

Teenyboppers, Groupies, and Other Grotesques: Girls and Women and Rock Culture in the 1960s and early 1970s

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I like to boast that the first record I ever bought was the Beatles' "Hey Jude" single on the Apple label. Or, I tell the story about the Christmas of 1969, when my mother, nervous about opening Pandora's box (which, as it turned out, she should have been), and annoyed by a sulking daughter, found that Santa had left a copy of *Abbey Road* for me in her closet. I am now compelled to come clean. Before I fell in love with the Beatles, my heart belonged to another band. I speak, of course, of the Monkees. I adored Davy's English accent and Mike's dry wit. I liked his sideburns, too. I joined their fan club. I put their pictures on my wall. I read *16* magazine voraciously. I never missed an episode of their television program. I bought their albums, and asked for them for Christmas and birthdays. I snarled at critics who wrote anything bad about them. I was, in short, a teenybopper.

As someone who is passionate about popular music, and who prides herself on her exquisite taste and refined ear, I've denied my Monkees obsession for years, preferring to present my 4th and 5th grade self as a precocious fan of the Beatles and the Rolling Stones. Since I'm confessing, I'll also admit that I watched the Partridge Family television show – although I wouldn't have been caught dead buying their music. Rock critic aesthetics had already entered my thinking. Even so, "teenybopper" is not a term I've ever cared to be labeled with. Nor is "groupie," a term used in teasing, and even by myself on occasion, in order to justify my almost lifelong passion for hard rock music. Jokes aside, the use of "teenyboppers" or "groupies" to identify female fans of popular music belies a disturbing reality of rock culture for women: for decades, those were essentially the two ways to imagine the relation of women to rock. The normative power of these prescribed identities remains potent, even though women are increasingly visible in rock culture as musicians and critics.

Such dynamics were decidedly not new or unique to rock culture

and criticism of the mid-1960s and beyond. Indeed, cultural critic Andreas Huyssen (1986) sees the identification of “mass culture as woman,” and the subsequent denigration of both as one of the characteristics of modernity in art, literature, and other forms of culture upon the emergence of that aesthetic philosophy in the mid-1800s. Huyssen also documents that the mass culture as feminine/high culture as masculine binary was alive and well in cultural criticism and the various representations of aesthetic Modernism throughout the 20th century, challenged toward the end by the advent of feminist critique. It is not a great theoretical leap to assert that the same dynamic was mapped onto the relationship of rock music to mass culture by early rock critics. But unlike abstract expressionist painting and other vaunted forms of mid-20th century Modernism, rock and roll music did not derive from high culture. If anything, it emerged out of the murky swamp of mass culture, comprised as it was of popular musical traditions associated with more marginal members of society. Consciously or unconsciously, the early rock critics who sought to create a critical vocabulary with which to evaluate and categorize works of rock and roll music applied the aesthetic criteria of Modernism to do so.

Very early rock criticism, circa 1966, was far more catholic in its appraisal of what constituted “good” rock and roll.¹ But by 1969, critic Robert Christgau (1969), writing in the *New York Times*, observed that “[f]or the last five years any rock performer worth his pretensions has written his own songs,” and that “[s]ong interpretation has been relegated by both performers and audiences to that phony adult world of nightclub theatricality which rock has been striving to destroy for 15 years.” His most powerful observation, in my opinion, was that “because of the usual prejudices about creative force, it has been easier for women to buck this situation.” Here, Christgau recognizes that the aesthetic biases of Modernism influenced how rock was created as well as received, and also recognizes that those same biases made it easier for female performers (he named Judy Collins, Joan Baez, and Janis Joplin) to continue the practice of song interpretation. It is telling that Christgau did not mention Joni Mitchell anywhere in his article. At the time Mitchell was already recording and developing her distinctive songwriting voice, one as “authentic” as that of any male rocker. It may be that female singer-songwriters like Mitchell were at best uncategorizable, at worst unthinkable in the developing discourses of rock masculinity and authenticity, even for those like Christgau who saw through them. Finally, although Christgau’s comment may be read as implying that women somehow saw through or didn’t care about rock “pre-

tensions,” I suggest that it may also be read as implying that what women did or did not do as rock performers did not matter.² At the same time, his comments about nightclubs, an influence on television variety shows, clearly signals his awareness that the feminized mass culture/masculinized high culture split was firmly entrenched in discussions of “authentic” rock versus other forms of music and popular entertainment.

What remains to be explained, however, is how women and teenage girls came to be the demeaned “outsiders” of rock culture, despite their contributions as performers and fans. I now turn to the theoretical work of literary critics Peter Stallybrass and Allon White to explain the very necessary function of ostensibly ostracized teenyboppers and groupies in creating and cohering normative masculinity in and of rock culture. The treatment and discussion of teenyboppers and groupies in rock discourse and rock culture in general is, I argue, a prime example of what Stallybrass and White call “displaced abjection,” an operation whereby a “low” social group turns its power and disdain against a group that is even lower (1986, p. 53). Although rock culture, as it emerged in the late 1960s, was largely populated by upwardly-mobile white middle-class youth, it embraced and honed an oppositional relationship to mainstream culture. It was not enough to designate women as low Others and to ignore their contributions to rock culture. They had to be actively disdained and kept in their place. At the same time, women were very necessary for the maintenance and coherence of rock masculinity, as sexual objects as well as adoring subjects. This contradictory need and disdain for women in rock culture exemplifies displaced abjection. Combined with the Modernist aesthetics mapped onto rock music and culture by early rock critics, strategies of displaced abjection succeeded in making women and girls marginal in and to rock culture. Their combined effects linger still.

This article argues that masculinity became naturalized in rock in the 1960s and, as a result, women became marginal and/or subservient to men in rock culture and its discursive formations. To support my argument I interrogate two particular sites of discourse about rock in which operations of naturalization and marginalization took place. I begin with an analysis of rock discourse about “teenybopper TV,” notably ABC’s *American Bandstand*, NBC’s *The Monkees*, and ABC’s *The Partridge Family*, and the subsequent disparagement of their teenage female audience in rock journalism, even decades after the programs appeared. I next explore the negative characterization and analyses of groupies in rock journalism of the late 1960s as an example of rock culture’s contradictory rela-

tionship to female sexuality. Ultimately, I suggest that rock journalism's construction of women and teenage girls as groupies and teenyboppers, as well as the elevation of select rock star girlfriends to the not-quite-as-bad category of "rock chick" foreclosed other possibilities for and ways to imagine the relationship of women to rock culture, even as the social and discursive formation coalesced in the late 1960s.

Teenybopper TV

Although I've come a long way, chronologically and aesthetically, from my pre-adolescent fascination with everything Monkee, I still feel a need to disassociate myself from it, and I'm sure I'm not alone. Why? The easy answer to that deceptively simple question is that, in the vaunted work of popular music scholarship and journalistic criticism, "teenybopper" is a very dirty word. Originally bandied about in entertainment industry trade magazines as shorthand for the pre- and mid-teen adolescent cohort and "their" music, it acquired its current, less savory and thoroughly value-laden meaning in the mid-1960s, or more accurately, as a result of later analyses of mid-1960s music and trends. Today, the term is used much more promiscuously, applied indiscriminately to fans of performers like the sexually charged (at least in the minds of their critics) Spice Girls and Britney Spears to the oh-so-cute-and-dreamy boy bands. It doesn't matter whether the teenyboppers in question are 9 or 17. What unites them is their bad taste, as perceived by the critics and scholars who "know better." That contemporary critics do not care to acknowledge that teenybopper taste is not "bad," but more likely undeveloped (who among us does not have aesthetic skeletons in our [pre-] pubescent musical closet) exemplifies the continuing power of discourses that feminize mass culture in general and valorize the "authentic masculine" in rock, even subtextually.³

One other thing characterizes the discursive teenybopper, her femaleness. I cannot recollect the term "teenybopper" being applied to male fans of these performers and groups, or to the scores of pre- and mid-adolescent males who worship the male equivalent of teenybopper pop stars, professional wrestlers, or the legions of young males who continue to hang the well-known poster of Jim Morrison, shirtless and pouty, on their bedroom walls. Indeed, worship of musical teen idols is as much about fetishism of their images as it is about music. It is this aspect of teenybopperdom, I assert, that is most problematic for critics and scholars who draw boundaries around rock and other "serious" and more aesthetically valued forms of popular music to protect it from less authentic forms.

In her study of teen idols, critic Gael Sweeney points out that, “[T]heories of spectatorship hold that whenever men perform they are, to some extent, objectified and feminized because they are put in the position of being looked at, rather than being in the dominant position of looking” (1994, p. 51). I suggest that rock and roll mythology and discourses of authenticity serve to defer and diminish the feminizing influence of the gaze on “acceptable” pop stars. That is, through this move, a suggestive poster of Jim Morrison becomes symbolic of his authentic phallic power rather than a site of homoerotic fetishism.

This particular discursive move is further bolstered by the binary positioning of the teen idol created by television as the opposite of the authentic rock star. In this section, I discuss how the “teen idol” television, as represented by *American Bandstand*, *The Monkees*, and *The Partridge Family* were mobilized by rock and roll critics in the service of creating discursive authenticity myths. In the case of *American Bandstand* and to some degree, *The Monkees*, the discursive work was done in hindsight, given that rock criticism had not emerged, or in the case of the latter, was just emerging at the time of initial broadcast. In any case, the term “teenybopper” was naturalized to represent types of music, fans and performers that were the inauthentic opposites of “true” rock and rollers. This naturalization is now so complete as to ignore or disavow the appeal of teenybopper music to young males of the same age.⁴ I argue that a further consequence of this discursive move is the gendering of the disparaged, inauthentic teenybopper as female. I link this move, which continues to do discursive damage to women in all aspects of popular music, to the specific address of television pop to pre- and mid-teenage audiences.

In the minds of many rock critics, and of the devoted who read them, *American Bandstand* is the ur-text of teenybopper television. It was based in Philadelphia, a city known in rock critic hindsight for its bland, soulless music, played by, in the words of critic Greg Shaw, “bored, middle-aged studio musicians” (1980, p. 97). It was hosted by someone who exuded all of the rebelliousness and non-conformity of a young Republican. Worst of all, it was aimed primarily at girls. Teen idols such as Bobbie Rydell and Fabian, culled from the streets of Philadelphia and paraded on *American Bandstand*, pulled on the heartstrings – and opened the wallets – of, in Shaw’s words, “the teenage girls, the ones in the suburbs who wanted big fluffy candy-colored images of male niceness on which to focus their pubescent dreams” (1980, p. 97). That is, he blames their success on their pre- and teenage female television audience. Real

rock and roll, Shaw and others imply, was not to be found in television, but on radio, out in the cars and streets frequented by male teens that had better things to do than to moon over Frankie Avalon. Television, it is implied, represents the worst of mass culture and crass commercialism, values that rock and roll is alleged to oppose. That is, television is perhaps the representative form of feminized mass culture. Its female teen audiences didn't know better than to fall for the fake teen idols whose managers and record companies preyed on their girlish fantasies.

Teenage girls were a logical target for the advertisers who sponsored *American Bandstand*. According to published surveys in the late 1950s, teenage girls spent more time than their male counterparts listening to rock and roll on the radio (thus refuting Shaw's assumption) (*Sponsor*, 1956, p. 33). Girls were also responsible for the majority of record purchases. Radio and television sponsors, the article implied, would be well-served by targeting the teenage girl audience. But teenage girls, according to a 1955 Ohio State University study quoted in the article, lost their taste for "hot" music once they assumed adult responsibilities and purchasing power. By their late teens, "their taste veers to the sweet and "schmaltzy" (*viz.* Lawrence Welk, Liberace) (108). In the eyes of later rock critics, the commercial allure of teenage and younger girls to advertisers and soulless record companies damned the audience as much as the purveyors of the products foisted upon them.

No doubt about it, *American Bandstand* was bland and commercial. It owed much of its appeal, to sponsors at least, to its emcee, Dick Clark. A 1958 *Variety* article attributed Clark's success to his "underemotional, relaxed 'all-American boy' personality" (Rolontz, 1958, March 24, p. 4). These same qualities were later used in rock culture to diminish Clark and his program's achievements. That is not to say that *American Bandstand* did not "water down" rock and roll. Indeed, the program was complicit in the relegation of most African American artists, except those who could emulate a white pop sound, to the newly re-ghettoized rhythm and blues category. *American Bandstand* helped to cement rock and roll as a white musical form. The racial implications of this move on what became rock and rock culture were skirted over later by white rock critics as they turned rock into a signifier of white masculinity and authenticity, and denied the implications of its African American roots as much as Clark's programs did. Instead, the after-the-fact critical analysis of *American Bandstand* helped to construct the teenybopper, and teenybopper music, as outside of the purview of authentic rock and roll.

Although I believe that *American Bandstand* is a problematic text in terms of racial, gender, and cultural politics, I assert that it contained, especially in the late 1950s, contradictions that call for further academic scrutiny. Because of television, *American Bandstand* helped to legitimize rock and roll, to prepare the way for the widespread acceptance of the music in the 1960s. The teenage audience of the late 1950s was not as homogeneous as rock and roll mythmakers would have us think. More importantly, interest in rock and roll tapered off after age 17; that is, the college-age audience had yet to adopt rock and roll as a generational signifier. As *Billboard* writer Hank Fox (1967) observed, that audience did not embrace rock and roll as its music of choice until the mid-1960s. Rather than acknowledging the impact of the cultural and industrial contexts of the program on its gender and racial politics, as well as its audience address, later critics damned its audience and its medium, blaming both for the bad “teenybopper” music of the era.

The female teenybopper, defined in opposition to the true, male, rock and roller, fan *or* artist, was discursively invented and subsequently naturalized as the binary opposite of the “authentic” rock fan in the mid-1960s. This naturalization was abetted by early works of popular music studies that set up dichotomies between male and female practices as musical enthusiasts. For example, Simon Frith, in his now seminal work *Sound Effects*, characterized teenyboppers as very young girls (ten to thirteen years old) who were “at their youngest and least free stage.” Frith grants that girls grow out of the phase, but implies that their relationship to pop music and stars does not. Their involvement with rock music and stars remains in the private confines of their bedrooms and their hearts. Their only public involvement with pop music is on the dance floor, as a place to find a husband (Frith, 1981, pp. 226-229). I do not want to be construed as taking a cheap shot at old theory, especially pioneering work that remains relevant, but to point out how entrenched and unquestioned Frith’s 20-year-old assumptions are in academic and popular work on rock and other youth musics and cultures. Being a teenybopper, then, was naturalized as a primary relation of the female fan to the masculinized world of rock. Despite the very visible presence of “women in rock” in recent years, the teenybopper remains the most enduring signifier of the relationship of the female fan to rock.

The key distinguishing feature of the discursively-constructed teenybopper is her thrall to the image of her beloved. *American Bandstand* set the stage for the worship of televised teen idols, but in a world where

the value judgments of middle-aged writers for music industry trade magazines could not do much damage to her reputation. After all, *Billboard*, *Variety*, *Cashbox*, and other magazines covering music before 1966 were trade magazines. Snide comments about teenyboppers appeared in their pages, but in an obligatory manner. Their readers, the producers and executives who were raking in teenyboppers' cash, snickered all the way to the bank. But the disparaged teenybopper was invented in the same year, 1966, as rock criticism. A television show about the antics of a cute rock band sealed the fate of the teenybopper as an outsider in true rock circles. It is to the *Monkees* and early rock criticism that I now turn.

The *Monkees* remain a thorn in the side to rock critics. The *Rolling Stone Illustrated History of Rock and Roll*, one of the first publications to set up a grand narrative of rock *and* rock criticism, is peppered with generally unsavory references to the *Monkees*, but the group is not worthy of a chapter.⁵ The *Monkees* are trotted out as an example of what real rock *isn't*, the notable exception to this being a photo caption in Lester Bang's essay on Bubblegum music in which he stated possibly the most annoying thing, to his fellow rock critics, about the *Monkees*: "Recording some great records, they proved that authenticity has little to do with rock, Holden Caulfield be damned" (Bangs, 1980, p. 328). The critical strategy used in hindsight to evaluate the *Monkees* is to accept and even celebrate their music as great pop, but to continue to disparage both their origins as a network television band-for-hire who did not write and perform its own music and the audience who catapulted sales of their records and related merchandise to Beatle-esque heights in the mid-1960s.⁶

A noteworthy aspect of the relationship between televised music of the 1960s and nascent rock criticism is how little television is explicitly mentioned in that body of work.⁷ This omission is especially telling in the case of *The Monkees*. The program aired from September 12, 1966 until August 19, 1968; *Crawdaddy* premiered in February 1966, and many of what are now considered to be the foundational texts of rock criticism (e.g., Richard Meltzer's, "The Aesthetics of Rock," a piece of impenetrable modernism if ever there was one) were published during its first two years. The few references to *The Monkees* in its pages were negative and negligible. For example, Paul Williams' "What Goes On" column in *Crawdaddy* mentions *The Monkees* only in passing, and then to simultaneously marvel at and disparage the money the group was raking in. The most Williams had to say about the group was published in the March 1967 edition of the magazine:

“I’m a Believer” is the biggest-selling single since “I Want To Hold Your Hand”; the \$3 million figure has already been passed in American sales alone. In England, where “Clarksville” was a flop, the tv show just began its run and 500,000 “Believer’s” were sold within five days of release (less than two dozen records a year sell 250,000 in Great Britain). *More of the Monkees* had an advance order of 1.5 million, which makes it four times a million-dollar album before starting. The amusing thing about all this is its supreme unimportance—after it’s all over, and they’ve out-sold everyone else in history, the Monkees will still leave absolutely no mark on American music (March 1967, p. 20).

As we now know, Williams was wrong. The Monkees’ music has gained more than a glimmer of respectability for its pristine pop sound, later echoed by artists more acceptable to the rock critic mentality. Nevertheless, *The Monkees* television program continues to exemplify the bad things that happen to good rock music when teenyboppers are its primary audience - and market.

The developing discourses of rock authenticity in the mid- to late-1960s implicitly justified the money made by successful rock artists as secondary to the quest for artistic integrity and purity. That from the start, managers and other players, including rock critics, contrived to make money out of rock and roll for themselves and its creators, was shoved under the discursive rug and has only recently been documented in detail.⁸ The Monkees’ greatest sin, for rock critics, was that they made an enormous amount of merchandising money from immature hordes of young girls who watched them on television, the epitome of “plastic” media. Teenyboppers were as removed from the rock and roll “authentic” as anything could be. Rock critics were able to divorce the Monkees music, accepted as “good pop,” from the immensity of Monkees success.

I suggest that the way that the Monkees television program and its fans were invoked in subsequent rock critic discourses incorporated the opinions and gender politics of middle-aged writers for trade magazines in the 1960s, and reflected the normative gender roles of the 1950s and early 1960s that informed the opinions of even countercultural journalists.⁹ Teenybopper Monkees fans are characterized in articles in trade magazines as being even more extreme than the female Beatlemaniacs who howled and screamed and threw jellybeans at George.¹⁰ According to a *Variety*

writer, Monkees fans hurled their entire arsenal of shrieks, cheers, screams, stuffed pandas and “humpty dumpties” (whatever those were) at the stage during concerts, regardless of who happened to be on it at the time (Vaden, 1968, p. 90). Moreover, “crazed” teenybopper Monkees fans bought tons of Monkees merchandise, and made bales of money for Screen Gems, the studio that produced the television program. By late January 1967, four months after the show premiered, merchandise related to the program was already making millions, “and pressing tabulators to keep pace with the cash flow” (Pitman, 1967, p. 27). The descriptions of overwrought fans couple with the vast amounts of money made because of the “fake” group’s television exposure soon turned into implicit condemnation of inauthentic, feminized television pop and the immature female audience that sustained, even demanded it.

During the same period that *The Monkees* was on first-run network television, ABC presented *The Beatles*, an animated cartoon based on the Fab Four, frozen in their circa-1964 look and persona. The program ran as a Saturday morning cartoon from September 25, 1964 until September 27, 1969. The characters remained frozen in their 1964 image throughout its run. According to author Mark Bego (1988, p. 303) in *TV Rock*, “the cartoon characters were portrayed as rock stars who were pursued by screaming female fans wherever they went.” This representation, of both the Beatles and their fans, was promulgated by the press and by the Beatles’ movies of the mid-1960s, notably *A Hard Day’s Night*. The cuddly Beatles pursued by their young, screaming, female fans was a better image for network television than the druggie Sgt. Pepper’s era and beyond Beatles, but grafting such an image onto cartoons for the allegedly gullible kiddie audience could only be marshaled as continuing evidence of television’s opportunistic relationship to rock and roll. Avoided once again is any consideration of such programming as providing an opportunity for younger people to develop their taste for rock and roll, rather than just learning to scream at it. More research remains to be done on this program, but I suspect that its targeted audience was even younger than that of *The Monkees* or *The Partridge Family*. Therefore, it could be seen as a further device to initiate young females into teenybopper practices, or a way to further exploit rock and roll. What is missing in this type of analysis of such programs is knowledge of how their young viewers perceived and “read” the programs relevant to any future interest in or relationship to rock and roll, or just in general. Nevertheless, it may be safe to say that *The Beatles* and other cartoon rock programs did reiterate the idea that rock groups were to

be screamed at, and contributed to the media amplification of such practices.¹¹

Their fondness for the Monkees and the cartoon Beatles did not cement the fate of female teenyboppers as the objects of authentic rock. Because the Monkees, as a group, produced some good pop songs, and because the group eventually sought and won their freedom from their pre-fabricators and began to write and perform their own songs, playing the instruments themselves, they obtained some shards of credibility with rock critics. Not so the next televised rock group, the Partridge Family. *The Partridge Family*, which ran on ABC from 1970 to 1974, followed the antics of a rock group composed of a family, mother and all. Loosely based on a real-life singing family, the Cowsills, the *Partridge Family* offered wholesome family fun.¹² When it was discovered that David Cassidy, the lead actor, could sing, the program became a phenomenon among pre- and young-teen girls, whose adoration catapulted Cassidy to the teenybopper pantheon. That same adulation marked the program as the worst that television could do to “authentic” rock music.¹³

In her now-infamous 1972 profile “Naked Lunchbox: The David Cassidy Story,” *Rolling Stone* writer Robin Green adopted a tongue-in-cheek tone as Cassidy sought to represent himself as a “serious” artist.¹⁴ Once again, the fans – and the merchandising – received their share of abuse. The writer’s ignorance of the television landscape of the time was underscored by her inability to recognize the popular shows and stars featured on TV Guide covers hung on a producer’s walls – shows such as *Bewitched* and *I Dream of Jeannie*.¹⁵

The article spoofs Cassidy, his teenybopper fans, and the entire television establishment and what it represents. Television, as characterized in this article, is populated and perpetrated by jaded middle-aged producers who realize that the medium is inauthentic by design, and who do not care to change it. Moreover, they could not care less about rock music. Their, and Cassidy’s, aesthetic malaise is implicitly contrasted to the other “authentic” artists profiled on the pages of *Rolling Stone*, whose works, it is presumed, will endure long after *The Partridge Family* and other television programs have disappeared from the screen and from cultural memory. For example, after detailing Cassidy’s reaction to (or more accurately, not-so-earnest defense of) an episode of *The Partridge Family*, writer Green quotes program producer Bob Claver’s opinion of the purpose of *The Partridge Family* and television in general:

“Well, let’s face it. No TV program is going in any time capsule. But we can try to make them as good as we can, under

the circumstances. The show's not meant to be realistic. It's entertainment. Viewers would like to be in that family. The characters are good looking, they're in show business, and they seem not to have the problems that plague most people. We deal in fantasy, and I can't see where it's all so ruinous." Especially since, he explained, they try to instill a moral message in every program. (Green, 1972, p. 41)

Teenybopper fans of this program, then, are seduced by images that will prove to be ephemeral, a big joke perpetrated for the sake of profit. The teenyboppers who, at Cassidy concerts, leave sticky seats in their wake, and who buy the panoply of products, from lunchboxes to bubblegum, with his name emblazoned on them are characterized as being deserving of the put-on, for not knowing or seeking better. Their role is to consume the inauthentic products of, in this case, televised pop, and fade away once changing allegiances and Nielsen ratings drive the current teen idols off the screen, and off the charts.¹⁶ Again, the existence of ancillary materials capitalizing on the celebrity of rock and roll artists, starting with Elvis and reaching fever pitch with the Beatles, and including anything from penants to board games and everything in-between, is conveniently ignored or denied by rock critics in their attempt to somehow blame teenybopper fans, artists, and television for such abominations.

Almost thirty years after the last episode of *The Partridge Family* aired, the program can still be viewed daily on cable television. The Monkees, the Partridge Family, and David Cassidy have all been profiled on VH1's *Behind the Music*. All three are recent subjects of network as well as cable made-for-television movies. The "disposable" television programs of the 1960s and 1970s all have cable channels devoted to replaying them, with equally devoted audiences of old as well as new fans. Meanwhile, many of the "authentic" artists profiled in rock magazines of the period have faded into obscurity, or have been revised in rock historiography as not being all too authentic themselves. (I refer here to groups like the Lovin' Spoonful and the Association, raved about in early issues of *Crawdaddy* and now relegated to cheesy K-Tel collections advertised on the same cable channels that lionize the pre-fab sitcom groups of the period.)

I would like to argue that the nostalgia for these programs represents the redemption of the teenybopper, but I cannot. I can argue, however, that it represents a contradiction within rock and roll mythology and dis-

courses that has yet to be resolved, or even acknowledged. On the one hand, these programs benefit from the prevalent nostalgia for the campy aspects of the 1960s and 1970s, rather than the social, political and economic turmoil that marked those decades. Additionally, the female teenyboppers of the 1960s and especially the 1970s are today at the height of their power and desirability as consumers of big-ticket items, a fact not lost upon the marketers of luxury cars and other high-priced items advertised during episodes of VH1's *Behind the Music*.

On the other hand, without female teenyboppers, rock mythology and its various discourses, particularly those of authenticity and a vibrant, outlaw masculinity and sexuality, could not have coalesced.¹⁷ For rock and rock culture to be authentic, something had to be inauthentic. Television, television pop, and those who flocked to it were appropriate foils. Moreover, the exclusion of female teenyboppers from the discursive confines of rock authenticity gave rock an air of aesthetic exclusivity, justifying the examination of rock as "serious" art. Poking fun at teenyboppers deflected criticism or even acknowledgment of the same basic impulses toward hero worship of the fans of so-called "authentic" rock. Authentic rock could not survive without adulation, especially the adulation of female fans, despite what the critics wrote. The display of unbridled heterosexual masculinity, and sexuality, was a crucial part of the rock myth, and worshipful female fans are important for its maintenance.

Even more important are groupies, who may be characterized, to some extent, as grown-up, hypersexual teenyboppers. The mature sexual desire of female groupies for rock stars was as scorned in and by rock culture as the virginal desire of teenyboppers. This contradiction is, as I discuss below, entirely coherent with and necessary to rock culture's particular inflection of masculinity. Rock journals, *Rolling Stone* in particular, played an important role in creating and circulating the masculine mythologies that held rock culture together, and in placing women in specific roles on its margins.

On the cover of the *Rolling Stone*...alas

It was not the first magazine of rock and roll, nor was it necessarily the most countercultural (despite its publisher's enduring claims to the contrary).¹⁸ *Rolling Stone* did not set out to be a "serious" and rather dry journal full of think pieces about rock and roll; rather, it set out to cover rock and roll as a cultural influence. In its early years, it not only covered rock culture, but in large part helped to define and characterize it. At the same time, the magazine limned out the boundaries of rock culture and

sorted out its insiders and outsiders.¹⁹

Unlike *Crawdaddy*, with its editorial imperative to take the actual music seriously, *Rolling Stone* wanted to take the whole scene anchored by rock and roll seriously, not with pedantic analyses of musical offerings, but with in-depth coverage of anything that could be vaguely articulated to rock and roll. According to Robert Draper's history of *Rolling Stone* magazine, magazine founder and publisher Jann Wenner "aspired to publish a magazine that would feature the clean, tasteful prose of *The New Yorker*" (Draper, 1990, p. 71). Moreover, Wenner himself had a reverential attitude toward rock music and artists, one that was reflected and heightened in the pages of his magazine. Early *Rolling Stone* writers, especially Greil Marcus, became creators and keepers of rock mythology, heavily inflected with a masculine accent, thus inscribing spiritual and musical significance into rock music and culture.

As can be expected for a magazine articulating itself to the counterculture in 1967, and with connections to a known counterculture community (in this case San Francisco, conflated in the popular imaginary of the time to the hippie enclave in the city's Haight-Ashbury neighborhood), *Rolling Stone* reflected the gender politics of the day, in its pages as well as in the composition of its staff.²⁰ Almost all of its writers were male, and its general orientation was masculine. Its style, sensibility and subject matter were geared to masculine subjects, readers, and subjectivity.

By 1967, when *Rolling Stone* premiered, the girl groups and "British Bird" singers of the early and mid-1960s were long gone, out of memory and out of rock and roll culture. One short article in the May 11, 1968 edition of *Rolling Stone* questioned the absence of women in rock, but in a back-handed way that turned women, specifically two of the most notable representatives of the girl group sound, the Ronettes and the Shangri-Las, into sex objects even while appearing to argue for more female presence and sexuality (or more accurately, sexual attractiveness, as defined by heterosexual men) in rock music. Richard Fannan's article is worth excerpting in length, as it exemplifies the matter-of-fact heterosexual male perspective encoded in rock discourse:

The other day I flashed on an album that should but never will be released, an album combining the greatest hits of the Ronettes [sic] with the greatest hits of the Shangri-las, the two most unbelievable rock groups that ever existed. They were the archetypes of a significant part of America at that

time. They were the tough, whorish females of the lower class, female Hell's Angels who had about them an aura of brazen sex. The Ronnettes were Negro-Puerto Rican hooker types with long black hair and skin tight dresses revealing their well-shaped but not quite Tina Turner behinds. And their songs, "Do I Love You," "Da Doo Ron Ron," and the rest, were not about holding hands in the park, not about puppy love, but about sex...

[about the Shangri-Las and their songs] Dirtier and filthier than Ronnettes and girlie magazines, this is stag movies about fellatio and Hell's Angel's branding their women. It's everything we deplore and idolize. It's the new car and the new stove, Mr. and Mrs. John Doe in the back seat of his car while they were going together in high school. All-American kid trying to feel his date's breasts during the drive-in movie while *Ben Hur* or *The Ten Commandments* is playing. It's high school when they get knocked up. It's sex in America.

So now we have Jim Morrison and Jimi Hendrix doing the same stuff but how come Mama Cass isn't shaking it down and inviting people in? How come Grace Slick and Janis Joplin really aren't that sexy? And how come Nancy Sinatra, who comes out with nowhere music, is? What is going on when it's Mick Jagger, instead of Marianne Faithful [sic], who sings "Let's Spend the Night Together"? What would happen if Grace Slick starred in a stag movie? Then would everything be alright? Who's better in bed, Tina Turner, Janis Joplin or Brenda Lee? Is there a female equivalent of "fag rock?" Have you ever seen Little Eva naked? The answers to the above questions just may be important. (Fannan, 1968, pp. 18-19)

Fannan's piece is instructive in that it, perhaps unknowingly, embodies some of the contradictions at the heart of naturalized masculinity in rock. That is, rock masculinity is discursively constructed as to bolster as well as reiterate itself; at the same time, rock masculinity requires the existence, illusory or real, of a subordinate femininity to support it and give it the appearance of "truth." Fannan indeed acknowledges the impact of at least

two of the girl groups on the popular conflation of sex and rock. Yet he redirects the “inherent” sexual subjectivity that he identifies in the Ronettes and the Shangri-Las in the service of what are kindly described as male masturbation fantasies.

Most interesting is Fannan’s arguably correct assertion that performers generally associated with hyperbolic masculinity, Jimi Hendrix and Jim Morrison, more or less stole their sexual personae from the Ronettes and the Shangri-Las, a rare recognition of the contribution of the girl groups to riveting sexuality to rock and roll culture as well as rock and roll music. But Fannan immediately undermines his insight, neutering its power. By castigating female rock performers for being unsexy, and for bemoaning the fact that Nancy Sinatra, with her “nowhere” (i.e., inauthentic pop) music, is, Fannan places female musicians in an untenable position: they have to be heterosexual male fantasy fodder as well as authentic rockers who play and write their own music. Ultimately, he implies that these two qualities are incompatible. Moreover, his address is to a male audience, underscored by his questions about what certain female artists are like in bed, or what they look like naked.

A point that Fannan inadvertently makes in his erotic fantasy about female rock and rollers is that, by 1968, they were few and far between, and those that were there did not fit the emerging rock and roll mold. *Rolling Stone* did cover some active female artists of the day, such as Mama Cass Elliot and Joan Baez, articulating them less to rock and roll than to musical forms on its margins, especially folk music. Grace Slick and Janis Joplin were the other most notable women actually working in rock and roll, but as evident above, were sometimes judged more for their perceived lack of sex appeal than for their artistry. Or, when discussed in terms of their sexuality or sexiness, it was often in terms of the male writer’s desire to sleep with her, fear of her sexuality, or both, as in critic Ken Greenberg’s (1968) description of meeting Joplin, published in a 1968 issue of *Crawdaddy*:

I went to their rehearsal in anticipation, and then we went to their show on LSD. Words fail. But I still sure wanted to take her home, and I still do. How could you not want to make love to Janis? She makes such furious love to you every time she performs, is hitting your hands together and screaming enough to give back? Most of us are much too scared of her. No wonder she’s bluesy, she gives us too much and we give her money.

This passage is notable for several reasons. First, it is a reversal of the usual gender roles regarding rock stars, but the writer and, one can assume, his readers, do not see this as aberrant, unlike the manifestations of female sexual desire (screaming, groupiedom) for male rock stars. Second, he is ultimately scared of her sexuality, perhaps because it feminizes him or puts him in a more subservient position. If anything, Joplin's sexuality is too much for the author and others to handle. Her excess threatens to belie the myth of hypersexual masculinity then beginning to take hold in rock culture and discourses. I suggest that sexy female stars needed to be physically and discursively put in a position where they did not undermine or threaten masculinity as normalized in rock culture (and in the mainstream culture from which the notion was imported). It was therefore even more incumbent to place even successful women in rock in a subservient or at least lesser position than their male counterparts. Perhaps unintentionally, the final sentence quoted above raises the specter of female prostitution, a practice in which the woman gives "too much" in exchange for money, and a role too easily ascribed to women who put themselves on display for male pleasure.

Sexy, successful women in rock were fine as long as they could be placed in gender-normative categories. A March 15, 1969 article by Paul Nelson, for example, entitled, "Janis: Judy Garland of Rock and Roll?," was likely intended as an insult to both Joplin and Garland, given that Garland had not yet accrued her camp credibility. One problem with Joplin, according to Nelson, was the interest of representatives of the "slick-paper supremacy" (e.g., *Time*, *Life*, *Newsweek*, etc.) in her music and persona. This interest in Joplin, it may be inferred, puts her and her work dangerously close to feminine and artificial mass culture, as opposed to masculine and authentic rock culture. Perhaps the most infuriating aspect of Nelson's supposedly "objective" analysis of Joplin is his indictment of her displays of low self-esteem; that is, her acquiescence to the gender role prescribed for women in the 1950s and into the 1960s, accepted and reproduced by the so-called counterculture. For example, Nelson claims:

It is difficult to imagine a Bob Dylan or a John Lennon peppering an interview with constant nervous interjections of "Hey, I've never sung so great. Don't you think I'm singing better? Well, Jesus fucking Christ, I'm really better, believe me." But Janis seems that rare kind of personality who lacks the essential self-protective distancing that a singer of her fame and stature would appear to need. (Nelson, 1969, p. 6)

Nelson is, perhaps unconsciously, criticizing Joplin for her performance of characteristics associated with traditional femininity. Rather than critiquing the cultural, social, and economic roots of the performative femininity reiterated by Joplin, he implicitly chastises her for being unable to overcome her assigned script, shifting responsibility for her inability to fit the role of rock star onto her personality, rather than the traditional cultural proscriptions and rules incorporated in supposedly countercultural rock discourses. For example, perhaps Joplin's low self-esteem was rare among men raised in the 1950s and 1960s, but was more characteristic - and expected - of women in that era. Nelson thus reproduces traditional gender binaries, roles and expectations under the guise of objective journalistic reporting.

A similar type of "objective" reporting contributed greatly to marginalizing women within rock culture, and to prescribing one of the only acceptable roles they could play in it. *Rolling Stone's* cover article on groupies, published in the February 15, 1969 edition of the magazine, was for a long time the definitive statement on the relationship of women to rock and to rock stars. That relationship, of course, was sexually and socially subservient. Under the cover of objective reporting and observation, but under the sway of traditional gender politics, *Rolling Stone* neglected to consider the truly transgressive aspects of groupiedom, or that groupies' aggressive sexuality could be subversive statements about gender roles in rock as well as mainstream culture. Moreover, *Rolling Stone's* writers passed on the opportunity to envision a role for women in rock culture that was not tied to the normative gender roles they grew up with, a move that could have been truly countercultural, if not revolutionary. Instead, the term "groupie" became almost an insult, ultimately a derogatory designation for the key players in a scene that reeked of artificiality, but something that "authentic" rock needed to succeed as a space of hyperbolic heterosexual masculinity. Indeed, the article went a long way toward pathologizing most groupies.

The *Rolling Stone* article defined a groupie as "a chick who hangs out with bands" and claimed that becoming a good one is not entirely a simple matter" (Burks, Hopkins and Nelson, 1969, p. 11). One prominent San Francisco groupie described the role of a groupie as "a non-profit call girl," equating her role to that of a Japanese Geisha, "and a friend and a housekeeper and pretty much whatever the musician needs" (11). The amorphous last category referred, of course, to sex, and set the stage for the

blatant construction of a double standard throughout the article, one that has managed to last even as rock's cultural power has changed and in a real sense, declined.

Groupies, and some of the rock stars who literally loved them, imagined themselves on a higher level than those female fans they dubbed "star-fuckers." The latter category was criticized because "they ball with the *super* stars of the pop world *only* so they can then say they balled Mr. H., Mr. D., Messrs. L., McC., H., and S." and a whole host of other "Misters", never a "Miss" (12). Even worse, in the perception of the three male rock critics who wrote the article, "Star-fuckers are balling names, not people, and this basically inhuman quest is not lost upon the musicians, who tend, naturally enough, to think of themselves as people first and Symbols second, especially in bed" (12). The arrogance, and naivete, of this claim is breathtaking in hindsight, but it is strong evidence of a double standard pervasive in rock culture and in mass cultural perceptions of rock and rock culture. For example, the groupies article blithely repeats the old saw that "men just need sex" without saying so explicitly by quoting two rock musicians (guitarist Jeff Beck and Canned Heat member Bob Hite) as more or less saying that they're loyal to their "old ladies" but need to have sex on the road. Hite, after saying that at home in LA, he has "an old lady I don't really want to lose, and I stick with her." But on the road,

...you got to have some of that. Like when the band's been on the road for three weeks or more, you get tired and you get irritable. We'll have fights, you know? Not real fights, but arguments over stupid little bullshit things that don't matter. It's the tension of the road, man. Groupies relieve that tension. You get laid and it's cool. You don't feel like hasslin' anybody. (24).

Groupies then, in the eyes of musicians and *Rolling Stone*, are more or less interchangeable with a massage or a hot bath. At the same time, though, they are depicted as objects of pity and derision. A member of the Youngbloods is quoted as saying that "[t]he only thing they're [groupies] good for is relieving tensions and picking up a dose of clap" (24). Musician John Walker of It's a Beautiful Day is slightly more understanding of groupies and their attachment to rock musicians, but dismissive of them nonetheless: "...it's impossible to identify with people — with groupies — when they don't see *you* as a person. You're almost a god image and they don't see the person inside that. Communication with groupies is weird.

But the sex thing is understandable: it's giving to people you love" (24).

Walker's comments belie his knowledge of his own power as a "rock star" or more accurately, an everyday rock musician. Implicitly, he also acknowledges rock's cultural power, bordering on that of a secular religion for youth culture. A double standard is obvious in his and in many other musician quotes carefully seeded throughout the article. Nowhere in its pages do the authors question the use of groupies by musicians for sexual relief or ego-feeding. As guitarist Mike Bloomfield observes in an unquestioned quote, "...the only thing that most of them [groupies] have to offer is their cunts" (24).

On the other hand groupies, who, it is implied, care nothing for rock music but only for, in the vernacular of the day, "balling" rock musicians, are criticized. *Their relationship to rock music is artificial and contrived, therefore worthless.* By aggressively seeking and having sex with rock musicians, groupies are accused of objectifying if not commodifying them, a reversal of gender norms of the time. As a psychologist with the Los Angeles Free Clinic asserts in the article, "They [groupies] treat sex the same way an accountant treats his new Buick, as a status symbol." Furthermore, the authors of the article claim that "the whole thing can be seen in a homosexual perspective, to the extent the chick is balling rock stars simply to be able to brag to her *girlfriends*" (12). Groupies are thus implicitly articulated to teenyboppers, with their posters of teen idols on their walls, chattering away about them to their girlfriends in their bedrooms. They do not care about the artists, only about sharing their exploits in a traditionally feminine and feminized manner. The idea that male rock musicians may be chalking up notches on their belts in order to brag to their friends, or as proof of the virility conferred upon them as counterculture deities, is not considered. The presence of groupies on the rock scene also helps to expunge the specter of homosexuality that haunts the homosociality of rock music performance and male fandom.

The authors concede that male groupies exist, depicting them as "fools" who do errands and other non-sexual favors for rock stars, and spend money on them, because they have little else to offer them. Male groupies, in this view, are beneath contempt. The authors acknowledge that there may be homosexual undercurrents in the male rock star/male groupie relation, but they dismiss it with this somewhat cryptic observation: "look around you at the next concert you attend at Fillmore West or East, sometimes fully 90% of the audience is male, and they aren't screaming either" (13). Screaming, even in 1969, is still coded as the female sexual response

to rock music and musicians; male fans are there for the authentic musical experience, not for sexual thrills. Male groupies are therefore just aberrant, nothing more.

Nowhere in the article are the potentially transgressive aspects of groupiedom recognized. If anything, the subversiveness of groupiedom is inconceivable within rock discourse, as it undermines the very mythology that supports it. Indeed, groupies, and the idea of groupies, supported rock musicians and rock in very important ways. Recalling Stallybrass and White's observation that the "top" has "a psychological dependence upon precisely those Others which are being rigorously opposed and excluded at the social level," the double standard employed by rock discourse about groupies becomes much more than that (1986, pp. 4-5). Especially when conflated with female fans, which I assert it is, as few other public options for participation in rock culture were available to women in the late 1960s, it becomes a crucial device for Othering women in rock discourse and keeping them firmly on rock's margins.

Rolling Stone's construction of groupies as "artificial" low-Others to "authentic" rock musicians is another prime example of displaced abjection, one that was working (and continues to work) on many levels in rock discourses. For example, some groupies saw themselves as "borrowing a series of lives from people and thinking you can be them" (Burks, Hopkins & Nelson, 1969, p. 12). That is, being a groupie magically confers social and cultural power to those typically deprived of it. Many groupies were teenagers, thus representing a traditionally disempowered group, in popular music as well as cultural and social discourses in general.

Even more distressing is how "groupie" was deployed to connote the relationship of adult women (that is, older than teenyboppers) in and to rock in general. The *Rolling Stone* article on groupies included profiles of certain well-known groupies on the rock scene, including some who were not "groupies in any way at all, but musicians, members of groups themselves" (14). However, the inclusion of profiles of female musicians as part of a so-called "objective" article on groupies enables the conflation of female musicians with groupies, marking them as somehow outside of authentic and legitimate rock and roll. One profile of a female musician and "scenester" comments upon her appearance at length, mentions that she is cross-eyed, and describes her everyday attire, details rarely observed or mentioned in articles about male musicians from the period.

Ultimately, the *Rolling Stone* article leaves the impression that groupies are pathetic creatures to be pitied, but at the same time a crucial

part of rock culture, without which male musicians could not relieve tension or receive their deserved amount of adulation. Not considered is any sense of agency or self-awareness on behalf of the groupies themselves, despite profiles of such notorious groupie cadres as the GTO's (Girls Together Outrageously), who recorded and performed together with the sponsorship of Frank Zappa.²¹ This is not to say that I wish to totally recuperate or celebrate groupiedom, but to complicate the meaning of the groupie in rock culture.²²

The gendered rock discourse about groupies has blinded critics to the transgressive aspects of groupiedom. For example, in her definitive statement about being a groupie in the 1960s, *I'm With the Band: Confessions of a Groupie*, Pamela Des Barres (aka Miss Pamela of the GTO's), makes no apologies for her sexual pursuit of and thrall to rock stars. Her autobiography begins at the start of her sexual awakening, and describes the crucial role of fantasies about rock and rollers in her developing sexuality. Diary excerpts scattered throughout the text show her teenage self to have been boy and Beatle-obsessed, making it easy to lump her in with the teenybopper hordes, and thus to dismiss the sexual thrills of her obsession as another "inauthentic" way to approach "serious" music and musicians (Des Barres, 1988).

There is another way to look at Des Barres' youthful fantasies about sex and rock stars that illuminates the threatening aspects of groupies to the coherence of rock mythologies. By becoming a groupie, Des Barres and others were able to flaunt and act upon their aggressive sexuality, a transgressive act for women even in the mid-1960s. That is, groupies like Des Barres were not seeking redemption or glory from association by having sex with rock stars. They were playing out their own fantasies, using rock stars as sex objects and little more. That this threatened the emerging discourses of rock as a site of unbridled male sexuality is clear from the musician quotes and article excerpts discussed above. Some of the musicians interviewed appeared to resent being used as objects, while at the same time ignoring that they were doing the same to groupies and other women under the guise of relieving tension while on the road, or helping themselves to the feast laid out like them, much like the cold cuts laid out backstage before a show. That this role could be reversed was too threatening to the discourses that conferred iconic status upon rock stars and musicians.

Therefore, to put the gendered hierarchy of rock back in order, and to keep its masculine mysteries intact, it was necessary to perform opera-

tions of displaced abjection, discursively constructing groupies objects of pity and derision who at the same time signified and reinforced rock as a heterosexual male cultural form. Possibilities for imagining groupiedom as an empowered position for women (and men) in rock culture, or for imagining sexuality in rock culture outside of performative heterosexual gender norms, were thus foreclosed. Subsequently, “groupie” remains a derisive term used to describe fans of almost any form of popular culture who take their adulation to extremes.²³

The visual and sexual image of groupies was later conflated with that of the “rock chick,” loosely defined as the real girlfriends of rock stars. Some of these girlfriends, notably Marianne Faithfull, whose singing talents were overshadowed in the 1960s by her status as Mick Jagger’s girlfriend, supplied the prototype for the visual image - blond, beautiful, drugged out, sexy, subservient to her rock star “man” - of the quintessential “rock chick.” This image developed through the circulation of album covers, magazine photos, and movies of the late 1960s and 1970s.²⁴ It should come as no surprise, then, that the women of MTV videos, upon the cable channel’s August 1, 1981 premiere, looked, acted and were treated a lot like the popular, if not naturalized, image of the groupie cum rock chick. Over twenty years later, even with the increased participation of women in rock groups and what remains of rock culture, these images still inform the popular conception of “women in rock.”

Notes:

The author thanks Jeff Melnick for his guidance and patience, as well as the anonymous readers for their insightful comments and suggestions.

1. For example, see the first few issues of *Crawdaddy* after its debut in February, 1966.
2. My comments are not intended to be a critique of Christgau, who remains in my opinion one of the only rock critics who has consistently shown sensitivity to the place of women within rock discourses and culture throughout his writing career.
3. This idea is based, in part, on Andreas Huyssen’s (1986) discussion in his essay “Mass Culture as Woman.” Huyssen, though, is hopeful that the advent of feminism and other critical and aesthetic movements have unsettled the modernist construction of mass culture as feminine. At the

conclusion of the article, he points to the increased visibility of women in spaces and institutions of high culture formerly cordoned off for men only. Huyssen does not, in his conclusion, address the on-going power of the discursive rather than physical means of exclusion. Such “discursive residue,” I assert, still exerts an inordinate amount of power in rock culture, despite the increased numbers of women in its purview. To be fair to Huyssen, he wonders in a number of places in this article whether postmodernism is just another form of modernism when all is said and done.

4. See, for example, a letter to the editor published in the *New York Times*, 7/25/99. In response to a somewhat disparaging article about teenybopper bands and fans by Jon Pareles, the mother of an 8-year-old boy questions Pareles’ lack of attention to the popularity of “boy bands” among boy audiences. This critical lacuna is consistent throughout the history of rock writing about teenyboppers.
5. For that matter, only two women make the stand-alone chapter cut, Janis Joplin and Aretha Franklin, although female artists are present in chapters on the Girl Groups and Singer/Songwriters of the 1970s. This “lumping together” of female artists, especially in the latter category, in arguably the first of the canonical guides that signified who and what were important in and to rock culture, deserves more academic scrutiny. For example, why was Joni Mitchell, as “authentic” as any male rocker of the time, if not more so, not deserving of her own chapter?
6. The Monkees were able to salvage a bit of rock “authenticity” when they demanded that they play their own instruments and take over responsibility for songwriting during their final season. Unfortunately, neither their network nor their audience stayed with them.
7. Aniko Bodroghkozy provides an interesting discussion of aspects of the Monkees that transgressed traditional television conventions, such as its antimilitarism, spoofs of conventional television programming, and subversion of production methods. With few exceptions, the transgressive aspects of the program were ignored or unrecognized by counterculture critics, especially those writing for the new rock magazines (2001, pp. 66-75).

8. See, for example, Goodman (1997) and Draper (1990).
9. See, for example, Susan Brownmiller's (1999) description in her memoir about the early days of the women's liberation movement of the reaction of the male writers for underground newspaper, *The East Village Rat*, to feminist writing in their paper in 1970. The men, unbeknownst to women writers, produced a sex and porn issue. Aniko Bodroghkozy (2001) also discusses the normative gender politics of the so-called alternative press in the 1960s.
10. The "commonsense" perception of the Beatlemaniac as a crazed "shrieker" in thrall to bands of young men with long hair and guitars is deftly refuted in a well-known article by Barbara Ehrenreich, Elizabeth Hess, and Gloria Jacobs. In "Beatlemania: Girls Just Want to Have Fun," Ehrenreich, Hess, and Jacobs argue that female Beatlemania was an assertion of "an active, powerful sexuality by the tens of thousands," enacted in a way that was more revolutionary than rebellious. For example, the sexual appeal of the male star emanates from the knowledge that one could never marry him; that is, the sexual display of female Beatlemaniacs (or Elvis Presley, or James Dean, etc.) fans was purely sexual, not directed toward an eventual descent into the tedium of marriage to a crew-cut boy from high school. Ehrenreich, Hess, and Jacobs use testimony from ex-Beatlemaniacs to observe that, for some young women, Beatlemania was a way to identify with the male groups and to access some of the cultural power accessible to males but not to females in the early 1960s. This is a key observation, as I assert that affective access to masculine power is one of the primary rewards of rock music for female fans and enthusiasts, even as it set up discursive and physical barriers to keep them on rock's margins.

That those same discursive barriers are terribly hard to tear down, exemplified by the naturalized and still reiterated portrayal of Beatlemaniacs as hysterical, screaming teenage girls. That Beatlemania may have been a reaction to sexual and gender repression, or a way for young women to assert themselves in a male-oriented society, is masked by various discursive strategies and stories that acquire truth effects because of repetition. With the start of rock criticism in the late-1960s, the slightly younger sisters of Beatlemaniacs became teenyboppers, wonderful foils against which to construct authentic rock music, performers, and audiences.

11. It may be more fruitful to locate *The Beatles*, *The Archies*, *Josie and the Pussycats*, and the other cartoon rock programs of the mid-1960s to the early 1970s within the category of “bubblegum.” This musical genre and its offshoots are often, correctly, articulated to teenybopper practices and enthusiasms, but cannot be totally conflated. For an interesting and serious look at bubblegum music and indeed, culture, see Cooper and Smay (2000).
12. A related musical phenomenon of the late 1960s and early 1970s was the family band, including such better-known representatives as the Osmonds, the Cowsills, the Jackson 5, and the De Franco Family. In addition to albums, some of these bands were featured in comic books, teen fan magazines, and cartoon programs, catering to the pre-teen and young teenage girl markets. The discursive association of such bands (with the exception of the Jackson 5, a different case altogether because of the band’s association with Motown and the critical acknowledgment that young Michael Jackson indeed had talent) with the denigrated fan practices of teenyboppers damned them to the worst circle of rock critic hell, bubblegum, thus obscuring musical value that some of the bands possessed. Michael Jackson has since become a critically-acclaimed pop superstar, despite his troubling racial self-reconstruction and increasingly bizarre public behavior. Susan Cowsill has enjoyed a distinguished career as a solo artist and member of the indie-rock supergroup, the Continental Drifters, in addition to many other side projects. Bubblegum music itself was recuperated in a recent book, *Bubblegum Music is the Naked Truth*, much of which flies in the face of conventional rock criticism to provide a fresh look at the music, artists, and fans of this undeservedly demeaned genre. See Cooper and Smay (2000).
13. Maybe not the worst. During this same period, television spawned two other teenybopper idols, Bobby Sherman and David Soul, both of whom starred on ABC’s *Here Come the Brides*. Sherman made his television debut as one of the original *Shindig!* dancers in 1964.
14. The article is infamous because of the picture of Cassidy on the magazine’s cover. At the height of his fame among young girl fans, the photograph distinctly showed his pubic hair.

15. That the writer is female is also telling. By 1972, conventions of rock criticism were firm enough that enough female writers adopted a male cynicism and style toward the discussion of teen idols.
16. Perhaps not so ironically, Green is female and later went into television, as an executive producer of *Party of Five* and producer of *The Sopranos*, as well as other programs. Green adoption of a very male tone underscores another problem of rock criticism, the fact that the few women writing it back in the 1970s had to buy into the mythology and discursive positioning of women and teenyboppers in authentic rock discourses.
17. In a similar vein, popular music scholar Sheryl Garratt (1990) suggests that “what the press or any of the self-appointed analysts of ‘popular culture’ fail to reflect is that the whole pop structure rests on the backs of these ‘silly, screaming girls.’” Garrett is referring here to the economic structure of the industry, by which a few major hits a year pays for the rest of the music produced by a label.
18. I heard Jann Wenner, *Rolling Stone* publisher and founder, speak at the John F. Kennedy School of Government in 1993. Throughout his presentation, especially when under fire from self-avowed feminists for the magazine’s frequent use of scantily-clad models, not necessarily related to rock and/or rock culture at all, on its cover, Wenner asserted that his magazine was still the “voice of the counterculture” without bothering to define what he meant by “counterculture.” It also should be noted that rather than gracefully folding his aging magazine, Wenner has recently fired his long-time managing editor, putting in his place a younger man known for his work at “male” magazines, pitching soft-core porn to other younger men. A victim of this change will be *Rolling Stone*’s increasingly rare but generally edifying long, left-of-center, issue-oriented articles.
19. Much of the history about *Rolling Stone* magazine that follows is from Robert Draper’s (1990) insightful and not especially complimentary history of the magazine.
20. *Rolling Stone* was never physically located in the Haight, but in the area known as South of Market. Then, it was a dilapidated manufactur-

ing area. In the 1990s, it became a crucial center for the short-lived
“dot.com” revolution.

21. I concede that Zappa’s support of the GTO’s may have had more to do with his ongoing distaste for and critique of hippie culture than any great feminist impulse.
22. The recent film *Almost Famous*, written by and based upon the early experiences of rock critic turned big-time movie director Cameron Crowe, presents a more tender view of groupiedom that acknowledges their humanity as well as their contributions to rock musicians and rock culture. Nevertheless, groupies are still portrayed as ultimately subservient to male rock musicians (that is, they call themselves “band-aids”), and not particularly interested in the music they make.
23. There are exceptions to this. Communities have developed around bands like the Grateful Dead and Phish, to name the two (arguably) best examples. The dynamics, of these communities, which are gender-inclusive, differ from the relationship of groupie to rock star. It may be argued that the sense of community and mobility, united by mutual fondness for the band in question, is as important as the aura of the band or even the music of the band for these cohorts.
24. See, for example, Roxy Music album covers from the 1970s, and the movies *Performance* and *Blow-Up*.

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