as subcultures have been examined there have been a certain crises of authenticity. However, the life of most subcultures is relatively short. The Deadheads are an example of a subculture that persisted for several decades as opposed to only a few years like the Punk subculture. In this section I will outline several factors that may have contributed to a crisis of authenticity in the Deadhead subculture. I will rely on first person interviews, primary data in the form of Relix magazine articles, a documentary film on the Deadheads filmed during the final tour in 1995, and my own ethnographic field notes. Some of these factors are: the death of Jerry Garcia and subsequent end of the Grateful Dead's nationwide touring, commercialization and mainstream success, and the internet.

From my content analysis I found that issues of authenticity have been a concern for Deadheads just like in any other subculture. However, this crisis has not always been the same. In the late 1970s the crisis was centered on new fans and the increasing number of problems with drugs and law enforcement. In the 1980s new fans were still the biggest problem, but they were so as a result of commercialization, mainstream success (i.e. the release of *In the Dark, 1987*), and behavior, or lack thereof, at concerts. In the years leading up to the death of Jerry Garcia most issues of authenticity were centered on who belonged to the scene and why. The issues with "new heads" was still the primary concern of Deadheads.

After the death of Jerry Garcia the culture articles became focused on remembering the fallen hero and what to do since the Grateful Dead were not touring any longer. Relix even began to include a section called "Where To Go Now That There Ain't No Shows," that listed bands that were similar to the Grateful Dead for those Deadheads that did not want to stop touring. Some of the articles and letters

discussed alternatives to the Grateful Dead experience in the form of other Jambands and most others

addressed the identity issues that were present after Jerry's death. Many people asked themselves

what a Deadhead was, could they still exist as they had for thirty years, and what would become of the

scene that they so cherished.

The table below represents the number of occurrences of each theme (articles and letters) over

a twenty-five year period. I have broken this time period into five year increments to better

demonstrate the trends in topics. I have chosen these year intervals so as to highlight the year of the

release of *In The Dark,* and the death of Jerry Garcia. It becomes easy to see that issues of subculture

and identity became increasingly more common leading up to the death of Jerry Garcia. Even after his

death the issue of authenticity and the state of the subculture was still the most common topic among

Deadheads   contributing to Relix magazine.
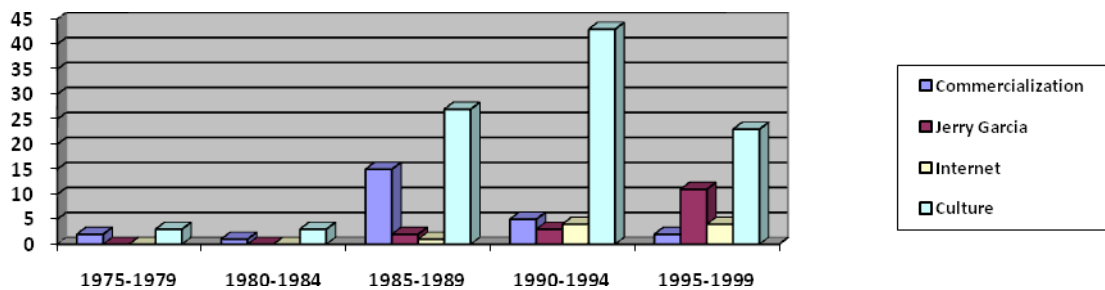
6.1: Commercialization and the "New Heads"

Commercialization and mass production have caused the subcultural value of many items to

decrease as they are too easily obtained and too easily adorned by non-members. The internet has

furthered this by allowing individuals to buy goods without ever attending a show. Now, suddenly

anyone can look like a Deadhead and have no idea the values inherent to being a Deadhead. In a 1978

interview a spokesman from Winterland Productions, the Grateful Dead's merchandising company, was

asked about the plethora of merchandise available to fans, "it's the things the kids really want – some kind of merchandise with the group's name on it that they can wear for identity" (Stanton, 1978:38).

With new found success came increases in merchandise sales. Daniel remembers a time when he was working in a "kind" (kind is an adjective used to describe people who adhere to the values of the subculture) store selling Grateful Dead t-shirts, "we were selling the authentic shit, not the bootlegged stuff you'd see in the lot." Daniel is pointing to the shift in vending from producing goods to make enough money to continue on tour producing lesser quality goods in attempts to make large profits. Sharing Daniel's sentiments, one head had this to say in a letter to Relix in 1988, "Sharing the Dead with the masses is alright. How can you be mad at something people enjoy? The thing that bums me out is the people who dress up as Deadheads and do their trips and then get so wasted. They can't deal with the scene and freak out. Just wish that things were like the late 70s and early 80s" (Relix, 1988:6).

With more and more people showing up without tickets the parking lot scene began to transform into the full-on bizarre atmosphere that has survived to this day. The parking lot scene was becoming more of an attraction than the music and the band tried to put a stop to vending as it attracted too many people without tickets. The problem became so big that the band itself released a statement: "Don't vend, vending attracts people without tickets, people without tickets have no responsibility to our scene" (Meeske, 2005). The parking lot and vending in general were at one time an authentic site where subculture members met and exchanged subcultural capital. As the popularity of the band increased the lot become more and more of a raucous party than a subcultural marketplace.

The crackdown on vending was met with mixed results from Deadheads. One Deadhead had this to say about the push to end vending, "they want to hammer us down…they don't realize we are the ones who put the banquet on the table" (Meeske, 2005). The push to end vending caused many vendors to run operations out of their homes rather than on the road. Relix began including a section

every month called "Craft Corner" where vendors could advertise their goods while not on the road. As the 1970s came to a close and the Dead marched on through the 1980s another problem would arise for the band and its followers.

Many old heads will tell you that the biggest event that "shook up" the scene was the mainstream success the Grateful Dead were afforded after the release of *In the Dark*, the album containing the band's only top 10 single "Touch of Grey" (1987). After almost twenty five years of being below the radar the band now had a large number of new fans that wanted to experience what the Deadheads had been for the last two decades. These new fans would clash with the old Deadheads in a struggle over identity within the subculture.

One head remembers the change quite vividly "1987 Laguna Seca, *Touch of Grey* came out and a new set of people came out that didn't have the education of the 60s" (Meeske, 2005). Meaning, these new people entering the scene did not adhere to the communal values of the subculture and acted selfishly, rather than selflessly. Some heads felt differently. One head interviewed for *The End of the Road,* welcomed new heads saying, "this time it's different…these are the flower children of the 70s, it's the same thing, it's not any different, this is real…all they want is some fellowship, some love, and peace. They come where they can find camaraderie…anyone can be a Deadhead the Dead are part of the experience" (Meeske, 2005). Other sentiments expressed feelings of distrust and resentment, "back then everybody was looking to change things it was a revolution, psychedelic revolution…nowadays it's an 'I don't give a fuck attitude'" (Meeske, 2005). These sentiments seemed to be new to the scene however. In an interview with a Deadhead that I shall call Drew, he recalls when he entered the scene in the late 1970s and being welcomed by older heads:

NC: "What were the noticeable differences between you and the established heads?"
Drew: "I didn't always fit in visually, I wore tie-dyes sometimes. As far as doing stuff [drugs]

we were the same. Essence of the scene was just a lot of really good people who loved the music and the scene…everyone was friendly"

NC: "In the early 1980s, after the problems with tickets and new faces in the scene, what were the feelings of old heads and the new kids on tour?"

Drew: "I don't think Deadheads ever met people they couldn't get along with that was a big piece for me, everybody was friends with everybody"

New faces brought new attitudes and behaviors that did not always coincide with the accepted values of the culture. Daniel remembers how he felt towards outsiders in the early 1990s:

NC: "How did you feel towards new, younger heads? Were you able to distinguish between the two?"

Daniel: "I lived and breathed it every day. I worked at a store where everyone got their information about tour, we're talking pre-internet. I was a source of information. We also sold tie-dyes and tapes and other shit like that, so when I was at a show I recognized "newbies" because they were wearing the factory shirts."

NC: "Were there any differences in behavior?"

Daniel: "Newbies felt like getting arrested was a badge of honor, but that's not what we were about. We all had a good time, but the new kids were more into harder drugs and more into the party than the music.

NC: "What's your opinion of the scene now?"

Daniel: "Scary…risks and consequences aren't as thought out. My age and being more aware… seeing 19 years of shows I know what's going on…I can spot the guy losing his shit two rows up… people getting robbed over drugs and nitrous. The core people are more genuine…age plays a huge role I think."

Daniel and other heads noticed that with this new set of fans came new sets of problems. Newer heads were not yet socialized into the scene and did not always know how to behave at shows.

In addition to being attracted to the Grateful Dead's recent mainstream success, many new fans were attracted to the musical experience the band provided. As the old saying goes, "there is nothing like a Grateful Dead concert."

New fans raised several authenticity issues within the scene. Commercial products such as tie-dye shirts and native American dresses, which were popular in the 60s and therefore viewed as authentic style, made it quite easy for one to appear as though they were a Deadhead. Widdicombe and Wooffitt (1990) address the issue of presentation of self in a subcultural setting, providing one example of authenticity gained by establishing one's personal presentation of self can be found among fans of punk music "being" rather than "doing" punk. There is an emphasis not only on one's style or effective use of objectified subcultural capital, but also on the way one behaves in the subculture. Now that anyone could look like a Deadhead, true Deadheads had to be distinguished by their authentic behavior in the subculture. They did this by displaying behavior that was in accordance with the norms and values of the subculture. A true Deadhead is one that abides by these norms and embraces the way of life chosen by Deadheads. Grana (1989) also notes that the easiest authenticity work is conducted in the situations in which ascribed group membership is necessary for one to represent the group. This places much more emphasis on the embodied subcultural capital of members.

As it was becoming more and more difficult to determine who was in fact a Deadhead it was also becoming increasingly more difficult to get tickets to shows. This resulted in several instances of gate-crashing. Many young heads viewed these events as reflective of the defiant spirit of the 60s, however, older heads who actually lived during the 60s viewed their actions as inconsiderate and ignorant (Meeske, 2005). After one concert in Deer Creek, IN, in 1995 was crashed the band had no choice, but to make the show free out concern for safety of the fans and staff. These actions angered many heads to the point that they made t-shirts that read "Gate-Crashers Suck!" There is documentary

footage of a police officer even buying one from a vendor to show support for the old way of doing things. Once again the band addressed this issue through its newsletter saying, "your reputation is at stake…they can only crash the gate if you allow them. A few thousand so-called Deadheads ignore those simple rules and screw it up for you, us, and everybody" (Meeske, 2005). The actions of these new younger heads forced many old heads to leave the scene entirely and stop touring.

The effects of commercialization and the influx of new heads on the scene had devastating effects on the culture surrounding the Grateful Dead. Old heads were conflicted about the new success and popularity of the band. New heads were challenging the old guard with disruptive behavior and youthful exuberance that was not always welcome. Ed and Jude McDonald, in a letter to Relix, sum up this tumultuous time:

"Unfortunately, it appears that the downside to all this popularity is the great monster called hassle. Hassle demands larger crowds; hassle has made it tough to get tickets, and place counterfeiters in our midst; hassle called in the heat to bust us for smiling on a cloudy day; hassle brought confusion with taping, copyrights and merchandising; hassle instigated quarrels among Deadheads (we personally try to avoid "family" disputes); hassle brought ills and troubles ad infinitum…Hassle almost makes one want to run and ahide and wait for it all to blow over and return to the status quo…But we ask the younger Deadheads (as older Deadheads, who wear our "Touch of Grey" with pride) to please tread lightly on our toes and don't let "push come to shove." There is plenty of space and you really don't need ours. A little respect for the years we wear. We may dance and shake our bones, but we have more age in those bones and the aches that are inherent with age. But we will get by, we will survive" (McDonald, 1988:6).

6.2: The Death of Jerry Garcia and the "End of the Road"

One of the biggest factors and perhaps the biggest moment in the Deadhead subculture's history is the death of Jerry Garcia. Weber defined the charismatic leader as one who possessed "a certain quality of an individual personality, by virtue of which he is set apart from ordinary men and treated as endowed with supernatural, superhuman, or at least specifically exceptional powers or qualities. These are such as are not accessible to the ordinary person, but are regarded as of divine origin or as exemplary, and on the basis of them the individual concerned is treated as a leader" (Weber, 1947:358-359). Jerry was afforded much praise, which he often humbly declined, as the lead guitarist for the Grateful Dead. He was viewed by Deadheads almost as a religious figure that led the subculture across the country in search of the communal experiences they so desired. This is echoed by one concertgoer in the film "The End of the Road," when he said, "Are there any heads around me? I think its kinda silly how people worship the Dead like Gods" "I think he [Jerry Garcia] is a God in his own thing…he is creating his own environment" (Meeske, 2005).

"This world is without end, and so is the life of our friend and leader Jerry Garcia" (Meeske, 2005). And so begins the documentary "The End of the Road" chronicling the last days of Jerry Garcia and for many the last days of an era. He was set apart from other members of the band because of his technical ability and songwriting skills. Because of his role in the band he was viewed as the leader of the Grateful Dead and subsequently as the leader of the Deadhead subculture. Toni Brown describes Jerry's death in this way, "the loss was so indescribably deep, so abstruse that we couldn't share it with those that weren't a part of it. It wasn't just that a guitarist had died. This was the head of our family, and suddenly, unmistakably, our lives were changed forever" (1997). Upon his death many members of the subculture had to make a choice, would they go back to the parent culture, or would they continue

their chosen lifestyle on the road with other bands. I conducted an interview with a Deadhead I will call

Daniel, who attended many shows leading up to the final tour that had this to say about Jerry's death:

NC: What effect did Jerry's death have on you personally?

Daniel: "It was tough, I mean shit, we had a week of vigils and drum circles on the beach. It affected my job…my livelihood. It brought a lot of us together, our hero died."

NC: What did you do after his death? Did you continue on the road with other bands?

Daniel: I started going to more Phish shows and [Widespread] Panic. I had this general love of the music that kept it going. The Dead helped me appreciate the music of other bands."

Drew, a Deadhead who followed the Dead from 1978 until Jerry's death in 1995, had this to say about the end of an era:

NC: "How did Jerry's death affect you personally? I mean after touring for so many years it must have been hard to deal with?"

Drew: "I initially went through some brief depression. I was a middle school principal and still went to shows." (*pauses)*

NC: "Did you try out any other bands or scenes?"

Drew: "That was it… I never gave it another chance… I just stopped. Bob [Weir] just never did it for me… Jerry was my connection to the intensity of the music."

NC: "In a lot of ways Jerry was the Grateful Dead for you. Was your experience shaped mostly by him?"

Drew: "When it was flat you'd go to a Jerry Band show and he was so alive. It was different every night, but in a way it wasn't…and for him it was all about the music"

Jerry's death contributes to the crisis of authenticity in a very immediate way. Many Deadheads

viewed their identity as a master status. Given that the Grateful Dead were the archetype of the

Jamband genre the question becomes "what am I now?" One Deadhead at Jerry's funeral lamented by

saying, "he's gone and I don't know what to do" (Meeske, 2005). Many Deadheads preferred their status as Deadheads over new identities as Phishheads, or as fans of any number of newly emerging Jambands. Deadheads were now looked at differently than before because they were becoming involved in a new community that had different values and a new identity. This new culture did not seem to value the same sense of community that had persisted in the Deadhead subculture for so long. There were no longer just Deadheads, but any number of "heads" related to these Jambands.

Several Deadhead's feelings were echoed by these sentiments "I thought about going to different places, but it didn't seem right" (Meeske, 2005). Deadheads felt that there was a void left in their lives that these new bands could not fill. The sense of community and the values of the subculture were lost to them in this new Jamband community. Many old Deadheads were skeptical and even resentful towards younger heads and new bands. One Deadhead had this to say in a letter to Relix magazine, "[I listen to the] Dead, Dylan, CSNY, stuff like that. Not Phish, definitely not Phish. This Phish thing is getting out of control" (Brown, 1997:34). This echoes the resentment of other Deadheads on the emerging Jamband community and its perceived lack of continuity with the Deadhead subculture.

The death of Jerry had another effect on the authenticity of the subculture. As Peterson notes (1997) music and other cultural products authenticity come into question when they are reproduced. Peterson makes the distinction between an authentic reproduction and kitsch (1997). Up until 1995 the Grateful Dead had maintained the same lineup for thirty years. The only major lineup changes were in the form of keyboard players, but the core group of Phil, Bob, Bill, Mickey, and Jerry had remained relatively unchanged during the band's career. Now suddenly with Jerry gone the band is no longer the Grateful Dead. The leader of the band was gone. In the years following his death many of the members of the band started separate projects and continued to play Grateful Dead songs. This provided a different kind of experience for Deadheads.

Throughout the late 1990s and early 2000s the band would get back together under the names, The Warlocks (their original name before the Grateful Dead), The Other Ones, The Dead (a common nickname for the band that they eventually embraced), and most recently , Furthur. Peterson argues that these new formations of the band are not authentic, that they are a reproduction of a once authenticated product (1997). By his definition the Grateful Dead can never be authentic again, "the definition of authenticity centers on being believable relative to a more or less explicit model, and at the same time being original, that is not being an imitation of the model" (Peterson, 1997:220). By this definition there can be no more Deadheads after the death of Jerry Garcia. Many Deadheads will tell you that they enjoy seeing Grateful Dead cover bands or went on tour with The Dead or The Other Ones, but that the experience was different this time around. Deadheads identities were being challenged by the lack of an authentic cultural product.

6.3: The Internet," Netheads," and the New Frontier

When the Deadheads were first gaining momentum as a subculture in the early 1970s most information was passed on by word of mouth. As the band became more popular and tape trading began to grow newer forms of communication were necessary to give and receive information. Originally this problem was solved by mailing lists for tickets and the now infamous Grateful Dead hotline. The hotline was introduced to help connect Deadheads with tour information and ticketing information. Once the band's popularity began to increase the hotline could no longer support the vast amount of phone calls. By the mid 1970s many Deadheads in the technology industry began putting information about the band on an early form of the internet (Hill, 1994). However, since the internet was is in its infant phase most Deadheads still relied on the hotline and publications such as Relix magazine. As the internet became more widespread and available many new websites, message boards, and forums began to pop up on the web. As one of the leading providers of Grateful Dead

news, Relix magazine began publishing articles about how to access the web and unlock its great

communication potential.

Peterson (2005) points out that "historically music scenes, those tightly bound aggregations or

performers, business people, and fans, depend on continual face-to-face interaction to maintain a sense

of identity and cohesion" (2005:1089). The internet provided a new frontier for Deadheads to connect

on. Message boards provided a forum for Deadheads to discuss shows, tape trading, or any other

special interest one might have. Many heads used the internet and email to stay in touch with friends

while not on the road. Along with this new technology came a new set of problems. Deadheads not

only had an identity as a Deadhead, but were now developing online identities as "Netheads."

As Hal Hill points out "content, accuracy, tone, and writing style are more important to our new

reputations as high tech Deadheads than the length of our hair or the brilliance of our tie-dyes. In five

years I think most Deadheads will be Netheads" (1994:67). Peterson and Bennett (2004) note that

beside a shared love of the particular kind of music, subcultural members identify other scene members

by their clothing, age, hairstyle , language and demeanor, but with the advent of internet-based list

serves and chat groups devoted to specific music and lifestyle scenes, people can join without having

any of this characteristics. This indicates a shift from objectified subcultural capital to embodied

subcultural capital. A Nethead's authenticity is determined by how they behave in an online social

situation.

Deadheads also used the internet to strengthen their community. After the death of Jerry

Garcia many heads went to the net and started message boards, or bulletin boards, with information

about shows and other news. As Jack Devaney points out "since the death of Jerry Garcia and the

discontinuation of the Grateful Dead touring unit, the scene has been transported from the parking lot

into Cyberspace. The internet has given Deadheads everywhere a place to expand, share and keep the

spirit alive" (1997:36). They began to use the internet as a substitute for real gatherings. It was a

valuable new tool that allowed heads to reconnect with friends from the road and stay in touch over

great distances. The internet also brought about a second boom in tape trading. As Devaney notes

"tape trading…is probably the single greatest thing that has benefitted from the web. Since the Grateful

Dead has stopped touring taping is growing" (1997:36). At the time traders were still trading tapes, but

eventually the move to MP3 and CD formats allowed for traders to trade more music in a much smaller

space.

The internet provided a new frontier for fans to interact on. Phish began using the internet to

keep fans informed in the early 1990s "modern technology has played a role in the fan-band

relationship. Through the use of the global computer internet, fans interact about the band on the

"phish.net" bulletin board" (Devaney, 1994:11). The band actually used the internet to test the waters

on their album *Rift.* Before the single "Fast Enough For You" hit the airwaves fans were complaining

online about how this single would bring about the commercial success and subsequent end of the band

as a non-mainstream act.

The internet has not been totally beneficial to the scene however. The crisis of authenticity was

also forced into a new digital realm where boundary lines were now blurred more than ever. The

internet not only brought about message boards and fan sites, but clothing and merchandise sites

where anyone could purchase items from their home. This creates a problem in the scene because prior

to the internet an individual had to go to a show or to a vendor to purchase subcultural capital. The

internet allowed anyone to purchase these goods and in turn made the goods less valuable to the

subculture. In many ways the internet intensified the issue of non-authentic merchandise. As I have

pointed out earlier netheads now needed to be more concerned with what they said and how they

acted online rather than how they dressed. Objectified subcultural capital is much easier to fake and

carries with it less value than embodied subcultural capital which is much more difficult to fake.

Chapter 7: Subculture and the Problem of Authenticity

Issues of authenticity are at the forefront of many cultural studies. The notion of authenticity can be applied to many different aspects of culture such as the material production, and subsequent reproduction, of goods, performances, and even group membership and participation. There are, however, several facets to authenticity. In discussing country music performance and sound, Peterson (1997) notes that the "definition of authenticity centers on being believable relative to a more or less explicit model, and at the same time being original, that is not being an imitation of the model. Thus what is taken to be authentic does not remain static but is continually renewed over the years. The changing meaning of authenticity is not random, but is renegotiated in a continual political struggle in which the goal of each contending interest is to naturalize a particular construction of authenticity" (1997:220). More simply stated, "authenticity is a claim that is made by or for someone, thing, or performance, and either accepted or rejected by relevant others" (Peterson, 2005:1086).

These claims of authenticity are not unproblematic however. Drawing on the presentation of self Goffman (1959) notes that many problems emerge when participants play roles that are incoherent or communicate in a way inconsistent with the characters they are playing. Force (2009) points out that "authenticity is not simply a characteristic but a practical accomplishment. It unfolds in culturally distinctive interpretive activities requiring effort and commitment to master. Authenticity, in particular, requires consistent and durable (i.e. rule-bound) interpretive effort and appreciative commitment" (Force, 2009:305). Peterson (2005) follows this with the notion that authenticity is socially constructed and the constructedness of authenticity is never as clear as when it is "vociferously claimed by the person who is seeking to be identified as authentic" (2005:1086). If authenticity is socially constructed it is also subject to change (Force, 2009; Peterson, 1997 and 2005). The ways in which authenticity is maintained and undergoes change is referred to as "authenticity work" (Peterson, 2005).

Grana (1989) notes, the easiest sort of authenticity work is seen in those situations in which

ascribed group membership, rather than training or other qualifying measures, gives one the right to

represent a group. This notion can be seen in music cultures, and most importantly to this research, to

subcultures as well. Historically music scenes have depended on face to face interaction to maintain a

sense of identity and cohesion (Peterson, 2005). Therefore, presentation of one's self is vitally

important to being viewed as authentic in a subculture or music scene. Widdicombe and Wooffitt

(1990) examinede the punk music scene and note that one example of authenticity gained by

establishing one's personal presentation of self can be found among fans of punk music "being" rather

than "doing" punk (1990). Force (2009) adds saying, "an individual's sense of subcultural self, of

authenticity, rests on an ability to successfully learn cultural hierarchies and boundaries, and to navigate

their identity performances accordingly" (Force, 2009:305). In other words, authentic participation in a

subculture is evidenced by an embodiment of the values of the subculture rather than just adopting the

style.

Fine and Kleinman (1979) note that culture and subculture is transmitted through

communicative acts. In this context, authenticity is a result of "symbolic exchanges among participants

and formative to a cultures existence" (Force, 2009:290). As Hays (1994) points out, these exchanges

not only construct "the beliefs and values of social groups, but also their language, forms of knowledge,

and common sense" (1994:65). Therefore, being authentic is not only a thing we are or a set of

distinguishing characteristics, but also something we engage in (Force, 2009). According to Aggleton

and Whitty (1985), subcultural sites are especially relevant arenas for viewing the processes of "personal

authentication for many youth, where they selectively construct identity in ways not accommodated by

conventional institutions such as churches and schools (1985:66). They argue that one of the main ways

in which subculture members construct an authentic identity is through style.

Consumption styles largely "materially mediate" authenticity practices in subcultures (Gubrium and Holstein, 2009). Force (2009) notes that in the punk subculture, participants make comparisons with each other in "doing the authenticities that talk and interaction reflexively assembles" (2009:291). This is furthered by the notion that subcultures are "taste cultures formed around consumption of common media in communion with others, marked by their own hierarchies, knowledge of which signifies hipness – doing the subcultural performance correctly, consistently, and, in a word, authentically" (Force, 2009:291). It should be noted that while consumption is a part of subculture, it is not the defining factor. I have made the distinction earlier that subcultures involve a way of life that includes the adoption of style, which is fueled by consumption, but where consumption is not the primary criteria for membership. This differs from a neo-tribe that is an almost strictly consumption based lifestyle. The key difference between way of life and lifestyle is the emphasis on consumption and what goods are consumed. Subcultural style and consumption reflects values and norms, whereas neo-tribal consumption reflects only style.

Authenticity within subcultures is largely based on adherence to the hierarchies internal to a subculture. Thornton (1995) and Williams (2006) view the knowledge of a subculture's forms and its history, and possession of internally sanctioned products as a prominent expression of authenticity. Vannini (2004) notes that authenticity is performed through the seemingly effortless "use of a coherent system of signifiers and effective authenticity work" that subculture members judge against a cultural standard (2004:61). Furthering her work on subcultural capital, Thornton (1995) suggests the "aura" of authenticity that is provided by internally sanctioned products affords the possessor certain prestige within the subculture as long as those goods are linked to a shared cultural standard. This is not limited to objectified subcultural capital however. Other studies (Haenfler, 2004; Weinstien, 2000; Widdicombe and Wooffitt, 1990) support the conclusion that demonstration, or performance, of "competency in the stories, knowledges, and practices of that subculture command a sense of authentic membership"

(Force, 2009:303). These facets of authenticity can be applied to the Deadhead scene as well. In the

following section I will outline several factors that have contributed to the evolution of the Deadhead

subculture into a more neo-tribal formation.

Chapter 8: Deadheads as Neo-Tribe

As noted in the previous chapter, after the end of the Grateful Dead many Deadheads were left wondering where their journey would take them next. The Jamband community emerged alongside the Deadhead subculture in the 1980s. Bands like Phish, Widespread Panic, and String Cheese Incident began making music in the tradition of the Grateful Dead. This involved long improvisational jamming, and an adherence to the values of the Deadhead subculture such as: sharing, community, anti-corporate sentiments, and extensive touring. In addition, these new bands also followed the model of the Grateful Dead and played different setlists every night and even allowed taping of their shows. But just as with the Deadhead subculture this new Jamband community involved a socialization process so that new members were able to acquaint themselves with the requirements of membership.

Along with the death of Jerry, the end of the Grateful Dead and their extensive touring caused many problems for Deadheads. One Deadhead viewed touring as a way to keep the spirit of the scene alive, "Even though the Dead aren't there, I still love the traveling part" (Brown, 1997:33). After 1995 many new bands began to fill the void that was becoming present in Deadhead's lives. Some of these bands had been performing together since the late 1980s when the Grateful Dead were still touring, but now they were seeing new faces in the crowd.

These new faces were Deadheads trying to trace back to the old days of touring. They used other bands that were similar in style to recreate the experience they gained in seeing the Grateful Dead. Beal and Peterson (2001) point out that contemporary performers may seek authenticity by claiming an association with earlier artists, types of music, or lifestyles. Toni Brown (1997) notes that "the scene has shifted and people have scattered among the many bands that continue to provide valid musical options. Some went to Phish, some to Widespread Panic. Millions of Deadheads have dispersed and we are now, truly, everywhere" (Brown, 1997: 27). Sarah Frieberg felt that the new scene had

much to offer old Deadheads, "But there is so much music that has been inspired by the Dead. There's always a great band to catch. I think I've been seeing a lot more diverse music since the Dead stopped touring. It's forced me to open my ears. The Dead gave us a great springboard of musical influence. I'll always be a Deadhead, but I still need to shake my bones!" (Brown, 1997:33). One of the biggest names in the Jamband community is Phish. Many Deadheads resent Phish for what they feel they represent, however others have begun to embrace them. Abbus Axelrod was 19 at the time this letter was written:

> "I go to Phish shows now, and they're different from Dead shows. There's a stronger feeling of love and community at a Dead show. There are definite similarities, buts it's a different feel. They [both] jam and attract similar crowds, but the crowds at Phish shows are a lot younger. They're [both] travelling bands that you can tour with. You need to be at the shows to underst-and the energy levels are different. [The Dead] is much higher, I mean, to travel with the band to love them that much and have them be an inspiration for 30 years! People I know who were on Dead tour, they'll see Phish shows, but they won't go on tour because they don't get the same feeling. People are kind of in it for themselves on Phish tour. The Dead just seemed different. People welcomed us more" (Brown, 1997:34).

In this letter Abbus is discussing some of the key differences between the Jamband community and the Deadhead subculture. He notes that the energy levels are different, or in other words, that the show experience is different, and that people on Phish tour do not adhere to the values of sharing and community that are present in the Deadhead subculture.

With many new band's and more opportunities to see music many Deadheads began to become more localized. Touring all summer was becoming a thing of the past. Some felt as though they were passing the torch to the younger generation and charging them with carrying on the tradition and heritage of the Grateful Dead "the Dead gave us the belief that it will go on forever… it's your generation's turn to see if it will" (Meeske, 2005). Another Deadhead agreed by saying, "fortunately the

Grateful Dead and its subculture of Deadheads will leave much behind as evidence of what a long strange trip it was" (Brown, 1997:27).

I will now apply the concept of neo-tribe to the Jamband community. The Jamband community is the group of fans who follow Jambands much in the same way the Deadheads followed the Grateful Dead. One difference is that the Jamband community is not centered on one band like the Deadheads were. Members of the Jamband community could be fans of any number of improvisational rock acts and fans of multiple bands. As I have noted in previous chapters many Jamband fans have failed to find the same experience in the Jamband community as they did in the Deadhead subculture therefore I will view the Jamband community through a neo-tribal lens.

I have defined a neo-tribe as a group characterized by fluid boundaries that result in "extensive internal diversity and continual flows of multi-affiliated individuals between one group and another," whose members have constructed highly individualized identities through consumption practices, and whose lifestyle reflects the strategies employed in choosing certain commodities and patterns of consumption (Hodkinson, 2004:287; Chaney, 1994). By unpacking this definition I hope to show how the Jamband community has evolved from the original Deadhead subculture and has created a new identity for itself and its members.

The first requirement is that a neo-tribe is characterized by fluid boundaries. Subculture membership can also be fleeting, but can be permanent as well. The opportunity for long-lasting membership is one of the key differences between subcultures and neo-tribes. Since neo-tribes are relatively more fluid than subcultures, and there is no requirement that norms or values be adopted, membership is much easier to obtain.

After the death of Jerry Garcia many Deadheads were left confused about the next phase of their journey. The options for many were to return home, to the parent culture, or to continue their

lifestyle of touring with different bands such as Phish, or String Cheese Incident. These newly opened

boundaries allowed for an influx of extensive internal diversity in regard to musical tastes and continual

flows of multi-affiliated individuals. This resulted in individuals constructing new identities around

different bands and scenes. Because the original subculture was focused around one band the newly

recognized Jamband community was forced to welcome individuals with multiple affiliations. Being a

Deadhead became recognized as a master status as the Grateful Dead were the original Jamband.

These multi-affiliated individuals were now engaged with several bands and would cross

membership lines of groups associated with several bands. There was no longer one option for summer

tour plans, but several. The new choices in music and experience allowed new Jamband community

members to construct highly individualized identities that shared some aspects of the Deadheads, but

were made uniquely their own based on an individual's band of choice. Some of these aspects are: the

appreciation of live improvisational music, an emphasis on sharing and communal attitudes, vending in

the parking lot, and tape trading.

These new identities became solidified through consumption practices that reflected the band

they were most interested in. For instance, at any given show in the late 1990s you could find someone

wearing a Grateful Dead shirt at a Phish concert. Before 1995 there was less of a need to establish your

identity as anything other than a Deadhead because the Grateful Dead were the main draw of the

Jamband community. Now individuals use consumption of material goods, and objectified subcultural

capital, to establish a new identity separate from being a Deadhead. Another aspect to consider here is

the age of members in the Jamband community. Many members were not old enough to experience

the Grateful Dead in their original lineup and began their journey with newer bands. These individuals

needed to display their identity and did so through their consumption practices.

The consumption practices of these new members reflected a lifestyle choice that echoed that of the Deadheads from years past. I will use the term lifestyle to describe the patterns of consumption and sensibilities used in choosing certain commodities. That is to say that new Jamband community members' lifestyle is reflected in the material goods and subcultural capital that they consume. In other words, members create their identity not out of shared values necessarily, but out of consuming the same type of product, whether it is music or material goods. By examining the patterns of consumption of this group it is easy to see that an individual may be affiliated with several groups, or bands, that are similar in style, yet markedly different in identity of fans. Each band in the community has its own symbols and creates its own musical experience. The values of community members remain relatively shared, but are not as concrete as in the Deadhead subculture. As I have said a subculture is a group of individuals who value a more holistic, or complete experience that is not fulfilled by the parent culture. I use the term holistic to describe a complete experience, one that involves the music, the culture, and the norms and values of the Deadheads. The neo-tribe is different in that this more holistic experience is not provided. By being based on consumption rather than norms and values, neo-tribes cannot provide the same experience as subcultures.

Chapter 9: Discussion

Most of the literature on the Grateful Dead refers to them almost exclusively as a subculture even though "the term subculture has been widely used in both the popular and academic presses and is more or less accepted, even if it is not clear what it means" (Sardiello, 2000:269). Grateful Dead scholars have identified the community as a music subculture specifically. According to Hebdige music exercises a "major determining influence over the development of each subcultural style" (Hebdige, 1973:73). Sardiello notes that "when musical tastes become associated with cultural content and value themes that differ from the mainstream culture, they can become subcultures" (Sardiello, 2000:272).

Grateful Dead scholars refer to Deadhead culture as a subculture because of the communal nature of the fans. Many point out the shared values, norms, and cultural artifacts that members of the community exercise as evidence of a subculture. The ritualistic nature of Grateful Dead shows provides evidence of subcultural aspects, but does not necessarily classify the community as a true subculture. It seems that leading scholars such as Rebecca Adams (2000), amongst others, refer to the community as a subculture partly because the concept is relatively easy to apply to any collective activity that operates outside of the dominant culture. It is not my intention to discount the ritualistic nature, collective behavior, or shared values of the community, but merely to suggest that through the crisis of authenticity splintering of the community, the concept of subculture may not apply to the Deadheads any longer.

Applying the concept of subculture to the Grateful Dead phenomenon is problematic in several ways. Current post-subcultural literature attacks the concept and agrees with most Deadhead scholars that the concept has no clear definition (Bennett, 1999; Muggleton, 2000). The lack of a clear definition makes it difficult to place any sort of collective activity under the umbrella of the subculture concept. By admission of scholars the concept of subculture is so unclear it is important to develop a working

definition of the concept that draws on classical literature and new post-modern approaches to cultural studies.

Another problem facing subcultures are crises of authenticity. The early Chicago School studies pointed out that, by definition, there has been a feeling among members of subcultures that others do not belong for some particular reason. These reasons have been as simple as style of dress and as complex as different values and norms. Over the last several decades this crisis has been magnified in the Deadhead subculture through the death of Jerry Garcia, commercialization, and the internet. By disrupting the fabric of the subculture, these factors have created opportunities for authenticity to come into question. And have also opened the once rigid gates of membership.

With the death of Jerry many involved in the culture were left feeling empty, alone, confused, and in some cases burned out. Jerry Garcia was the lead guitarist for the band during its entire thirty year career. Many members of the culture looked to Jerry as a god-like figure leading them on a cross country journey to salvation through music. When that journey was over many of them did not know where to go next. Some of them returned to their normal lives as principals, construction workers, artists, or insurance salesman, however, some of them wanted to continue on the journey with new bands. As a result the original Deadhead subculture began to split into groups surrounding other bands. With these new bands came new fans and new ideas about the identity of the group. Now more than ever questions were being asked about who belonged and who did not. Resentment towards new fans grew and old heads continued to divide themselves from the new heads. The crisis of authenticity was at its peak during this tumultuous time.

Commercialization also posed many problems for Deadheads. The success of the band in the late 1970s and 1980s saw an increase in the fan base and also an increase in the "hassles" as many Deadheads have put it. The shift to large arenas created many problems such as increased police

activity and drug enforcement. The commercial success of *In The Dark* brought a new younger fan base

that many old heads believed did not embody the spirit of the 60s that the subculture was based

around. Merchandising also increased during this time and allowed anyone to purchase subcultural

goods without having any ties to the subculture at all. All of these issues added to the crisis of

authenticity by making it more difficult to distinguish between members and non-members of the

subculture. Commercialization was also one of the biggest catalysts in the move away from subculture

and the move towards consumption based neo-tribalism.

Finally, the internet proved to have both a positive and negative effect on the subculture.

Positively speaking the internet allowed many heads to connect in ways they had never imagined. It

allowed friends to re-connect after years of limited communication. It provided fans with new ways to

discuss the band, exchange information, and even trade concert tapes. However, the internet also

provided many avenues for less-acquainted fans to act like Deadheads when in fact they were not in a

traditional authentic way. Online markets provided avenues for the sale of merchandise to a much

wider range of people than before. This allowed anyone and everyone to purchase subcultural goods

and in turn de-valued the more authentically produced goods.

These factors have contributed to the crisis of authenticity in the Deadhead subculture. They

have aided in the shift from subculture to neo-tribe. The Deadheads were once a vibrant subculture

that provided a unique experience for its members. This experience was defined by the music of the

Grateful Dead and the unique concert experience they were able to provide for so long. In addition to

the musical experience, Deadheads also produced many subcultural artifacts such as: tape recordings of

every show, material goods, and shared values of sharing and community. This once vibrant subculture

has now been reduced to a consumption based neo-tribe with no strict boundaries of membership.

While the Jamband community echoes the ethos of the Deadhead subculture, many of the communal

values and beliefs such as sharing and community have been lost. Some say that the death of Jerry was

the knockout blow, but as I have outlined the fight to keep the subculture alive had been long since

been underway.

Chapter 10: Limitations and Opportunities for Further Research

Throughout this study I was presented with several limitations. One major limitation can be seen in the way I employed my methodology. My field notes were not as strong as they should be as this was my first experience employing that method. The use of content analysis may have been a poor choice in research methods. I should have conducted a much more thorough investigation into the literature produced by the Deadheads and Grateful Dead scholars. Due to my closeness with the research topic I was also a bit close-minded when examining the literature. In my early research I approached the topic as if I already knew the answer to my question. This hindered my research and may have added flaws to my content analysis.

I feel the project could have benefitted from more semi-structured interviews. By only conducting two interviews I was unable to provide a truly representative sample of Deadheads. My attempts to use the internet were met with hostility and were largely unsuccessful. Future research would benefit from interviewing more Deadheads and from a varying age range. It would also benefit from interviewing members of the jamband community as well as Deadheads to gain a better perspective on the similarities and differences between the two cultures. The content of my questions could have been strengthened by asking more questions that dealt with feelings of community rather than mainly asking questions dealing only with opinions of outsiders.

Another limitation is the use of documentary footage. As I have established in my methodology section, documentary footage can tend to only provide the perspective of the director and sometimes can be biased towards his/her opinions. In addition to these limitations there is simply not a lot of documentary footage on the Grateful Dead and other jambands. Even though the documentary I examined is considered to be a key component of Grateful Dead history future research would benefit

from seeking out more documentary footage, or considering the drawbacks simply exclude it from the data.

To further this project I would include a large section on drug use amongst subculture members. I felt that topic was a bit too large to include in this project, but any future studies should include drug use. As I have noted in the brief history of the Grateful Dead, the psychedelic rock genre was born out of drug use and therefore plays an integral role in the story of the band and its followers the Deadheads.

Overall I have learned a great deal about subcultures and post-subculture theories. This project has room for improvement, mainly in the methodology, that could be corrected after some formal training in qualitative methods. In addition to becoming more familiar with the literature I have become more aware of my shortcomings as a researcher. I have learned that qualitative methods take time and the proper training to be effective research tools. I hope to apply this knowledge in further studies and to continue to develop proper methodological techniques.

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