

Diary of participant observation: Transcribed notes

Part of the research process for this study was to conduct participant observation at one of two clubs, depending on which one I could attend on any given week, these were either Sugar Cubes on a Friday night or Po Na Na on a Wednesday. Over the six months of research conducted large amounts of notes were taken, in the following documents the most relevant sections from each week have been transcribed for comparison with the content analysis.

I conducted the observations by sticking to the following guidelines:

Unfocused observations: The people in general, any connection between attire worn and content of the magazines, any connections seen at all with their actions, going up to dance or coming off the dance floor for particular songs, their tattoos, ages, genders, general amounts of people.

Focused observations: For example what type of music is being played, DJ's set and request lists, specific t-shirts being adorned by people, suit, shirts ties, etc. Overall feel of subculture, can any changes be noted?

1st October, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

The two bands that were heavily praised in this weeks Kerrang! Magazine were Korn and Bullet for my Valentine (BFMV). Throughout the nights participant observation I witnessed one BFMV t-shirt worn by a male approximately 20 years old. The club was however particularly busy, estimated attendance was 200 people or more, the fact that no one was wearing a Korn t-shirt, even though they are still particularly popular,

was a significant observation. DJ set lists and request featured no Korn or BFMV tracks. However there were some requests for Rammstien, which did appear in the content analysis, in the form of an advert for their new album.

8th October, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

In this weeks content analysis bands such as Sum 41, Him and Marilyn Manson were featured. Him was, according to the content analysis, criticised, participant observation showed people still adorning the Him symbol, that of the heartagram. There were however no requests for Sum 41, although Marilyn Manson did feature on the DJ's set list. No one was dressing in the smart way MM appeared in the magazine, other t-shirt designs that featured in the magazine also failed to appear on anyone I looked at. No real connections noted between sections of magazine content analysed and the attire or music of the clubs patrons.

15th October, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Content analysis showed features which contained high levels of information and praise for bands such as Anthrax, Placebo and Good Charlotte. During the course of the night people were seen to be wearing Good Charlotte hooded tops and there were requests for it on the DJ's request list, however the other bands featured in the magazine had no recognition within the crowds. The Hives had a large feature on them, adorning their suits as usual, however again, no people in shirt and tie, or suit

jacket. Patrons were wearing regular attire, t-shirt, jeans, wrist bands, no real connection with the magazines content however.

22nd October, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

The likes of Green Day and Rammstine had significant features according to this weeks content analysis, however during the course of the night no real recognition by the clubs patrons. Set lists included regulars such as Metallica, The Used and Rage Against the Machine. Bowling for Soup and Hatebreed had a feature that showed them partying and drinking, there were a number of requests for Hatebreed songs although none were played. Although shirt and ties were again featured in the magazine on band members there was no one that I saw at the club following this seemingly increasing trend of rockers.

29th October, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

My Chemical Romance have a very large feature and have been in the magazine repeatedly weeks previous, there shirt and tie appearance seems to have having affect as a small group of people were all spotted wearing the stripy tie and shirt. No requests for their music, their music also failed to feature on the DJ's set list. Him also featured heavily and again people were seen supporting their Heartagram sign on hooded tops, although not very many. Overall impact seems to have been much higher this week than in previous weeks, most significant so far.

5th November, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Velvet Revolver featured heavily, large amounts of information and praise according to content analysis, during participant observation their music did not feature during the entire night. Scott Weiland, the lead singer of Velvet Revolver, has a very noteworthy rock star style, although hard to replicate it is apparent people try to do so on a regular basis, his image is obviously a significant one. NOFX and The Used were also featured, both punk bands really more than heavy metal, none of their music was played but people were wearing Used hooded sweat shirts. Generally no connection directly with the magazine observed, the fact that Scott Weilands image is constantly trying to be replicated by members of the subculture is perhaps down to the magazines constantly covering him however.

10th November, 2004, Wednesday night metal night – Po Na Na

Lostprophets seemingly the largest band featured in this weeks magazine, their lead singer, Ian Watkins, is again a significant star of the subculture at this pointing time. Considerable amounts of people in Po Na Na trying to replicated his style. The ‘Emo’ style of smart shirt, sometimes with a tie, tighter jeans than usual and hair over one eye is becoming increasingly popular. First time Lostprophets have been featured in the magazine to an appreciable level since the start of the study however so would suggest this is due to other forms of media influence.

19th November, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Velvet Revolver featured again, along with more hardcore metal bands in this weeks magazine. This was reflected with in not only the DJ's set lists but also requests. Machine Head and new hardcore metalers Caliban in the magazine, requests for Hatebreed, Fear Factory and such. Possible influence there, one Machine Head t-shirt and Caliban t-shirt spotted. No one wearing any shirts or ties spotted, however Emo style of tighter jeans and hair style does stand out, adorned by a number of people.

26th November, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Lostprophets featured again in magazine, older metal mega stars also featured, Guns and Roses as well as the Prodigy. No significant connection noted at all between analyses of magazines contents and observations made. Groupings of people dressed in 'Emo' style, but no more than usual. No one adopted shirt and tie this week unlike previous weeks. Track listings and requests featured none of the bands that came up during content analysis.

3rd December, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Slightly less metal oriented bands featured overall in the magazine, seen in regards to the content analysis. The Darkness featured significantly but no t-shirt support of requests were seen, DJ set list also saw no Darkness. Prodigy requests were seen however, they were also seen in the magazine this week being praised although with limited information on them. Keith Flint, Prodigy lead singer, wearing shirt and tie, in regards to this there were people seen supporting the emo style with short sleeve

shirt, tie and appropriate style of hair. General increase in amounts of 'Emo Kids' on the increase since research started. Overall connections with content analysis of the magazine however were minimal.

10th December, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Again less metal oriented feel to the magazine, Stereophonics featured heavily with praise and information. No link between content analysis and observations made in club to any real degree. Electric Six, Muse and Machine Head, all come up during the content analysis, in regards to this, machine head tracks were seen as requests for the DJ, and a Muse t-shirt was observed. Generally the music was of much heavier bands than were featured in the magazine. Fear Factory, Hatebreed, Soulfly were all played.

15th December, 2004, Wednesday night metal night – Po Na Na

This was a particularly significant week in the history of heavy metal as a whole. Dime Bag Darrell, infamous and legendary guitarist for Pantera and in recent years Damage Plan was shot dead at a concert along with members of the crowd and road crew. During the night there were constant dedications from the DJ most music being played was that of Pantera, everyone came out in their old Pantera t-shirts, hooded tops. The magazines extensively covered the occasion as well as massive amounts of websites, TV stations and radio. In this regard the content analysis really only brought up Dime Bag features. Although the majority of fans wore Pantera merchandise there were the usual Emo kids that feature everywhere at the moment.

24th December, 2004, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Did not go out due to it being Christmas eve.

7th Jan, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Many more hardcore metal bands featured in the magazine generally, although bands such as Mar Volta still there. In regards to observations DJ set lists saw no relation to pages analysed, no band t-shirts were supported of the bands featured. Even though Judas Priest released an album that gained 5 K's no one showed support for them through clothing or song requests. Mar Volta featured in the magazine looking emo with shirt and tie, this was replicated by emo kids and other fans in the club.

14th Jan, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

This weeks content analysis saw many lesser known bands coming up and generally being featured in the magazine, no surprise that there was little to show any connection between that content and the observations of the crowds at the club. more relevant the Used and Guns and Roses' Slash were featured. Slash was wearing an AC/DC t-shirt that was actually observed during the club night, a male approximately 18 years old was wearing exactly the same t-shirt as Slash was in the magazine. This could have been a categorical display of influence but after asking the wearer where he got the t-shirt he said he picked it up in New York the summer before, he had failed to buy Kerrang! That week.

21st Jan, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Content analysis of this week shows more heavy metal bands than usual, the likes of Kill Switch Engage and System of a Down both featuring in the magazine and on DJ set lists, although, both of these bands have featured repeatedly over previous weeks even though not featured in the magazines. I also observed fans supporting t-shirts for System of a Down, again, SOAD apparel is a regular feature of most Heavy Metal clubs and seeing a t-shirt of the band is not rare. Turbo Negro were featured two weeks in a row in the magazine and in neither weeks did I see any apparel or hear any of their music at the club. generally, as always, little connection between the two.

28th Jan, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

A shift this week to more indie, less heavy bands the Mooney Suzuki, My Chemical Romance and New Found Glory, in this regard there were the regular Emo Kids were out, but in no fuller force than in previous weeks. A notable general shift in the subculture overall is seen to be happening. Baggy trousers and a t-shirt are, on the whole, still a prerequisite for any discerning metal fan, however, for the fringe sections of the subculture such as Emo and NuPunk a shirt and tie seem to be the fashion of choice. A general connection between the magazine and music and attire of the subculture was minimal but generally the emo fringe section of the subculture is picking up.

4th Feb, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

This week's content analysis brought quite an eclectic mix of bands, Garbage where making a comeback with a new album and Rammstine had a very successful review of their latest album. However, neither of these bands featured during the nights observations. Feeder featured in the magazine wearing a shirt and tie, as is the trend, and during the course of the night, again, there were an appreciable amount of people wearing a shirt and tie. At this point, after 4 months of study, it seems the shirt and tie theme is definitely a recognisable trait of a certain type of fan of music that would fall under the Heavy Metal umbrella term. So far it is the only connection to be made of any significance between the magazines and the subcultures traits.

11th Feb, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

This weeks content analysis brought out more metal bands than usual, the likes of Bullet for my Valentine and Killswitch Engage were featured with relatively large amounts of information as well as a significant amount of praise. These two factors failed to materialise any reaction by the crowds at the club however, there were no tracks played or requested for either band and no t-shirts for either band were scene. The overall increase in 'neater' attire was notable again as it seems the subculture is shifting. General connections between the magazine and the observations however were few.

18th Feb, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

My Chemical Romance featured heavily again in the magazine. Perhaps their featuring in the magazine is due to the obvious shifts taking place within the subculture, their lead singer is always of ‘smart’ appearance, indeed which seems to be his gimmick. In regards to the observation that took place, although, as previously observed the typical attire for a member of the subculture is still baggy t-shirt, baggy jeans, wrist band and a like, there are people that would be deemed as ‘dressing up’ within the subculture for wearing the shirt and tie. However, although image may be changing there is no apparent change in musical tastes, requests for the bands that often support the shirt and tie, such as My Chemical Romance, the Hives and Feeder where non existent. General overall connections between the magazine and the observations was again small to nothing, overall I would say the magazines are following the trends of the people rather than the magazines influencing the trends themselves.

25th Feb, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

Bands like Mars Volta and My Chemical Romance featured again in this weeks Kerrang! Again there are representatives of this fringe element of the subculture observed in the club environment but the general populous remains static and

unchanged. For the first time My Chemical Romances music was requested but more traditional heavy metal bands that created the 'anthems' of metal, such as machine head and Metallica, were dominant. Overall the magazines contents seem to have little or no influence on the subculture.

1st March, 2005, Friday night metal night – Sugar Cubes

More heavy metal bands featured in this magazine, Usurper see a re-emergence of the traditional heavy metal look, with chains, leather jackets, large boots and torn denim. In this regard there were the bikers of the club, which choose to dress in this more traditional manner, however, the younger contingent of the crowd still chose the baggy jeans and other such attire. Requests and merchandise for Hatebreed were seen, however, this, like with bands previously mentioned, is of no massive significance as Hatebreed are regularly requested, played with t-shirts frequently adorned by their particularly loyal fan base. In general again no linkage between observations and magazines content observed to any significant extent.