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UNDERSTANDING MUSIC IN MOVEMENTS: The White Power Music Scene

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Relying on the analysis of ethnographic and documentary data, this article explains how U.S. White Power Movement (WPM) activists use music to produce collective occasions and experiences that we conceptualize as the movement's music scene. We use the concept "music scene" to refer to the full range of movement occasions in which music is the organizing principle. Members experience these not as discrete events, but as interconnected sets of situations that form a relatively coherent movement music scene. We emphasize three analytically distinct dimensions of this scene—local, translocal, and virtual—and specify how each contributes to emotionally loaded experiences that nurture collective identity. Participants claim that strong feelings of dignity, pride, pleasure, love, kinship, and fellowship are supported through involvement in the WPM music scene. These emotions play a central role in vitalizing and sustaining member commitments to movement ideals.

While many studies mention music as a part of social movement cultures, surprisingly few sociologists systematically consider how activists use the aesthetic, associational, and symbolic forces of music in their movements. The most prominent exception is Eyerman and Jamison's (1998) *Music and Social Movements*, which describes connections between protest music and long-standing cultural traditions. They focus on the ways that music embodies and reworks traditions "through the ritual of performance" (Eyerman and Jamison 1998:35), helps to "mobilize protest and create group solidarity" (p. 45), and eventually enters into broad "collective memory" as cognitive codes, aesthetic principles, and "living sources of collective identity" (p. 47). While their argument captures some of the widest dimensions of the relationship between movements, music,

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and culture, it does not tell us much about the specific uses and experiences of music in movements. We need thicker, more nuanced, case-specific treatments at the “ground level of social action” (DeNora 2000:x) to more fully explain how activists create, experience, and use music.

In this article, we are concerned with how movement members use music to produce and structure the collective occasions and experiences that we identify as a movement’s music scene. By movement music scene we mean the elements of a social movement’s culture that are explicitly organized around music and which participants regard as important for supporting movement ideals and activist identities. In dramaturgical terms, “scene” refers to a part of a larger work (e.g., scene of a theatrical play) in which actors and symbols convey ideas that tie together and sustain the overall storyline or action. Similarly, a movement’s music scene is an influential part of wider movement culture in which activists routinely enact and express movement ideals in settings organized around music. The music scene, then, encompasses those instances in which movement members use music to produce and structure collective movement occasions. These are not discrete occasions, but are interconnected sets of situations that members experience as a relatively coherent whole—a scene—which is a part of the broader movement. A music scene is to be actively experienced, to be *felt* as particular cultural attitudes and emotions that draw participants into shared understandings of music, politics, lifestyle, and associated symbols. Understanding how a movement’s music scene operates not only requires knowledge of how it is organized, but also recognition of how participants feel about the occasions that make up the scene. A movement’s music scene, then, is not merely an objective quality that exists in time and space but is also thoroughly experiential, resting on shared beliefs about the nature, value, and authenticity of music-oriented movement occasions (Grazian 2004).

We discuss these issues using the case of the U.S. White Power Movement’s (WPM) music scene. As we have explained elsewhere, a rich WPM culture endures despite the extreme marginalization and stigma associated with overt white power activism (Futrell and Simi 2004). WPM persistence rests on the members’ capacity to establish and maintain “free spaces” (Evans and Boyte 1992; Polletta 1999; Futrell and Simi 2004) where activists communicate, materialize, and reinforce their ideology and collective sensibilities. For many members, the occasions organized around movement music provide “havens” (Hirsch 1990) from the mainstream. These range from face-to-face settings, such as concerts and festivals, to the virtual contexts of interactive music Web sites and webzines. While not all movement members participate in or support the movement’s music scene, many of those who do claim that their experiences in the scene evoke collective meanings that help anchor their commitment to the movement. Our analysis describes how this occurs.

MUSIC, SCENES, AND MOVEMENT CULTURE

The few scholars who have developed a “ground-level” standpoint on the role of music in movements typically describe music lyrics as tools for framing grievances and musical

performance as ritual activity. Lyrical analysis offers some insights into the use of music in recruiting and mobilizing activists. For example, Denisoff's (1972) work on folk music and U.S. left-wing movements highlights the use of rhetorical songs to articulate grievances and draw in activists.¹ Similarly, Roscigno, Danaher, and Summers-Effler (2002) discuss the cognitive impact of music on the collective identities of early 20th century southern textile workers (see also McLaurin and Peterson 1992). They explain how workers used music and song to construct a collective identity by recasting the responsibility for labor problems onto company owners, signaling that exploitation was a shared experience, and urging collective organization and protest. These works rely on lyrical analysis to describe music as a form of discourse that articulates identity and grievances. In this view, music's main impact is on the cognitive understandings of listeners, who come to perceive social conditions in new ways and act to change them according to lyrical representations. This argument specifies how the visions articulated in songs may enlighten and encourage people to organize and participate in collective action. However, lyrical analysis only addresses part of activists' experiences with music (DeNora 2000). The meanings constructed through music result from a much wider range of factors (DeNora 2000; Rosenthal 2003).

Ritual is one of these factors. Since Durkheim (1915), sociologists have thought of rituals as intensely emotional and expressive events that communicate meanings about social relationships in relatively dramatic ways (also Wuthnow 1987; Taylor and Whittier 1995; C. Bell 1992; and Collins 2004). Rituals have been analyzed as symbolic performances that express conflict (Goffman 1959, 1967; Garfinkel 1967), symbolize resistance and rebellion (Schechner 1993), frame grievances and communicate power (Benford and Hunt 1992), and create the "emotion culture" (Gordon 1989) and boundaries of groups (Taylor and Whittier 1992). Many social movement cultures organize ritualistic occasions around music. According to Sardiello (1994:116 as quoted in Roscigno et al. 2002), it is in ritual contexts that "music is meaningfully interpreted by social actors in a way that helps to define or reaffirm their social worlds." Lyrics may have little to do with this interpretation. Rather, actors identify with and commit to one another as they collectively participate in music performances (e.g., singing, dancing). According to Collins (2004, 2001), copresence and a shared focus of attention during performances can heighten participants' "emotional energy," thereby strengthening collective feelings of solidarity. Thus, the scholarship on music and movement culture tells us that music lyrics offer listeners narratives for making sense of their worlds, and music rituals allow participants to collectively experience the narratives and sounds in cognitively and emotionally meaningful ways.

Lyrical and ritual analyses are important, but limiting research to these two dimensions oversimplifies the uses and experiences of music in movements. As DeNora notes, music is "a device for social ordering [and] occasioning" (DeNora 2000:110). It serves as a familiar cultural pretext for drawing people together in an array of collective situations. Some of these situations can produce strong collective identities over time (Bennett and Peterson 2004; Hodkinson 2004). Paul Willis (1978) and Simon Frith (1996, 1981, 1978) demonstrate that music can be a key resource in and through which agency and identity

are produced. People often use and refer to music in ways that organize their relationships by “produc[ing] their social situations and themselves *as selves*” (DeNora 2000:6). It is not just the content of music that is important, but “the cultural practices in and through which [music] is used to produce social life” (DeNora 2000:6). This approach raises important issues about what the cultural material of music “‘does’ for its consumers within the context of their lives [specifically how they use it], as an active ingredient of social formation. Music does much more than depict or embody values . . . it is constitutive of styles of conduct” (DeNora 2000:6–7).

Applying these ideas to movement music leads us to explore the ways activists use music as the organizing principle for a wide range of movement-based occasions and practices. A complete sociological account must explain the cluster of collective occasions and activities that are organized around movement music. This approach offers a broader sense of how activists use music to communicate, materialize, enact, and sustain politicized movement identities. To deepen our understanding of music’s role in movements, we extend our analytic focus to the full range of situations and cultural items associated with movement members’ production, experience, and use of music. The concept “movement music scene” is intended to capture the organizational and experiential qualities of the occasions and practices revolving around movement music.

While the idea of “scene” is not entirely new and appears in a number of sociological studies, most uses are undertheorized.² For instance, Ned Polsky’s (1967) *Hustlers, Beats, and Others* or Sherri Cavan’s (1972) *Hippies of the Haight* employ “scene” as a simple descriptor and use it interchangeably with notions of subculture, counterculture, and community.³ In *Scenes* (1977), John Irwin goes a bit farther by elaborating on Shibutani’s (1961) notions of reference group and social world to describe several “lifestyle scenes” (e.g., bar, beat, hippie, surfing, skiing) created by urbanites to fill perceived voids in sociability. These scenes are collective activities that offer ongoing opportunities to “plug into more complete, emotionally sustaining relationships” (Irwin 1977:26) than those that are otherwise found in metropolitan life. Though an interesting study, Irwin does little to assess the relationship of music and social scenes.

Recent scholarship has resurrected the notion of scene, establishing a specific link to music, and is beginning to map more precisely its conceptual meaning and empirical aspects. The first in this wave, Will Straw (1991:273), describes a music scene as “that cultural space in which a range of musical practices coexist, interacting with each other within a variety of processes of differentiation, and according to widely varying trajectories of change and cross-fertilization.” A music scene is formed as “coalitions” and “alliances” come together around musical styles, articulate “a sense of purpose” (Straw 1991:273), and draw boundaries that define who is “in” and “out,” thereby creating and sustaining social groups. The practices and occasions organized around music can “produce a sense of community” (Straw 1991:373) that is meaningful, arousing, exciting, and authenticating. Music scenes are not closed communities, however. While scenes may, as Gaines (1994:52) observes, promote “subterranean, subcultural, esoteric, and insular cultures with highly specified meaning systems, and linguistic, sartorial, and behavioral codes,” they also allow for very different levels of commitment and fluid participation by

its participants. In Irwin's words, scenes are "available" (1977:29) insofar as they offer numerous ways for people with varying levels of interest to gear into the action and express affiliation. Participants may range from those highly committed to the music (and politics, fashions, attitudes, lifestyles, and symbolism) supported in the scene to the much less committed and the merely curious (see also Fox 1987).

Most recently, Bennett and Peterson (2004) elaborated on these understandings of music scenes with a three-part typology that distinguishes local, translocal, and virtual scenes. In their view, music scene refers to "the contexts in which clusters of producers, musicians, and fans collectively share their common musical tastes and collectively distinguish themselves from others" (Bennett and Peterson 2004:1). Local scenes cluster these activities in a particular geographic area, usually focus on a specific genre of music, and exhibit distinctive cultural signs and lifestyle elements associated with the locale in which the scene is embedded. Translocal scenes involve "widely scattered local scenes that are drawn into regular communication around a distinctive form of music and lifestyle" (Bennett and Peterson 2004:6). These affective communities, organized around music and "[their] associated stylistic innovations . . . transcend the need for face-to-face interaction as a necessary requirement for scene membership." Examples of translocal scenes include the temporary communities of music festivals and traveling music caravans, such as Deadheads, Phishheads, etc., that draw a variety of participants to periodic large-scale gatherings where they interact with members across social networks (Bennett and Peterson 2004:9; see also Kruse 1993). Virtual scenes connect physically separated people to create a "sense of scene via fanzines and, increasingly, through the Internet" (Bennett and Peterson 2004:7). Chat rooms, listservs, music trading sites, and virtual 'zines mediate interaction organized around a music culture and facilitate an "exchange of knowledge" (Bennett and Peterson 2004:7) that promotes connections among far-flung members.

This typology is useful but narrows the analytic focus on a scene to a single dimension—local, translocal, *or* virtual—when it is likely that established scenes involve all three elements. A more complete understanding of music scenes must locate and analyze the interconnections among local, translocal, and virtual dimensions. The interconnections have implications for accessibility, growth, and long-term maintenance of a music scene, as each provides different ways for participants to be involved in a scene's activities. Additionally, Bennett and Peterson neither explicitly analyze scenes' political dimensions nor attempt to understand social movement music scenes. We extend Bennett and Peterson's (2004) typology by demonstrating the links between local, translocal, and virtual dimensions of the U.S. WPM's music scene. The WPM music scene includes bands, performances, performing spaces, indigenous recording companies, recordings, broadcasts (e.g., radio and video streams), symbols, street sheets, fanzines, Web sites that report on movement music, and the activists who are involved. These spaces (both physical and virtual) and activities supply a range of options for interaction in situations in which political, aesthetic, and stylistic interests reflecting movement goals are prominently expressed. Participants report that their experiences in the scene create powerful cognitive and emotional changes to sense of self and commitment to the movement.

METHOD

Our analysis is grounded in ethnographic and documentary data collected on a variety of white power activists and groups between 1996 and 2004. Participant observation⁴ was conducted in a variety of settings and included one- to three-hour in-depth face-to-face and telephone interviews with 59 WPM activists.⁵ Sixteen respondents were movement leaders and 43 were rank-and-file activists. Forty-four follow-up interviews were conducted with the primary movement contacts, for 99 total interviews. We also performed extensive content analysis of WPM media (e.g., newsletters, Web sites, Internet discussion groups, and radio broadcasts) and collected information about the WPM from law enforcement sources, research groups (e.g., Anti-Defamation League [ADL], Southern Poverty Law Center), and print and broadcast media (newspaper articles and television segments).⁶

Snowball and purposive sampling strategies produced contacts with a wide range of activists, networks, and groups within the WPM. The sample included members of networks active in 21 states.⁷ Represented organizations include White Aryan Resistance, Aryan Nations and local branches of Aryan Nations, Hammerskins, National Alliance, Ku Klux Klan (KKK), Southwest Aryan Separatists (SWAS), and various smaller skinhead groups (e.g., Aryan Front, Bayside Skins, Independent Skins, L.A. County Skins, and Orange County Skins).⁸ Interviews focused on individual manifestations of activism, movement strategies advocated within and across groups, and the meanings activists attached to various types of movement participation, including music. Participant observation and interviewing allowed for the close examination of a wide range of political activism unavailable in secondary sources and movement propaganda (Blee 1996). Of course, we cannot assume that interviewees' recollections are complete and fully accurate. Secondary source analysis provided additional verification for the movement data collected through primary interview and observational means. Our triangulated multi-method strategy (Denzin 1978) produced a dense array of data on the U.S. WPM. While we present our themes in a systematic and organized way in the following, we do not intend to depict a homogeneous, invariant picture of WPM music culture and experience. Our generalizations about the movement's music scene and the people who sustain it constitute a starting point for further investigation about scenes in this and other movements.

Finally, a word about the methodological difficulties we confronted while studying the WPM. As we are not members of these groups, entrée was difficult. WPM members are often antagonistic toward outsiders, they prefer secrecy, and, at times, participate in illegal activities. Moreover, the movement's networks are diverse and loosely structured, and levels of activism vary widely among participants. Simi made contact with Aryan Nations and SWAS via several letters and phone calls requesting, as a sociologist, opportunities to observe various movement events. Eventually these requests were granted by both groups on the sole condition that he was white. These contacts snowballed into others across several of the movement's networks, culminating in the sample described above. While many contacts were open to interviews, many others were not. Simi's status was challenged at times. He was accused of working in concert with law enforcement

agencies or as an agent provocateur. Some of these challenges resulted in threats of bodily harm, though none occurred.

THE WPM MUSIC SCENE

The U.S. WPM is a segmented network of overlapping groups such as the KKK, Christian Identity sects, neo-Nazis, and Aryan skinheads (Dobratz and Shanks-Meile 1997; Burris, Smith, and Strahm 2000).⁹ Although there are differences among these wings of the WPM, they all agree on fundamental doctrines (Burris et al. 2000). As Abby Ferber (1998:49) explains, they “share common ideologies and goals and an overriding commitment to maintaining white supremacy.”¹⁰ There are ongoing debates among the groups, but also sustained efforts to forge shared objectives. . . . Foremost among these is the commitment to white power and defending the “white race” from “genocide.” They envision a racially exclusive world where “nonwhites” are vanquished, segregated, or at least subordinated to Aryan authority. This vision is articulated, for example, in the infamous “14 Words” statement (“We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children”). Many WPM members are strongly anti-Semitic, support Aryan militarist nationalism, and claim to seek a white homeland to control and defend against non-Aryans. Members also object to interracial sex, marriage, and procreation, and idealize conservative, traditional, and patriarchal family forms and community relations dominated by Aryan kinship. According to Ezekiel (1995:xxix), it is this general “agreement on basic ideas [which] is the glue that holds the movement together.”

Aryan music is one of the most pervasive means of racist expression among both veteran and newly recruited WPM activists across all branches. Many WPM gatherings include Aryan music produced by more than 100 U.S. white power bands and more than 200 bands in 22 countries (Southern Poverty Law Center 2002). Two of the most notorious white power organizations—The National Alliance and Hammerskin Nation—are closely tied to the two most prominent white power recording companies, Resistance Records and Free Your Mind Productions (formerly Panzerfaust Records). Their expressed goal is to create alternatives to mainstream music genres by producing music that articulates Aryan ideals and is linked to occasions and experiences in which the WPM is promoted.

There are many styles of white power music: rock, heavy metal, and country and western are the most common, but techno and Aryan folk genres are also emerging. While each genre claims specific stylistic distinctions, the lyrical themes in each reflect the fundamental doctrines common to most movement groups: Aryan nationalism, white power, race war, anti-Semitism, anti-immigration, anti-race-mixing, and white victimization.¹¹ There is also a clear emphasis on upholding Aryan values through movement participation, fraternity, kinship ties, and racial loyalty. These lyrics speak of fostering “global brotherhood,” “*volk*,” “white pride,” and “Aryan heritage.”¹²

White power rock is, by far, the most popular style in the white power music scene. It derives from punk and *Oi!*, a musical style originating in English working-class culture that combines hard guitar and drum-driven sounds, relatively simple musical structures,

and vocals that resemble fast-paced chants. Its roots can be traced to the late-1970s British group Skrewdriver, who veered from punk anarchism toward racist politics and a heavy metal hard rock sound to become the first premier white power rock band (Goodrick-Clarke 2002; Ware and Back 2002). Other bands emerged during the 1980s, but the most rapid growth occurred in the late 1990s (Center for New Community [CNC] n.d.; Southern Poverty Law Center 2001a). Bound for Glory (St. Paul, MN), Aggravated Assault (Atlantic City, NJ), Bully Boys (Dallas, TX), Max Resist and The Hooligans (Detroit, MI) are among the most influential groups in white power rock, though Skrewdriver remains the most notorious one (Goodrick-Clarke 2002). The group appealed to the growing number of U.S. skinheads who, through the 1980s, became increasingly associated with extreme right-wing politics and Aryan racialism. Today, Skrewdriver is sometimes referred to as the “godfather” of white power music. The band continues to be a focal point of solidarity among white power rock listeners, and is the exemplar for many bands that emerged during the last decade.

White power music culture matters to activists, but it is not clear precisely how it matters. Our explanation concentrates on the creation of a movement music scene that provides multiple ways for people to participate in music-focused occasions that promote movement ideals and identity. Next, we discuss how the virtual, local, and translocal contexts of the WPM music scene are organized.

Virtual Dimensions of the WPM Music Scene

The Internet is critical to organizing the WPM music scene. Cyberspace enables a wide range of white power activists to create dense interorganizational channels, through which information about the movement travels quickly and unimpeded (Kaplan and Weinberg 1998; Burris et al. 2000). As Hoffman (1996:72) argues, the Internet presents opportunities for WPM networking that previously did not exist by offering a private form of communication and “bring[ing] distant isolated groups and individuals together. [It] has the potential to reach an audience far beyond any they could reach with their traditional propaganda.”

We think a lot about how to reach a wider audience with the [mainstream] media pushing all this anti-white propaganda. We can't let that media define us. We've got to find ways to get the message out and with the Internet we've had some success. [Aryan Web sites] are forums that help connect people to something larger that's out there. (southeastern Aryan activist, December 15, 2002)

Aryan groups that promote white power music utilize the Web as a relatively low-risk, low-cost, high-access means of marketing and distributing WPM music, ideology, and other cultural items (Eyerman 2002). Several WPM music organizations have developed sophisticated Web-based media enterprises that are central to the white power music scene. In North America alone, more than 40 companies are directly involved in creating a Web-linked multimedia music culture for the movement (CNC n.d.). They range in size from small two- or three-person Internet outlets that stock and distribute Aryan music to larger, independent labels that sign bands, produce recordings, sell merchandise, and organize live concerts, festivals, and tours. Resistance Records and Free Your Mind

Productions are the major labels in the U.S. white power music scene. They have the most prominent and elaborate Internet presence and command national and international production and distribution networks, making their white power CDs and merchandise widely available.

Resistance Records bills itself as “the soundtrack for the white revolution.” It was founded in 1993 by World Church of the Creator member George Burdi who later sold it to former National Alliance leader William Pierce. Following Pierce’s death in 2002, his protégé Erich Gliebe took over day-to-day operations of the National Alliance and Resistance Records. In 2005, Shaun Walker took the helm of the National Alliance and Gliebe is reportedly still assisting with Resistance Records. Resistance’s 718 music titles span a rich variety of genres. Themes of violence and racist hatred aimed at blacks, Jews, Asians, and immigrants are articulated in the songs, cover art, and band names—for example, “Fueled by Hate,” “Aryan Terrorism,” “Brutal Attack,” “Blue-Eyed Devils,” “Angry Aryans,” “Racist Redneck Rebels,” and “RaHoWa” (short for “racial holy war”). According to the ADL (ADL 2000), the company sold up to 50,000 white power CDs per year before legal troubles in 1997. By 2000, sales rebounded and Resistance reportedly received about 50 orders per day, averaging \$70 in merchandise. Judging by those numbers, it appears that Resistance performs modestly well relative to other small, independent U.S. music labels with possibly more than \$1 million in annual sales (ADL 2000).¹³ CDs are ordered through the Resistance Records Web site, which also offers access to 24-hour streaming radio, its fanzine *Resistance*, books, videos, jewelry, clothing, and other badges of WPM affiliation, and links to other white power Web sites. Resistance’s purchase of the Swedish Nordland Records in 1999 reportedly doubled the label’s inventory to 80,000 CDs (ADL 2000). The label’s presence in Sweden is particularly important as “Sweden is . . . one of the world’s largest producers [and consumers] of racist rock” (Bjorgo 1998).¹⁴ This expansion positioned Resistance Records as the major presence in the Aryan music scene.

Panzerfaust Records was established in September 1998 and has been closely linked to the largest racist skinhead group, the Hammerskin Nation. Referring to a Nazi-era anti-tank weapon, Panzerfaust can be literally translated as “armored fist”—a concept members use to communicate the idea that white power music is “the audio ordnance that’s needed by our comrades on the front lines of today’s racial struggle” (Panzerfaust Records Web site—<http://www.panzerfaust.com/about.shtml>). After an internal dispute with owner Anthony Pierpoint, Panzerfaust was reorganized in early 2005 as Free Your Mind Productions.¹⁵ Our observations suggest that this change has only strengthened the organization’s role in the WPM music scene, as the transition was almost seamless, links to the Hammerskins are even more prominent, and the Web site is more sophisticated. Like Resistance Records, the Panzerfaust/Free Your Mind Web site offers hundreds of white power music selections across several genres. There is also a webzine that reports on the music scene and other WPM developments, hyperlinks to other white power Web pages, a chat room for activists, photo galleries of bands and shows, and an extensive catalog of movement paraphernalia.

Resistance, Panzerfaust/Free Your Mind Productions, and other WPM music companies claim their purpose is to build community around an authentic, indigenous Aryan

cultural alternative to mainstream pop culture, which they see as “polluted” with multi-ethnic influences. Such a project entails supporting a music scene that people, especially youth, can access and emulate in their lifestyles and political practices. Resistance Records seeks to provide meaning and a source for community building among disaffected, and primarily young, whites. The Web site proclaims:

Resistance music is the voice out there telling young White people that ours is a culture and a race worth preserving and fighting for. For the time being, our racial enemies control the mass media and so our people must be awakened and won over, one at a time if need be. Now that you have received the message, you have the responsibility to your kinsmen to help them out of the maze of degradation and filth that has been constructed around them. (Resistance.com, August 28, 2003)

Panzerfaust founder Anthony Pierpoint explains how he sees his music company's role:

You'd be amazed at how many young white kids [are] looking for an outlet, a space, to sort of be something different where they don't have to feel guilty about being white or act like a nigger to be cool . . . we [Panzerfaust] give them that opportunity and provide some direction by helping get them educated. . . . (Interview, July 14, 2002)

Panzerfaust Records/Free Your Mind organizer Bryon Calvert also claims their Web presence is crucial in recruiting young people into the white power music scene.

I probably do over a hundred emails a day . . . your average 14 or 15 year old kid that came across us by doing an Internet search, or because he saw a sticker or some friends of his told him about the label. And they go and they actually read the literature, they read the articles, they listen to the MP3s, they watch the music videos, they listen to what we're saying, and it's like they just soak it up. (http://www.news.minnesota.publicradio.org/features/2004/05/13_horwichj_panzerfaust/, May 29, 2004)

Providing a music scene members can join is, then, a crucial part of the WPM's efforts to recruit members and nurture movement identity. For a Bound for Glory band member, access means exposure, which leads to “racial education” and, ultimately, political action.

Music is number one. It's the best way to reach people. Through music, people can start getting into the scene, then you can start educating them. It's about making a political community by getting involved in the music. (Downloaded from <http://www.musicalterrorists.com>, February 24, 2004)

Part of the “education” is implemented by marketing the political lifestyle models of Aryan activism associated with the WPM music scene. Web catalogs are replete with images of activist “models” demonstrating a variety of clothing styles and activities that make up the “Aryan aesthetic” of the WPM music scene. Along with many others, Panzerfaust/Free Your Mind Productions and the linked Hammerskin Nation Web sites offer photo galleries of concert participants displaying dress, tattoos, and other insignia of Aryan authenticity and style that viewers are encouraged to assimilate, emulate, and reproduce. Resistance Records markets their own clothing brand, “Aryan Wear,” which combines Nordic, skinhead, punk, and military influences. Members consume and display this paraphernalia as a political act that authenticates their Aryan activist status.

It's really cool how you can get all this shit off the Net now. Ten years ago there really wasn't that much stuff you could get period. But now you've got all the music, the

jackets and boots, and other clothes, and all kinds of racial books and magazines. I mean you can get pretty much anything you can think of. . . . These products . . . they show how far we've come and how much possibility there is for what we can do and it reminds you of who you are—a white Aryan. . . . (Southern California skinhead, June 14, 2004)

The explicit goal of the music Web sites is to market an identity linked to a particular movement music scene—a strategy also common among mainstream music companies. Of course, one difference is that this scene and aesthetic revolve around explicit, highly politicized white power themes, which veteran activists expect will encourage young participants to carry on racist political lifestyles outside of the scene. That the WPM music scene mirrors some aspects of mainstream scenes is not coincidental but strategic. The WPM music industry's clear intention is to mimic the familiar *forms* of popular music culture while investing it with radically racist themes. It is a way to sustain veteran members and draw new members into the movement's music culture by offering the forms of occasions, experiences, and items common across many music scenes.

To accentuate connections among scene participants, many of these music Web sites are not merely organized clearinghouses for Aryan music and paraphernalia, but they also provide space for real-time communication through listservs, chat rooms, and bulletin boards in which members create and sustain virtual white power communities linked through participation in the music scene. An Aryan Front member captures the feeling of many other activists we spoke to:

It keeps me connected, I don't have my free time to attend as many . . . festivals as I'd like, but emailing and the chatrooms and just the Web sites make me feel a lot less alone. . . . I think the Internet just makes it easier to be a racist when you know what's out there and how many other people all over the world are fighting for pretty much the same thing you are and feel the same way you do. . . . (Aryan Front activist, June 27, 2004)

Message boards are replete with discussions among attendees and those experiencing aspects of the scene from afar. Many chat room participants encourage attendees to describe their experiences so that they can vicariously feel connected to the scene.

Ugh. . . . I have to work and can't make Aryan Fest @@@@ I'm counting on the list to fill me in on all the good stuff! 14/88 aryanwoman (Downloaded from Panzerfaust.com chat room, March 8, 2004)

White power music companies and concert organizers are also providing real-time Web access to events for members of the scene who cannot attend a show. For instance, Panzerfaust gave virtual entrée to the 2004 Aryan Fest through live video streams, photos, and sound clips of the event. Online fanzines also report in great detail on Aryan music festivals and bar shows, both hyping the events before they occur and then offering behind-the-scenes coverage of the bands, fans, and movement leaders who attend. Likewise, streaming Internet radio stations such as Radiowhite.com and Resistance Radio not only broadcast white power music but also interview band members and movement leaders.

The virtual dimension of the WPM music scene offers Web-based contexts in which participants can access social networks that intersect around white power music. While

translocal and local dimensions of the white power music scene are kept in motion by a series of concerts, festivals, and other activities where members converge in face-to-face settings, the virtual dimension allows members to feel a part of the scene without physically being there. Instead, they participate vicariously by reading reports from those involved in movement music, by listening to broadcast performances and recordings, and by consuming CDs, symbolic apparel, and other merchandise that represent the music scene and the wider movement. The virtual dimension of the scene makes even solitary experiences, such as listening to songs, surfing music Web pages, or reading 'zines a part of participating in the scene's broad collective experience. As we discuss in more detail in the following, embracing the Aryan music aesthetic in these ways can help members experience the ambient moods and tones that nourish their sense of belonging and identification with the collective "we" of the movement music scene.

Local and Translocal Dimensions of the WPM Music Scene

The WPM music scene relies on much more than its Internet presence. Concerts and music festivals are the scene's primary face-to-face opportunities for participants to experience a level of camaraderie and fellowship that virtual participation alone cannot provide. Small bar shows are the focal occasions of the local dimension of the WPM music scene. They are the most frequently organized music events and typically draw anywhere from 50 to 100 regular participants from a particular geographic locale. In the Southern California white power music scene (mainly Los Angeles, Orange, and San Bernardino counties), small bar shows usually feature three or four bands and brief speeches from WPM activists between sets. These events tend to draw a crowd of regulars—committed young and veteran activists with strong friendship affiliations across several local movement networks. At the shows we observed for this study, we identified local members of the Hammerskins, KKK, National Alliance, Women for Aryan Unity, Aryan Front, Orange County Skins, World Church of the Creator, Blood and Honour, and Aryan Nations. Larger bar concerts are less frequent, but usually draw between 150 and 200 participants from both the local scene and scenes outside the area. These events are often organized around the most prominent white power bands that travel a music circuit connecting several different local scenes. The circuits establish connections between local, translocal, and virtual dimensions of the scene. Linking various local scenes creates opportunities for members in one local scene to experience live performances by bands celebrated in other ones. Since these bands are often among the most popular across the entire WPM music scene, many attendees will have listened to their recordings, discussed them in Internet chat rooms, and read about them in 'zines. The entire circuit, rather than just one local venue, then, becomes a set of occasions that offers participants multiple ways to experience the scene.

Multiday festivals are the largest, most elaborate, and most clearly translocal dimension of the scene. They draw together 300–600 members from an array of local scenes and movement networks across the United States and other countries. All these settings bring a range of people together around Aryan music in order to foster a sense of purpose and belonging for a community whose members practice racial exclusion and openly express

racist viewpoints. Indeed, these music events are one of the few places where WPM activists openly participate in face-to-face collective relationships fueled by Aryan ideals.

When you're at a show you get to do things you normally can't do and it just feels great to let go and be what you are [as he points to audience members that are simultaneously *sieg heiling* the band on stage during a performance]. You know, be a racist with everyone else who's here. We're all here because we're white and we want to be somewhere where that's not a crime and you don't have to be ashamed of it and that's hard to find today. It's hard to find places where you can do that. (Aryan musician/activist, July 15, 2002)

While local activists predominate at the bar concerts, the larger events also attract many out-of-town WPM members, thereby giving the scene a translocal dimension. Some come from other vibrant local scenes with information about their own particular bands and cultural styles, while others come to experience a vibrant local scene that is not available in their own area. The Southern California shows we observed included participants from Northern California, Nevada, Utah, Florida, Georgia, New Jersey, Arizona, Texas, Oregon, and Minnesota. Larger concerts also draw more nascent members and potential recruits with no clear affiliations. Organizers seek to take advantage of this by providing attendees with direct access to materials associated with the movement music scene. The bar is stocked with white power CDs, stickers, and patches, band T-shirts, 'zines, and other white power literature. There is also contact information for as many as 20 separate white power groups across the nation. Audience members are encouraged to sample the merchandise, carouse with band members, and befriend other activist "brothers and sisters."

There is an inherent tension, however, in attracting participants. One of the features of scenes is their availability and openness (Irwin 1977). Organizers struggle to maintain the local WPM music scene's availability and openness while simultaneously excluding WPM opponents from shows. They go to great effort to maintain the ambiance and tone of the concerts as "pure" Aryan spaces. Thus, many bar concerts are organized as private parties where attendees are visually screened by bouncers and their names are checked against a list compiled by the show's organizers. In others, tickets obtained via organizers' Web sites are required for entry. To get in, attendees must know members of the local scene who will sign their name on the list or vouch for them at the door. It is also possible to gain entrée by displaying the symbols of membership, such as Aryan tattoos, fashion, WPM vernacular, and other proofs of cultural knowledge that confirm one's politics. At other times, young attendees without clear affiliation will be let in if organizers feel they are not a threat and may be recruitable. This filtering process marks the boundaries between scene members and those not "in the know."

As a result of these filtering efforts, the ambient mood at the shows is one of cathartic release from the strains of everyday routines, especially the claimed limitations typically imposed on racist expression. Participants' Aryan symbols and white power tattoos—one of the most celebrated signs of WPM membership—are on clear display. Many participants wear tank top shirts (and some men go bare chested) to show off tattoos such as the German iron cross, confederate flag, Hitler, crossed hammers, or a clenched fist with slogans such as "White Pride," "White Power," "SKIN," or "Proud to be White." Some also

display tattoos of local white power bands, further expressing attachments to the local music scene. Jackets and T-shirts with white power patches indicating affiliation with local (e.g., OC Skins) or national groups (Hammerskins) are also prominent. There are other ritualized elements to these shows, including activities such as collective white power chants,¹⁶ some done in unison with the bands, or various types of dance. The shows are also replete with open displays of camaraderie and fellowship among many participants. The festive tone is also indicated by members' gestures, *sieg heils*, claspings shoulders, and "busting knuckles" or "knocking elbows," combined with smiles and shouts of excitement to each other and the bands. Performed between long-time friends and recent acquaintances, these gestures of camaraderie are meant to express a collective identity as participants in the scene. Many conversations revolve around gossip about the local activist networks involved in the scene, appreciation of the music played at the show, comparisons among bands and genres, and links between the bands and WPM groups. Activists often invite others into their conversations in an effort to befriend fellow Aryans and recruit new members. The other WPM group settings we have observed—such as Aryan congresses, demonstrations, and rallies—carry a more serious, politicized tone to them. To be clear, while the music spaces are also highly politicized, they contain a "looseness" and sense of leisure that does not seem to require that attendees demonstrate the level of movement commitment expected in other WPM activities.

White power music festivals are the leading translocal occasions in the WPM music scene, as they draw larger numbers across an even wider array of movement networks than the bar concerts. Since 1998, both the frequency and size of festivals have increased dramatically (Southern Poverty Law Center 2001b). The two most prominent festivals—Hammerfest, organized by Panzerfaust and Hammerskin Nation, and Nordic Fest, produced by Resistance and the Imperial Klans of America—have been held annually since 2000 and draw between 300 and 600 activists from both the United States and Europe (ADL 2002).¹⁷ The 2002 Rocky Mountain Heritage Festival featured bands and activists from various skinhead groups, the National Alliance, and KKK affiliates based in 12 states, Great Britain, Germany, Poland, and the Netherlands. Folk Fest, which has been held in Florida since 2001, is sponsored by the white nationalist organization Nordwave, and features live bands, a hammer-lifting competition, a playground for children, food, camping, boat rentals, and hikes on nature trails. An even more recent addition is Aryan Fest, organized by the Oregon-based Volksfront (with chapters in California and Arizona as well as Canada and Germany). The event was held in early 2004 on a private property outside Phoenix, Arizona. For a \$30 ticket, attendees could listen to nine bands and three featured speakers, receive two free beers, a barbeque dinner, and on-site camping. Panzerfaust Records provided these resources and all of the proceeds were earmarked to benefit Volksfront land purchases for Aryan community development.

Multiday events are the most notorious and popular in the WPM music scene. Typically held on remote, private property, the festivals usually include up to a dozen bands, speeches from WPM leaders, workshops on Aryan heritage and activism, a wide array of white power merchandise, ritual swastika and cross lightings, and even sporting competitions. Like bar shows in the local scene, patrons are extensively scrutinized to help

ensure privacy from authorities and protesters. Privacy is partially protected by the sophisticated virtual dimensions of the scene. For instance, tickets and information about Hammerfest 2000 were available to activists only through a password-protected Web site. Tickets were required for entry, and all patrons were thoroughly observed at the gates to ensure that the festival was a safe haven for extreme racist expression. Similarly, the attendees of Aryan Fest 2004 were instructed via the event Web site to gather at a meeting place several miles from the event at times set by festival organizers for initial scrutiny before being led to the venue. Many attendees stay at the same hotels and eat at the same restaurants that are promoted on event Web sites and discussion lists. On-site camping at the largest festivals allows activists to set up temporary tent towns where all-night parties and postconcert “fellowshipping” are the norm. Some of the largest festivals have also offered on-site amenities such as a restaurant and general store. The events explicitly cater to several generations of white power activists, from teens and young adults to much older veterans, thereby creating a powerful context for the transmission of movement identity and practices as well as for the recruitment and retention of members (for similar findings, see Hamm 2002:85–93).

Frith (1996:111) observes that making and experiencing music culture is not simply a way of expressing ideas, but “a way of living them” (see also Willis et al. 1990). In other words, music is a social activity that emerges from social interaction and provides a basis for sustaining interactions across various social contexts and occasions. As the primary local and translocal contexts in the WPM music scene, concerts and festivals bring Aryan activists together in spaces where they collectively distinguish themselves. These occasions are “prefigurative,” in that they are among the few face-to-face contexts in which activists live and feel the types of experiences and relationships that reflect the society the movement seeks to build, if only for a few hours or days (Breines 1989; Polletta 1999; Futrell and Simi 2004). The virtual dimensions of the scene enhance members’ abilities to continuously network with one another outside of face-to-face contexts, providing a continuity of scene experiences that would otherwise be difficult to produce. Likewise, the live contexts concretize the scene’s virtual dimensions by providing direct physical contact with other members. All three dimensions offer numerous opportunities for participation in an enduring white power music scene that helps anchor members to the movement.

EMOTIONS AND IDENTITY IN THE WPM MUSIC SCENE

A broad understanding of the music scene’s significance for WPM members requires a recognition of what it means to those involved, how they feel about it, and how these emotional experiences support collective sensibilities. The virtual, local, and translocal dimensions are contexts for emotionally loaded experiences, which activists value, in part because of strengthened feelings about and identification with their peers in the scene and the wider movement.

Our data strongly suggest that the WPM’s music scene is pregnant with meaning and emotion. Specifically, the activists we interviewed felt “vitalizing” (Taylor 2000) and

“reciprocal” (Jasper 1998) feelings of freedom, pride, pleasure, gratification, connectedness, revelation, identification, power, and legitimacy about the movement, which they largely attributed to their experiences at occasions organized around movement music.¹⁸ These types of convictions are, in Collins’ words (1990: 28 as quoted in Jasper 1998: 399), “the ‘glue’ of solidarity” that anchors collective identity and action. The emotions most commonly attributed to WPM members, “reactive emotions” in Jasper’s (1998) terms, such as anger, hatred, and outrage that galvanize members against an “other,” are also apparent. These emotions take root in individuals, but are nurtured and amplified by the scene’s organizational contexts and cultural settings, which foster expectations of how members should feel about themselves in relation to other members and outsiders (Jasper 1998; Taylor 2000). Of course, these same types of emotions can be experienced in a wide range of movement occasions, many of which are not explicitly tied to Aryan music and the scene (e.g., occasions organized around religious practice). Our focus here, however, is on scene experiences as they are linked through the range of social occasions and activities in which music is the focal point.

We concentrate our analysis on “vitalizing emotions” (Taylor 2000) that elicit positive feelings such as pride and pleasure in movement identity (Taylor 2000:271). Specifically, we discuss two analytically distinct, yet closely intertwined, ways that the WPM music scene helps participants anchor their feelings toward the movement and its members. First, we show how the WPM music scene’s cultural community offers many activists a sense of defiant accomplishment against mainstream culture. Second, we explain how these emotions, combined with the sense of camaraderie and fellowship created in the music scene, help to maintain bonds that sustain involvement and draw in new members.

Agency and Solidarity

Part of the emotional significance activists attribute to the WPM music scene revolves around a strong sense of agency. Many reported feeling dignity, pride, and pleasure through their participation in the music scene. The scene’s physical settings and virtual contexts encourage members to openly express and embody extreme racist ideals with supportive others. Because these acts defy mainstream cultural practice, they enable members to experience a strong sense of agency regarding their capacity to organize, participate in, and sustain Aryan ideals and identity through music. This empowering sense of agency can nurture commitment toward the scene and the wider movement. Additionally, agency can be felt in solitary acts that are tied to and available through the music scene. As an activist explains:

I listen to white power music and I still have that feeling of being involved with something as a whole. Listening to music like Max Resist, it’s something where I can sit at home alone and even though I know the whole world is against me I can pop in a Max Resist CD and listen to it and go not only is this uplifting me but I know the band’s behind it and there are people who have the same CD that forms a community and gives us strength. . . . (Midwest Aryan, September 1, 2001)

Many members claim to experience white power music as representing a larger cultural community of the music scene and the wider movement. By calling forth inspiring imag-

ery of that community, activists report that white power music lifts their spirits and strengthens their convictions when they may otherwise feel pressured to conform to mainstream culture and to reject white power ideas. As a northern Hammerskin explains:

What it does to people you know who listen to white power music it gives them a certain level of confidence it allows them in their daily lives when they're trying to keep their jobs, maintain their relationship with their girlfriend, or to raise a child, or maintain a household when your struggling with your racial ideology. . . . What it does is it gives you a little room to maneuver, a little bit of uplifting attitude. You know you can get through your day with the whole world against you instead of giving up or selling out. We say, "You know what we're racists and nobody likes us but we don't care and we're not gonna go away and tomorrow is another day." [We] form a rich community together . . . a basis to unite. (Northern Hammerskin, September 1, 2001)

This community is accessible in a variety of contexts that comprise the scene. Participants report that live shows and festivals offer them the pleasures of fellowship, love, kinship, pride, and inspiration in face-to-face contact with other members. These "reciprocal emotions"—i.e., feelings that members have toward each other—combined with the reactive emotions of anger and hatred for the racial "other," can be strong reinforcers of collective identity (Jasper 1998).

When I hear [white power music] it ignites something in me. Attending the music shows and being there live is even more powerful. The live shows are energizers for racial pride, they just fill you up with love and hope for the future. (Southeastern Aryan Activist, June 23, 2003)

[The festival] was great. We got dressed up [in Aryan regalia] with all these great white families and that's what was really important about this event . . . a chance to build unity and remember why we do all of this, it's for racial kinship. (Colorado Aryan, February 19, 2001)

The festivals are particularly important settings in this regard. These large-scale events bring together supportive peers across a range of WPM networks and are particularly powerful for fostering pride and a sense of connection to an enduring Aryan community. Two WPM members relate common responses of many attendees interviewed:

I really hate missing the shows . . . [they] really bring people together. They keep you strong, they keep you feeling like you're part of something, part of the movement and if we can keep together then there's hope that we can save the white race from destruction. (Idaho Aryan, July 12, 1999)

When people come together at the music shows we're telling each other that our beliefs can withstand all of the bullshit out there and we don't have to cave in, we don't have to give up and go with the race-mixing multicultural propaganda. . . . (Southern California skinhead, August 13, 2000)

Feelings of unity, cathartic release, and, simply, "fun" are major elements of this collective experience.

Before '93 I didn't really hang out with others [in the WPM] much. I pretty much did my own thing and hung out with [white power] people around the neighborhood

and in college. But then I went [to a festival] and that's when it started to change. That show helped build so much unity. We really came together after that. There were people from all over. California, Arizona, Nevada, from all over, even from other countries. It was all 'cause of this show. (L.A. County skinhead, March 28, 2002)

They're [music shows] informational as well as entertaining which is really important to combine. These are the main purposes for these events, to have fun as well as to remember our duty. (Southern California skinhead, January 25, 2002)

Many find participation in the scene pleasurable. Committed WPM activists indicate that this pleasure emerges from the feeling of dignity they experience in contexts where open moral expression of Aryanism is supported (see D. Bell 1992) for similar points about U.S. civil rights activists). Elisabeth Jean Wood (2001:268) has talked of such pleasures as the "emotional in-process benefits [or] the emotion-laden consequences of action experienced only by those participating in that action." While their ideological positions are quite different, the emotions WPM activists experience in the scene parallel those of the El Salvadoran insurgents she studied. She explains that while campesinos supporting the Farabundo Marti National Liberation (FMLN) organized to realize their interests,

... the particular emotional benefits (of their actions) turned on a more profound role for agency: for both moral outrage and pride, the *assertion of agency* itself constituted part of the meaning of those acts. Participation per se expressed moral outrage, asserted a claim to dignity, and gave grounds for pride... their exercise of agency... was a pleasure, both individually experienced (as pleasure must be) and collectively expressed (shared with other participants as they jointly asserted their capacity for agency and dignity as actors). Thus moral outrage, pride and pleasure... impelled the insurgency despite the high risk and uncertainty. (Wood 2001:268, original emphasis)

Members also indicate that creating and sustaining the cultural community of activists in the WPM's music scene is an expression of agency against social forces that they perceive to be aligned against them. They experience defiant resistance as pleasurable, in part, because it symbolizes their capacity to act and their dignity as actors despite strong constraints and potentially high risks.

These feelings are not limited to experiences at festivals or concerts. As we described previously, members also express similar feelings when they consult white power fanzines, Web sites, and virtual chat rooms in which attendees relay moods and emotions of the experience to others. For instance, the authors of postings in a Panzerfaust Records chat room conveyed feelings of inspiration, identification, excitement, hatred, and aggression experienced by participating in recent white power concerts. Discussing a 2003 Confederate Hammerskins show outside Jacksonville, Florida, an activist related:

What a great show!! After [the] speech I was ready to take on every jew in the land with a stick. can't wait to go get out to "cali" and see how in the hell those guy's can wear those hair cuts and not be fighting 24/7. Final War kicked ass as always as did all the bands, red white and black watch out for this allstar lineup they are going to be something else. well thanks for the great time great to see everybody and great to see all the kids come and have fun for they are why we do this and will always be in this "till every

jew is d**d—opps gone” 14/88 Bob. (Downloaded from Panzerfaust.com, March 24, 2004)

Another member expressed similar sentiments about the 2004 Volksfront Aryan Fest:

My bro N I went to our first Aryanfest this last weekend in phoenix. It was just mind blowing on the amount of brothers and sisters out there all living, breathing, and working for the cause. And here I thought we were alone LOL. The bros from Volksfront were not only helpful, but very professional as well. Living in today's society it's nice to know that at any time I can log onto Panzerfaust and be connected to my brothers and sisters, and speak our minds on the cause at hand. For me it's all of us getting together and fighting for the same common goal “THE PRESERVATION OF THE WHITE RACE.” Once again thanks to Azvolksfront and Panzerfaust Records for the weekend with my new family. Proudwhiteman. (Downloaded from Panzerfaust.com, March 24, 2004)

These postings closely mirror the types of sentiments many of the activists we interviewed reported about the concert experience. Messages of joy, inspiration, and identification may lead those reading these posts to anticipate similar experiences and consider attending future shows. Such enthusiastic descriptions of the scene, so common in the movement's virtual spaces, affirm the visceral feelings and affective bonds attendees expect in the face-to-face gatherings. These feelings of community, pride, and pleasure are also buoyed by expressions of anger and resentment that bind Aryans against their opponents.

Exceptionalism, Superiority, Recruitment, and Commitment

WPM members' experiences in the music scene also figure prominently in many of the stories they tell about their involvement in the wider movement. Affective bonds supported in the scene appear crucial to recruitment (McAdam 1988). In particular, feelings of uniqueness and superiority cultivated in the scene can be transformative.

I had some racist views before I started listening to [white power] music, but once I heard that first Skrewdriver song I was sold. It really did change my life. I started going to white power shows whenever I could and I'd drive anywhere, it didn't matter how far. . . . It connected me to other people who had the same passion and were willing to say, “you know, I'm a racist. So what? I'm proud of who I am,” and you weren't going to hide from the fact whites are getting pushed aside. (Colorado Skin, August 23, 2002) How I really started believing, thinking, in that white separatist sense and then got all white supremacist, it was really through the music. There's a whole other genre of music out there that no one ever hears about, and it's real powerful, especially at that awkward stage where no one exactly knows who they are. It gives you an identity . . . you're special, you know, because you're white. (California skinhead quoted in Blee 2002:162)

Some fans are drawn to the scene by a sense of exceptionalism, and the enlightenment derived from their insider status and perceived privileged knowledge about the “true” nature of the world, which they fully realize through participation in the scene. For example, many members of the scene claim that they are among the few who “see through” and reject mainstream attempts to denude Aryan culture and destroy the “white race.”

Resistance music is important to me because it is a real alternative. Its great to have something that doesn't degenerate our culture and heritage. With MTV and the major record labels promoting hip-hop as "the cool thing" for white kids, too many white kids have been duped into believing it and drive around listening to blacks sing about "killing whitey," its pathetic! I refuse to be a mindless lemming that follows any fad that comes from the MTV media bosses. (Chat room posting by "Joe" <http://www.resistance.com/who/index.htm>, September 27, 2002—Resistance Records)

Many activist fans use WPM music as a form of aesthetic expression to authenticate themselves as true Aryans with alternative politics, attitudes, and style they can access through the scene. But, recalling Frith (1996), music is not simply a way of expressing ideas, it is also a way of living and feeling them. By making the aesthetic judgment to listen to white power music and participate in the scene, members come to live the movement and feel more involved than might be the case without the music. Of course, there are multitudes of ways to experience the WPM music scene and to "live the movement." We do not presume that all participants in the scene express the strong commitments we discuss here, as not all participants in any movement express the same views and rationales for involvement. For many in the WPM, religiously based white supremacist activities provide other ways to gear into the movement and live it in emotionally significant ways (see Dobratz 2001). What the music scene does provide, however, are occasions organized around music that create opportunities for participation in a variety of ways. Our research shows that the music scene is also a distinct route to deep commitments to the WPM. As Hamm (1993: 211) observes, many "listeners of this music . . . transform themselves from their ordinary realities to something wider, something that enlarges them as people. They become [white power activists]."

CONCLUSION

In this article, we have extended prior approaches to scenes, music, and movement culture by elaborating the concept of movement music scene to capture both the organizational and experiential character of movement activities focused on music. Extending Bennett and Petersons' (2004) framework of virtual, local, and translocal dimensions of music scenes helps to produce a more complete and nuanced understanding of the effects of music in social movements than those provided by lyrical and ritual analyses alone. To be clear, our intent is neither to dismiss the relevance of lyrics in articulating influential values and meanings, nor to claim that ritualistic aspects are unimportant. Clearly both are central to music's role in social life, including in social movement cultures. But that is not all. Music is also an organizing resource and focal activity for a variety of movement occasions that, in the WPM, extend across virtual, local, and translocal movement contexts. In both physical and virtual settings, activists use the aesthetic, symbolic, and associational forces of music to draw participants to a range of practices through which they articulate, materialize, reaffirm, and experience their commitment to the movement. The proliferation of both physical settings (in the form of concerts and festivals), and virtual settings (such as music Web sites, streaming radio, fanzines, and chat rooms) creates

numerous opportunities for people to participate in the scene and, thereby, be involved in the movement in various ways. As Gerlach (1971; also, Gerlach and Hine 1970, 1973) has long noted, such segmented and polycentric forms of organization can enhance the vitality of a movement as it permits members to do different things and reach out to different populations. The multiplicity of music occasions that constitute the WPM music scene brings a variety of members into contact with one another, enabling them to construct networks of affiliation and overcome obstacles to participation and the mobilization of resources.

Such a scene is particularly important for highly marginalized movements like the WPM. Facing “strong codes against the direct [public] expression of racist views” (Van Dijk 1992; Billig 2001), the music scene provides physical and virtual spaces where members can freely express and experience the feelings and attitudes associated with the Aryan aesthetic. As Buechler (2000:208) observes, movements that give such emphasis to internal movement culture are often “subjected to the criticism that they are no longer social movements at all but rather depoliticized subcultures no longer interested in social transformation.” This claim ignores what the concept of movement music scene highlights—that maintaining a cultural community of committed activists is “both a major accomplishment and [may be] the outer limit of what is [presently] possible” for the WPM (Buechler 2000:208). This does not mean that larger social transformation goals are not sought. Rather, we maintain that strengthening the movement culture is a condition necessary for and prior to the attainment of broader goals. WPM organizers realize that the Aryan music scene is a pivotal part of the movement’s culture, and so should we.

The issue of music’s role in movements is not only an academic concern. Although participation and interest in the WPM music scene appears to be growing, Blee (2002:165) notes that “not all racists agree on what forms of racist culture are appropriate [and] the question of music can provoke especially hot disputes.” Some members consider Aryan music and the scene created around it as little more than a minor cultural adjunct or even a distraction to “real” movement politics. They believe that participation in the music scene too often becomes the limit of one’s involvement in the movement rather than a gateway to deeper commitments that hold the potential for active insurgency. Scholars echoing this assumption argue that music is merely a superficial packaging of political ideas without much substance regarding WPM goals or strong effects on wider movement participation (for more on this point, see Street 2003). On the contrary, we have shown that the movement–music relationship in the WPM scene is much more than the superficial stylistic behavior devoid of political content or influence. The WPM music scene engages both seasoned activists and nascent members in activities that express the lifestyle and ideology of white power politics, thereby providing activists and potential adherents broad access to models of Aryan identity and opportunities to sustain it. Thus, far from being politically innocuous, the white power music scene contributes in numerous ways to the formation and persistence of movement involvement.

Blee (2002:162) and others (e.g., Hamm 1993) also claim that racist music is particularly important for younger generations of activists, and suggest that “many young racists see such music as the key to reviving a movement they regard as floundering under the

lifeless leadership of older Klan and Nazi leaders.” It appears to us that music is not just a way to overcome older generations’ deficiencies, but may also bring generations together. Generational divides between scene participants and nonparticipants may, in fact, be diminishing as involvement in the music scene increases across movement networks, and organizational aspects become more professionalized and sophisticated, offering a wider range of musical styles, paraphernalia, and involvement opportunities. There is no doubt that many participants in the white power music scene are in their teens and twenties (Hamm 1993; Lööwe 1998a; ADL 2002), and our observations suggest that the action in the scene (which involves subterranean, risky, and taboo aspects) does attract young newcomers. Nevertheless, the WPM music scene is not exclusively youth dominated. Many of the earliest activists who initiated the scene in the late 1980s and early 1990s are now active veterans. Other long-time participants, who claim ambivalence about attending shows and other face-to-face occasions, utilize the scene’s virtual dimensions (e.g., streaming recordings, Internet chat rooms, fanzines) to access the movement and sustain their involvement. Indeed, many of our older informants claim that the scene allows them to participate in more mature and sophisticated (often meaning less public and less risky) ways than were once available to them.

Cyberspace is a particularly important dimension of this involvement, as it enables participants to experience the scene without having to be physically “there.” Web sites enable members to regularly connect with one another, and movement music provides an attractive incentive for making those connections. Members can even participate vicariously in the collective experience of live concerts and festivals through chats about the scene, reports of music events, CDs, or streaming broadcasts of the events. The virtual contexts of the WPM music scene help conjure emotions and ideas that nourish participants’ identification with the collective “we” of the scene and the wider movement. As virtual experiences become an increasingly important part of contemporary identity formation processes, and as more people interact in and experience virtual worlds, we expect the virtual dimension of the WPM music scene to carry even more influence in developing movement ties and commitments. Indeed, as Barry Wellman and his colleagues have pointed out, the Internet adds another layer of social interaction to many users’ experiences, increasing the density of their relationships (Wellman 1999; Wellman and Gulia 1999; Wellman and Haythornthwaite 2002). Clearly, combined with face-to-face contexts, the virtual dimension of the WPM music scene creates a potent, multifaceted cultural resource for linking members to one another and the collective “we” of the movement.

The Aryan music scene is one part of WPM culture that draws together participants whose commitment levels may vary widely. People “make the scene” by navigating through a variety of spaces organized around music. They may just wet their feet by surfing WPM Web sites, or dive in by participating in both virtual and face-to-face occasions. If, as most accounts suggest, changes in self-concept and collective identification usually occur gradually as a result of interaction and exposure to alternative styles and narratives (Kiecolt 2000:117), it is reasonable to suggest that the more opportunities for exposure to racist narratives and experiences the scene provides, and the longer that exposure, the

deeper the identification with the WPM is likely to become. For those who become committed, the scene helps to sustain affiliation by making available experiences that vitalize involvement in strident racist and anti-Semitic beliefs, and provides a sense of dignity, efficacy, and pleasure that activists may not find elsewhere. This is the primary significance of the scene for its members.

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NOTES

¹Denisoff (1971) also describes what, by our conceptualization, is the early American folk music labor movement scene—a highly politicized amalgamation of performers, their songs, performances, performing spaces, organizers, music bulletins, and 'zines (e.g., *Sing Out!*), production companies (e.g., People's Songs, Inc., People's Artists, Inc.), and radio broadcasts (also see Eyerman and Jamison 1998). However, he does not give much analytic attention to the wide range of collective occasions and experiences available in this scene and, instead, focuses on lyrical analysis to assess movement music.

²There is fairly common usage of the term "scene" as related to music, art, and fashion across the fields of sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, communications, and history. However, few have attempted to spell out what it means analytically.

³Although "scene" is sometimes used synonymously with subculture, we do not intend this. "Scene" is not coterminous with the concept of subculture. As Bennett (2000, 1999) notes, the concept subculture has lost much of its sociological validity as scholars use it in contradictory ways and it takes on a plurality of meanings. Regarding music and sociability, subculture seems to now exist as "little more than a convenient 'catch-all' term for any aspect of social life in which . . . people, style, and music intersect" (Bennett 1999:600). Moreover, the traditional use of this term suggests that subcultures are much more coherent and homogenous than they often are. This is important for us, as activist commitments to movement communities vary widely and involvement can be very fluid. Indeed, one of the important features of the WPM music scene is that it offers multiple ways to gear into the movement that require differing levels of commitment and allow for fluid participation. Second, social movement scholars often use subculture to describe a much broader aspect of movement culture than our use of the scene concept. Subculture often refers to the entirety of a movement (i.e., a social movement is a subculture). Following this definition, if music scene is equivalent to subculture it would be a subculture of a subculture. Additionally, equating music scene with subculture would ignore the various genres in the scene and would not take us very far analytically. A movement music scene is subcultural, but not a subculture per se. At most, we use scene to refer to a dimension of a movement subculture. All those who participate in the movement do not necessarily also participate in a movement's music scene. Indeed, not all racist groups agree on what forms of racist culture are appropriate (Blee 2002:165).

Finally, what we conceptualize as scene also cannot be captured by the concept ritual. Although movement music scenes may certainly exhibit features of formal ritual (e.g., ritual boundaries, group performance, symbolic enactment), to limit what happens in the scene and how people experience it to ritual oversimplifies the matter.

⁴Participant observation concentrated on Christian Identity activists in the southwest, Aryan Nations activists in Idaho, WPM participants in Southern California including major leaders such as Tom Metzger (founder of the White Aryan Resistance), several WPM promoters and band members, and numerous skinhead groups. These contacts resulted in, among other things, observations of live Web site/radio broadcast productions, various social gatherings, WPM bar concerts and music festivals, and 21 home visits with activists, each ranging from one day to three weeks.

⁵Of the 59 interviews, 43 were with male activists and 16 with female activists. Their ages ranged from 15 to 25 years (n7), 26 to 35 years (n28), 36 to 45 years (n9), 46 to 55 years (n9), and 55 and over (n6).

⁶Newspaper articles on the WPM were drawn primarily from the *Los Angeles Times*, *The Salt Lake Tribune*, *The Spectrum* (St. George, Utah), and the *Las Vegas Review Journal*. Articles were selected through a structured, exhaustive search of the Lexus–Nexus database and microfilm indexes of the *Los Angeles Times* and *Las Vegas Review Journal* to 1985 using search terms such as skinhead, neo-Nazi, white supremacy, white power, hate- (including hate-crime, hate group, etc.). Other articles are drawn from data provided by watchdog groups (e.g., Southern Poverty Law Center, Political Research Associates). We also examined 48 WPM Web sites.

⁷The states are: Alabama, Arizona, California, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Kansas, Maine, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, Nebraska, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Oregon, Texas, and Washington.

⁸In the case of widely known white power groups, the names of the organizations and their representatives are left unchanged. In other cases, pseudonyms are used.

⁹There are many attitudes held by members of skinhead subcultures. Some are explicitly antiracist. Here we refer only to those explicitly racist skinheads directly involved in white power activities.

¹⁰Though typically characterized as a supremacist movement (Ferber 1998), Dobratz and Shanks-Meile (1997) argue that a separatist philosophy has become a central theme within some networks of the WPM. Additionally, Berbrier (1998) points out that “new racist” rhetoric seeks to emphasize white power legitimacy through arguments for cultural pluralism and some are even claiming whites as victims of discrimination, stigmatization, and racial genocide (Berbrier 2000).

¹¹Examples of doctrinaire song titles and lyrics by two of the most popular white power bands include:

Race and Nation by Skrewdriver (n.d.)

I believe in the White race,
A race apart,
We've got a mile start,
I believe in my country,
It's where I belong,
It's where I'll stay,
Chorus:
For my race and nation,
Race and nation,
Race and nation,
Race and nation.

Hate Train Rolling by Bound for Glory (n.d.)

Chorus:

Hate Train Rolling on the rails of an insane world,
Hate Train Rolling a non-stop collision undeterred,
Hate Train Rolling leaving wreckage in our path,
We're Bound for Glory,
Hate Train Rolling, Built to forever last.

¹²Examples of song titles and lyrics focusing on themes of "brotherhood," "volk," "white pride," and "Aryan heritage" include:

Geile Macker (Keine Kacker) by Max Resist (n.d., 1998b)

Freikorps for Deutschland,
and the love of the fatherland,
Max Resist for brotherhood is the reason we exist,
Standing together with our strength and pride,
Our true feelings for us it's hard to hide.

Chorus:

Skinhead unity, it's the way it should always be,
Friends from all over the world that's you and me,
Aryan brothers hands across the sea,
Skinhead pride—White unity.

It's Okay to Be White by Aggressive Force (n.d.)

It's okay to be White,
Strength through pride,
You have inside,
It's okay to be White,
It's okay to be White,
Loyalty within you,
Have with your kin.

Stand One, Stand All by Youngland (n.d.)

Stand one, stand all, stand up, stand proud
and raise the white man's flag,
Cause I'm for you and you're for me,
and unity is what we have.
Don't listen to what they say,
Don't ever fall away,
Don't listen we'll have our day,
When our nations have their way.

¹³It is important to note that claims by both WPM leaders and antiracist watchdog organizations may exaggerate the level of sales and consumer demand.

¹⁴According to a 1997 survey by the Centre for Migration Studies and the National Council of Crime Prevention in Sweden, out of 8,000 young Swedes between the ages of 12 and 19, 12.2 percent reported listening to white power rock "sometimes or often" (Lööwe 1998b).

¹⁵Throughout the paper, references to "Panzerfaust" refer to activities and statements prior to the 2005 reorganization. "Panzerfaust/Free Your Mind Productions" will be used for all post-reorganization references.

¹⁶Chants are relatively simplistic and straightforward. For instance, the most common we observed is “sieg heil, sieg heil,” which is sometimes repeated for 5–10 minutes, usually in unison with a Nazi salute. Another is “white power, white power” or the variation “white fucking power” used the same way. Periodic shouts of “88” or “14” are also common, as is singing along with popular chorus lines, such as “I’m an 88 rock ‘n’ roll star.”

¹⁷European music shows often attract several thousand and represent an ideal that U.S. organizers seek to attain.

¹⁸Of course, exposure to the scene can also produce or enhance feelings of revulsion, fear, and hostility from those who do not inhabit it toward those who do. Here we concentrate on the emotions of committed activists.

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