

Are You Really There? The Mediatized Experience of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Concert-Goer

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A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts

Graduate Program in Communication & Culture

York University

Toronto, Ontario

April 2018

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## **ABSTRACT**

This thesis focuses on the ways cellphone use has further mediatized the concert experience. The cellphone's mediatization of the concert experience involves modifications to memory practices, understandings of the concert experience, and interpersonal interaction within the venue. The combination of a content analysis, participant observation, and interview analysis, examined qualitatively and quantitatively, found that the cellphone has become a standard accessory to concert attendance. Not only has the cellphone become standard, it has forever changed the way we remember and experience concerts. The first set of data included the news coverage of cellphone use during concerts between the years of 2002-2016. The second set of data came from the notes taken during the participant observation of five concerts. The third set of data, the interview analysis, includes 30 concert-goers, five of which were local artists.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In the past five years, my attendance at concerts has become a regular occurrence. As an audience member at concerts from local bars to large outdoor music festivals, I have captured moments of concerts through pictures and videos of my favourite songs or interesting aspects of a performance, including cases of encouraged audience participation. On the one hand, my desire to record the material was to revisit the material down the road and relive the concert experience. On the other hand, the times when I would record, I found myself engaging in audience participation to lower degrees to ensure the quality of the material I was capturing. Recently, I have attended a series of shows where artists or the venues have requested the removal or restraint of cellphone use. Such requests have been received with very mixed responses. Beyond hearing such requests during performances, I began finding articles in the popular media discussing numerous artists speaking against cellphone use, while others continue to use or promote their use during performances. The growing dichotomy of opinions among artists regarding cellphone use prompted questions about performers' resistance to cellphones, the desired concert audience experience, and the effect on audience members. The concert space has been mediatized by mobile technology, in this case the cellphone, and its widespread use has influenced interpersonal communication, memory, and expectations of the experience for Canadian concertgoers.

The rising complaints against cellphone usage at concert venues represent the resistance by certain artists and audience members towards the increasing digitization of live events.<sup>1</sup> Communication technology, specifically cellphones, is used during live events to provide

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<sup>1</sup> Danielle Subject, "Changing the Subject: Cell Phones at Concerts," *The Ontario*, 2015, <http://www.theontarion.com/2015/11/changing-the-subject-cell-phones-at-concerts/>.

audience members with an option for later viewing, saving, or remembering content forever. Within the concert venue, audience members use their cellphones to take pictures, record videos, research content, and connect with those within and beyond the venue. A recent study conducted by Ticketfly found that audience members (between 18 and 34 years of age) surveyed are using their phones for half of a live event or longer.<sup>2</sup>

This research focuses on the contemporary concert experience, centred on the genres of rock and pop, and the role of cellphones within this context. Individuals' perceptions and values associated with cellphone use are assessed in relation to the rising arguments or frustration with cellphone use during live performances. The consideration of individuals' goals of cellphone use or opinions on the negative traits associated with the technology reveal conflicted sources of value and how the cellphone is placed in relation to those values. As the use of cellphones at concerts is currently growing and evolving, a large amount of scholarly work intersecting audience studies, audience experience, and technology, particularly cellphone usage, all contribute to the larger research literature upon which this research is based. This research takes a mixed methods approach, combining reactive and non-reactive elements to investigate the various facets of cellphone use within concert venues.

An analysis of news coverage regarding cellphone usage within concert venues, material collected through participant observation, as well as through a series of semi-structured interviews make up the methodologies of this research. The combination of a content analysis, participant observation, and interviews allowed for research involving both quantitative and qualitative elements. The data collected reveal several patterns surrounding the concert

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<sup>2</sup> "Mobile Phones Have a Bright Future at Live Events," *Start.Ticketfly.Com*, 2015, <http://start.ticketfly.com/?p=56399>.

experience and the cellphone's place within it including: interaction/engagement, mediatization, memory, quality, and economics. It is important to note that the patterns found are not in isolation to one another, but, in fact, rely on one another. The inclusion of cellphone use in the concert venue reveals concerns surrounding disruption to interpersonal connection and issues of disrespect. The combination of negative sentiments felt towards cellphone use and the benefits of cellphones within the concert context reveals the concert experience as a space undergoing a media-related change in which resistance reveals the unsteady process in the latest stage of mediatization.

Technology's ability to extend the communicative capabilities of individuals is central to an understanding of our increased relationship to it. Marshall McLuhan's theory that "the medium is the message" argues that technology "shapes and controls the scale and form of human association and action."<sup>3</sup> Such a belief is central to an understanding of the ways in which technological use is extending the possibilities of connecting and communicating with each other. For example, by using smartphones, users can text, call, or share information with family or friends all over the world. Key to an understanding of the importance of a medium to the society where it is used is a consideration of the social, political, and cultural context as well as the "unforeseen" consequences in using a specific technology.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, medium theory not only assesses the extensions that technologies provide, but the unforeseen limitations that are caused by an increased reliance on technologies' applications. In order to ensure that the change seen is not a matter of the phone itself, but rather individuals' use, when phones are referred to, it is their use that is considered, not the technology on its own. This perspective was used to stress

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<sup>3</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994), 9.

<sup>4</sup> McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 13-14.

that the technology is not guiding the changes to the concert experience seen; it is the decisions of individuals in their use that is causing change.

Political economic theory was employed in terms of the perspective of “cultural capital” and the audience as a labour force. Political economic theory is tied to the research conducted based on the fact that cellphone use and the concert industry are surrounded by the production, distribution, and consumption of media goods. In terms of the research conducted, the interest lies in the consumption of media goods, in this case cellphones being used to consume media during a performance. The production of the material created by audience members on the behalf of their online presence, for other fans who could not attend, or on behalf of the artist is also considered. For the purposes of the research conducted, the reference to cellphones includes all mobile phones, whether or not there are online capabilities. While both are considered, the use of cellphones with online capabilities or data plans stresses the value of material captured in terms of the work involved. In relation to the associated value of material captured, two distinct perspectives in the literature are crucial to this work. The first is Dallas Smythe’s theory of the “audience commodity,” which analyses how audiences are seen to hold economic value based on their labour conducted as audience members.<sup>5</sup> A consideration of the audience’s actions in terms of labour emphasizes the inseparable link between economic and cultural studies. The second theory central to the correlation of audiences and political economy is the notion of cultural capital. Cultural capital assesses the extension of capital to include art and culture. The concept comes from the research of Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu’s work saw cultural capital existing in three states, namely: embodied, objectified, institutionalised. The embodied state sees cultural

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<sup>5</sup> Dallas Smythe, “On the Audience Commodity and Its Work,” *Media and Cultural Studies: Keywords*, eds. Meenakshi Gigi Durham and Douglas M. Kellner, 2nd ed. (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 195.



capital as an individual's long-lasting disposition; the objectified sees cultural capital turned into goods; and finally, the institutionalised state is when the embodied state is recognized by external institutions.<sup>6</sup>

Throsby's work saw the continuation of research into cultural capital. Throsby's work demonstrates his attempt to incorporate cultural capital into standard economic theory.<sup>7</sup> Within cultural capital is the belief in tangible as well as intangible forms of cultural capital, which must be understood within the network of cultural artifacts which exist within a cultural ecosystem.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the importance of value associated with tangible and intangible people, processes, and places can be seen in Throsby's following explanation:

An essential element of culture in both functional and constituent senses as defined above is its role as an expression of group or collective aspects of people's behaviour, as demonstrated in their activities and belief systems. Thus, in broad terms something can be said to be of cultural value if it contributes to these shared elements of human experience... a concept of "culture" carries with it a concomitant notion of "cultural value".<sup>9</sup>

The added value attached to mentioned items are novels in Throsby's case, but music would act in a similar manner providing listeners something which they not only can recognize and relate to, but also participate in through singing along, dancing, or interacting with the artist. Therefore, according to Throsby, based on the cultural capital or value associated with an item or an artist, the higher the monetary value will be for the artist or item in question.<sup>10</sup> The labour utilized by audience members can be seen through artists and companies encouraging the use of cellphones during performances to share the material with those beyond the venue. The

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<sup>6</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, "Forms of Capital," in John G. Richardson (ed.) *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education* (New York: Greenwood, 1986), 243-4.; David Throsby, "Cultural Capital," *Journal of Cultural Economics* 23, 1-2 (1999): 4.

<sup>7</sup> Throsby, "Cultural Capital," 10.

<sup>8</sup> Throsby, "Cultural Capital," 9.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 6.

motivations of consumers are crucial to consider, as without consumers' desire to see and interact with an artist and their music there will be little to no monetary value associated with that experience.

While most of the research analyses the motivations of audience members and their phone use, the labour involved in cellphone use at concerts will be revealed/discussed in this thesis. The forms of audience labour involved include aiding in the promotion of the artist online as well as an individual's cultural capital based on their sharing of scarce or novel material.

Before moving forward with a discussion of the methods, the context needs to be considered. The increased ownership and use of smartphones have not only influenced patterns in communication, but have had ramifications on the concert experience and interpersonal interaction. Since the year 1999, North America has seen the proliferation of online applications, digital cameras, texting, and multiple social media platforms.<sup>11</sup> Further, the explosion of the mobile phone and the internet took place at the same time.<sup>12</sup> These changes have seen the growth of a sharing culture, in which individuals possess multiple screens and venues for sharing personal data. Furthermore, with the advent of the internet, we are now faced with an information overload due to the mass amounts of data now available at our fingertips. Jocelyn Noveck, a journalist for the Associated Press, stresses two common concerns of the decade, back in 2009, as connectivity and instant gratification. These two concerns are intertwined with contemporary communicative technologies, as through the advent of the internet and social media platforms we are expected to be available for connecting at any time as well as achieving

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<sup>11</sup> Jocelyn Noveck, "50 Ways Life Has Changed in the Last 10 Years," *Toronto Star*, 2009, [https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2009/12/21/50\\_ways\\_life\\_has\\_changed\\_in\\_the\\_last\\_10\\_years.html](https://www.thestar.com/news/world/2009/12/21/50_ways_life_has_changed_in_the_last_10_years.html).

<sup>12</sup> Peter Glotz, Stefan Bertschi, and Chris Locke, *Thumb Culture: The Meaning of Mobile Phones for Society*, 1st ed. (Piscataway: Transaction Publishers, 2005), 12.

one's desires when one wants.<sup>13</sup> While Noveck's article points towards numerous social and technological changes from 1999-2009, there must be a consideration of more recent changes. An understanding of evolving practices in terms of Canadians' mobile use should be assessed through an increased reliance on the use of cellphones to experience and re-live the performance as well as the rising limitations in physical interaction based on the concern for the quality of material captured.

Cellphones or mobile phones have become associated with mobility, portability, and customization. The evolution of the cellphone reveals an increasing convergence of technological abilities into this medium.<sup>14</sup> The sharing culture seen through an analysis into practices associated with the Keitai, which was the first camera phone, saw the importance of sharing and mementos to the users of the technology.<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the development of the cellphone and internet must be considered within the context of globalization and urbanism.<sup>16</sup> In the contemporary Canadian context, in which cellphones and live music interweave, our understandings and treatment of interpersonal interaction need to be considered. Therefore, within Toronto, an urban space, in which the importance of live music is increasing, audience members are able to use their cellphones to communicate with those beyond the venue to all over the world.

The Canadian Monitoring Report annually "provides a comprehensive view of the Canadian communication services sector, including the technologies they depend on to

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<sup>13</sup> Noveck, "50 Ways Life Has Changed in The Last 10 Years."

<sup>14</sup> Gerard Goggin, *Cell Phone Culture*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 2, 143.

<sup>15</sup> Goggin, *Cell Phone Culture*, 144, 146.

<sup>16</sup> A. Hepp, S. Hjarvard, and K. Lundby, "Mediatization: Theorizing the Interplay between Media, Culture and Society," *Media, Culture & Society* 37, 2 (2015): 321, doi:10.1177/0163443715573835.

participate in the digital economy.”<sup>17</sup> According to the 2015 Communications Monitoring Report, from 2010 to 2014, Canadians’ ownership of smartphones jumped from 24 percent to 66 percent.<sup>18</sup> More recently, the 2016 Communications Monitoring Report highlighted another 7 percent increase among Canadians 18 or older in owning a smartphone.<sup>19</sup> Furthermore, the 2016 report also showed that “wireless and internet data usage is growing” with a 44 percent increase of wireless data and 40 percent for fixed internet data usage from 2014-2015 alone.<sup>20</sup> With a majority of Canadians owning cellphones, an increased sharing culture, the place of the cellphone within the concert context provides a case study into the increasing usage of cellphones and motivations for such use.

While personal motivations are central to an individual’s phone use, the policies of the venue play a role in what are the permitted boundaries of use. The venues’ policies will shape the permissible experiences had during the live performances. Having read through the policies of venues attended, such as Massey Hall, Budweiser Stage (previously Molson Amphitheatre), the Danforth Music Hall, and the Air Canada Centre, there is no mention of smartphones not being allowed. That being said, there are policies that can be seen across the different venues. For example, in all the venues considered here, professional cameras or professional equipment for the video/audio recording of concert material are prohibited.<sup>21</sup> While professional cameras are

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<sup>17</sup> "Communications Monitoring Report 2015: Executive Summary | CRTC," *Crtc.Gc.Ca*, 2015, <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/policymonitoring/2015/cmrrr.htm>.

<sup>18</sup> "Communications Monitoring Report 2015: Executive Summary | CRTC," *Crtc.Gc.Ca*.

<sup>19</sup> "Communications Monitoring Report 2016: Executive Summary | CRTC," *Crtc.Gc.Ca*, 2017, <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/policymonitoring/2016/cmrs.htm>.

<sup>20</sup> "Communications Monitoring Report 2016: Executive Summary | CRTC," *Crtc.Gc.Ca*.

<sup>21</sup> "CAMERAS, VIDEO CAMERAS, AUDIO RECORDERS," *Theaircanadacentre.Com*, 2015, [http://www.theaircanadacentre.com/about/atozitem.asp?a\\_to\\_z\\_guide\\_id=19](http://www.theaircanadacentre.com/about/atozitem.asp?a_to_z_guide_id=19). "Frequently Asked Questions," *Massey Hall*, 2017, <https://www.masseyhall.com/box-office-and-venue-info/frequently-asked-questions/>. "FAQ – The Danforth Music Hall," *TheDanforth.Com*, 2017, <http://thedanforth.com/fag/>. "Budweiser Stage Rules | Budweiser Stage | Previously Molson Canadian Amphitheatre," *Canadianamphitheatre.Net*, 2017, <http://www.canadianamphitheatre.net/molson-amphitheatre-rules/>.

either forbidden or restricted based on the venue, point-and-shoot cameras are usually permitted upon request. Further, in three out of the four policies considered, the camera/video policy was specified as depending on the preferences of the performer. In the case of the Danforth Music Hall, this decision can be made on the day of the performance.<sup>22</sup> Therefore, the concern displayed by venues is of a professional nature, not individual audience members' amassing digital material as long as the recording material is not of a professional level. Even within this brief consideration of venues' policies, there are slight differences between them, such as the value placed on artists' positions on recording the performance, yet they are all in agreement over the prohibiting of professional material. While their policy on professional material is clear, what happens when most of the audience is recording and sharing material, non-professionally, on their mobile devices? Does this widespread practice have an effect on the concert experience? If yes, what effects and to what degree does it impact the experience?

Research into the use of cellphones in concerts is relatively recent, a majority of the literature analysed came from adjacent fields, such as cellphone use in general. Liveness is central to the concert experience.<sup>23</sup> Also essential is the evolution of mediatization theory, the relationship between technology and society with a focus on cellphone culture, along with the relationship between technology and memory. In relation to the audience's perspective on phone use, audience studies, uses and gratification theory specifically, and the concert audience are considered. The literature demonstrates the intersection of the concert experience and the implications of communicative technology. This research builds on work relating to technology, notions of liveness, and the contemporary audience experience. It is paramount to remember that

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<sup>22</sup> "FAQ – The Danforth Music Hall," *TheDanforth.Com*.

<sup>23</sup> Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in A Mediatized Culture* (London, Routledge, 2008), 106.

understandings of liveness, authenticity, and interaction are constantly evolving based on the contexts in which they are found. Furthermore, within the context of evolving communication technologies and therefore our relation to them, new modes of communication through new media are central in considering understandings of interpersonal communication as well as liveness/authenticity.

This mixed methodology research of reactive and non-reactive elements includes: a content analysis of online coverage on the use of cellphones in concerts; participant observation of five live shows to consider audience interaction at the venue; and individual interviews with audience members to allow for clarification as well as additional information on the value or disruption phones place in the concert context. These elements allow for the mediatized experience to be seen clearly.

A content analysis of a non-random convenience sample of 51 Canadian newspaper and online articles addresses the evolution of the place of cellphones within the concert venue. The analysed articles were selected from the database ProQuest and the search engine Google in relation to Canadian articles, from coast to coast, discussing the topic. The articles analysed were collected between the years of 2002 and 2016 to capture the evolution of the argument. Further, the investigation of common phrasing and arguments for and against cellphone usage provided a baseline for the next methodologies as well as reveal underlying motivations towards cellphone usage.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> Carol Grbich, *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Introduction*, Second edition (London; Thousand Oaks: SAGE, Publications Ltd., 2012), 188, 195.

The participant observation of five concerts allowed for an opportunity to interact with concert-goers within the venue and consider their actions during a performance. Further, participant observation supplied data to fuel the final methodology, interviews with concert-goers. The participant observation provided an opportunity to see if the trends found in the content analysis continued.

Conducting a series of 30 semi-structured interviews utilizing a snowball sample with concert-goers, ages 18 to 30, provided opportunities for clarification and expansion of audience members' opinions and anecdotes illuminating their points. Further, the collection of interviews provided a variety of opinions about the concert experience and the use of cellphones during performances. This work makes it apparent that while cellphones hold potential benefits for acting as cultural artifacts, memory aids, and as a promotional medium, the negative effects of cellphone use on interaction between concert participants and with the artist cannot be ignored.

The major concern found surrounds the centrality of interaction between those within the venue. The actions and sentiments of audience members regarding interaction, mediatization, memory, quality, and economics stress the centrality of interaction to understandings of the concert experience. An investigation into each of the patterns uncovers arguments against the use of phones within the venue as well as the widespread use.

This research investigates the following:

- 1) Audience members' use of their cellphones and the goals which are achieved through the practice. Additionally, this research analyses audience members' outlook on the use of cellphones during performances;
- 2) The potential relationship between established notions of liveness and authenticity and audience members' responses to cellphone use during performances; and
- 3) The potential mediatization of the concert experience, and the definition of mediatization to follow.

The increasing ownership of cellphones among Canadians and their presence in the concert venue calls into question the effect of using this communicative technology within a context that was previous space/time bound. An examination of the contemporary Canadian concert experience reveals common tendencies with regard to cellphone usage at concert venues. This research emphasizes the motivations of audience members and artists with respect to cellphone usage. For example, motivations of sharing and collecting become apparent. As audience members display a range in cellphone uses during concerts, then, by extension, so will their outlook on cellphone usage. The content analysis suggests that cellphones pose a new problem for interpersonal interaction and the way cellphone use is discussed reveals an evolution in understandings of authenticity. The consideration of artists will include larger artists through the content analysis and interviews conducted, as well as local artists interviewed who provided their opinion on phone use during performances. An assessment of audience gratifications surrounding the concert experience will highlight growing tendencies and desires for future Canadian concert experiences. Clearly, the concert space has been mediatized. Mediatization can be understood as “media-related change,” in which the introduction and use of communicative technology in a context which did not possess this technology previously alters forms of interpersonal interaction. The instances of media-related change must be understood in the specific socio-cultural context in which the changes are found.<sup>25</sup> Further, mediatization must be understood as occurring within larger phenomena such as globalization and digitalization.

The concert venue transforming understandings of liveness is being debated through questioning the cellphone’s place within concert venues. An investigation into the place of

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<sup>25</sup> Andreas Hepp, "The Communicative Figurations of Mediatized Worlds: Mediatization Research in Times Of the 'Mediation of Everything,'" *European Journal of Communication* 28, no. 6 (2013): 616, doi:10.1177/0267323113501148.



cellphones during concert performances will reveal a high level of concern towards cellphone use's ability to negatively impact interpersonal interaction.<sup>26</sup> Further, while cellphone use in concerts is a point of frustration, a matter of disconnect, it is not purely a negative example of mediatization. Within cases of mediatization, understandings of authenticity and liveness are changing, and so, too, are audience members' understandings of the situation. Based on a mixed methods qualitative analysis, it becomes clear that cellphones are disconnecting audience members from those around them, yet at the same time they are providing new modes of interaction. Therefore, to allow the beneficial modes to be a part of the concert experience and deal with the 'disconnect' involved, a policy of limited use would be the most beneficial option. The policy of limited use would minimize distraction to the experience, allow for further interpersonal interaction, while still allowing for audience members to share and save content through their cellphones. The cellphone will not be removed from the concert space altogether. Cellphone use is modifying the live concert experience as well as the methods for sharing and revisiting that experience. The cellphone is here to stay and it is time to explore the ramifications of the mediatization of the concert space by mobile technology.

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<sup>26</sup> Colin Lovequist, "The Phone Backlash at Shows Is Increasing, but Some Artists Are Embracing It!" *620 CKRM*, 2016, <http://www.620ckrm.com/2016/03/29/colin-the-phone-backlash-at-shows-is-increasing-but-some-artists-are-embracing-it/>.; "Harper Robinson," Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, Interview 24, Transcript.; Jason Osler, "Sorry, Adele: Taking Photos at Concerts Enhances Experience, Study Says," *CBC News*, 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/photos-enhance-experience-adele-concerts-1.3636625>.; Medicine Hat News, "Rock Ramblings: Concert Fans on Cellphones Make It Hard for Performers to 'Feel the Vibe,'" *Medicine Hat News*, 2016, <http://medicinehatnews.com/entertainment/local-entertainment/2016/04/14/concert-fans-on-cellphones-make-it-hard-for-performers-to-feel-the-vibe/>;

## CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Significant to the study of the contemporary concert experience is memory, mobile technology, and the mediatization of everyday life. This review of the literature also demonstrates the centrality of the context to notions of liveness and authenticity. Works investigating the notion of mediatization reveals two strands of research in which the understanding of the term and its applicability conflict. The back and forth between scholars reveals how this term involves an ongoing discussion of its ramifications as a phenomenon on its own or one occurring within other phenomena, such as globalization. In terms of cellphone use, dominant trends include the consideration of the context in which the use is found, the age of the users, the extended communication possibilities, as well as the concern over potential negative effects that cellphones hold.<sup>27</sup> Another stream of research assessed surrounded audience studies in terms of concert audiences, their activity, connection with each other, the artist, and those beyond the venue.

Overall, the literature considered highlights the ongoing parameters of where the medium's impact affects the form of communication, the degree to which the technology itself is responsible for changes, and finally, the activity and choices of individuals in using cellphones. In terms of the activity and choices, this includes the degree of use and the importance of the interaction between audience members, both within the same physical space or not.

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<sup>27</sup> Goggin, *Cell Phone Culture*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 15-16, 205-7.; Ilpo Kalevi Koskinen, *Mobile Multimedia in Action*, 1st ed. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 165.

## Liveness/Authenticity

Resistance to technological change is nothing new. Discussions of authenticity, culture, and liveness co-exist with the introduction of new technologies. In the discussion of these concepts, Anne MacLennan provides indications of how technology affects its audience. MacLennan notes resistance to electrical transcriptions or the recorded show in the context of early radio programming.<sup>28</sup> Simon Frith argues the relationship between art and technology as the audience and artistic community questioned the authenticity, starting with crooning and Bing Crosby and moving on to other artistic interpretations such as those of Bob Dylan to critique the role of technology in the authentic performance.<sup>29</sup> Similarly, Kembrew McLeod emphasizes the importance of authenticity in hip-hop as assimilation threatens identity.<sup>30</sup> The following includes two cases in which a changing culture or technology is shown to change an audience's understanding on notions of liveness and authenticity.

Charles Lindholm's *Culture and Authenticity* utilizes a cross-cultural examination into understandings of authenticity. Lindholm's breakdown between personal and collective notions of authenticity emphasizes the multi-leveled understandings and implementations of this term. Lindholm stresses how all cultures are "unique," and it is through the construction of cultural frameworks from which we socialize ourselves and in relation to others.<sup>31</sup> How our close cultural frameworks evolve based on the attempt to "spin a lifeline out of thin air in order to keep from drowning in the deluge" can be seen in the evolution of terms such as authenticity,

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<sup>28</sup> Anne F. MacLennan, "Circumstances Beyond Our Control: Canadian Radio Program Schedule Evolution during the 1930s," *PhD Dissertation* (Concordia University, 2001), 35-26.

<sup>29</sup> Simon Frith, "Art versus Technology: The Strange Case of Popular Music," *Media, Culture and Society* 8 (1986): 263-279.

<sup>30</sup> Kembrew McLeod, "Authenticity within hip-hop and other cultures threatened with assimilation," *Journal of Communication* 49, 4 (1999), [http://works.bepress.com/kembrew\\_mcleod/26/](http://works.bepress.com/kembrew_mcleod/26/).

<sup>31</sup> Charles Lindholm, *Culture and Authenticity* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 144.

especially during times of change.<sup>32</sup> For example, understandings of authenticity will change based on evolutions in social practices, norms, or the ripples caused by communication technology which modifies understandings of interaction. Lindholm's emphasis on the evolving nature of notions of authenticity is central for not only showing the organic nature of the term to its context, but also for how this evolution will be more prevalent during times of change in the context.

An excellent exploration into the notion of authenticity can be found in Philip Auslander's *Liveness*. The work explores the notion of authenticity through an assessment of the evolution of liveness through mediation. For example, Auslander's first chapter not only reveals the dependent relationship between theatre performance and television, first through television's adoption of "theatrical" programming, but then theatre's mimicking of television's unique qualities.<sup>33</sup> This mirroring relationship reveals that liveness and mediatization are not actually binary oppositions, when in fact, they are mutually dependant terms.<sup>34</sup> This idea coinciding with Lindholm's as during times of change, in this case technological, a society's understandings of authenticity, too, will evolve. Therefore, it is crucial to consider these terms in the context where they are found, because their meaning will change. What was understood to be a live experience thirty years ago differs from today; we cannot define liveness based on a different time and context.

Auslander's work goes further to reveal the evolving relationship between television and live performance, in his case, rock concerts. Auslander shows how rock music since the 1960's evolved to incorporate mediatization through performance equipment and recordings. He

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<sup>32</sup> Lindholm, *Culture and Authenticity*, 145.

<sup>33</sup> Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in A Mediatized Culture* (London, Routledge, 2008), 12, 25-6.

<sup>34</sup> Auslander, *Liveness*, 11.

explains the incursion of the music video model on that of the live performance. Additionally, Auslander reveals the efforts made to maintain authenticity within the musical community following the Milli Vanilli Scandal at the Grammys in the 1990's.<sup>35</sup> This evolution reveals the progression of live performance as initially superior to the recorded version then later the video actually authenticates the live performance.<sup>36</sup> Through Auslander's assessment of the transition from theatre to television to live performance (rock concerts) and the concerns expressed over the Milli Vanilli Grammy crisis in which lip syncing was revealed, the core concern has remained of setting the terms for authenticity in a changing historical, social, and technological context.<sup>37</sup>

Furthermore, Auslander emphasizes the absolute necessity of studying the context as the relationship between live and mediatized forms is historically contingent, therefore stressing the ongoing evolution of the relationship of these concepts.<sup>38</sup> Building on the work of Walter Benjamin's *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Auslander brings forward our current understanding of intimacy as stemming from television; therefore the incursion of mediatization can be understood as responding to the need for "televisual intimacy."<sup>39</sup> A desire or need "shaped by mediatized representations" that must always be considered in their historical context.<sup>40</sup>

Auslander's work ends with the prediction that "...any change in the near future is likely to be towards a further diminution of the symbolic capital associated with traditional live

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<sup>35</sup> Auslander, *Liveness*, 90-98.

<sup>36</sup> Auslander, *Liveness*, 106.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, 126.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, 56.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid*, 184.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid*, 184.

events.”<sup>41</sup> Yet with research into the rising cost of live performances and efforts to reduce technological infringement on live performances begs the question whether the response currently seen is in response to the decreased capital of live events or if, in fact, their capital has been raised. Overall, Auslander proves the correlation between television and live performance, reveals the fictitious binary construction of liveness and mediatization, and demonstrates the necessity of considering the context in which a practice or technology is in use. Through a consideration of the notion of liveness at different periods, live theatre, television, and mediatized concerts, the notions of liveness and authenticity of the performance hinged on the social frameworks adapted to that period of change.

This text is central to an understanding of mediatization as well as notions of liveness in the contemporary age. I strongly agree with Auslander’s work, not only for showing previous forms of mediatization within the concert venue (i.e. through electronic magnification), but for his revealed patterns between television and live performance. Auslander demonstrated that the debates over “rockism” were not a new phenomenon, but an established debate forwarded in this specific context. Therefore, through Auslander’s establishment of the changing nature of authenticity based on its social context, authenticity can be understood as a malleable and ever-changing notion in which its use and understanding is central. Auslander’s work makes no reference of the infringement of cellphone usage on the concert experience and its effect on further evolutions in the use of terms such as mediatization and liveness, yet his work provides the framework in which to consider these changes. Investigations into notions of authenticity not only closely relate with understandings of performance, but understanding how the term is understood reflects the context in which the term is being used. As Auslander’s work revealed

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid, 187.

how understandings of liveness and true rock music evolve, so too does the concept of authenticity. While Auslander's work was published in 2008, his insights into the malleability of notions of liveness and authenticity remain true, and further, the centrality of the context to understanding these concepts cannot be underestimated. Auslander's work not touching on cellphone use specifically, does not negate the importance of this work to the case of cellphones during live performances. The continued evolution of "liveness" from Auslander's work occurs today.

The discussion of the evolving nature of notions such as liveness and authenticity stress the importance of investigating these experiences of change, specifically technological change to an everyday experience.

## **Mediatization**

Mediatization has been understood by scholars in a number of different ways, but all of the cases involve the examination of experiences surrounding media-related change. Similar to Auslander, Schulz sees new media as hybrids of older media, in which the older are not fully displaced, yet the new media are expanding the supply of information, entertainment content is dominant, and private contributions are not significant enough.<sup>42</sup> While Schulz and Auslander's work both argue the continuation of trends from the television era, Schulz's work shows the elements of mediatization in social change as well as the functions of media. Schulz identifies the following four elements in social change as: extension, substitution, amalgamation, and accommodation. The four elements emphasize the changes associated with communication through the new media, as extending human limits, substituting social activities, becoming

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<sup>42</sup> Winfried Schulz, "Reconstructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept," *European Journal of Communication* 19, no. 1 (2004): 97, doi:10.1177/0267323104040696.

integral to social life, and as a catalyst for business activities.<sup>43</sup> While Auslander's work considers mediatization in terms of evolution, Schulz stresses the notion of "loss" as central to mediatization, in terms of constraints on messages or forms of communication.<sup>44</sup> The benefit of Schulz's model of mediatization is his emphasis on continuity in the evolution of media.<sup>45</sup> Further, Schulz's mention of loss is significant, as it signifies not only the changes in the form of communication, but the emotions of individuals towards that change as loss. Later scholars' work reveals the importance in defining mediatization and its parameters, yet they do not reflect Schulz's emphasis on the experience of change as a loss.

Competing definitions of mediatization stress the different approaches taken towards media-related change and its place in relation to other phenomena. Hepp provides an account of the two streams in mediatization research as institutionalist and social constructivist, and specifies the difference between the terms mediatization and mediation. Hepp's goal is to provide a bridge between the two traditions of mediatization research. While mediation can be understood as "any process of communication in total," mediatization can be understood as the theorization of "media-related change."<sup>46</sup> The institutionalist model centres on media logic and institutions,<sup>47</sup> while the social constructivist considers the relation between socio-cultural and communicative change as part of everyday life.<sup>48</sup> Hepp's new mediatization can be understood as "a concept used to analyse the (long term) interrelation between the change of media and communication on the one hand, and the change of culture and society on the other hand in a

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<sup>43</sup> Schulz, "Reconstructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept," 88-9.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 90-93.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 99.

<sup>46</sup> Andreas Hepp, "The Communicative Figurations of Mediatized Worlds: Mediatization Research in Times Of the 'Mediation of Everything,'" *European Journal of Communication* 28, no. 6 (2013): 616, doi:10.1177/0267323113501148.

<sup>47</sup> Hepp, "The Communicative Figurations of Mediatized Worlds," 617.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, 618.



critical manner.”<sup>49</sup> In order to link the two traditions, Hepp emphasizes the need to consider mediatization in a wider context, that of “mediatized worlds,”<sup>50</sup> in which mediatization occurs on different levels and in different spaces. Finally, Hepp’s work emphasizes the need for an analysis of mediatization in times and contexts of significant change are considered, emphasizing the mediatization of everyday life.<sup>51</sup> The desire to link the two traditions stresses both the short and long-term ramifications of media-related change.

Two scholars who position themselves in opposition to Hepp’s claims would be that of Deacon and Stanyer. Deacon and Stanyer emphasize the ambiguity of the term based on the different uses of the terms within the literature, stressing the two traditions.<sup>52</sup> The scholars break down their criticisms of mediatization literature into the following three categories: media as causal factors of change<sup>53</sup> stressing that media systems are in fact not singular factors for change, the need for systematic research of historical change and when mediatization began,<sup>54</sup> and, finally, the conceptual design which is not in agreement by scholars.<sup>55</sup> While Deacon and Stanyer’s work correctly stresses areas of ambiguity within mediatization literature, their work does not consider Hepp’s attempt in bridging the two definitions towards a more centralized understanding of mediatization.

Hepp et al. is written as a response towards Deacon and Stanyer’s article, in which they criticize the previous work as utilizing too simplistic an understanding of mediatization.<sup>56</sup> Hepp

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<sup>49</sup> Ibid, 619.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, 621.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid, 621, 627.

<sup>52</sup> David Deacon and James Stanyer, "Mediatization: Key Concept or Conceptual Bandwagon?" *Media, Culture & Society* 36, no. 7 (2014): 1033-1034, doi:10.1177/0163443714542218.

<sup>53</sup> Deacon and Stanyer, "Mediatization: Key Concept or Conceptual Bandwagon?" 1034.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid, 1037.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid, 1040-1.

<sup>56</sup> A. Hepp, S. Hjarvard, and K. Lundby, "Mediatization: Theorizing the Interplay between Media, Culture and Society," *Media, Culture & Society* 37, no. 2 (2015): 314, doi:10.1177/0163443715573835.

et al. consider Deacon and Stanyer's three criticisms of the research and then work towards showing mediatization as "part of a paradigmatic shift."<sup>57</sup> Hepp et al.'s argument is compelling as they stress that mediatization is a media-centred approach in which various social factors are considered yet media remain at the centre, rather than media-centric which is simply a one-sided approach that does not consider additional social factors.<sup>58</sup> While Hepp et al. acknowledge the benefit of additional historical work on mediatization, they stress that Deacon and Stanyer did not consider mediatization as long-term processes, and further that historical work may have been done, but it was not available to the previous authors in access or language.<sup>59</sup> Contrary to Hepp's "institutionalization of mediatization," media systems may not be the driving forces of change, yet other processes of change find their expression through communication and media.<sup>60</sup> Further, it is necessary to consider mediatization on a context-sensitive basis as well as consider moments of intense transformations where communication technology is utilized in a specific context for the first time.<sup>61</sup> In these cases, mediatization would be understood in relation to larger phenomena such as globalization.<sup>62</sup> While agreeing with Hepp et al. on the increasing complexity of mediatization research as more is written and mediatization as a media-centred approach, the institutionalization of mediatization, as being a process on the same level of globalization, does not reflect how this process exists as a subset of globalization or individualization.

Deacon and Stanyer's "Mediatization and' Or 'Mediatization of'? A Response to Hepp Et Al." reveals different uses of mediatization as "mediatization and" versus "mediatization of," and

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<sup>57</sup> Hepp et al., "Mediatization," 315.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid, 316.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid, 318-9.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid, 320-1.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, 320-1.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 321.

based on the different versions of mediatization, the ramifications of mediatization differ.

“Mediatization and” considers trends of mediatization in relation to other social and cultural spheres, while “mediatization of” sees media as the sole or primary moulding force. Deacon and Stanyer argue that high theory of mediatization is disconnected from common applications, therefore while certain scholarly work emphasizes the complexity of mediatization, a large amount of research utilizing the term mediatization consider communication technologies as the singular driving force.<sup>63</sup> While Deacon and Stanyer’s work emphasizes common simplistic uses of mediatization as the sole moulding factors within mediatization studies, there needs to be a consideration of the reasons for changes in social interaction according to those experiencing the change within an understanding of the wider factors or social context at play. Therefore, beyond their emphasis on the need for growth in historical or long-term research, research within periods of intensive change needs to consider the motivations for change and therefore reflect the context of change.

Bratus picks up the discussion of the interaction of mediatization and authenticity as demonstrated earlier by Auslander. Bratus begins his article “In-Between Performance and Mediatization: Authentication and (Re)-Live(D) Concert Experience,” with the centrality of the notion of authenticity to rock music and the individuality associated with understandings of authenticity.<sup>64</sup> While Auslander does emphasize the importance of authenticity and liveness, in Bratus’s work the notion of individuality comes forward.

Bratus extends Auslander’s argument to include the practice of video recording live musical performances. Bratus emphasizes the video’s ability to bridge the lived event and the

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<sup>63</sup> David Deacon and James Stanyer, "'Mediatization and' Or 'Mediatization of'? A Response to Hepp Et Al.," *Media, Culture & Society* 37, no.4 (2015): 655-6, doi:10.1177/0163443715580761.

<sup>64</sup> Alessandro Bratus, "In-Between Performance and Mediatization: Authentication and (Re)-Live(D) Concert Experience," *Rock Music Studies* 3, no. 1 (2016): 41-2, doi:10.1080/19401159.2015.1129112.

recorded document. Further, Bratus emphasizes the importance of the ongoing creative process and feelings of physical closeness. The ongoing creative process can be understood according to changes in the performance based on the audience's influence or *filmmers'* ability to reconstruct the event in unique ways.<sup>65</sup> Bratus' highlighting the centrality of proximity to individuals' construction of authenticity through recording<sup>66</sup> stresses the importance of individuals' experiences and changes in experience based on audience members' use of technology. Bratus's work also considers the loss of aura, echoing Walter Benjamin's aura argument in the age of mechanical reproduction, yet stressing the necessity of the re-orientation of notions of aura and authenticity through the technical production involved in the mediated reconstruction.<sup>67</sup> In this new context, authenticity in popular music is to be understood as a form of "witnessing" in which recording devices are the eye witnesses, the form or shape of the video depends on the mediator (or videographer), and the performer is the figure in which this authentication process is surrounded.<sup>68</sup> Both Bratus and Auslander emphasize the ongoing evolution of notions of authenticity/liveness through the lens of mediatization. While Bratus does not stress the socio-cultural context to the extent that Auslander does, he demonstrates the evolution of authenticity to include mediatized formats within a live performance. One discontinuity within the text would be Bratus's argument on notions of authenticity as individualized, yet there are no mentioned demonstration of resistance or multiple versions of authenticity within this evolved mediatized context. Overall, Bratus's work reveals an evolution away from Schulz's "loss" towards a form of "witnessing," highlighting the accepted and central place of technology to live and authentic experiences.

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<sup>65</sup> Bratus, "In-Between Performance and Mediatization," 45, 53.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid*, 41, 52.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid*, 56.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid*, 57-8.

In order to address the live concert experience, including both *filmmers* and those who experienced concerts with their own senses, the multi-faceted nature of the concert experience must be addressed. In order to address the mediatization of the concert experience, there must be a consideration of the audience as well as the technological influence in this context. Within the literature surrounding media effects and technological use, the dominant patterns include: the extension of human capabilities (communication, memory, mobility, etc.), media as disruptive technologies (issues of breaking etiquette or established boundaries), the relation between media and identity formation, and, finally, technology or media as a form of entertainment. Despite the debates within the field of mediatization, such as that between Hepp et. al versus Deacon and Stanyer, mediatization is media-related change studying both long-term effects and intense periods of change. Communication technology is not the sole driving force for change, the context in which the change occurs is paramount. Mediatization occurs within larger institutions such as globalization and individualization. Finally, in order to understand the ramifications of mediatization, the media-related change must be examined in the context in which it is found, and further, to analyse the abilities of the technology and how it does and does not challenge our understandings of mediatization. The inclusion of the cellphone into the concert space is influencing how audience members are choosing to interact with the concert experience and those around them. In order to analyse these changes, the abilities and treatment of cellphones must be assessed.

### **Cellphone Culture**

In order to understand the latest mediatization of the concert space, it is paramount to analyse existing works which explore cellphone use and the impacts of that use. Examples of

analyses within the field include the work of Goggin, Koskinen, Walsh et al., as well as Ling and Donner. Examining the work of the mentioned scholars will show rhetoric on media extending human capabilities resulting in positive and negative consequences, the medium as a tool for identity formation and sustenance, and, finally, as a form of entertainment.

Goggin's *Cell Phone Culture* explores the range of activities in which cellphones are used in order to establish the culture surrounding cellphones. Goggin considers the evolution of phone studies, emphasizing concerns such as technological convergence, the blurring between public and private spaces, as well as the redrawing of social boundaries.<sup>69</sup> The range of activities covered within the text includes that of advertising and design, texting, moral panics, photography, and moblogging.<sup>70</sup>

Goggin's work emphasizes the discourse associated with cellphones based on their usage and opinions on the extent of what their use can affect. For example, within the case of moral panic surrounding cellphone usage, Goggin uses the work of scholars such as Thompson to move away from the classical approach of such panics, in order to consider the influence of modernity, contextuality, as well as discourse in reframing an object into a subject of anxiety.<sup>71</sup> Further, while the anxiety reflected is targeted towards one communication technology, the fear is spread through established communication technology. For example, anxiety surrounding cellphone use is spread through media such as newspapers and television.<sup>72</sup> Therefore, the context in which an emotion is expressed is key to understanding the impression taken towards an object.

The cultural standpoint taken within the text reveals the continuation of technological determinism through a consideration of the discourse surrounding the positive and negative

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<sup>69</sup> Goggin, *Cell Phone Culture*, 1st ed. (New York: Routledge, 2006), 3.

<sup>70</sup> Goggin, *Cell Phone Culture*, 15-16.

<sup>71</sup> Ibid, 108.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid, 124-5.

attributes of the technology as well as the connection between communication technology and identity development or sustenance.<sup>73</sup> Through this work, topics relating to cellphone culture include: the importance of discourse, context, identity, mobility, and the utopian possibilities for the future of the technology. While Goggin promotes a future of cellphones according to openness,<sup>74</sup> there is little emphasis on the individuality within cellphone culture. For example, Goggin stresses the matter of identity in the design or customization of cellphones, yet there is further choice in terms of the product itself, and then further, the prioritization of difference uses of cellphones. Further, the extent of use would emphasize the individuality of the users. Finally, the text considers cellphone culture within different contexts; it suggests that there is somehow universality to cellphone culture. Beyond considering the context of cellphone usage, the potential of local differences should be stressed.

Koskinen considers the use of cellphones as part of everyday life. While Koskinen's work does not consider the regional or national context in which the research takes place, it considers the physical uses of the cellphone and social conventions surrounding those actions to engage whether what we are seeing are new practices or established practices in new forms.<sup>75</sup> Similar to Goggin's work, the patterns found in this text include that of extending communication, the convergence of technology, the intersection of technology and identity, along with cellphones as the evolutionary result of previous technology.

Koskinen's analysis into the use of cellphones for taking photos stresses a connection to Kodak culture. With the introduction of the Kodak camera, no experience or knowledge was needed to take a photograph, and therefore one can begin to see the photograph as a postcard to

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<sup>73</sup> Ibid, 205-7.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid, 210.

<sup>75</sup> Ilpo Kalevi Koskinen, *Mobile Multimedia in Action*, 1st ed. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 165.

one's experiences.<sup>76</sup> Further, examining the photograph's continuation into multimedia, the concern for capturing a memory remains, yet one cannot forget the "fun" and "consumption" over lasting value.<sup>77</sup> Therefore, the practice of photographing as not only a memory tool, but as a form of entertainment is worth noting. While Koskinen's work attempted to break down the practices of person-to-person interaction to show how cellphones have changed everyday interaction, there was a perceived lack of consideration into the differences in cellphone practices of users in these early uses of the cellphone. While there was a feeling of disconnect from cellphone users within the text, Koskinen shows how old-age practices are being evolved into "more elaborate" practices over time.<sup>78</sup> Therefore, when considering cellphone practices, not only the socio-cultural, but also the historical influences of the technology hold sway. Finally, Koskinen stresses the need to consider the cellphone as a consumer technology, and therefore continue to study the prioritized uses of the cellphone. The consideration of the prioritized uses of the cellphone stress what values or goals are achieved through the use. As Koskinen's work came from a time when the cellphone's technology was less evolved, the smartphone's vast capabilities and the widespread use and ownership of this technology stresses the need for further study.

Walsh et al. picks up the discussion on the use of cellphones, in their case, an analysis into feelings of belonging and social identification among Australian youths based on their cellphone usage. This case study emphasizes how the desire for belonging and social identification (based on group norms) directed the amounts of cellphone usage among

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<sup>76</sup> Koskinen, *Mobile Multimedia in Action*, 45-50.

<sup>77</sup> Koskinen, *Mobile Multimedia in Action*, 58-9.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid*, 166.



participants.<sup>79</sup> While Walsh et al. highlight the underpinning motivations for cellphone usage as relating to one's identity and social circles, there is a lack of consideration in the context of the usage as well as the varying degrees of usage amongst participants. Further, while a need to belong may impact cellphone usage,<sup>80</sup> there needs to be deeper studies into cellphone usage with multiple methodologies in order to reveal different motivations, levels of use, and the reasons for those differences.

Ling & Donner's *Mobile Communication* illustrates how mobile communication has become interlaced within everyday activities through the use of vignettes. The discoveries found within Ling and Donner's work include youth as early developers, the cellphone as the result of previous technology, cellphones as part of everyday life, the correlation between technology and identity, the blurring boundaries between public and private space, as well as cellphones as a discursive technology, many of which have already been identified.

Ling and Donner's work stresses the following final points: there has been the increasing expectation for personal availability at all times, we can now be reached further than anywhere before, and finally our lives have become so intertwined with cellphone use that our lives are being coordinated through their use.<sup>81</sup> Ling and Donner emphasize how the technology is not utopian or dystopian in entirety; in fact, while the cellphone can be disruptive, it can cause stress, "it can also save the day."<sup>82</sup> Ling and Donner's work reveals the growing reliance on cellphones, as the discourse coming from the text at times reflects technological determinist thinking by

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<sup>79</sup> Shari P. Walsh, Katherine M. White, and Ross McD. Young, "The Phone Connection: A Qualitative Exploration of How Belongingness and Social Identification Relate to Mobile Phone Use Amongst Australian Youth," *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 19, no. 3 (2009): 232-233, doi:10.1002/casp.983.

<sup>80</sup> Walsh et al., "The Phone Connection," 235.

<sup>81</sup> Rich Ling and Jonathan Donner, *Mobile Communication: Digital Media and Society Series*, 1<sup>st</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 154-6.

<sup>82</sup> Ling and Donner, *Mobile Communication*, 156.

applying characteristics of the notion such as the mentioned saving the day. Finally, as the focus of this book emphasizes the choice and texting capabilities of the cellphone, there is a need to consider the ever-growing capabilities that cellphones possess.

Cellphones have extended communication possibilities in terms of space and time. They have become a part of everyday life. They are tools for identity formation, identity sustenance, and entertainment. With the introduction of these new media, anxieties towards their impacts accompany that introduction. While the concern is important to consider, it is through established media that the anxiety is circulated. While the technology has an impact on interpersonal interaction and communication practices, it is not the sole driving force for change. Cellphone use has changed people's lives through the technology converging previous media, establishing and sharing people's identity through the technology, and extending the possibilities for communication practices in new ways.

Goggin and Koskinen both touched on the use of cellphones for taking photographs, reflecting on convergence and, in some cases, the desire to capture a moment. The discourse of capturing a moment reflects on the notion of memory and the importance of understanding how memory is understood. Research relating to memory falls under psychological, sociological, cultural, and, more recently, the historical fields.<sup>83</sup>

## **Memory**

Cellphone use during concert performances has ramifications on memory practices, based on what images are captured as well as to what purposes, therefore a discussion of understandings of memory and how it works must be assessed. José van Dijck's "Mediated

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<sup>83</sup> José van Dijck, "Mediated Memories: Personal Cultural Memory as Object of Cultural Analysis," *Continuum* 18, no. 2 (2004): 262-272, doi:10.1080/1030431042000215040.

Memories” is a paramount text to consider the interaction between memory and communication technology.<sup>84</sup> Van Dijck’s work considers how individuals engage in acts of remembering in private settings, how individual preferences are filtered through cultural conventions, and the relationship between individual and collective memory.<sup>85</sup> Van Dijck shifts the focus away from collective memory towards personal cultural memory in which the user of a media is active, holding individual agency, and it is through considering individual cultural memories that one can explore the negotiation between the self and culture at large.<sup>86</sup>

Van Dijck stresses how memory making, collectively or personally, is an active process, in which it not only takes conscious work involving communicative technology to inscribe the memory, but each revisiting of the memory actually changes it.<sup>87</sup> In other words, the capturing of a moment is done through a coded process, which limits the elements of the original experience. Further, each time the codified memory is revisited different elements of the experience will be remembered. She shows how research involving memory in a collective sense considers how events are remembered in relation to others, stressing humans as social beings.<sup>88</sup> While collective memory with a social and historical orientation may show the feeling that individuals are part of a larger collective past, there is no consideration of culture. The inclusion of culture reflects the importance of a consideration of the material and cultural context through which memories are understood by individuals.<sup>89</sup> The emphasis on memory as a cultural act allows for an inclusion of the act of mediation.

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<sup>84</sup> van Dijck, "Mediated Memories," 261.

<sup>85</sup> van Dijck, "Mediated Memories," 265.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, 273.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, 262-5.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, 266.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid, 268.

Van Dijck's emphasis on how the use of communicative technologies not only have the capability to reshape how events are recalled, it influences the ontological status of events and how they are remembered based on what truths the new technologies hold.<sup>90</sup> On the other hand, the ontological status is relevant for the resistance towards the new technologies as holding truths. The resenting or anxiety towards new technologies for their potential of manipulation or somehow desecrating the original memory is important to remember.

The mediation of memory allows for opportunities of self-reflection and the negotiation between the self and society.<sup>91</sup> Further, with mediation, every time the memory is revisited, the memory is adjusted, revised, or changed following a "continuous project of self-formation."<sup>92</sup> Van Dijck's emphasis on considering mediated memories not only stresses the development of growth of the self, but also the importance of sharing that memory with others in extending or stating one's identity.<sup>93</sup> The importance of mediated memories cannot be underestimated. They reveal personal identities and how these identities must negotiate themselves in relation to established cultural and social frameworks. In this context, the negotiation between the individual and the collective must be central.

While van Dijck's work is somewhat dated, the arguments of the text remain relevant, suggesting that the treatment of new technology is, in fact, repetitive in the negotiating of communicative possibilities and the ramifications for personal identity. Further, this work is central for an understanding of the evolution of memory work into different fields of study. Overall, this work provides a clear connection between memory and communicative technology, and further, reveals the importance of analysing personal cultural memories as valuable on their

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<sup>90</sup> Ibid, 272.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid, 273.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, 273.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid, 274.

own without having to be in relation to a larger or collective event. It is through the use of communicative technologies to create these mediated memories that demonstrates the way individuals position themselves in relation to their context and past culture as well as reshape the images of themselves and those around them over time.<sup>94</sup> Van Dijck's work on memory reveals the centrality of identity formation and the importance of individual records in a cultural analysis to stress the individuality in negotiating with one's context.

Touching on similar topics within memory studies, such as the mediation of memory as well as remembering as an active process can be seen in the work of Kitzmann et al. *Memory Work* which provides cases from different disciplines to show the diverse ways the relation between memory and communicative technology is understood and treated. The text starts off by redirecting the matter of mediation as the problematization of memory, where the externalization of memory through communication technology is not a new phenomenon. Kitzmann et al. argue that the reason for the contemporary era's approach towards the externalization of memory as something to fear is actually just the acceleration of the process by occurring more and more often.<sup>95</sup> This point is central in contextualizing periods of anxiety or concern towards communicative technology. This point also reveals how people's treatment of a new technology follows a pattern of concern and anxiety towards later acceptance and use.

Within the field of media studies, Kitzmann demonstrates the activity involved in the memory process. For example, various media have been used as opportunities of self-reflection or memorializing specific familial events.<sup>96</sup> Further, the influence of the digital revolution as changing practices is associated with picture taking. For instance, before digital cameras, photos

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<sup>94</sup> Ibid, 275.

<sup>95</sup> Andreas Kitzmann, Conny Mithander, and John Sundholm, *Memory Work*, 1st ed. (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2005), 14.

<sup>96</sup> Kitzmann et al., *Memory Work*, 45-51, 56-8.

were taken more carefully, and when developing said photos only certain ones were framed; yet with the advent of digital technology, the photo could be instantly reviewed and the photographer could act as the producer in which they complete the editing and publishing process on their own.<sup>97</sup> In the final section on “the network,” Kitzmann stresses that with the adoption of the world-wide web, consumers are now in control of the distribution of their self-documentation. In this context, lines between public and private are blurred. For example, previous distinctions between privacy and public, present and past, are collapsed and at the same time extended in this new context.<sup>98</sup> Overall, Kitzmann argues how self-documentation through various media reconstruct the relationship to memory based on the impact and use of specific media technologies.<sup>99</sup> This idea coincides with that of van Dijck on the importance of individual records, yet in this case, it is for the purpose of personal memories, not cultural memories.

Sjöberg’s “A Mirror with a Memory” considers interaction between memory and media technology from a film studies perspective. Sjöberg provides an overview of issues regarding camera-produced films. Sjöberg considers memory in terms of cultural, private and technological memory. According to cultural memory, a photograph cannot substitute a memory, it merely provides reference to it.<sup>100</sup> In relation to film, each time the photograph or film is revisited, the memory is changed.<sup>101</sup> Therefore, memory cannot be understood as a stable entity, but something which is re-interpreted based on the evolving context of the viewer. In terms of “technological memory,” Sjöberg stresses how a memory which occurred in the past can be experienced in the

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<sup>97</sup> Kitzmann et al., *Memory Work*, 57-8.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid, 63-4.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid, 64.

<sup>100</sup> Patrik Sjöberg, “A Mirror with a Memory: On the Relation between Camera-Produced Images and Memory,” in *Memory Work*, ed. Andreas Kitzmann, Conny Mithander, John Sundholm, 1st ed. (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2005), 68.

<sup>101</sup> Sjöberg, “A Mirror with a Memory,” 69.

present, stressing the importance of temporality in memory work.<sup>102</sup> Sjöberg raises the notion of a “prosthetic memory” in which a memory experienced by others can be internalized by those who were not at the event through watching the footage documented at the event; in this process, media technology are central for the distribution of footage.<sup>103</sup> Further, with the inclusion of photography and film as part of everyday life, through digital technologies such as the digital camera and later the camera phone, the question of the role of these images in our lives comes to the forefront.<sup>104</sup> The cross-disciplinary position of *Memory Work* stresses the importance of memory in different fields as well as showing the importance of considering the notion of memory in the context of use. For example, considering memory according to a historical perspective would highlight collective memory, whereas a communications perspective would stress the interaction between personal and collective memory. Further, *Memory Work* reaffirms the connection between technology and memory as something with a long history and an evolving relationship which continues to be worth studying.

The final work central to an understanding of memory considers the relationship between popular music and memory. While the previous work considered a variety of fields, this text not only provides a current understanding of memory, but also the continued importance of materiality to the process of remembering. Bennett and Rogers’s “Popular Music and Materiality” explores concrete manifestations of music listening and fandom based on the findings of a three-year Australian Research Council project on music and cultural memory.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid, 74.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid, 74-5.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid, 81.

<sup>105</sup> Andy Bennett and Ian Rogers, "Popular Music and Materiality: Memorabilia and Memory Traces," *Popular Music and Society* 39, 1 (2016): 28, doi:10.1080/03007766.2015.1061339.

The article works to stress the importance of the materiality in terms of showing how we understand popular music.

The main topic coming out of the text was that popular music objects acquire meanings beyond their everyday status, influenced by the “contextualizing effects of online technology.”<sup>106</sup> For example, it is through ticket stubs that listeners are able to revisit vivid memories and draw value from these experiences of recall.<sup>107</sup> Further, Bennett and Rogers’ work highlights the role of materiality in an increasingly digitalized context. For example, while previously physical playback material was replaced with newer forms, now those materials are being replaced by digital versions of the songs. Further, the stages of material playback also coincide with one’s “outgrowing” stages of their youth.<sup>108</sup> This work stresses three important arguments: the immaterial value associated with material objects, the relocation of materiality in an increasingly digitized context, and finally, that the materials in which individuals surround themselves not only reflect their identity, but the stages in the evolution of their identity. While Bennett and Rogers highlight these arguments, the emphasis on materiality in terms of their connecting the past and present<sup>109</sup> leaves out one important motivation for the collecting of materials, namely the ability to revisit. The inclusion of the “future” in correlation to “past” and “present” already noted better reflects the motivations of uses in the amassing of popular music materials.

The works surrounding cultural memory analysed reveal evolving understandings of what it means to recall events based on the use of communication technology. Digital media is evolving at a rapid pace. The anxiety surrounding these changes reflects the question of how individuals place themselves in relation to their society and how they can understand the new

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<sup>106</sup> Bennett and Rogers, "Popular Music and Materiality," 28.

<sup>107</sup> Bennett and Rogers, "Popular Music and Materiality," 39.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid*, 36-7.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid*, 40.



ways they interact with their past. These media-related changes and the concern surrounding them not only consider how interaction is changing, but how these events are recalled and understood. Individual cultural memories are central to understanding how people negotiate their identities in relation to the culture at large. Further, it is through sharing these materials and revisiting them that one's identity is extended or shared. Further, while the shift towards digital over physical material is growing, the tendencies of saving, sharing, and revisiting these types of materials have not changed, only the methods have.

The importance of the audience, their motivations and level of agency, calls to question the ways in which audiences are understood. While there is a plethora of research within audience studies, for the purposes here there will be a focus into Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) in which the motivations and actions of audience members are central.

## **Audience Studies**

Audience studies has seen an evolution in understandings and treatment of audiences. Early understandings of audiences were seen as a mass which could easily be swayed to follow the propaganda or advertisements directed at them. This early Effects Theory did not last as the dominant understanding of audiences, due to the limitations found in this view, such as no direct correlation found and a lack of consideration of the context. Later research began to delve into the nature of the audience as a collective of individuals who hold their own opinions and absorb information differently than one another.<sup>110</sup> Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is one of the

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<sup>110</sup> Rowland Lorimer, Mike Gasher, and David Skinner, *Mass Communications in Canada*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2008), 121-135. Early effects research had given way towards more of an understanding of an audience as holding agency. Streams of this research can be seen by Marxist Theory, British Cultural Studies, Uses and Gratifications Theory, and Feminist Studies. Further, reception theory's emphasis on the centrality of context to a given study brings the importance of public and private interaction to the forefront.

later theories which investigate the motivations of audience members and the gratifications they seek through conscious decisions made.

In the age of the internet, where audiences have more control than they had with previous technologies, the question of the nature of this new audience comes into question. One scholar who considers this question is Sonia Livingstone in “The Challenge of Changing Audiences.” Some of the central ideas coming out of this work include: the need for broadcasters to adapt to this new context to reach their audience, the ‘active audience’ theory has come to the forefront, audiences are engaging with content across platforms and creating their own, as well as the relationship between reception and consumption being historically contingent.<sup>111</sup>

Livingstone stresses that it is important to consider the history of the relationship between reception and consumption. The notion of the privatized audience is a twentieth century concept. With the advent of the television, audience members were disconnected from one another and their interpretations were internalized. Further, in the internet age, the audience’s necessary participation and sometimes content creation is now coming to the forefront.<sup>112</sup> Livingstone argues that the nature of “audiencing” is changing, yet audiences will remain central to media analysis. Further, Livingstone’s argument shows that the concept of the audience is not only changing now, but it is a fluctuating concept in which its meaning is understood based on its context. This idea reflects Auslander’s emphasis on the fluidity of “liveness” based on its social and historical context.

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Finally, the changing context of the internet has led to questions on what the form of an audience becomes when individuals hold more autonomy and power than ever before.

<sup>111</sup> Sonia Livingstone, "The Challenge of Changing Audiences: Or, What is the Audience Researcher to do in the Age of the Internet?" *European Journal of Communication* 19, 1 (2004): 79, 84, doi:10.1177/0267323104040695..

<sup>112</sup> Livingstone, "The Challenge of Changing Audiences," 85.

While Livingstone's work highlights the importance of contextualizing audience research, the mentioned gaps in the research are echoing effects research. Through considering the relationship between new media and areas of transgression online, the anxiety of the negative effect new media may hold over their audience members becomes apparent.<sup>113</sup> Livingstone's emphasis of an active audience cannot be ignored. In this new context, audience members are active users and producers in which their motivations and actions must be considered. A consideration of the audience in this way will allow for an understanding of these new active members in relation to their evolving context.

### **Uses and Gratifications Theory**

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) is a long-standing theory which can be seen as unique from other theories based on its evolution from a functionalist into a stronger more evolved model. McQuail, Ruggiero, Bracken and Lombard, along with Rui and Stefanone have all undertaken research involving UGT, and through their work, the increased sophistication of the philosophy becomes apparent.

McQuail's historical summary of UGT research stresses the growth of the theory due to an increased interest in the audience in a context where media effects research was being criticized and television was central. Also central to the history of UGT was Elihu Katz's influential research which emphasized the importance of audience members' actions.<sup>114</sup> One of the early assumptions of the theory, which will remain, includes the belief that audience members make conscious and rational choices based on their backgrounds, social roles, and

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<sup>113</sup> Livingstone, "The Challenge of Changing Audiences," 82.

<sup>114</sup> Denis McQuail, "With the Benefit of Hindsight: Reflections on Uses and Gratifications Research," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 1, 2 (1984): 177-8, doi:10.1080/15295038409360028.

values.<sup>115</sup> Another criticism surrounded how UGT research became divided between two camps.<sup>116</sup> The lack of centrality of researchers will continue to be a source of contention.

Three criticisms which McQuail raises and addresses includes the lack of a theoretical underpinning of the theory, the social and political implications, and finally, the model of man and the way of handling cultural phenomena.<sup>117</sup> These issues are addressed through the proposal to follow Katz's attempt to bridge the two camps of research and a consideration of the cultural and social context in which phenomena occur to allow for a consideration of the choices made and the meaningful encounters with cultural products.<sup>118</sup> By following the cultural or affective model proposed, salient experiences of "arousal" can now be included.<sup>119</sup> This inclusion allows for this type of experience to be understood as a motivation in it of itself. This experience would be placed above gratifications and provide insight into the desires of audience members to connect and extend the experience.<sup>120</sup>

McQuail's work represents one of the early attempts at bridging the discord within Uses and Gratifications Theory in order to improve the theory's validity. The inclusion of culture and society as focuses for research provides a step away from the criticized functionalist model. Further, while McQuail does not test the proposed bridge, the ability to resurrect ideas such as "taste" and "escape"<sup>121</sup> would allow for a deeper understanding into the choices and actions of audience members in relation to and within cultural phenomena.

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<sup>115</sup> McQuail, "With the Benefit of Hindsight," 179.

<sup>116</sup> McQuail, "With the Benefit of Hindsight," 180.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid*, 181.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*, 183-6.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*, 187.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*, 188-90.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*, 191.

Ruggiero's work comes sixteen years later and reflects the centralization of the research in the 1980s and 1990s: attempts to redefine methodologies, the rise of the "active audience," and how the theory eventually fell out of favour.<sup>122</sup> The reasons for its fall included: the continued individualistic approach, vague central concepts, and the assumption that media selection is initiated by individuals (audience members).<sup>123</sup>

Ruggiero argues that while the theory may have fallen out of favour, the internet may be changing that. Within the context of the internet, the user is active. Audience members are choosing the content they consume and the divide between sender and receiver is breaking down.<sup>124</sup> Within this new context, new communication attributes includes: interactivity (audience as active), demassification (control over medium), and asynchronicity (the ability to stagger messages in time).<sup>125</sup> A question posed by Ruggiero central to the possibility of using UGT within this new context, is whether or not old frameworks (from previous media) can be applied to online context. In answering this question, Ruggiero stresses the approaches taken within the research as the audience as active vs. passive or individual characteristics vs. structural factors.<sup>126</sup> He goes further to include the findings of recent scholars on UGT in relation to mass media or the internet to highlight motivations of entertainment, relaxation, escape, interpersonal communication, companionship, and surveillance.<sup>127</sup>

Ruggiero emphasizes that with the advent and increasing popularity of the internet, the range of actions for audience members is growing, users can communicate faster over greater

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<sup>122</sup> Thomas E Ruggiero, "Uses and Gratifications Theory In the 21st Century" *Mass Communication and Society* 3, 1 (2000): 4-8, doi:10.1207/s15327825mcs0301\_02.

<sup>123</sup> Ruggiero, "Uses and Gratifications Theory in the 21st Century," 11-13.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid*, 14-15.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid*, 15-17.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid*, 17-18.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid*, 18, 28.

distances, and this new context is challenging traditional media while it is becoming a part of daily life.<sup>128</sup> He answers the question of the relationship between old and new research by arguing that the old frameworks can be used if new uses and gratifications which are internet specific are included.<sup>129</sup> This argument coincides with Ruggiero's assessment of UGT's evolving theoretical base as something positive. The benefit of the theory's malleability would be its ability to evolve as our understandings of audience members deepens and evolves based on their relation to new communication technology. Therefore, Ruggiero's work into UGT reveals the ability of this theory to adapt to any evolutions in communication technology and address changes in cultural and social practices. Overall, Ruggiero's article is central to adapting UGT to the contemporary context, yet based on its published date there have been numerous advancements in the technology that would add to this field of research.

Two scholars who pick up on UGT research would be Bracken and Lombard, who examine the degree to which different media are able to fulfill different human needs.<sup>130</sup> The article works towards the adaption of the Katz, Gurevitch and Haas Study interview questions into a different culture.<sup>131</sup> Bracken and Lombard argue that the study's analysis of multiple needs allows for the comparison of multiple needs in different media.<sup>132</sup> Based on the surveys conducted by Bracken and Lombard, there were five trends found: media utility, media and distance of need referents, newspaper readership, media and self needs, and media specialization. These trends identify that while certain media may be used, they are not fulfilling the need based

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<sup>128</sup> Ibid, 28.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid, 29.

<sup>130</sup> Cheryl Bracken and Matthew Lombard, "Uses and Gratifications: A Classic Methodology Revisited," *New Jersey Journal of Communication* 9, 1 (2001): 103, doi:10.1080/15456870109367401.

<sup>131</sup> Bracken and Lombard, "Uses and Gratifications," 104, 109-110.

<sup>132</sup> Bracken and Lombard, "Uses and Gratifications," 104.

on increased cynicism among participants. Therefore, the greater the distance, the greater the role of the media in satisfying the need.

While Bracken and Lombard state that UGT has its flaws, they argue that it is one of the only ways to study how people use media.<sup>133</sup> They conclude that media are only moderately helpful in fulfilling basic human needs.<sup>134</sup> The application of the original study towards Bracken and Lombard's assessment of different media allows for the generalization of the needs. There is no consideration of context, which does not show the reasoning for the different levels of needs met by different media. Finally, there is no account for an evolution in needs or media from the time of Katz, Gurevitch and Haas.

An article which addresses the new needs or evolution of UGT in the internet context as it has evolved involves the work of Rui and Stephanone, which considers the fame seeking of ordinary individuals after watching reality television in relation to the use of social networking sites (SNS). Rui and Stephanone title this desire for fame seeking as "exhibitionism."<sup>135</sup> One gap argued by the authors suggests that there is a need to address the development of specific needs and desires in relation to new media,<sup>136</sup> this idea coinciding with Ruggerio's earlier work. Some of the mediating factors of addressing this need include an analysis of the social context in which the practice is found.<sup>137</sup>

Based on previous research, some of the motivations for SNS use include: relationship initiation and maintenance, social interactions, information seeking, entertainment, escapism, and

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<sup>133</sup> Ibid, 108-109.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, 109-110.

<sup>135</sup> Jian Raymond Rui and Michael A. Stefanone, "The Desire for Fame: An Extension of Uses and Gratifications Theory," *Communication Studies* 67, 4 (2016): 399, doi:10.1080/10510974.2016.1156006.

<sup>136</sup> Rui and Stefanone, "The Desire for Fame," 400.

<sup>137</sup> Rui and Stefanone, "The Desire for Fame," 403.

professional development.<sup>138</sup> In line with the argument Bracken and Lombard made based on the abilities of different media, Rui and Stephanone were able to facilitate or restrict the levels of satisfaction found.<sup>139</sup> In the context of the internet, Rui and Stephanone consider the forms and extent of SNS use among undergraduate students who participated in their study.<sup>140</sup> While the authors acknowledge limitations to their study, namely the sites used and the small sample employed,<sup>141</sup> there is no analysis into the presence of exhibitionist like behaviour found in earlier media. While the agency associated with new media allows for exhibitionism more easily based on the accessible and wide audience, this behaviour did not come out of nowhere.

Rui and Stephanone suggest that their study allows for a deeper understanding of the connection between traditional and internet-based media, and therefore the role of new media in society.<sup>142</sup> As new technology provides new opportunities for research, it is also useful to consider what happens to previous audience compositions in the new context. For example, what happens to live audience members with the rise of digital technologies? What is the role of smartphones, with access to social networking sites anywhere, on audience members? How do audience members of live performances interact with one another, the performer, and those beyond the venue in a context where all are reachable?

UGT is one of the only theories in which audience members' motivations can be analysed. While the theory is limited based on the assumption that audience members make conscious/rational choices according to background, social roles and values,<sup>143</sup> the theory was

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid, 403.

<sup>139</sup> Ibid, 404.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid, 405-406.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid, 413.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid, 414-415.

<sup>143</sup> Denis McQuail, "With the Benefit of Hindsight: Reflections on Uses and Gratifications Research," *Critical Studies in Mass Communication* 1, 2 (1984): 179, doi:10.1080/15295038409360028



revived with the advent of the internet and the interactive user.<sup>144</sup> With the advent of the internet, new communication attributes include interactivity, demassification, and asynchronicity. Further, new motives include: entertainment, relaxation, escape, interpersonal communication, companionship, and surveillance.<sup>145</sup> According to Wei's "Motivations for using the mobile phone for mass communications and entertainment," UGT can be applied to the use of mobile phones. Some of the motivations found by Wei include: passing time, sociability, reassurance, information seeking and organizing.<sup>146</sup> Further, in relation to the use of social networking sites, the motivation of exhibitionism, or fame seeking, has been found.<sup>147</sup>

An examination of mediatization, cellphone culture, and UGT, the following trends were found: the blurring of public and private space, the potential for media to be understood as both extending communicative possibilities and disrupting social norms, the interaction of media use and identity formation and maintenance, new media becoming a part of everyday life, and the crucial need to consider the context of use for communication technologies. Returning towards the question of the shape of live audiences in the contemporary context, an examination into live concert audiences will reveal similar topics to those identified by the previous literature. Further, it will consider the levels of importance of the mentioned topics in this context. Finally, context specific concerns will be revealed for the unique interaction of live audiences and personal communication technological use.

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<sup>144</sup> Thomas E Ruggiero, "Uses and Gratifications Theory in the 21st Century," *Mass Communication and Society* 3, 1 (2000): 14-15, doi:10.1207/s15327825mcs0301\_02

<sup>145</sup> Ruggiero, "Uses and Gratifications Theory in the 21st Century," 15-18.

<sup>146</sup> Ran Wei, "Motivations for using the mobile phone for mass communications and entertainment," *Telematics and Informatics* 25, 1 (2008): 41, doi:10.1016/j.tele.2006.03.001.

<sup>147</sup> Jian Raymond Rui and Michael A. Stefanone, "The Desire for Fame: An Extension of Uses and Gratifications Theory," *Communication Studies* 67, 4 (2016): 399, doi:10.1080/10510974.2016.1156006.

## Concert Audience

The literature surrounding the live music audience is relatively recent, beginning in the 1990s.<sup>148</sup> Some of the common patterns identified in summative literature include the audience as an active collection of individuals; a collection of individuals that come together for a collective experience; the influence of the internet on audience experience; and the correlation between live music experiences and identity formation.<sup>149</sup> Within the new context of the internet, audience members are able to engage in musical experiences at multiple levels, both live and online.<sup>150</sup> Their engagement is blurring the line between producers and consumers and reinforcing the arguments that audience members are active consumers in an experience in which individual assessments are made.<sup>151</sup> In the contemporary concert experience, identity formation is being linked with the sharing and consumption of music, and communication technological evolutions are shifting the established boundaries and norms of live concert experience.

A central text on the live concert experience includes Burland and Pitts's *Coughing and Clapping: Investigating Audience Experience*. Burland and Pitts provide a holistic collection of articles on concert experiences, live and online, of multiple genres, and the various facets to the musical experience. The range of topics covered range from marketing, to motivations for attendance, to the makeup of festival audience members, to the influence of communication technology on the experience. This text shows the interaction between audience members, their expectations, decisions made, as well as explore new elements found. Breaking the text up into

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<sup>148</sup> Lucy Bennett, "Music Audiences: An Introduction," *Participations: Journal of Audience and Reception Studies* 9, 2 (2012): 200.

<sup>149</sup> Roberta Pearson, "Fandom in the Digital Era," *Popular Communication* 8, 1 (2010): 93, doi:10.1080/15405700903502346; Bennett, "Music Audiences," 201-203; Mark Duffett, "Introduction: Directions in Music Fan Research: Undiscovered Territories and Hard Problems," *Popular Music And Society* 36, 3 (2013): 301-3, doi:10.1080/03007766.2013.798538.

<sup>150</sup> Bennett, "Music Audiences," 201.

<sup>151</sup> Bennett, "Music Audiences," 201-202; Duffett, "Introduction," 301.

the three sections of before, during, and after the concert experience ensured that the articles could be understood in the context considered by the writers.

Pitts's "Musical, Social and Moral Dilemmas: Investigating Audience Motivations to Attend Concerts" stresses how not only the decision to attend the concert is an active choice, but there are external as well as internal influences which drive the steps of the process.<sup>152</sup> Further, the motivations found work along a continuum and work in tandem with one another.<sup>153</sup> The value of audience members towards the experience are not only important for encouraging further attendance, but also for the importance of "being there."<sup>154</sup> Some of the questions raised in this article include: What does it mean for audience members to be satisfied? What is the influence of recording?

Bennett's "Texting and Tweeting at Live Music Concerts: Flow, Fandom and Connecting with other Audiences through Mobile Phone Technology" reveals the influence of texting and tweeting on listening practices of audience members and how the experience has changed based on new media.<sup>155</sup> The increased presence of cellphones within the concert venue has revealed the centrality of engagement, the disruptive presence of cellphones, as well as the extension of community or inclusion of audience members within the venue and beyond.<sup>156</sup> Bennett's work highlights communication technology's influence and the possibility for continued changes in audience members' practices as technology shifts.<sup>157</sup> The study of online communities suggests

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<sup>152</sup> Stephanie Pitts and Karen Burland, *Coughing and Clapping: Investigating Audience Experience*, 1st ed. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2014), 22.

<sup>153</sup> Pitts and Burland, *Coughing and Clapping*, 33.

<sup>154</sup> Pitts and Burland, *Coughing and Clapping*, 55.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid*, 89-90.

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid*, 92-98.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid*, 98-99.

that recording is only for the purpose of sharing, yet audience members are a collective of individuals and the varied reasons for recording needs to be understood.

Long's "Warts and All: Recording the Live Experience" considers the motivations for recording as individual responses for "making sense" of live performance.<sup>158</sup> A consideration of Facebook and other social media reveals a correlation between the live concert experience, identity formation, collective memory, and again, the importance of sharing online.<sup>159</sup> Finally, Burland and Pitts's "Postlude" ends with the continued importance of audience members in the contemporary age. As the text demonstrates and is seen within previous literature: audience members are active, they hold a sense of agency, it is through individual choices that live experiences may be repeated, and the concert experience provides a sense of community, belonging and identity.<sup>160</sup>

Overall, *Coughing and Clapping* provides an overview of the various facets to a concert experience, namely: the centrality of audience interaction, the influence of using communication technology, and the role of identity formation, maintenance and sharing through this platform. The holistic approach of the book saw the inclusion of numerous methodologies, the ones most common included surveys, interviews, and participant observation, through which the audience members' voices come forward. While the concert experience is considered, one area of the concert is not, the intermission. What do audience members do in this period? How do they interact with one another? Do they use their cellphones, and if so, what are the forms? Therefore, while the intermission is not considered, this text stresses the importance of audience voices and the influence of communication technology.

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<sup>158</sup> Ibid, 147-150.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, 147-150, 158.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, 177-178.

Other works which reflect the concert experience can be found with Bailey, Bennett, Colburn, Baker, Knox and Brown. In these works, central topics include the interplay of technology and identity, the fluctuating boundaries of an audience, and the motivations of audience members to attend and record concert material. Bailey's *Media Audiences and Identity: Self-Construction in the Fan Experience* investigates cases of fandom to reveal how through interacting with different modes of media that audience members construct or affirm their self-identity.<sup>161</sup> A central argument coming out of social hermeneutic theory and the cases provided by Bailey stresses the degree of autonomy of audience members, and even more so the importance and existence of self-reflexivity through their fandom and their utilization of electronic media to further experience their fandom.<sup>162</sup> Further, this work provides an important introduction into the role of identity and autonomy on the part of audience members when engaging in a form of fandom. This text offers a window into the fandom of music audiences and the growing importance of electronic media for that fandom.

In terms of the motivations of audience members, Brown and Knox's work reveals the motivations for audience members to participate in live concert experience despite rising ticket prices.<sup>163</sup> Through open-ended questionnaires, Brown and Knox find that some of the unique motivations include participating in a one-time experience, engaging with the visual spectacle that concerts hold, and demonstrating in fan worship.<sup>164</sup> According to Brown and Knox, the

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<sup>161</sup> Steve Bailey, *Media Audiences and Identity: Self-Construction in the Fan Experience* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 202, 213.

<sup>162</sup> Bailey, *Media Audiences and Identity*, 28, 212.

<sup>163</sup> Steven Caldwell Brown and Don Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts? The Motivations behind Live Music Attendance," *Musicae Scientiae* (2016, 102986491665071): 1, doi:10.1177/1029864916650719.

<sup>164</sup> Brown and Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts?" 10.

decision for audience members to attend concerts despite rising costs suggests that the perceived benefits of the live performance outweigh any potential for risk.<sup>165</sup>

In terms of the importance of communication technology to the concert experience, the work of Lucy Bennett, Andrea Baker, and Steven Colburn are considered. Baker's article utilizes surveys, interviews, and participant observation in order to reveal the fluidity of online/offline boundaries through which fans' material goods are exchanged.<sup>166</sup> Analysing a collection of Rolling Stones fans online reveal the processes of exchanging materials, such as recordings, concert tickets, apparel and accessories, and artwork and posters.<sup>167</sup> Baker's work reveals the importance of material culture, fan knowledge, the social norms of fan culture,<sup>168</sup> and demonstrates the important role that communication plays in the exchange of materials and this new community, online, that would not have otherwise formed.

In terms of cellphones recording or capturing material during live performances, the work of Colburn and Bennett comes forward. Colburn's article analyses the motivations for recording concerts and then uploading them to YouTube. Colburn finds that the motivations of audience members link with the desire for accumulating cultural capital based on *filmmers'* concerns for quality and recognition.<sup>169</sup> Some of the motivations Colburn finds include the desire for access to scarce material, share the experience with those not there, the opportunity to relive the experience, as well as proof they were there.<sup>170</sup> Overall, Colburn's study into the motivations and

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<sup>165</sup> Brown and Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts?" 14.

<sup>166</sup> Andrea Baker, "THE EXCHANGE OF MATERIAL CULTURE AMONG ROCK FANS IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES," *Information, Communication & Society* 15, 4 (2012): 520-522, doi:10.1080/1369118x.2012.666258.

<sup>167</sup> Baker, "THE EXCHANGE OF MATERIAL CULTURE AMONG ROCK FANS IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES," 524-528.

<sup>168</sup> Baker, "THE EXCHANGE OF MATERIAL CULTURE AMONG ROCK FANS IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES," 521, 531-533.

<sup>169</sup> Steven Colburn, "Filming Concerts for YouTube: Seeking Recognition in the Pursuit of Cultural Capital," *Popular Music and Society* 38, 1 (2014): 62-3, doi:10.1080/03007766.2014.974373.

<sup>170</sup> Colburn, "Filming Concerts for YouTube," 64-66.

actions of *filmmers* reveals a progression of fandom in which fans have opportunities for further involvement than ever before.

Bennett's article investigates how communication technology is reshaping the boundaries of live music concerts through the sharing of information with fans online.<sup>171</sup> Through analysing the interactions of fans online, Bennett found the following patterns connecting the experiences of those online with those who experience live shows: collective anticipation, the exchange of fan knowledge, and judgements made on text.<sup>172</sup> The demonstration of what had been exclusive to the live experience, now being seen beyond the venue, stresses how the boundaries of live music experience are changing through the capabilities of communication media.

An investigation into the existing scholarly work reveals the evolution in understanding audiences as active individuals, rather than a passive collective. Technology is not the sole driver for change; communicative technology is used by individuals for their own personal motivations and uses. While the trend has shifted towards use, some research continues to write from the position that the technology is the driver of change. The use of communications technology is important not only for extending communications abilities, but its use for identity formation, maintenance, as well as sharing personal experiences in an increasingly frequent format. Further, the use of communications technology is shifting established cultural norms and practices.

All practices or phenomena should be understood as taking place within a specific socio-cultural context, in which the lines between public and private space are blurred. Audience members, through communications technology, are able to create their own content and then share it with others. In the live concert context, audience members are understood in one of two

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<sup>171</sup> Lucy Bennett, "Patterns of Listening through Social Media: Online Fan Engagement with the Live Music Experience," *Social Semiotics* 22, 5 (2012): 545, doi:10.1080/10350330.2012.731897.

<sup>172</sup> Bennett, "Patterns of Listening Through Social Media," 550.

ways: as individuals or as a collective. Therefore, in the contemporary era with the use of personal communications technology, how are audiences to be understood? While a large amount of research is interested in audiences in the online context, the question remains of the form, extent, practices, and behaviours of live audience members in an increasingly digitized context. Additionally, while cellphone culture and social media are discussed, the forms are continuing to change, and therefore the uses are as well. The increased presence of the cellphone in the concert context needs to be understood for its influence on interpersonal interaction between audience members and with the performing artist. Individual understandings of the concert venue and the experience by audience members will highlight their activity and how the concert space is now being understood.

Based on the work of Hepp et al., the following work will follow a media-centred approach, meaning that while the media play a role in change, they are not the sole drivers of change. Further, following Deacon and Stanyer's work, mediatization will be treated as a subset to larger phenomena such as globalization and individualization. While considering the anxiety or concern towards cellphone use during live performances, the evolving notion of authenticity will be considered. The anxiety expressed will be discussed during the content analysis phase of the research, as it is through previous media, in this case newspapers, that the concern is spread. Schulz description of the sensation of "loss" will be also reflected in the interview stage of the findings. The research related to cellphone culture will be used to consider how experiences of cellphones have changed since the texts were written. Following an understanding that audience members are active individuals who hold their own sense of agency, the research will consider how and why audience members are choosing to produce their own content. Audience members' uses and gratifications sought when attending concerts, and more specifically when they choose



to capture material during performances, will be assessed. The motivations found will be considered in relation to previous research on memory, specifically the contents' immaterial value, and how do these motivations compare to previous media like the internet, and the motivations found by Bennett, Colburn, along with Brown and Knox. Furthermore, the research to be conducted will show how mediatization of the concert space is nothing new, and this latest stage of mediatization is changing how individuals choose to interact with one another and the performance experienced.

### CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGIES

The mediatized concert space is nothing new, yet the inclusion of the cellphone in this space has seen the further mediatization of the space. The cellphone is seen as a source of disconnect for audience members,<sup>173</sup> yet the personal gratifications outweigh the limitations that cellphone use poses. An assessment of the methodologies utilized in the conducted research will highlight the reasoning and choices made in the organization of the research at its various stages. The content analysis allowed for an investigation into common patterns of thought about cellphones in the concert venue, and how its inclusion is posing a messy and unaccepted transition by all parties involved. The participant observation revealed patterns in the times of cellular use as well as comparing the uses to those found in the content analysis. Finally, the interview stage was essential to the research in demonstrating the centrality of audience members as a collection of individuals meeting personal gratifications and needs. The choice of a mixed methods approach revealed the various facets and arguments surrounding cellphone use in concerts as well as the unsteady balance between negative and positive approaches towards the cellphone in this space. The concert space is only one example of the increasing presence of cellphones in our daily lives, and how we choose to handle the use of this technology will have ramifications for audience members of live performance moving forward, as well as methods for in-person interpersonal communication where cellphones are not seen as a threat or source of disconnect.

Utilizing mixed methods, which can be understood as “an approach to inquiry involving both quantitative and qualitative data...,”<sup>174</sup> allowed for the inclusion of numerical data, while

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<sup>173</sup> “Noah Wilson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 5, Transcript.; “Ryder Smith,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 1, Transcript.

<sup>174</sup> Cresswell, “Chapter 1,” 4.

holding an approach to understand “the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social problem.”<sup>175</sup> The choice was made to follow an explanatory sequential approach to the research. In this tactic, the quantitative aspect, the content analysis, was undertaken first, and then the qualitative research, participant observation and interviews, were used to support or deepen the data collected in the previous methodology.<sup>176</sup> The triangulation of content analysis and interviews permitted the analysis of common understandings of the perceived problem of phone use in the concert venue, before delving into more detailed research. The content analysis provided a foundation for the qualitative data. Finally, the combination of qualitative and quantitative aspects to the research allows for the limitations of each perspective to be addressed through the data amassed by the other approach.<sup>177</sup>

The primary methodology implemented was a qualitative content analysis. The choice to follow a qualitative content analysis is beneficial in that it has potential for quantitative data and is able to “create new awareness and sensitivity in the reader” on the unknown information or perspectives held on the topic.<sup>178</sup> The ethnographic content analysis allows for “more depth of explanation as to why and how words have been used in particularly cultural contexts.”<sup>179</sup>

Stemler notes the limitation of following a quantitative content analysis, as number counting

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<sup>175</sup> Cresswell, “Chapter 1,” 4.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, 14-16.

<sup>177</sup> Ibid, 19; Decoster 236; Andrea Baker, “THE EXCHANGE OF MATERIAL CULTURE AMONG ROCK FANS IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES,” *Information, Communication & Society* 15, 4 (2012): 522, doi:10.1080/1369118x.2012.666258; Ilpo Kalevi Koskinen, *Mobile Multimedia in Action*, 1st ed. (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 2007), 181; Stephanie Pitts and Karen Burland, *Coughing and Clapping: Investigating Audience Experience*, 1st ed. (Burlington: Ashgate Publishing Group, 2014), 178; Andy Bennett and Ian Rogers, “Popular Music and Materiality: Memorabilia and Memory Traces,” *Popular Music and Society* 39, 1 (2016): 40, doi:10.1080/03007766.2015.1061339; Steven Caldwell Brown and Don Knox, “Why Go To Pop Concerts? The Motivations behind Live Music Attendance,” *Musicae Scientiae* (2016, 102986491665071): 13, doi:10.1177/1029864916650719.

<sup>178</sup> James W Drisko and Tina Maschi, “Qualitative Content Analysis,” *Content Analysis* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 98.

<sup>179</sup> Carol Grbich, *Qualitative Data Analysis* (London: SAGE Publications, 2013), 188.

alone cannot guarantee that the greatest concerns are the highest mentioned categories.<sup>180</sup> As audience members' opinions on cellphone usage in concerts is a relatively untouched topic, the coding followed an emergent or inductive model, in which the codes were formulated based on a preliminary reading of the articles, and open coding allowed for the creation of new categories.<sup>181</sup>

Stemler's "An Overview of Content Analysis" cites Krippendorff's work in suggesting the following six questions are necessary to ask: Which data are analysed? How are they defined? What is the population from which they are drawn? What is the context relative to which the data are analysed? What are the boundaries of the analysis? What is the target of the inferences?<sup>182</sup> With this in mind, the parameters for the content analysis became: Canadian articles from newspapers and online sources, such as online articles from radio stations, mentioning cellphones in relation to concerts, between the years of 2002 and 2016. No articles of Canadian origin were found before 2002 based on the parameters of the research conducted. The first article found discussed cellphone use in concerts in 2002. While there was no reason found for the initial articles found in 2002, the spike in articles found in 2012 coincides with cellphone ownership in the United States reaching over 50 percent.<sup>183</sup> While the articles analysed were of Canadian origin, the content on the articles reflected performances within Canada and the United States. The material was gathered from the database ProQuest and the search engine Google, searching the words: concert, cellphones, relating to rock, alternative, and pop genres.

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<sup>180</sup> Steve Stemler, "An Overview of Content Analysis," *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation* 7, 17 (2001).

<sup>181</sup> Stemler, "An Overview of Content Analysis."; Satu Elo and Helvi Kyngäs, "The Qualitative Content Analysis Process," *JAN Research Methodology* 62, 1 (2007): 107-10, doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2007.04569.x.

<sup>182</sup> Stemler, "An Overview of Content Analysis."

<sup>183</sup> Jean M. Twenge, "Have Smartphones Destroyed a Generation?" *The Atlantic*, September 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2017/09/has-the-smartphone-destroyed-a-generation/534198/>.

The articles gathered, 51 in number, were analysed not only for keywords but also for patterns or themes related to the text.<sup>184</sup> Each paragraph of the articles analysed were coded. This decision was made as it better reflected the meaning by the artist, rather than individual sentences on their own. While the paragraph parameters were utilised, certain paragraphs were individual sentences.

Organization involved the open coding and creation of categories.<sup>185</sup> The articles were then run through wordcounter.com for the frequency of words included in the material (titles included). The top 20 and 50 words were considered for quantitative analysis. Additional analysis considered the use of synonyms as well as the frequency of articles published by year. This analysis allowed for a consideration of the evolution of the phenomenon and the criticism towards the practice.

The thematic content analysis was conducted on the content and titles of the articles. This stage of the content analysis saw the ongoing negotiation of the patterns found to ensure there was no overlap as well as that relevant data was included.<sup>186</sup> Further, this step was conducted more than once to ensure the validity of the categories for their reflection of the analysed material as well as the assurance that the categories were mutually exclusive. Once the coding was complete, the material not included was reviewed one more time for consideration into the categories, or the possibility of modifying the categories to better reflect the data considered. The categories found were also broken down based on the subthemes within each category to better reflect the nature of the discussion as well as what aspects looked quantifiably important. The

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<sup>184</sup> Hsiu-Fang Hsieh and Sarah E. Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," *Qualitative Health Research* 15,9 (2005): 1285, doi:10.1177/1049732305276687.

<sup>185</sup> Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, "Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis," 402.

<sup>186</sup> Drisko and Maschi, "Qualitative Content Analysis," 103.

categories were considered for their frequency within the material as well they were considered in relation to one another. For example, mentions of cellphones in positive ways were considered in relation to negative mentions of phone use in concerts. Overall, the content analysis provided the chance to analyse common complaints and praises of phone use, common ideas on the concert experience, and artists' opinions or actions related to phone use or the concert performance. The use of a thematic content analysis allowed for an understanding in the trends of thought surrounding cellphone use in concerts. The presence of the cellphone as a source of connection and disconnect, two contrasting ideas, reveals multiple trends in understandings of the influence of phones and the relationship between an artist and its audience. The trends found also indicated dominant versus more subversive trends. Finally, the content analysis raised further questions regarding audience members' opinions on the topic and to what extent are cellphones being used in concerts, and how are cellphones being treated both by artists and audience members during performances where artists have not taken noticeable public opinion one way or the other.

Limitations of the qualitative content analysis include the following: the numbers can be seen as superficial, the interpretation must coincide with the numbers,<sup>187</sup> potential categories could have not been included,<sup>188</sup> and an important theme could have been mentioned only once or not at all.<sup>189</sup> In order to address these limitations, the utilization of mixed methods, namely participant observation and interviews, provided the opportunity to consider the significance of the patterns found as well as possible important topics which were not discussed in the texts analysed for the content analysis. Participant observation allowed for an investigation into the

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<sup>187</sup> Grbich, *Qualitative Data Analysis*, 188.

<sup>188</sup> Hsieh and Shannon, "Three Approaches to Qualitative Content Analysis," 1279.

<sup>189</sup> Drisko and Maschi, "Qualitative Content Analysis," 102.

interaction of participants as well as what cultural members deem important and taboos within the context.<sup>190</sup> To understand cellphone use during concerts, this experience was necessary to the research. Concerns central to this stage of the research included: the face-to-face interaction of audience members, to see how they responded to cellphone use, how they co-opted their phone use, and if comments were made with reference to phones. Furthermore, the ‘disconnect’ described in the content analysis stage of the research, begged the question of whether this disconnect was observable. Are audience members not interacting with one another, have cellphones limited interpersonal interaction, or are cellphones posing no threat to interpersonal interaction? In order to understand the perspective of artists, like Adele, who have made it public that cellphones are not welcome or at least pose a distraction, the behaviour of audience members needs to be understood. Finally, if cellphone use is becoming so widespread in concerts, when is it happening? Is it throughout a performance, during breaks, or are there trends in the use of phones at specific times during performances? Are there certain unspoken understandings among audience members when to or not to use their cellphones?

Participant observation is “a process in which the observer’s presence in a social situation is maintained for the purpose of scientific investigation. The observer is in a face-to-face relationship with the observed, and, by participating with them in their natural life setting, he gathers data...”<sup>191</sup>

Participant observation was a suitable methodology for the research conducted as this is a phenomenon of which little is written, it is observable in everyday life, as well as providing an

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<sup>190</sup> Barbara B. Kawulich, "Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method," *Forum: Qualitative Social Research* 6, 2 (2005), <http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/466/996>.

<sup>191</sup> Morris S. Schwartz and Charlotte Green Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," *American Journal of Sociology* 60, 4 (1955): 344.

opportunity for studying in a non or minimally manipulated environment.<sup>192</sup> Additionally, it provided the opportunity to consider the forms of interaction between audience members as well as with the performing artist, in regard to the use of cellphones during performances. As the research is surrounding the use of cellphones in relation to audience studies, Koskinen suggests that observation is one of the useful methods to qualitatively analyse research of this nature.<sup>193</sup> The micro-sample of five concerts allowed for an understanding of the forms of interaction between audience members as well as with artists. Further, as Hatch mentions when conducting a thematic analysis when the data becomes repetitive, the research can stop, yet to ensure that the trends found continued, two additional concerts were included in the study.<sup>194</sup>

Within this methodology, the format of data gathering is central. The choice to follow a covert method was decided based on the fact that an overt method would have taken months to establish comfortability for those analysed.<sup>195</sup> As the concert experience is only a matter of a few hours and there is no way to inform all of the participants of the research, and further, there would be no way to ensure that their responses would not be mediated based on the knowledge of the research conducted. Therefore, the covert method offered the most information possible, as it would avoid disrupting normal behaviour.<sup>196</sup> While the covert method was employed, the position taken involved a mix of active and passive elements. For example, while there were no questions asked of audience members during the performance, interacting with the performance

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<sup>192</sup> Danny L. Jorgensen, "The Methodology of Participant Observation," *Participant Observation*, 1st ed. (Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1989), 2-5.

<sup>193</sup> Koskinen, *Mobile Multimedia in Action*, 181.

<sup>194</sup> J. Amos Hatch, *Doing Qualitative Research in Education Settings*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 90.

<sup>195</sup> Schwartz and Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," 346.

<sup>196</sup> Kawulich, "Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method."



and audience through dancing, cheering, and singing was undertaken. This interaction was conducted in relation to others engaging in these practices.<sup>197</sup>

Central to the methodology of participant observation includes self-analysis in which the researcher must consider their personal background of experience as a base of knowledge, personal biases, as well as the context of the research.<sup>198</sup> In the case of the research conducted, concert going has been a common practice before the research began; therefore, understandings of common practices were established. Language and the symbolic system were already shared between participants and the researcher, based on a similar background and shared language. The consideration of biases was reflected upon during the analysis of the data collected. In order to least disrupt the participants of the concerts attended, the concerts attended were venues with which I was familiar, entry was gained through the purchasing of tickets, my dress and action were unobtrusive, and I spoke with participants as if I was a participant in the concert as well.

As memory is unreliable, field notes were taken during the performance. The notes taken were concentrated during the breaks in the performance, namely before the concert, during the intermissions, and immediately after the show. Notetaking in this way allowed for participation in the concert experience as well as gathering material for later analysis. The notes included: the date, time, place/positioning, physical make up, roles, personal feelings, actions seen among audience members, and questions to be answered.<sup>199</sup> Field notes considered the actions of audience members, their arrangement within the venue, as well as any noticed patterns.<sup>200</sup> The

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<sup>197</sup> Schwartz and Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," 348-9.

<sup>198</sup> Arthur J. Vidich, "Participant Observation and the Collection and Interpretation of Data," *American Journal of Sociology* 60, 4 (1955): 355, doi:10.1086/221567.354.; Schwartz and Schwartz, "Problems in Participant Observation," 353.

<sup>199</sup> Kawulich, "Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method."

<sup>200</sup> Danny L. Jorgensen, "Notes, Records, Files," *Participant Observation*, 1st ed. (Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1989), 2-3.

notes taken were arranged according to the sections of the concert: pre-concert, first opener, (second and third, if there were additional opening bands), intermission, headliner, and encore. The iPhone “Notes” application was used as phone usage within the venue was less noticeable than pen and paper would have been, as well digital files allow for modification and easy transfer when it comes to further analysis.<sup>201</sup>

Questions kept in mind at this stage included those from Evans’s work on Participant Observation:

What is happening here? Who is taking part? What counts as competence? Who are the experts? Who is excluded from the action and why? How is the boundary on participation maintained? Who are the notices? What are the spatio-temporal arrangements/limits of the interaction? How are social relations organized and structured through this practice? What bodily skills are required to participate and what materials/tools? Where is the tension/the drama/ the poetry/ the conflict? What is the aesthetic/ the feel/ the flow of action? How can I take part?<sup>202</sup>

Further questions that were considered for the specific research conducted included:

What are the forms of interaction between audience members? What are audience members’ reactions towards cellphone usage during performances? How is content recorded (picture or video), and for what length of time? What content is desirable for recording? When are phones used and how? Who is encouraging or discouraging their use?

It was these questions that not only helped structure the material gathered, but also the analysis of the event and individuals’ interactions with one another. The following day, the initial notes were expanded into full sentences and anything not included from the previous night was added. After the expansion of the material and reflecting on the limitation or biases experienced as a researcher, the material was reviewed for patterns found in the expanded field notes taken. A read through of the material allowed for a consideration of patterns between different concerts,

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<sup>201</sup> Danny L. Jorgensen, “Notes, Records, Files,” 6.

<sup>202</sup> Gillian Evans, "Practising Participant Observation: An Anthropologist's Account," *Journal of Organizational Ethnography* 1, 1 (2012): 98-9, doi:10.1108/20466741211220697.

before jumping to conclusions by writing notes right away. Once the read through was complete, notes were made on the document of hunches, noted patterns, or questions to consider for the interview stage.<sup>203</sup> A light thematic analysis into the field notes revealed patterns in phone usage throughout a performance, the stance of the researcher, the relation towards literature, the interaction of the audience, and the interaction of the performer with the audience.<sup>204</sup>

The issue of bias in the conducted field notes leaves the potential that certain areas were viewed as more significant than what the participants viewed as important. In order to address this bias and allow for a greater understanding into the motivations of audience members towards cellphone usage or the concert experience, a series of interviews was conducted. Baker's research into fandom and materiality also employed the combination of participant observation and interviews.<sup>205</sup> In order to ensure that ethical protocols would be followed, the research to be conducted was sent for approval to the ethics board. With the necessary revisions made, the research was approved for the conducting of interviews.

The recruiting process followed a snowball method. This method for recruiting was chosen due to similar research into the experiences of individuals relating to popular music.<sup>206</sup> Further, the snowball method allowed for the interviews to begin with those known to participate in concerts as an audience member, and those recommended based on first round of interviews were more likely to respond based on their friend/family member already having participated. Interviewees recruited were those between the ages of 18 to 30 to reflect the millennial perspective on the issue at hand. While the genre of music was considered for the first round of

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<sup>203</sup> Jorgensen, "Notes, Records, Files," 6.; Danny L. Jorgensen, "Leaving the field and communication results," *Participant Observation*, 1st ed. (Newbury Park: SAGE Publications, Inc., 1989), 4.

<sup>204</sup> Jorgensen, "Notes, Records, Files," 9.

<sup>205</sup> Baker, "The Exchange of Material Culture Among Rock Fans in Online Communities," 519.

<sup>206</sup> Andy Bennett and Ian Rogers, "Popular Music and Materiality: Memorabilia and Memory Traces," *Popular Music and Society* 39, 1 (2016): 33-4, doi:10.1080/03007766.2015.1061339.

interviews, beyond such there was less due to the nature of audience members attending different genres of music.

Before each interview was conducted, the participants were given an “informed consent form” with information on the research and their participation to the research, in order to gain their written consent. The semi-structured interviews allowed participants to expand on their answers or to leave room to gain insight into what they deemed important to the concert experience. Further, the semi-structured organization of the interviews coincided with qualitative methodology in which one must remain flexible and reflective in the interview process.<sup>207</sup> Additionally, the snowball methodology allowed for a wider range in the employment status of participants than there would have been if the research were limited to students.<sup>208</sup>

The questions asked were broken into the following sections: demographic, introduction to concert experience, personal experience, personal phone use, other people’s use, and the recommendation for a future participant. In order to allow for a deeper conversation than having participants simply answer the questions asked, probes were used in order for audience members to expand on their answers. For example, if an audience member said what elements of a concert they felt were authentic, I responded with either silence, why, can you expand on that? The use of echoing was very useful in having participants expand on their answers to better understand their motivations surrounding the concert experience and phone usage. In the end, there were 30 interviews. The reason for not going beyond this point comes from the work of Lincoln and

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<sup>207</sup> Jamie DeCoster and Bronwen Lichtenstein, "Integrating Quantitative and Qualitative Methods in Communication Research," *Communication Methods and Measures* 1, 4 (2007): 233, doi:10.1080/19312450701636599.

<sup>208</sup> Shari P. Walsh, Katherine M. White, and Ross McD. Young, "The Phone Connection: A Qualitative Exploration of How Belongingness and Social Identification Relate to Mobile Phone Use Amongst Australian Youth," *Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology* 19, 3 (2009): 229, doi:10.1002/casp.983.

Guba as well as Spradley found within Hatch's *Doing Qualitative Research in Education Settings*. According to Lincoln and Guba, when the results of the research become redundant, the researcher should do one more interview to be sure the sample is sufficient.

On the other hand, Spradley suggested that repetition allows for a deeper investigation into the complexity of social situations. In order to bridge the two perspectives, once repetition was seen an additional ten interviews were conducted.<sup>209</sup> This process allowed for an investigation into the opinions of a few local artists on the use of phones and a way to consider the validity of repetition seen in the earlier interviews.

The interviews conducted were transcribed and saved in locked files. The names were removed from edited versions, to ensure that participants' identities remained anonymous. For participants that wanted their names used in the research, this was noted. The thematic analysis of the interviews followed an inductive model, which is based off the data and not trying to fit pre-existing codes. Through an inductive format, underlying ideas and assumptions were considered in the data.<sup>210</sup> The choice for an inductive thematic analysis was well-formatted for this research as there are little to no previous studies dealing with the phenomenon; therefore, the codes coming from the data reflect the phenomenon.<sup>211</sup>

Once the interviews were transcribed, there was a single read-through of the material without notes taken. After this reading, a series of read-throughs included noting down initial ideas was done.<sup>212</sup> The process of re-reading the interviews allowed for a familiarization with the

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<sup>209</sup> J. Amos Hatch, *Doing Qualitative Research in Education Settings*, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 90.

<sup>210</sup> Virginia Braun and Victoria Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," *Qualitative Research in Psychology* 3, 2 (2006): 83-4, doi:10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

<sup>211</sup> Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, "Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis," 401.

<sup>212</sup> Vaismoradi, Turunen, and Bondas, "Content Analysis and Thematic Analysis," 402.

opinions of the audience members and ideas on how to successfully code to ensure that the data was fully considered and that as many codes and categories as possible were analysed.<sup>213</sup> The coding process involved breaking down each answer to the main points or ideas given. These broken-down answers were considered in relation to the answers given by other participants. Follow coding; the data was grouped into potential themes.<sup>214</sup> The reviewing of the categories saw the shifting of codes and the removal of certain themes which did not qualify as themes.<sup>215</sup> The understanding of categories used was as follows: “a theme captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within the data set.”<sup>216</sup> Beyond the larger themes, subthemes were included in order to show the correlation between the different patterns within the data.<sup>217</sup> The final step before reporting the results included the defining and naming of themes in order to capture what each theme is about.<sup>218</sup> The demographic data was compared not only for thematic patterns, but these answers also provide a quantitative perspective on the initial questions given. The patterns found were compared with the themes found in the coded material beyond the demographic answers given. Further, any interesting outliers were noted for comparison not only to the thematic analysis, but for comparison to the previous methodologies conducted as well.

The use of interviews at this stage was based on a reading of related literature, which emphasized the benefits or validity to this method for research relating to audiences or qualitative research in general. For example, Baker’s investigation into Rolling Stones fans’ materiality in digital communities employed open-ended interviews which provided rich data

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<sup>213</sup> Braun and Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," 88-9.

<sup>214</sup> Braun and Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," 89.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid, 91.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid, 82.

<sup>217</sup> Jodi Aronson, "A Pragmatic View of Thematic Analysis," *The Qualitative Report* 2, 1 (1995): 1-3.

<sup>218</sup> Braun and Clarke, "Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology," 92.

into the motivations and actions of these online community members. Further, Baker's work also employed a mixed methods approach in order to reflect the facets of the research conducted.<sup>219</sup> Other scholars promoting interviews as typical qualitative research or its applicability towards research related to multimedia include Denney and Tewksbury as well as Koskinen.<sup>220</sup>

The employment of a mixed method approach to the research conducted allowed for an examination into common rhetoric or ideas surrounding the idea of cellphone use at concerts, the actual actions of audience members within the venue confines, as well as the chance to explore audience members' opinions on the place of cellphones in the concert experience. The use of mixed methods helped to minimize the limitations that each individual method held. Further, they allowed for a tri-leveled analysis into what seemed like a simple social situation as well as the context in which it is found. The research from the methods utilized was beneficial in revealing several categories and practices within the concert venue as well as the fluctuating position of the cellphone in the context.

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<sup>219</sup> Baker, "THE EXCHANGE OF MATERIAL CULTURE AMONG ROCK FANS IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES," 519-20.

<sup>220</sup> Koskinen, *Mobile Multimedia in Action*, 181.; Andrew S. Denney and Richard Tewksbury, "How to Write a Literature Review," *Journal of Criminal Justice Education* 24, 2 (2013): 222, doi:10.1080/10511253.2012.730617.

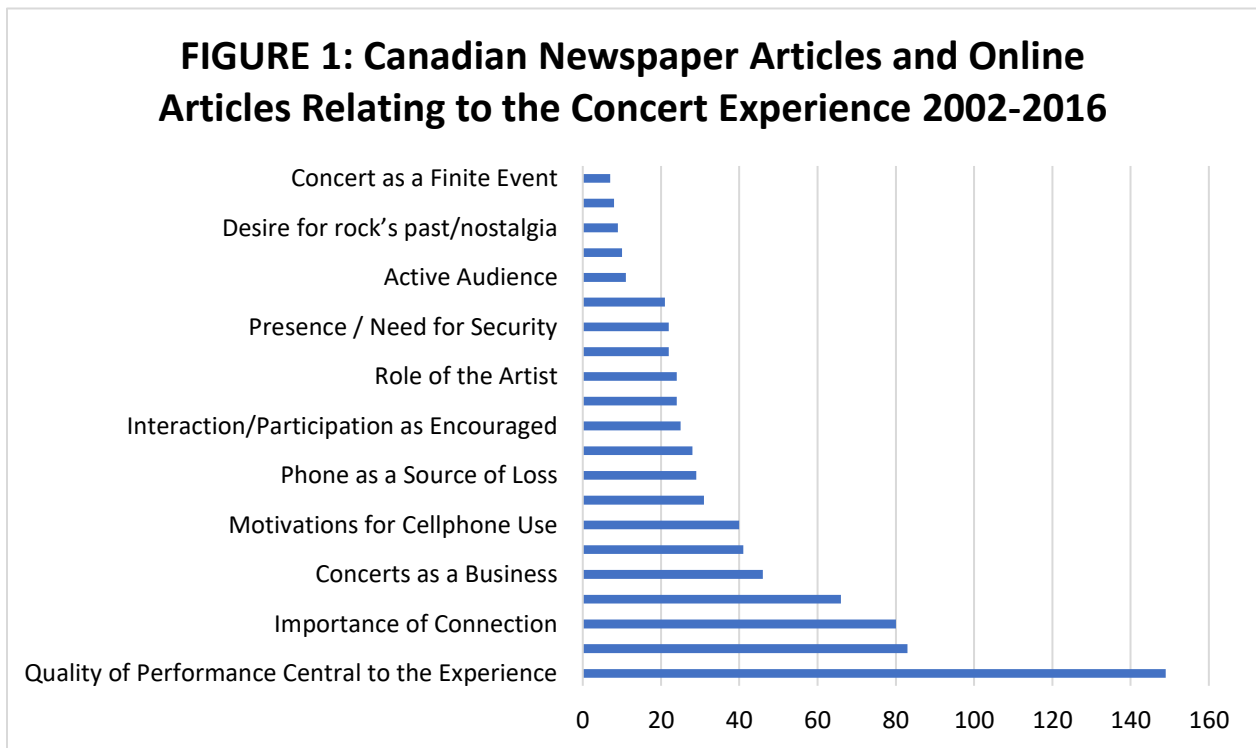
## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

The investigation into the use of cellphones during concert performances stresses the activity of audience members as individuals, who make decisions on how to use their own devices or not, based on their personal desires, their desired concert experience, as well as a concern for other audience members within the venue and beyond. The ‘disconnect’ caused by cellphone use is occurring within concert venues and influencing interpersonal communication, as demonstrated by the frustration towards phone use. On the other hand, the technology is not purely negative. Cellphones are allowing audience members to connect with audiences beyond the venue, share the experience with friends, and gain mementos from the concert experience. The concert space has been mediatized by the cellphone. In order to reveal the ways in which the space has been mediatized, the common complaints, benefits of the technology in this space, and how the use of cellphones is guided by personal choice, Uses and Gratifications Theory was applied to the data collected from the interview stage of the research. Active audience members are choosing to use their cellphones or not, and to what degree, in order to satisfy personal gratifications. Once the audience members have been considered for their activity, there can be an investigation into the revealed categories according to the content analysis, participant observation, and interviews conducted. The themes to be discussed include: mediatization, memory, interaction/connection, economics, and quality. This section includes numerous quotations coming from audience members in order for those interviewed to speak for themselves on the topics discussed. Finally, within each of the topics, opinions on cellphone usage during performances are being considered for both their benefits as well as hindrance to the desired experience. An examination into opinions on the use of cellphones during performances stresses the degree of acceptance as well as varied resistance to the use of these devices within the concert context. Hence, in the assessment of the concert experience, the use of



cellphones is common place, yet their use causes disruption to individuals’ connection with those in the venue. Based on this fact, a limited approach to cellphone usage would not only aid in audiences’ experiences but further the benefits of cellphone usage within the context.

Following the content analysis conducted, the following patterns were found in the articles analysed and reveal the centrality of connection to the concert experience. The patterns found also show the increasing influence of cellphone use on understandings and sentiment towards concert experiences:



The chart depicted above reveals the common patterns found in the content analysis conducted. The highest category “Quality of Performance Central to the Experience,” describes instances in the articles in which the performances described were evaluated based on the quality of the artist’s performance. The extremely high frequency of this category can be the result of three possibilities: quality of performance is paramount to live experience, the articles analysed

were dominantly concert reviews in which concerts are appraised based on their quality, or a combination of the first two answers in which quality is central, yet the context of articles is framed based on a concern over quality. Due to the fact that the majority of articles analysed were concert reviews, the importance of quality can be understood as a driving force within this genre. Due to the importance of assessments of quality to concert reviews, there is a re-visitation of quality during the interview stage of this research to test its importance to audience members.

The category “Real Life vs. Recorded” stresses the importance of the quality of live performance as different from recorded material, and in a majority of the cases it is perceived as superior or containing elements beyond the recorded version of songs. Unique elements to live performance and spectacle both describe attributes to the live performance, including costumes, confetti, or cases in which artists fell off the stage. The importance of the spectacle to the articles analysed, once again, goes back to the fact that the articles are reviews of the artists and the performances.

Further, the “Concert as a Finite Event,” “Desire for rock’s past/nostalgia,” “Simple over Spectacle,” and the “Role of the Artist,” also reflect the evaluation of the quality of the performance. The desire for simplicity over spectacle, describes concert reviews in which the artist chose a simplistic performance style over a spectacle version. The concert as a finite experience stresses the event and all it holds can only be experienced once. Finally, the “Desire for rock’s past/nostalgia” and the “Role of the Artist” both highlight how different experiences are desired from a live performance, and therefore, quality is appraised on whether these goals were met or sentiment was felt.

The social nature of concerts can be seen in the following categories: “Importance of Connection,” “Participation/Interaction Central to Experience,” “Motivations for Cellphone

Use,” and “Interaction/Participation as Encouraged.” In the mentioned categories, connection is central to the experience between audience members, and especially between the artist and audience. The connection or interaction between audience and artist is the relationship on which the concert is predicated, yet the inclusion of the cellphone as a source for socializing or connection highlights how audience members are extending the boundaries of the concert venue to include friends and family.

On the topic of cellphones, a recurring category is the negative influence of cellphones on the concerts experience. This topic can be seen running through the following categories: “Phone as a Source of Loss,” “Phones Cause of Disconnect/Distracton,” “Presence/Need for Security,” and “Problem of Phone use in Concerts.” It becomes apparent that the concern over the influence of cellphones in the concert venue is present and varied in the concerns expressed. Some of the concerns found include: the issue of the luminescence off the cellphone screen as source of distraction/disconnect, the ‘disconnect’ of audience members towards those around them (the artist and other audience members), and the phones as a source of loss in terms of respect and attention. Furthermore, to show the degree of concern regarding cellphone use’s negative influence, the category “Presence/Need for Security” includes, yet is not limited to, the use of security to enforce the restriction of cellphone use during concert performances. “Sadie Martin” worked as an usher and periodically had to enforce this policy for artists who did not want phones used during their performances. “Sadie” explains how this was not only an uncomfortable practice, but it was not always effective.<sup>221</sup> According to interviewee “Ryder

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<sup>221</sup> “Sadie Martin,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 17, Transcript; *For the purposes of the quotes coming from the interview transcripts, the phrasing has not been edited, it has been kept to the wording given by interview participants; In order keep the identity of participants confidential, their names were changed. The changed names are indicated as being enclosed by quotation marks. The names not enclosed by quotation marks include the names of participants who chose not to be anonymized.*

Smith,” a frequent concert-goer, the use of security and ushers to limit cellphone use during performances can be even more distracting than unmediated cellphone use.<sup>222</sup> The negative accounts of phone use coincide with Goggin’s work on cellphones, revealing how anxiety or concern towards the use of new communication technology is spread through established media, in this case newspapers.<sup>223</sup>

The content analysis, like the interviews, did not only describe negative accounts of the influence of cellphones, but the benefits of the use or acceptance of cellphones as part of everyday life. The categories in the content analysis, which reflect this side of the debate, include: “Cellphones Enhance the Experience,” “Phones as Part of Everyday Life,” “Interaction/Participation as Encouraged,” “Cellphones as Lighters + Body Position,” “Participation/Interaction Central to Experience,” and “Motivations for Cellphone Use.” Some of the categories listed here were already listed in the social category, yet it stresses that cellphones are not innately negative. How individuals choose to use their cellphones, and to what degree, is central to an understanding of how others look towards cellphone use as well as potential methods to move forward. While the negative accounts towards cellphone use reflect the concern of the technology’s impact on an experience, the acceptance of phone use, or viewing it as a part of everyday life, it is a perfect example of individuals trying to make sense of a changing culture. In other words, as Lindholm states, it is during times of change that cultural frameworks evolve in an attempt to prevent “drowning in the deluge” of change.<sup>224</sup> Both the positive and negative accounts listed in the content analysis highlight the active nature of audience members and begs for further analysis into the motivations and desires of audience members.

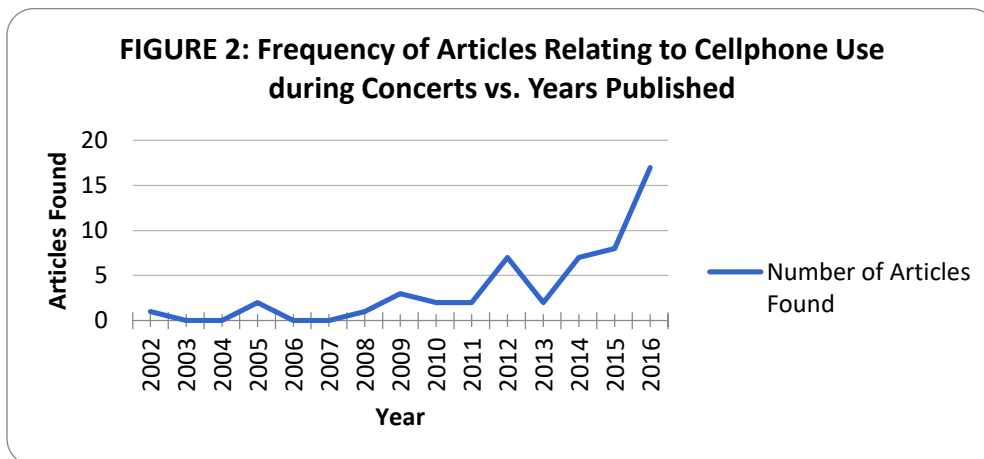
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<sup>222</sup> “Ryder Smith,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 1, Transcript.

<sup>223</sup> Goggin, *Cell Phone Culture*, 124-5.

<sup>224</sup> Lindholm, *Culture and Authenticity*, 145.

The content analysis conducted considered articles discussing the use of cellphones in concerts between the years of 2002 and 2016. The first Canadian article found on the use of cellphones during concerts, titled “Cells let concert-goers share sound” by Catherine Lucey, explained how cellphones are being used as a source of connection between audience members and friends/family beyond the venue. The article begins with a description of the beginning of a Shakira performance and how the audience’s reaction to the artist taking the stage is to wave their hands, squeal, and call their friends. The cellphone’s ability to share the sound allowed for friends or family beyond the venue to share in the live performance. Further, other motivations noted in the article revealed the use of cellphones to coordinate with friends attending the performance and as a safety tool.<sup>225</sup> The article’s use of multiple audience members’ testimonials highlights the personal choices in who is contacted and why. Furthermore, the importance of sharing the experience becomes a topic that only increases in importance as the research goes on. The following graph shows an increase in the number of articles discussing phone use during concerts:



<sup>225</sup> Catherine Lucey, "Cells Let Concert-Goers Share Sound," *Kingston Whig – Standard*, 2002, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/docview/352856194/fulltext/E177B944A8A14CB5PQ/4?accountid=15182>.

An increase in the discussion of the ramifications of phone use during concerts, for both positive and negative effects, stresses the growing prevalence of the device within live performances of this type. Further, the dramatic increase from 2012 to 2016 parallels not only increased Canadian phone ownership, but also the increase of smartphone ownership in Canada. For example, the percentage of Canadians subscribing to mobile services in 2012 was 52 percent<sup>226</sup> and by 2016 the number of households which have mobile phones rose to 85.6 percent.<sup>227</sup> This finding coincides with Wei's argument that the more features a technology has the more common the use will be.<sup>228</sup> Therefore, the use of cellphones overall has become increasingly common, and its use in designated contexts has risen as well.

Beyond the rise in cellphone usage, there must be a consideration of the motivations of audience members. Wei argues that different motivations lead to different uses.<sup>229</sup> According to the content analysis conducted, the motivations for cellphone use during concerts were as follows:

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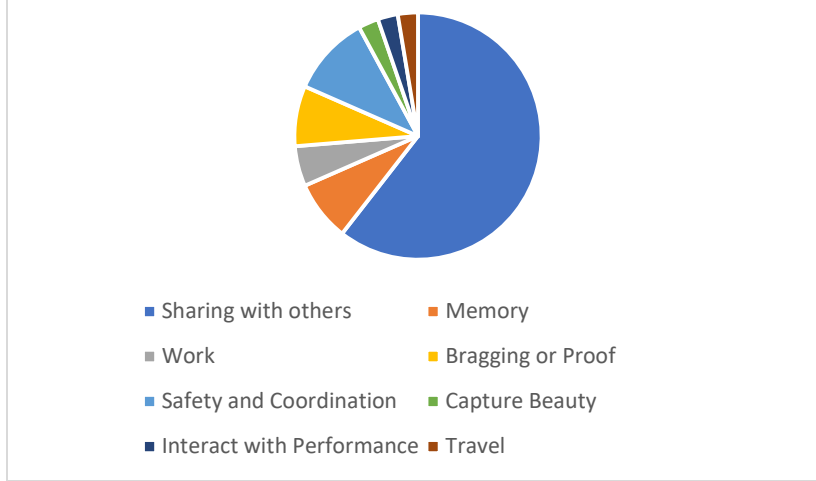
<sup>226</sup> "Communications Monitoring Report 2013: Telecommunications Service Industry | CRTC," *Crtc.Gc.Ca*, 2014, <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/PolicyMonitoring/2013/cmr5.htm>.

<sup>227</sup> "Communications Monitoring Report 2016: Canada's Communication System: An Overview For Canadians | CRTC," *Crtc.Gc.Ca*, 2016, <http://www.crtc.gc.ca/eng/publications/reports/policymonitoring/2016/cmr2.htm#a2>.

<sup>228</sup> Wei, "Motivations for using the mobile phone for mass communications and entertainment," 43.

<sup>229</sup> Wei, "Motivations for using the mobile phone for mass communications and entertainment," 43.

**FIGURE 3: Motivations for Cellular Usage at Concerts 2002-2016**



As indicated in the chart above, the desire for sharing material is dominant, yet the methods of sharing content have continued to evolve, and the reasons for the sharing warrant further investigation. The next most common arguments for cellular usage during concerts fall under safety/coordination, proof, and memory. The chart above reveals the dominant social nature of not only cellphones, but the concert experience as inherently social. In this social context, the cellphone is being used to expand the opportunities for connection or relation to the live performance. The prominence of the "sharing with others" motivation for cellphone use raises several questions. Based on the work of Colburn's Youtubers, the desire to share was a matter of increasing their cultural capital, while Bennett's works emphasise the desire to share in terms of an extended audience or community. In terms of the Canadian context, who do audience members want to share with? Is it only a select group of friends or larger groups? If there is a variation, why is it so?

Contrary to the concerns of artists like Adele, Prince and Jack White, cellphone use is not necessarily in opposition to connecting to one's audience. The 'disconnect' felt by artists towards cellphone use is causing those artists to institute policies in which cellphone use is restricted or

even banned. Using participant observation and interview analysis, the debate on cellphone use became more complicated. When audience members share concert material, they are in fact creating more connections for the artist beyond the venue. Further, while the cases in the content analysis were few, the reality exists that through cellphone use audience members are connecting with the performance. They are able to enter contests, get closer to the performer, and see the performer more closely through the use of zooming in on the camera application, and especially responding to an artist's request for phones to be raised. The presence of lighters within venues has decreased, either due to fewer smokers within audiences or the restriction of smoking within many venues. In this new context, cellphones are replacing lighters. While the luminescence from cellphones is brighter than lighters, it is a form of connection that cannot be ignored.

While particular motivations were found within the articles, participant observation and the conduction of interviews allowed for a deeper analysis into the topics that the content analysis pointed towards. Furthermore, the interview stage revealed the parameters of the frustration towards cellular use during live performance as well as the personal nature of the decision to engage in cellular use and to what extent. All the methodologies conducted were in agreement on the use of cellphones for pictures, social media, videos, calls, and texting. Furthermore, all the findings from the methodologies stressed that audience members are individuals who take in the concert experience in individualistic ways, and the cellphone has begun to play a noticeable role in this context. For individuals who choose to use cellphone, this practice is an action in it of itself. Furthermore, audience members' control over their use in terms of amounts and methods of use highlights the individual needs and goals sought. In terms of those who record, this practice is not new. The following selection from Mark Duffett not only



reveals that documenting is an active process, but that audiences are also having global ramifications based on their ability to share material:

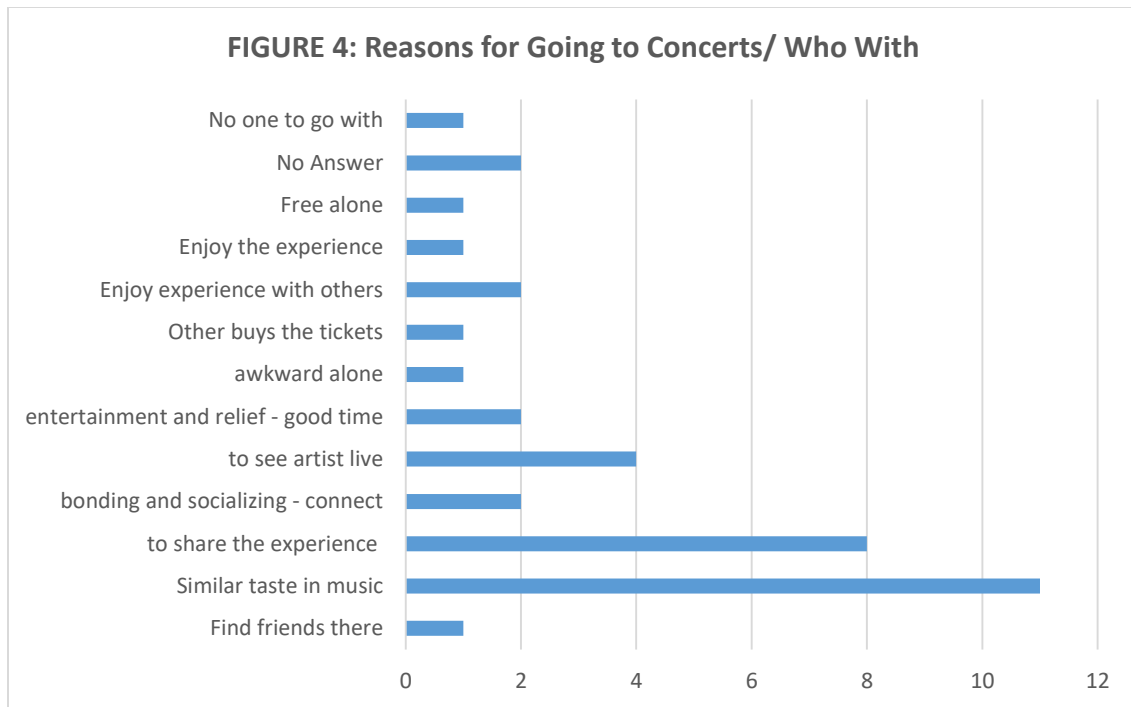
Since the 1950s at least, fans have documented their heroes in concert. Filming is an interesting fan practice in so far as it is impossible to call it 'passive.' Clicking a camera button might seem a routine activity, but it is also necessarily an 'active' one: nobody is told to do it. Indeed filming has often officially been banned, policed, or outlawed at live events. The practice constructs a memento of an exciting moment, but also keeps the filmmaker out of the moment. 'Filmmakers' eventually become curators, keeping an important audiovisual record of musical activity. Colburn shows how, in the digital age, 'filmmakers' are also immediate global broadcasters.<sup>230</sup>

The interview process not only considered the motivations of individuals for their cellular usage, but other motivations influencing their concert going experience as well. For example, interviewees were asked both who they typically attend concerts with as well as the reason for that choice.<sup>231</sup> 46 percent answered that they attend concerts with friends. Other dominant answers included: 20 percent for a significant other, 16 percent for going alone, and 12 percent for going with family. The final answers totalling to 6 percent were with: co-workers, bandmates, and those with the same taste. As the majority of the answers (84 percent) answered that they go with someone else to a show, this stresses the concert as a social or shared experience:

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<sup>230</sup> Mark Duffett, "Fan Practices," *Popular Music and Society* 38, 1 (2015): 5, doi:10.1080/03007766.2014.973764.

<sup>231</sup> In response to the question asked, interviewed participants were able to (and many did) give multiple reasons for concert attendance as well as who they share the experience with.



The chart above summarizes the answers given by audience members on who they attend concerts with and why. The answers given reveal a wide range, yet when looking at the categories closely, the social experience is central. For example, “Enjoy experience with others,” “awkward alone,” “bonding and socializing – connect,” “to share the experience,” “Similar taste in music,” and “Find friends there,” all emphasize the centrality of the social nature of concerts. While the question posed does ask for the interviewees with who they attend concerts, the dominant trend found shows that concerts are shared experiences with established friends or new ones made at shows.

Furthermore, the highest category, “Similar taste in music,” emphasizes that it is not about having just any friend attend the show with the interviewee, but one that enjoys the experience based on a common interest in the performance. On a slightly different note, four interviewees noted the desire to see an artist live as their reason for attending concerts. Even in these cases, audience members are describing their desire to connect with an artist. The desire to

see the artist live is a form of interaction, in which an experience can be shared between an artist and their audience.

While the social aspect is clear, it does not seem universal among the interviewees based on the answers given. For example, in the case of “free alone,” interviewee “Zoey Lewis” explains when she sometimes doesn’t go with her significant other, she feels freer when alone to move around the venue and interact with the performance in ways that her significant other would not be comfortable with.<sup>232</sup> In this case, “Zoey’s” behaviour seems anti-social; it is in fact social as well. The desire for a different type of experience or interaction with other concert-goers, leads this interviewee to attend venues alone in order to socialize differently once there. Another case, “other buys the tickets,” the interviewee is suggesting the only reason for their attendance is their significant other is paying for the tickets. This would seem that the experience is not desired.<sup>233</sup> Yet, the acceptance of attending the concert highlights the social and shared nature of this performance between “Autumn Evans” and her significant other.

According to the thematic analysis conducted, the motivations of audience members in their cellphone usage were considered. The motivations found include: sharing or posting, proof, memory or the ability to relive an experience, wanting a piece, safety/coordination, brag, practice, boredom, keepsake, and as a method to keep in touch. The motivation of memory was seen previously by Koskinen’s work, in which material captured was viewed as postcards of one’s experiences.<sup>234</sup> On the other hand, some of the motivations found in the content analysis, that were not largely present in the literature analysed include: bragging, proof, and boredom. The motives of bragging and posting show that sharing the content is not merely to extend the

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<sup>232</sup> “Zoey Lewis,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 13, Transcript.

<sup>233</sup> “Autumn Evans,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, Interview 21, Transcript.

<sup>234</sup> Koskinen, *Mobile Multimedia in Action*, 45-50.

audience,<sup>235</sup> but to show a level of superiority in terms of cultural capital over those absent from the venue itself. In conjunction with the motivations found from the content analysis, sharing, proof, and memory can also be found in the other methodologies conducted, while the interviews provided a wider range of reasons and examples given for their specific usage.

The uses of cellphones found include: taking pictures, videos, audio, the use of social media for both sharing and scrolling through, as well as the waving of phones. In regard to material captured, examples given include the lights, setup, liked songs, the unexpected, artist interaction, specific instruments, as well as capturing an artist's skill, a funny moment, and new or reinterpreted music. While certain artists are concerned with cellphone use for the potential of leaked material, which may in turn affect future performances in a negative way, other artists are embracing audience members' desire to record and share the material. Taylor Swift mentions how the widespread use of cellphones is actually challenging artists to change their set lists between performances and increase their audiences' interaction with them.<sup>236</sup> While Taylor Swift sees cellphones as an accepted part of the concert experience, other artists view the cellphone as the cause of disconnect between themselves and their audience. This sense of disconnect or a sensation of "loss" in terms of the experience, coincides with Schulz's work which identifies this feeling of "loss" as stemming from coming to terms with rapid technological or societal changes.<sup>237</sup> This creates a struggle between the artist and audience, as the artist is attempting to direct a specific type of concert experience, while the majority of audience members are concerned with their own motivations, in many cases involving their cellphones. The dominant

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<sup>235</sup> Pitts and Burland, *Coughing and Clapping*, 92-8.

<sup>236</sup> Tracy Moore, "The Phone Backlash at Shows Is Increasing, But Some Artists Are Embracing It," *620 CKRM: The Source*, 2016, <http://www.620ckrm.com/2016/03/29/colin-the-phone-backlash-at-shows-is-increasing-but-some-artists-are-embracing-it/>.

<sup>237</sup> Schulz, "Reconstructing Mediatization as an Analytical Concept," 90-93.

motivations for audience members' use of cellphones includes sharing, proof, and memory. The following includes audience members' examples of their motivations in cellular usage during concert performances from the content analysis and interviews conducted.

## MOTIVATIONS FOUND

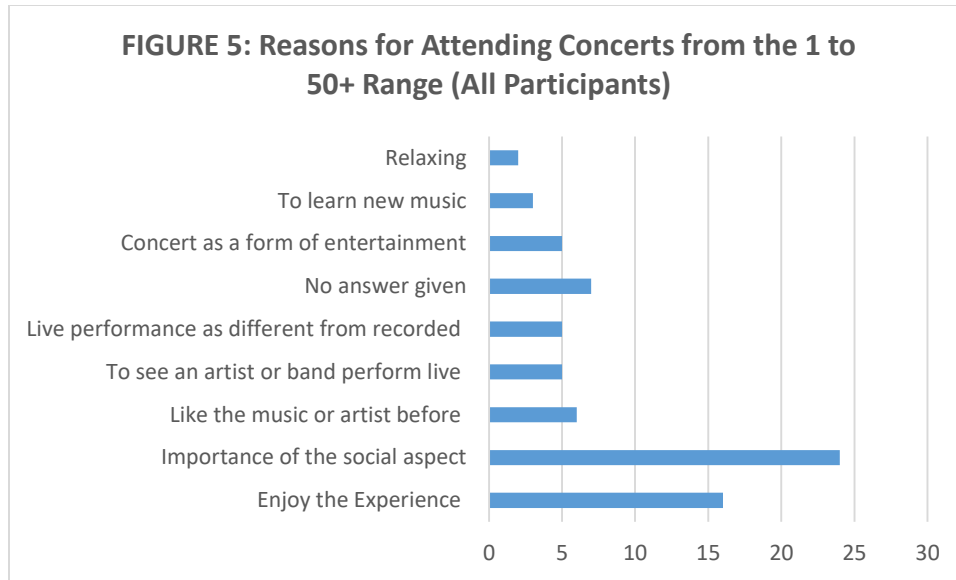
### Sharing

When the interviewees were asked the reason for their attendance of concerts, the greatest category revealed the importance of sharing the experience with friends, family, and online followers. The importance of a concert experience as one dictated by interpersonal interaction reveals the centrality of sociability to concerts. This desire to share the content of live performances was also present in the work of Lucy Bennett, where her work into online communities highlights the importance of this shared material to these communities. The social nature of concerts cannot be underestimated. In terms of cellphone use, interpersonal interaction is negatively mediated causing audience members to feel a disconnect from their fellow concert-goer, yet through the cellphone's ability to connect to others beyond the venue, concert-goers are sharing their experience in ways that were never possible before.<sup>238</sup>

The concert is dominantly understood as a shared social experience. The following chart depicts the breakdown of the given reasons for attending concerts from the interviewed participants. Interviewees gave multiple reasons for their attendance and all have been included in the following chart. While some participants did not provide an answer to the question, the majority provided an answer which reveals the centrality of “sharing” or the social nature of concerts for the interviewed participants:

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<sup>238</sup> Pitts and Burland, *Coughing and Clapping*, 92-98.



The “Importance of the social aspect,” refers to how the experience is shared; this can be understood in terms of sharing the music with a friend, sharing in the experience of an artist that one’s friends enjoy, making friends with other concert attendees, or sharing the experience with other audience members. Other reasons given for attending concerts include “Enjoy[ing] the Experience” of live performance, a previous familiarity with the artist and their music, and the unique elements to live performance based on how it differs from the recorded version of the music. The least popular reasons given included the desire to learn new music and the opportunity for a relaxing evening. The social aspect to the concert is central. The question that arose was whether the desire to share the experience was only in reference to those within the venue or if it went beyond. When it came to answering questions relating to interviewees’ cellphone use within concert venues, the motivation for sharing content was apparent yet again. Sharing with those beyond the venue can be understood as the attempt to share the experience with friends or fellow members of social media through the use of smartphones. Both the content analysis and interviews conducted revealed the methods, patterns, and motivations for sharing content with those beyond the venue. Within the case of “sharing,” the variations in what is

captured, where the content is shared, and the given reason for such decisions, stress audience members as active individuals, making conscious decisions to reach individualized goals.

*CAMDEN, N.J - When Colombian singer Shakira takes the stage in this teen-pop amphitheatre concert, girls in the crowd wave their hands in the air and squeal. Then they whip out their cellphones and call a friend.*

*"She couldn't come, and this is our song," yells Casey Connelly, 18, of Ridley Park, Pa., over the thunderous sounds of Shakira's Underneath Your Clothes.<sup>239</sup>*

In the case of Casey Connelly in Camden, New Jersey, her motivation to share the music is clear. This music or artist reflects a shared interest between friends that was established before Casey's concert attendance; this coincides with the idea that cellphones or other communication technology are used for identity or relationship maintenance.<sup>240</sup> The cellphone's ability to extend the boundaries of audience members to those beyond the venue allows for Casey to share this live experience with her friend. The cellphone, in this case, is a helpful tool for connectivity, where there is no negative sentiment held. The practice of sharing the live experience is not limited to sharing the sound to an individual friend. Through the capabilities of a smartphone, audience members are able to share content in new ways and to larger audiences.

Interviews:

**Interviewer:** *So just on the topic of cellphones, can you just describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones in concert venues or during a performance?*

**"Ryder Smith":** *... well as, well, to take pictures just to share with close friends and to kind of to have during a discussion with them later... And then, if there's something that is happening that's really cool during the concert that I would want to post online or to share with another person, or if there's a song that I know that someone really likes but they're not at the concert, then I might take a short video of what's going on in order to show others later.<sup>241</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *So why do you record?*

**"Violet Baker":** *Again, just to share. To share and I think with the recording, if I want to show my friends say a certain musician they get to hear the sounds I'm hearing or like a*

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<sup>239</sup> Catherine Lucey, "Cells Let Concert-Goers Share Sound."

<sup>240</sup> Walsh et al., "The Phone Connection," 235.

<sup>241</sup> "Ryder Smith," Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 1, Transcript.



*certain song re-envisioned by the musician for live performances. They get a little some of it, a little taste of it, so that's why I record.*<sup>242</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Why do you record?*

**Jonathan Friedman:** *Like why do I record video? So, I can share it online, so I can learn more about a part that I find interesting, or that way I can share it with people that I want to share it with.*

**Interviewer:** *So why do use your cell phone for the reasons that you do?*

**Jonathan Friedman:** *I guess it's kind of like a show off sort of thing, because in my mind these are celebrities and if I am like oh yeah, I have a picture with Russ from 12-foot Ninja online, and then three people, and, whoa I love 12-foot Ninja, from somebody you wouldn't even know who likes 12-foot Ninja too, and then you'll have something new to talk about. And then you can ask them about what kind of, what else do they listen to, you learn about different kinds of bands that you didn't even know existed.*<sup>243</sup>

Sharing the music is a rational and conscious decision made, from the choice of what to record to with whom the material is shared. Therefore, within the case of sharing, audience members are active individuals who are catering their actions based on their detailed motivations. For example, the content analysis example described Casey Connelly, an audience member, calling a friend to share the material, because this was a song of shared interest. On the other hand, the interview examples given include more detailed information on variations in material captured or the purpose of sharing. In interview one with “Ryder Smith,” if something “really cool” happens or songs that they “know that someone likes,” the material is shared. In this case, the sharing of material is a conscious decision to share material others will enjoy. During the interviews, there was little to no mention of calling a friend to share the sound, but the practices of posting material online or sending pictures and video to friends were prominent. The material shared no longer has to be live necessarily for the receiving end of the material sent. Additionally, the evolution in the form of content exchanged emphasizes how much the technology has changed between 2002 and 2016. Instead of sharing the sound through a phone call, videos and pictures are sent to specific recipients as well as larger audiences through social

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<sup>242</sup> “Violet Baker,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 28<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 18, Transcript.

<sup>243</sup> Jonathan Friedman, Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 26.

media platforms. A further discussion of the practice of sharing is found within the results of the thematic analysis.

### **Proof/Brag**

For certain audience members, the practice of sharing material is a method to brag about their attendance at a given performance. The concert is a finite experience in which only a limited number of people can attend, and the practice of sharing the material proves that those audience members were a part of that fixed experience. Audience members use their cellphone to capture and record material, which can then be shared and increase their cultural capital.

Lucey's "Cells Let Concert-Goers Share Sounds," describes the normality of sharing the concert experience with those beyond the venue. She writes that "[f]ans call friends to brag about the show and hold up their phones so others can hear a favourite song."<sup>244</sup> At the time the article was written, cellphones did not have the capabilities they do now, yet even then, audience members displayed their desire to show others the experience they were having in order to brag about their participation in a finite event. The cellphone is providing audience members with the opportunity to show others their experience from their point of view, prove that their experience happened as they said, and brag to others about the experience in real-time.

While the quotation above highlights the ability to share sound during a phone call, the interview stage shows, once again, how the methods for bragging have been expanded, and the potential audience has grown through social media.

**Interviewer:** *So just on the topic of cellphones, can you just describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones in concert venues or during a performance?*

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<sup>244</sup> Lucey, "Cells Let Concert-Goers Share Sound."

**“Ryder Smith”:** *Well, personally for, I’ll start off with my use of cellphones at concerts, which is I generally take a few pictures at the beginning of the concert just to, well, number one to post to social media, because if you don’t post to social media you’re technically not there, ‘cause there’s a feeling of if you don’t have pictures then it didn’t really happen...*<sup>245</sup>

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned the revisiting of material, but not often, but if you do revisit it, when would you and why, and also how often?*

**“Olivia Williams”:** *Yeah unless, again, people who are, like, have like serious visual spectacles as part of their thing, so sometimes you’ll just do that for proof. Look, look at this thing! They were dressed up as the transformers, I’m not joking!*<sup>246</sup>

**Interviewer:** *How do you decide what you post? What do you post?*

**Jonathan Friedman:** *I guess if it’s a cool, if it’s a cool video that I think other people would enjoy, I’ll post it. Like my Instagram followers, if I think they’d be interested in it or it will better my Instagram status in anyway, I will post it.*<sup>247</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Why do you take pictures?*

**“Levi Roberts”:** *Just if someone is like, I don’t know, like it’s really almost never that I would take a picture, so it is really a rare, rare thing and I guess even though it seems silly, some sort of like proof that I saw this legendary or one time or rare thing. But at the same time, as I was saying that I have no need or urge to prove it, even if someone like was like you didn’t see this person, I would be like OK whatever, I don’t really care to try to prove it. That’s partially why I’m not like rushing to get a smartphone and be able to do that stuff, because I don’t really care about that.*<sup>248</sup>

While motivation of proof/bragging coincides with sharing, as the material most likely is shared to brag or as proof of the experience, this motivation stands on its own. The reason for this being is that the material is not shared for the purpose of another’s enjoyment necessarily; the material holds cultural capital based on the rarity or exclusivity of the material captured at the event. While Throsby’s work emphasized how artists or items with cultural capital, the higher the monetary value is, in the case of material captured during concerts, it is the value associated with the artist/performance in terms of popularity or rarity that more value is accrued to the audience members sharing this material.<sup>249</sup> This discussion of proof was seen through Colburn’s

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<sup>245</sup> “Ryder Smith,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>246</sup> “Olivia Williams,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 3, Transcript.

<sup>247</sup> Jonathan Friedman, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>248</sup> “Levi Roberts,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 28, Transcript.

<sup>249</sup> Throsby, “Cultural Capital,” 6.

work into “*filmmakers*.” While the Colburn’s *filmmakers* were dominantly interested in sharing their material through YouTube,<sup>250</sup> the *filmmakers* of the research conducted showed a shift towards platforms such as SnapChat, Instagram, and Facebook.

Further, the material shared is important based on the fact that others will be viewing the material. For example, Jonathan Friedman mentions the importance of increasing his Instagram status. This motivation for status through proof coincides with Colburn’s argument that *filmmakers* are driven by the potential for gaining cultural capital or recognition through material shared.<sup>251</sup> On the other hand, “Levi Robert’s” lack of interest in proving the material to others points towards an alternative to the desire for cultural capital through material shared online. Further, it reveals that the desires for audience members are along a continuum, and the value held will differ based on the audience member’s desired outcome or experience. Based on the mentioned difference, the relevance of UGT comes through as not only are individuals motivated by different impulses, their values towards those impulses vary.

## **Memory**

Central to the discussion of cellphone use during concerts is the question of the motivation of taking pictures or videos as keepsakes. The need to consider this topic reveals the picture taking process or phone use, in general, as an active process in which individuals seek to achieve specific goals. In the case of audience members interviewed, the desire to remember the concert experience through material captured became apparent. This desire to recall or revisit the event was seen through the work of van Dijck along with Bennett and Rogers. The cellphone's

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<sup>250</sup> Steven Colburn, "Filming Concerts for Youtube: Seeking Recognition In The Pursuit Of Cultural Capital," *Popular Music And Society* 38, 1 (2014): 59, doi:10.1080/03007766.2014.974373

<sup>251</sup> Colburn, "Filming Concerts for Youtube," 59.

ability to capture and store recorded material has changed the way audience members experience live performance, as the memory of seeing others use their phone is now part of that experience, and more so that the ability to revisit the concert through the stored material is changing how concerts are remembered.<sup>252</sup>

The following quotes come from the interview stage of the research, and demonstrate the desire or motivation of some audience members to document the experience for later review:

**Interviewer:** *So just on the topic of cellphones, can you just describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones in concert venues or during a performance?*

**“Ryder Smith”:** *... and then to take pictures to just kind of remember as a personal memento for myself...*<sup>253</sup>

**Interviewer:** *I'm just gonna ask this again, why do you record?*

**“Piper Green”:** *Well proof as I just mentioned, and then for a keepsake. I like reviewing it. Like the show that I went to, what they sounded like.*<sup>254</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Why do you take pictures?*

**“Bailey Edwards”:** *For memory. Just to remember.*<sup>255</sup>

While the examples for the category of memory are not detailed, this notion repeats itself within the interviews conducted. Whether the desire is to look back within a week or potentially years down the road, audience members, not all but some, do value the use of their cellphones to record material to revisit or remember the concert experienced. While Bennett and Rogers’ work emphasized how value is drawn from revisiting a memory through a captured format, there is little discussion on the type of value or reasons for that revisiting.<sup>256</sup> Based on the interviewed participants, the desire to revisit the material can be for the purpose of a pick me up, something to do late at night in bed, or something that is done based on chance. The desire to not only remember, but to have a piece of that experience which can be revisited, echoes the work of van

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<sup>252</sup> Sjöberg, “A Mirror with a Memory,” 69.

<sup>253</sup> “Ryder Smith,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>254</sup> “Piper Green,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 30<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 20, Transcript.

<sup>255</sup> “Bailey Edwards,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, Interview 25, Transcript.

<sup>256</sup> Bennett and Rogers, “Popular Music and Materiality,” 39.

Dijck, who discussed the motive of recording material as an attempt to freeze time for one's identity or to share the material.<sup>257</sup>

Further, van Dijck argues that this act is an active process,<sup>258</sup> which coincides with the active audience model utilized in this research. Further, the desire for a memento or keepsake coincides with Baker's investigation into the exchange of materiality among online fan communities, as in both cases, the material's value is raised above a regular object based on its affiliation with the desired person, in these cases, the artists or band.<sup>259</sup> While Bennett and Rogers were concerned with the transfer or sharing of material goods as well as extending a memory,<sup>260</sup> the pictures and videos kept in this research represent a "digital materiality," which can be shared or maintained for personal extended memory.

Other motivations saw the use of cellphones to alleviate boredom, either during downtime between sets or even during a performance that is not being enjoyed,<sup>261</sup> as well as to keep in contact with friends or family based on sharing the material with them.<sup>262</sup> According to audience members interviewed, their motivations influence the material captured, as the material to be captured is meant to serve a specific service.

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<sup>257</sup> José van Dijck, "Mediated Memories: Personal Cultural Memory as Object of Cultural Analysis," *Continuum* 18, 2 (2004): 263, 274, doi:10.1080/1030431042000215040.

<sup>258</sup> van Dijck, "Mediated Memories," 263.

<sup>259</sup> Andrea Baker, "THE EXCHANGE OF MATERIAL CULTURE AMONG ROCK FANS IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES," *Information, Communication & Society* 15, 4 (2012): 520, doi:10.1080/1369118x.2012.666258.

<sup>260</sup> Andy Bennett and Ian Rogers, 2016. "Popular Music and Materiality: Memorabilia and Memory Traces". *Popular Music and Society* 39, 1 (2016), 28, 35, doi:10.1080/03007766.2015.1061339.

<sup>261</sup> "Ryder Smith," Interviewed by Erica Melamed; "Owen Collins," Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, Interview 23, Transcript.

<sup>262</sup> "Lucas King," Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016, Interview 15, Transcript.

## EMERGING PATTERNS

### Connection/Engagement

A central idea amongst audience members regarding their attendance, enjoyment, and feelings of authenticity relate to the interaction or connection felt with others in the venue. Interaction between an artist and audience members can be seen through the desire for proximity, a smaller venue, interacting with the artist physically, or through enjoyment of the performance. Interaction with other audience members can be seen through the desire for proximity, a smaller venue, and physical interaction. The matter of interaction closely parallels the findings of Brown and Knox who investigated the motivations for attending pop concerts.

The motivations noted were characterised as experience, engagement, novelty, and practical.<sup>263</sup> All the motivations found by Brown and Knox were present within the study conducted. For example, in regard to “experience,” audience members represented a desire for proximity to an artist in real time.<sup>264</sup> In regard to “engagement,” some of the audience members discussed the importance of a concert as a shared experience.<sup>265</sup> Similar to the “Reasons for Going to Concert/ Who With” chart given earlier in the findings, a common response by interview participants mentioned the concert experience as one that is shared. Regarding novelty, the desire for unknown aspects of a concert experience also came forward in the research conducted.<sup>266</sup> For example, one audience member stressed the desire for live performances as connected to the unexpected or exciting aspects of a concert experience.<sup>267</sup> The final category or

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<sup>263</sup> Steven Caldwell Brown and Don Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts? The Motivations Behind Live Music Attendance," *Musicae Scientiae*, 2016, 6, doi:10.1177/1029864916650719.

<sup>264</sup> Brown and Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts?" 6.

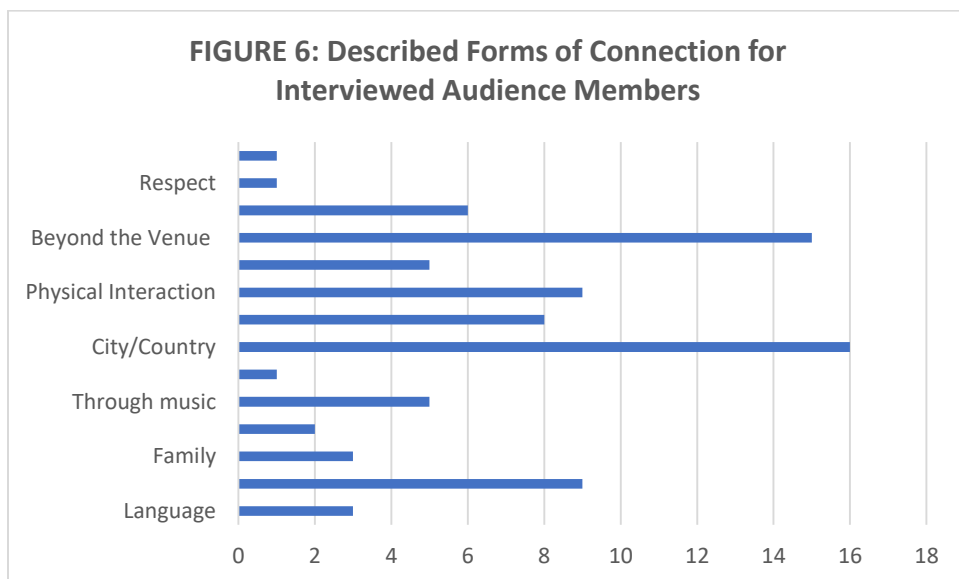
<sup>265</sup> Brown and Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts?" 8.

<sup>266</sup> Brown and Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts?" 9.

<sup>267</sup> "Miles Anderson," Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 6, Transcript.

the “practical” re-emerges within the economic section to come. The following sections provide examples found within the matter of interaction/connection coinciding with Brown and Knox’s motivations of engagement, experience, and novelty. While Brown and Knox’s work provides an understanding into the motivation for attendance to a pop concert, there is no discussion of these ideas during a performance as well as the influence of phones on the notions of “experience,” “engagement,” and “novelty.”

The content analysis’ findings relate to Brown and Knox’s notion of the experience in terms of how audience members are able to interact with an artist or others in the venue. The following graph details the different forms of connection audience members showed in relation to the artist:



In regard to Brown and Knox’s “experience,” the audience members who participated in the interview portion of the research stressed the importance of proximity to an artist during a performance.<sup>268</sup> Certain participants did not follow this trend due to an unwillingness/inability to

<sup>268</sup> Brown and Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts?" 6.



achieve such proximity, claustrophobic feelings, or a desire for sound quality over closeness.

While certain participants did not follow this trend, the following examples show a portion of those who felt this way:

**“Ryder Smith”:** *Ideally, when I go to a concert, I prefer smaller concerts where the crowds are no larger than 500 to 1000. And, I prefer generally to either stand or sit pretty close to the stage depending on the show.*

**Interviewer:** *Why do you want to sit closely or why do you want these smaller venues?*

**“Ryder Smith”:** *It’s more intimate, you get more of a small concert feel, where you can feel more connected to what’s going on on-stage, rather than observing it as a third party to it, or you feel more connected.<sup>269</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned the bigger artists wanting better seats, like what would be better seats?*

**“Liam Moore”:** *Like, obviously closer to the stage or seats that aren't obstructing your view.*

**Interviewer:** *What is the venue make up that you most enjoy?*

**“Liam Moore”:** *I prefer a smaller setting, like, again because of that ambient atmosphere that you get. I find with bigger venues it's kind of harder to feel like, what's the word I'm looking for, to feel like actually part of the concert. Usually bigger concert settings it's you're just there, just watching. Whereas, like, if you choose a smaller venue you actually feel a part of the concert.<sup>270</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *Where are you located during this, and is your location important to you within a venue, and if so, why?*

**Danielle Knoll:** *Well this was an outdoor festival, so, well there's different bands, right? So, I guess in one day. It was kind of like three different concerts. For the bands that I don't know as well, usually I'll tend to be in more of the middle or more further away. The bands I know really know well like Barenaked Ladies, we went upfront. So, I don't know.*

**Interviewer:** *And so why does your location?*

**Danielle Knoll:** *I don't know so maybe if it's a badge that you, you know better and you're more like confident about their music. Maybe you feel more confident to, I could go up front and then if it's a band that you're just kind of getting to know, kind of stay farther away as if it's like an interaction, you know.<sup>271</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *Are there any factors, what are the factors that will impact where you sit or locate yourself within a venue?*

**“Bailey Edwards”:** *... I would like to be as closest possible to the stage, but because I'm shorter, if I know I'm just not going to be able to see anything, I would just rather go to the seats, like at Metallica, I was not in the mosh pit, I was in like the first few rows in the*

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<sup>269</sup> “Ryder Smith,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>270</sup> “Liam Moore,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 7, Transcript.

<sup>271</sup> Danielle Knoll, Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, Interview 22, Transcript.

*seats. There was no point to me, like I would probably lose out on the experience, yeah.*<sup>272</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe the venue make up that you most enjoy?*

**Jonathan Friedman:** *I enjoy small bar venues the best, where they have like a small little space for people to stand and tables should people need to sit down. There's drinks and food available, but you can also be right up there with the band to enjoy.*

**Interviewer:** *Why do you enjoy this make up?*

**Jonathan Friedman:** *Again, just when you listen to these artists all the time, they are kind of celebrities to you, even though they might not be on the radio, but just being close to them, it makes you feel like you're a part of that, which is pretty exciting.*<sup>273</sup>

Audience members describe the importance of proximity for their concert experience.

Audience members want to actually see the artist performing and the potential to be seen as well.

Without the ability to see the performance, the experience is diminished as can be seen by the response given by “Bailey Edwards.” Further, the desire for proximity will be mediated by circumstances such as finances, the danger of damage by the speakers, or disability. These mediating factors were discussed by Brown and Knox as practical factors for attendance, namely prices.<sup>274</sup> Further, as demonstrated by Danielle Knoll, the desire for proximity can also be mediated based on a pre-existing connection with the artist or their music. Therefore, the value associated with an artist by the audience member will affect the desire to see the artist in the first place, and especially for repeated attendance.

In addition to the Brown and Knox’s findings, the desire for proximity is tied, not causally, to the preference for a smaller venue. For example, “Ryder Smith” and “Liam Moore” both stress the preference of a smaller venue, as it provides a better connection with those in the venue. The following provides examples which echo Brown and Knox’s point on “experience” as the desire to see music performed live:

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<sup>272</sup> “Bailey Edwards,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>273</sup> Jonathan Friedman, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>274</sup> Brown and Knox, “Why Go to Pop Concerts?” 10.

**Interviewer:** *And why do you go to concerts?*

**“Lucas King”:** *I like the experience of seeing a band live. There is a certain energy that you get when you go to see a live band. There's a certain type of fun. I feel like there's this collective experience that you get to experience when you're at any sort of performance art, any sort of live theatre or live music, where you just feel like you're experiencing something that's only going to happen once, and it's this magical kind of feeling that happens. Yeah.*<sup>275</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Who do you typically go to concerts with and why?*

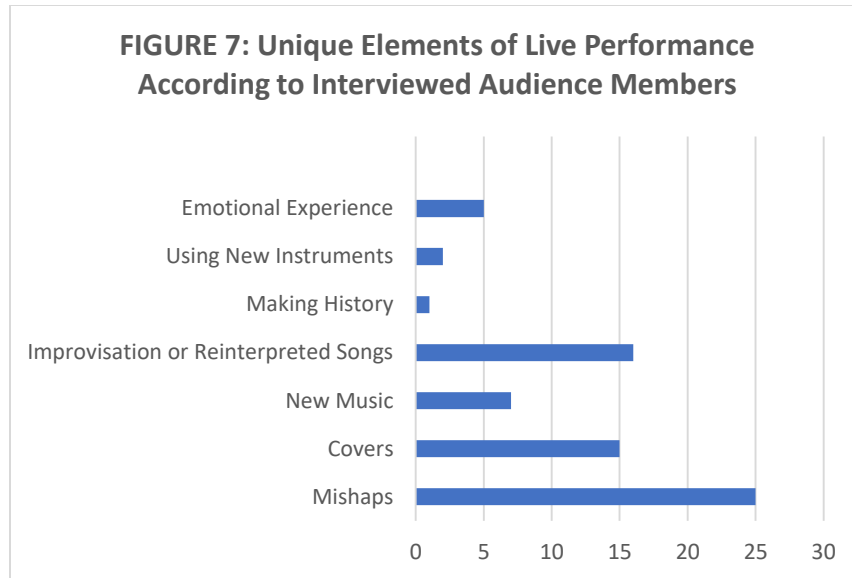
**Sanger Yoo:** *I go to concerts predominately with my friends just to have a good time to get like a live experience of what I'm hearing.*<sup>276</sup>

The desire for experiencing music live is a desire demonstrated by audience members. As “Lucas King” notes, it is through a live experience that a band’s “energy” can be experienced. Further, this is a one-time experience. This idea of a finite experience returns in the discussion of cellphone usage during performances. Finally, the desire for seeing a performance live can be predicated, not dependent, upon a previous familiarity with the music to be performed. Further, the desire for seeing music live relates to Brown and Knox’s notion of “novelty,” in other words, the desire to see the unexpected, be it music or the performance itself. The following graph coming from the content analysis conducted reveals the different forms of novelty within a concert experience:

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<sup>275</sup> “Lucas King,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 21<sup>st</sup>, 2016, Interview 15, Transcript.

<sup>276</sup> Sanger Yoo, Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 19, Transcript.



Beyond the content analysis conducted, the responses of audience members reveal the importance of these aspects not only for their experience, but also for their own footage. These aspects are common in audience members who record or capture concert material. For example, the desire to hear a rare version of a song by “Miles Anderson” demonstrates that when the material is not captured, regret can occur.<sup>277</sup> On the other hand, according to “Bailey Edwards,” the prevalence of concert recordings by audience members actually hinders their personal experience, as due to their being short, they can only see the concert through the screens of other audience members. The following examples describe the desire for “novel” aspects to a concert experience as well as the desire for capturing these moments:

Featuring an Artist on Stage:

**Interviewer:** *What makes you more likely to take a picture?*

**“Liam Moore”:** *Well, I could give you an example of an instance where I took a picture. About last year, we went to the Weeknd, who is an R&B artist. He brought out Ed Sheeran for one of their songs, so the crowd was buzzing, and you know, so we took a photo of that, because it's not often that a big artist like that comes out, like that is a feature.*<sup>278</sup>

<sup>277</sup> “Miles Anderson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>278</sup> “Liam Moore,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

Unexpected:

**Interviewer:** *What would be the most desirable content for photos and videos taken during a concert?*

**“Sadie Martin”:** *The most desirable. Something uncommon. Something, some kind of thing that only can happen live that you weren't expecting. I think that when shows are just like somebody up there with a microphone singing, it's, that's not really what I'm looking for, I'm looking for some kind of, whether it's like a dance or a guitar riff or an interaction with the audience or whatever it is, something that was unexpected. That like makes it live.<sup>279</sup>*

Rare:

**“Miles Anderson”:** *... Because sometimes I do, there's songs that I really like and then I regret not recording it. Like when we saw Fall Out Boy a few years ago at The Beach, and they decided to do this little piano acoustic version of 20 Dollar Nosebleed, which is a song I never heard them play live before at all. I couldn't even find it on YouTube and I was like wow this is amazing, it was one of my favourite songs and they've never played it. I've never seen them play it and they're playing this crazy different version that I might never find anywhere else, but I said I just really wanted to enjoy, and I decided not to record that song and I sat there and I loved it and it was awesome. But then now, I find I'm forgetting how it sounded and I can't find the videos of it anywhere online, because they only did it that one night and a lot of the times when I think how I really should have recorded it, because I want to see what it's like. You know, I'm starting to forget.<sup>280</sup>*

The examples provided show the value associated by audience members with the novel aspects of a concert experience. In all the cases provided, it was the unusual material which was desired by audience members. While “Miles Anderson” displayed regret regarding not recording an acoustic reinterpretation of an unusual song, “Sadie Martin” stressed the desire for material that can only be captured live. The desire for capturing material that is finite in nature and perhaps even rare is shown to hold capital for audience members.

Brown and Knox’s notion of “engagement” stresses the concert experience as one that is shared.<sup>281</sup> The content analysis and interviews stressed that this notion was only felt by some of

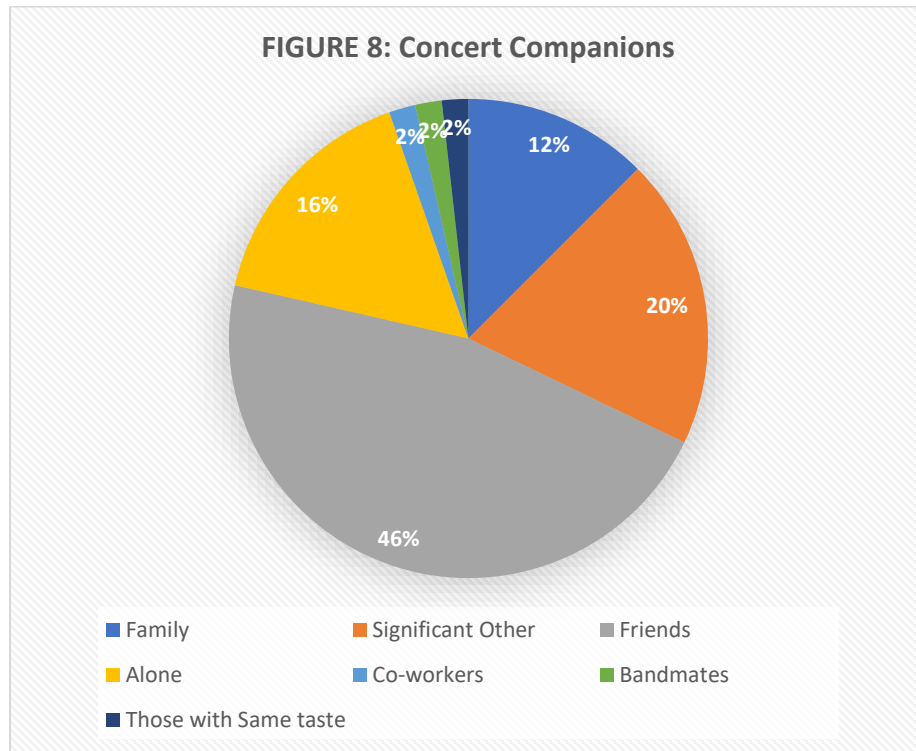
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<sup>279</sup> “Sadie Martin,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 17, Transcript.

<sup>280</sup> “Miles Anderson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 6, Transcript.

<sup>281</sup> Brown and Knox, “Why Go to Pop Concerts?” 8.

the participants and with particular boundaries. The following chart outlines the answers given by interviewed participants towards whom they attend concerts with:



The majority of the time interviewees attend concerts with those who they are familiar. This practice reflects on their answers given earlier in the findings, stressing the desire to share the experience with those of familiar taste or those well known to the interviewees. While this aspect of the interviews highlights the social nature of the concert experience, later in the interviews, for several participations, there was little interest given in connecting with other audience members beyond those they came with. The most common forms of connection described by audience members included: proximity to other audience members, connecting through music, or through physical interaction when others displayed similar reactions to the music. Other audience members pointed out that they either felt no connection or were not

interested in connecting with other audience members. For example, “Penelope Lee” only wanted to focus on the performance, as can be seen below:

**Interviewer:** *What events, factors, or occurrences within a concert help you feel connected with other audience members?*

...

**“Penelope Lee”:** *Yes, so if like you're sitting there on your phone you're not actually spending time to look at the show, so I will mostly like sit around being grumpy about that. Or I just won't, won't pay attention to them at all. So if it's a whole bunch of really polite concertgoers, who are all just really excited for a specific show, then I just don't pay attention. I just focus on the band.*

Another central form of interaction, whether it was seen as positive or negative, was the use of cellphones. The use of cellphones during concert performances has sometimes been encouraged by some artists as shown by the following cases:

Content Analysis:

*... In Toronto on Monday night, during the first of four sold-out concerts in the Air Canada Centre, U2 lead singer Bono exhorted the crowd to flip open their cellphones and BlackBerrys and let the backlighting transform the arena into a Christmas tree.*<sup>282</sup>

Participant Observation:

*Within the performances of both Blink 182 and Def Leppard, cellphone use was encouraged by the artists. In the case of Def Leppard, audience members were encouraged to take out their phones and wave them from side to side in the place of lighters. During this time, there was a select number of lighters risen instead of phones being used. Blink 182 also encouraged the use of phones to “light up the stage” while the band played a short song in the dark.*

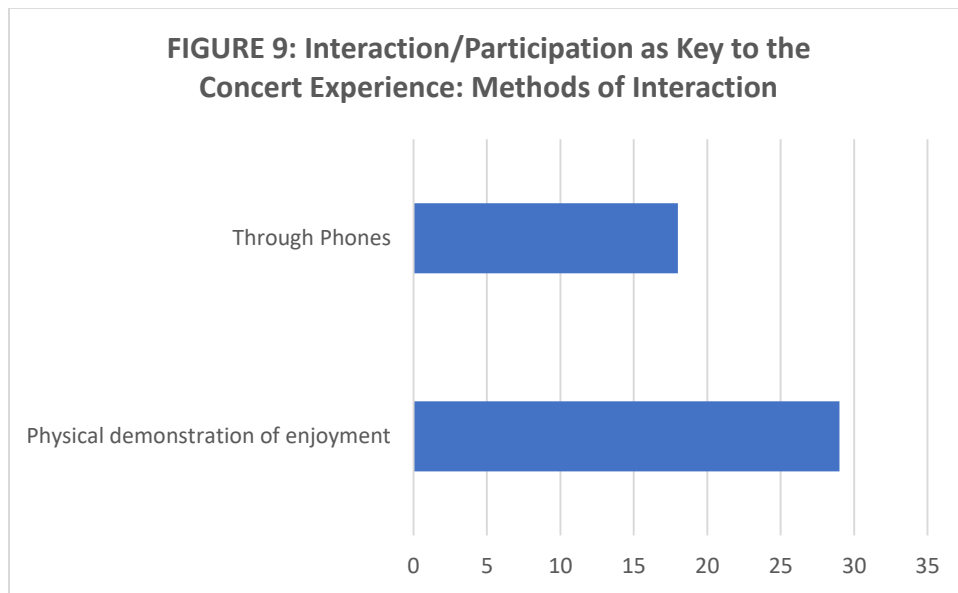
**“Miles Anderson”:** *...like there was this you know Blink 182 in the summer, they decide for one song to just turn all the lights off on the stadium. It was pitch black and people didn't even get it first, and then they're like “we're just going to do this whole thing completely in the dark,” and it was like a little song really in the dark. Nobody can see anything and nobody had any lights or anything, and then they're like “hey guys we wanted you to light up the stage for us with your phones,” so...*<sup>283</sup>

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<sup>282</sup> Don Martin, “Why Bono Won't Find What He's Looking For,” *National Post*, 2005, <http://search.proquest.com.ezproxy.library.yorku.ca/docview/330221183/fulltext/E177B944A8A14CB5PQ/29?accountid=15182>.

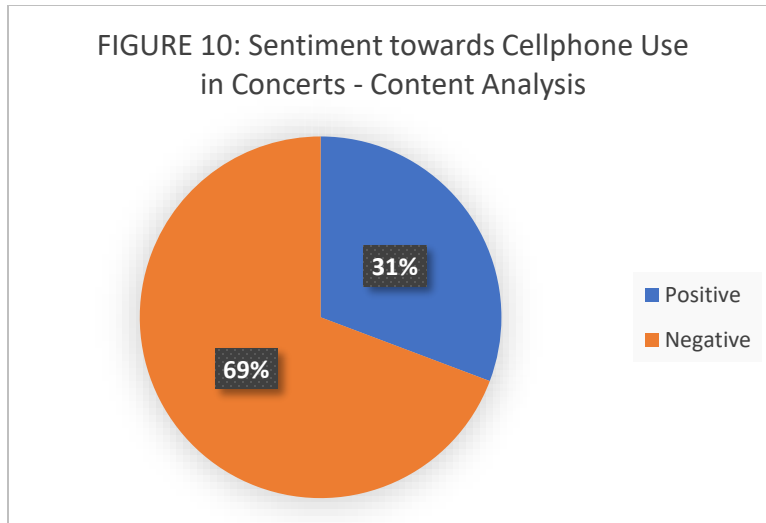
<sup>283</sup> “Miles Anderson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

Other than encouragement, audience members will use their cellphones in the place of lighters without being asked, yet the greater use of cellphones to interact with a performance is the recording of footage through pictures, videos, or audio material. The content analysis conducted considered the forms of interaction between artists and audience members. The following shows the breakdown between phone usage as a source of interaction and physical demonstrations of enjoyment such as clapping, cheering, or dancing:



On the other hand, the content analysis and interviews conducted shows a widespread sentiment that cellular usage during concert performances is hindering or decreasing the potential for interaction or enjoyment. Content analysis topics which include the negative potential of phone use on interaction includes “Problems with Phones in Concerts,” “Phones as a Source of Loss,” and “Disconnect/Distracton Phones Present.” The following shows the ratio between positive and negative comments on the use of phones during performances according to the content analysis results:





While no comments were made by performers or audience members towards the negative use of phones during the participant observation section of the research, the interview section revived the argument that cellphone usage presents a feeling of disconnect or distraction felt by audience members towards the performance. The complaints noted by audience members include: disconnect and distraction based on an obstructed view and the luminescence coming off the phone.

The following describes the frustration felt over the luminescence of cellphones as opposed to lighters' softer light:

*This past Saturday Donnie and I went to see Walk Off The Earth at the Brandt Center. We went specifically for that show and didn't stick around for the others. The music was great and the crowd was into it, but unfortunately, we were stuck behind a bunch of youngsters that used their cell phone lights to mimic lighters. Times have changed at concerts. We use[d] to do that all the time with our Bic lighters, but the lumens coming from the smart phones are so much brighter and everybody has a cell phone. All of that is fine, but the lights (lumens) on the phones were a big distraction as we were trying to focus on the show and not the waving "city lights". ...<sup>284</sup>*

<sup>284</sup> Colin Lovequist, "The Phone Backlash at Shows Is Increasing, but Some Artists Are Embracing It!" 620 CKRM, 2016, <http://www.620ckrm.com/2016/03/29/colin-the-phone-backlash-at-shows-is-increasing-but-some-artists-are-embracing-it/>.

The description of the distraction that the cellphone's light stresses two main ideas on changes to the concert experience based on the cellphone's mediatization of that space. The light of the cellphone and the distraction it causes, creates a disconnect between audience members. Firstly, the desire of audience members, who do not own lighters, who wish to participate in the concert, are being described in opposition to those who do not participate in this practice. The growing dichotomy between audience members is creating laboured interpersonal interaction between concert-goers. Secondly, the cellphone's presence and use in the concert experience is changing what elements of concert experiences are remembered. The frustration felt over a cellphone's luminescence became the dominant memory for the audience member described above.

Beyond the articles analysed, the interviews conducted highlight how frustration over the cellphone is a recurring issue for audience members in terms of a cellphone's light and the physical obstruction their use creates:

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones during concert performances?*

**“Emma Jones”:** *I’m 50/50 about it. I do use them slightly. I think that they can be great to an extent. So, when you are using the cellphone for shorter periods of time, recording a song, taking a couple of photos, it’s alright. But when somebody is holding their phone up the entire concert, I find it very distracting and aggravating.*<sup>285</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cell phones during concert performances?*

**“Harper Robinson”:** *I think it's obnoxious [laughs]. Like obviously, everybody uses their cellphone, and like I think it's an important means of communication. But on the other hand, like I think it's also like, it sort of like separates people from communicating with one another. When someone is constantly texting on their phone, you can't, you know. Your face isn't looking up towards a person, you're not really engaging in a conversation with them, and it makes things a little awkward.*<sup>286</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place or use of cellphones during concert performances?*

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<sup>285</sup> “Emma Jones,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 2, Transcript.

<sup>286</sup> “Harper Robinson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, Interview 24, Transcript.

**Michael Friedman:** *By audience members. By audience members yeah. I think it's fine, it depends on how distracting it is, so like it's not really my place to say "hey, you can't use your cell phone, you can't film that..."*<sup>287</sup>

The complaints of audience members towards phone use reveals the ways in which it is affecting those around them in a negative way. The potential for disconnect or a distraction can be pulling audience members further from one another and decreasing alternative forms of interaction such as talking, dancing and singing. While the negative potential of phone use has been noted, there is a larger argument at play. The question to ask concerns the degree of frustration, as audience members' answers will gauge whether the concert experience has become a mediatized space further than it already has, based on the potential acceptance of phone use during performances.

## **Mediatization**

For the purposes of the research conducted, mediatization can be understood as media-related change in which the researcher, coming from a social-constructivist approach, considers this type of change in everyday communication practices.<sup>288</sup> Cases of mediatization must be considered in the context in which they are found, therefore when analysing the increasing use of cellphones within concert venues, there must be a consideration of the content of cellular usage in which it has become an accepted part of everyday life. As mentioned earlier in the findings, over 80 percent of Canadian homes own cellular devices. Further, within the context of globalization, fans from all over the world can engage with material uploaded online. The potential participants of a concert experience have therefore expanded exponentially, and it is

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<sup>287</sup> Michael Friedman, Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 29, Transcript.

<sup>288</sup> A. Hepp, "The Communicative Figurations of Mediatized Worlds: Mediatization Research in Times of the 'Mediation of Everything,'" *European Journal of Communication* 28, 6 (2013): 616, doi:10.1177/0267323113501148.

only a matter of the number of fans, availability of access, and permission for the material to be shared that a local concert has the potential to become a globally experienced event.

With mobile communication, it can occur faster and through more diverse forms.<sup>289</sup> Further, with smartphones combining the abilities of the mobile phone, internet, and camera, the forms and extent of communication have expanded. Additionally, phone use can be used to avoid or lessen feelings of loneliness.<sup>290</sup> While the potential benefits cannot be ignored, the majority of the data analysed shows the phone being understood as disrupting the boundaries between public and private spheres in which “improper” use is on the rise.<sup>291</sup> Some of potential negative effects of phone use include a loss of privacy/intimacy, distractedness, and inconsiderate public use.<sup>292</sup> One example of the use being perceived as inconsiderate comes from Richard Griffiths, who stopped a show due to the sound of a ringing phone. He followed this by threatening to stop the performance altogether if another phone was heard.<sup>293</sup> Overall, research into mobile communication reveals detractions and enhancements based on its use. Ling and Donner summarize this point by stating: “It has established a logic of use that is difficult to ignore. It can be disruptive, it can jigger the way power is exercised and it can facilitate unwanted disruptions in our lives. It can stress us out and it can also save the day.”<sup>294</sup>

Before moving forward with the potential mediatization of the concert space in terms of cellphone usage, it is worth noting the space is already mediatized. Auslander’s *Liveness* reveals

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<sup>289</sup> Rich Ling and Jonathan Donner, *Mobile Communication: Digital Media and Society Series*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2009), 106.

<sup>290</sup> Peter Glotz, Stefan Bertschi, and Chris Locke, *Thumb Culture: The Meaning of Mobile Phones for Society*, 1st ed. (Piscataway: Transaction Publishers, 2005), 280.

<sup>291</sup> Ran Wei and Louis Leung, “Blurring private and public behaviors in public space: policy challenges in the use and improper use of the cell phone,” *Telematics and Information* (Pergamon, 1999), 25.

<sup>292</sup> Glotz, Bertschi, and Locke, *Thumb Culture*, 279.

<sup>293</sup> Ling and Donner, *Mobile Communication*,” 108.

<sup>294</sup> Ling and Donner, *Mobile Communication*,” 156.

how the concert venue is a mediatized space in terms of performances with audio amplification through speakers and microphones as well as through the use of video technology within the larger venues.<sup>295</sup> Further, Holding also discussed how the introduction of video technology within concert spectacles attempted to bridge the relationship between artists and their audience further back in the venue.<sup>296</sup> Therefore, the discussion of cellphone usage during concerts is assessing whether the concert space has been further mediatized than it already was.

Auslander's research into liveness stresses how this term is understood in relation to the understanding of mediation, and how the definitions will change according to the use of different technologies.<sup>297</sup> Therefore, it is important to understand that these terms are dependent on one another, and through considering what is live, real, or authentic will stress how mediatization is being understood within the contemporary concert context. In the interviews conducted, interviewees were asked what elements of a concert feel genuine, real, or authentic to them. In response to this question, certain trends were found. Authenticity was closely related with artist-audience interaction, whether it was artists speaking with their audience or the quality of the performance. The quality of the performance in relation to authenticity was understood according to an artist's effort, a feeling of "being in the moment," real vocals and instruments, as well as unique elements to a live performance such as mishaps or mistakes. The only mention of phone use regarding the negative potential for overuse was mentioned in relation to another issue for the interviewee, namely being drunk as a result of boredom:

**Interviewer:** *What factors of a concert experience make it feel authentic to you, and when I say authentic I mean that it feels like a real or genuine experience?*

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<sup>295</sup> Philip Auslander, *Liveness: Performance in A Mediatized Culture*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 90-8.

<sup>296</sup> Eric Holding, *Mark Fisher: Staged Architecture; Architectural Monographs No. 52* (Chichester: Wiley-Academic, 2000), 87.

<sup>297</sup> Auslander, *Liveness*, 11.

**“Sadie Martin”:** *I think not being able to, like sit down, like not wanting to just be like in a seat, socializing, getting too drunk, like those are all signs of, like, boredom. I think that an authentic experience is when you're not pounding back booze, when you just can't stay seated, you want to go up to the front, when you want to dance with your friends... Even when you're like taking pictures with friends or taking pictures at the show, not too many pictures because too many pictures means you're bored. But, when you're engaged with what's going on, I think then you're having an authentic experience.*<sup>298</sup>

The following quote, on the other hand, provides an example where the use of video enhanced the concert experience for the interviewee:

**Interviewer:** *What factors of a concert experience make it feel authentic to you, a real or genuine experience?*

**“Miles Anderson”:** *... And then there's other ones like when I saw a Mariana's Trench a while ago. They had this new album that had this little story to it, so they filmed little like pieces of the story that they wrote for the album, and put that in between some songs too, and so it was like a little movie kind of thing as the show was going along, and at the end there was, you have the big ending. It was pretty cool.*<sup>299</sup>

While the above quote is referring to the use of technology it demonstrates the established place of video within concerts. This quote shows the cellphone's potential to enhance an individual's concert experience.

The following quote comes from an audience member discussing their photo taking process. This section will stress the adoption of the term authenticity to include mediatized formats, in this case, phone use:

**Interviewer:** *You have mentioned zooming in, why do you do this? Like why do you and why you don't?*

**“Bailey Edwards”:** *I'll zoom in if I want to specific part to be in the photo, like if I want to cut off a certain aspect, I don't zoom in because I just don't think it's authentic.*

**Interviewer:** *Why not?*

**“Bailey Edwards”:** *Because I wasn't that close. Or like I wasn't that, I wasn't that close to the stage, so why should I post a photo where, you know what I mean? I feel like if this is my perspective and my experience, when I look back at that picture I want to know what I was actually looking at and not... What I wanted to, wanted to be closer.*<sup>300</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> “Sadie Martin,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>299</sup> “Miles Anderson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>300</sup> “Bailey Edwards,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

The inclusion of mediatized formats into authenticity reflects the acceptance of the use of this technology, and follows Bratus' work which argues that authenticity is not lost through mediatization, the notion is re-oriented through technological reproduction, where recording becomes a form of "witnessing."<sup>301</sup> To mediate the different impressions on cellphone use based on the research conducted, the findings collected will be broken down according to the following subthemes: live vs. recorded, etiquette/respect, interaction, and distraction/disconnect in which obstructed views and light will be discussed. A spectrum of responses will be seen, within the subthemes to be discussed, which will range from resistance to the encouragement of cellular usage.

### **Live vs. Recorded**

The belief that live and recorded are two dichotomous notions, coincides with Aulander's work in which liveness is understood in relation to existing forms of mediation. Audience members discuss live elements to performances as those which cannot occur if they are not there. For example, a certain energy, mistakes, speaking with the audience, reinterpretations, or covers of existing songs reveal live elements to a performance that cannot exist in an artist's mediatized format of a CD or download. The following show examples of desire for a specifically live performance:

**Interviewer:** *And why do you go to concerts?*

**"Lucas King":** *I like the experience of seeing a band live. There is a certain energy that you get when you go to see a live band. There's a certain type of fun. I feel like there's this collective experience that you get to experience when you're at any sort of performance art, any sort of live theatre or live music, where you just feel like you're*

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<sup>301</sup> Bratus, "In-Between Performance and Mediatization," 57-58.

*experiencing something that's only going to happen once, and it's this magical kind of feeling that happens. Yeah.*<sup>302</sup>

**Interviewer:** *And do you typically see bands more than once, and if so why?*

**“Sadie Martin”:** *I do. I see the band that I like more than once. I think I can get really like obsessed with the group, and then I'll just like see them over and over and over again. But I don't, but I don't like everything, so when I find something I really like I try to like, I can continue going to see their shows and can continually be excited about it. I know all the words and I like to see, even just the same, the same like set of songs performed, because like it's live music and that's always going to be different. And there's always going to be something slightly new or something you didn't hear before that like, you feel in a different way.*<sup>303</sup>

On the other hand, these live moments are those which are desired by those who are recording. The following provide examples in which this can be seen:

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned Snapchat, I'm just wondering, during a concert performance, how do you use your own cellphone?*

**“Miles Anderson”:** *I definitely tried to use it minimally, but if they're playing the song that I really like or that I really want to share with people, especially if they do it a song differently than it is on the album, or if it's a different version, or if they do like a cover of a song I know that I wasn't expecting. They may never do it again that's like, the really interesting things, that's what I want to see and that's what I want to show people, so that's what I'm looking for and usually I take my phone out for that.*<sup>304</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Why do you choose to sometimes look back at either other people's recordings or on YouTube?*

**“Anthony Taylor”:** *Just live versions, well it depends, it depends on the versions of the songs, like some versions are obviously better live, you know some performers are really good live, so it's nice hearing the live acoustic set at Massey Hall or whatever versus, you know, just a normal audio recording versus a live nice acoustic set, so it just depends on like... Then in studio version, it just depends really on the version of the songs really, so obviously it's nice to hear some of those more studio version songs versus the mainstream how it's played, so.*<sup>305</sup>

In the examples provided, liveness can be understood as an energy which can only be experienced in person. The experience is social in nature, and most importantly, liveness will

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<sup>302</sup> “Lucas King,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>303</sup> “Sadie Martin,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>304</sup> “Miles Anderson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>305</sup> “Anthony Taylor,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, Interview 16, Transcript.



always hold something new. This idea of newness or the finite potential of liveness can be seen in the desire for recorded versions of the material. For example, “Miles Anderson” highlighted the desire to share versions of songs which are uncommon or things which “they may never do it again.” In addition, the sound of live music holds something different to that of recorded music, therefore “Anthony Taylor” reveals the desire to experience live music’s sound after the show, even if they were not the one to record the material. Therefore, social media or sharing platforms are playing a role for those who want to experience a live performance beyond the venue. This point has been made explicitly clear through Bennett’s work with online audiences. While live experiences hold the potential for the unexpected or connection, audience members online are able to tap into that experience through shared material. Additionally, audience members who attended the concerts can review these live elements and remember the experience through the aid of footage captured.

## **Interaction**

The participant observation conducted focused on patterns in cellular usage during concerts as well as the potential of discouragement/encouragement of the technology. Within the five concerts attended, phones were used in every show. Pictures, videos, and audio were captured. In certain cases, the material was immediately shared through social media such as Instagram and Snapchat. While certain artists are concerned with audience members’ phone use as it creates a barrier between themselves and their audience, audience members are using their cellphones, through posting on social media and sharing material through text messages, to interact with the performance in a new way. This new interaction while seemingly displacing the old, is not constant, and extends the boundaries for those who can interact and appreciate the

performance. Other audience members were using their cellphones to text others beyond the venue and scroll social media. The highest concentration of phone use for personal reasons, such as texting, emailing, or scrolling social media was during the intermission of shows. In this, questions considered were what was the purpose of this type of usage? Was it boredom? Was it a way to interact with a friend beyond the venue?

In terms of mediatization, the potential acceptance of this technology would see how the cellphone has been incorporated into forms of interaction. For the purpose of the research conducted, primary interest surrounded the interaction between those within the venue, not beyond. A majority of those interviewed highlighted interaction in terms of physical contact, such as dancing, singing, catching someone's eye, or talking with others, either artists or other audience members. In terms of benefiting interaction, the following describes examples where phones were seen in a positive light.

Demi Lovato's 2014 performance demonstrated an example in which the use of smartphones allowed for increased interaction for audience members with the performance in a "tangible" way. During the single "Neon Lights," audience members with the Demi Lovato app were encouraged to click on the app causing their phones to become "beacons of flowing, multicoloured, pastel light[s]."<sup>306</sup> Further into the concert, audience members' flashlights began to blink in tune with the music. Audience members had the opportunity to participate in the performance in a way that would not be possible without cellphones present. Further, the author describing the concert, explains their feeling of jealousy and being somehow left out by not

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<sup>306</sup> Ben Rayner, "Demi Lovato's Feel-Good Toronto Concert Wins Over Fans, Parents And A Curmudgeonly Critic," *Toronto Star*, 2014, [https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/music/2014/03/27/demi\\_lovatos\\_feelgood\\_toronto\\_concert\\_wins\\_over\\_fans\\_parents\\_and\\_a\\_curmudgeonly\\_critic.html](https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/music/2014/03/27/demi_lovatos_feelgood_toronto_concert_wins_over_fans_parents_and_a_curmudgeonly_critic.html)

being able to participate in these ways. Smartphones are providing new avenues for conversation between artist/s and audience members during performances.

Similarly, the selection to follow, coming from Sanger Yoo, describes another form of interaction with an artist during a live performance. What is interesting and important to note coming out of the interview with Sanger Yoo is the fact that cellphones are not only changing the landscape of rock and pop concerts, but other genres as well. Therefore, while the debate seems concentrated within the rock and pop genres, the cellphone phenomenon is not limited to this scope.

**Sanger Yoo:** *Oh, I wanted to say that I was at a rap concert and they integrated Snapchat in a very interesting way. So they, it's the act, the act's name is Rae Sremmurd, and they saw that somebody who is recording the concert on Snapchat, so the rapper took the phone, put it on selfie mode and started recording themselves, and they were like "hey, this is Ray Sremmurd and I'm here to bless this guy's Snapchat." And they actually like it made it like into somebody's snap, that's kind of integrating social media and their cameras in a very, very realistic way, in a very tangible way, so that's happening more and more these days, actually. You know, artists taking other people's phones and like recording it as part of their story. So yeah, it's always a nice conversation piece, if I were that guy and I would have really liked it, you know, I would've saved it, showed everybody. So that's cool.<sup>307</sup>*

In the examples provided, not only was phone use present, it was enhanced through increased interaction with the artist. In the case of the content analysis example, the writer of the article described feelings of isolation based on a lack of interaction with the performance, due to not engaging in phone use. Further, the fact that cellphone usage was incorporated into the show provides an example of an artist or performer increasing their audience members' participation through phone use which is widespread. On the other hand, Sanger Yoo's mentioning of an artist taking someone's phone to interact with the audience member's social media network is

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<sup>307</sup> Sanger Yoo, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

described in terms of tangibility. The desire for the experience to happen to Sanger Yoo coincides with Baker's discussion on materiality in fandom. For example, the type of material culture accumulated or exchanged reflects the values of the people.<sup>308</sup> In the case of Sanger Yoo, the potential for digital material closely associated with an artist is an item of value and one which is sought after.

On the other hand, the following examples show sentiments on how phone usage was hindering or decreasing meaningful interaction between concert participants, audience members as well as artists:

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones during concert performances?*

**“Mason White”:** *...The recording or taking pictures of the concert because it kind of just, it shows there, there are at least detachment from the concert itself that's going on in front of them and it can take that a little bit, at least, away from you as well, your attachment to the concert in that moment right now that you're experiencing it, experiencing it. So if I had to choose, I would say I would rather look around and see you know, no phones recording stuff, because it would just, it would keep the excitement going for me to see other people dancing around and smiling and, you know, enjoying the music and the setting and stuff. That being said, I understand it.*<sup>309</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones during concert performances?*

**“Harper Robinson”:** *I think it's obnoxious [laughs]. Like obviously everybody uses their cellphone, and like I think it's an important means of communication. But on the other hand, like, I think it's also like, it sort of like separates people from communicating with one another. When someone is constantly texting on their phone, you can't, you know, your face isn't looking up towards a person, you're not really engaging in a conversation with them, and it makes things a little awkward.*<sup>310</sup>

In the cases provided, the use of phones is providing a barrier between participants as well as decreasing physical interaction, such as smiling, dancing, and singing. Further, the use of

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<sup>308</sup> Baker, "THE EXCHANGE OF MATERIAL CULTURE AMONG ROCK FANS IN ONLINE COMMUNITIES," 519.

<sup>309</sup> “Mason White,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 11, Transcript

<sup>310</sup> “Harper Robinson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

texting within the concert venue poses a disengagement from those a participant is attending the performance with. Thus far, in the cases of interaction as well as live vs. recorded, the use of phones has been met with both negative and positive responses. In concurrence with audience members feeling that cellphones hinder interaction, a number of artists agree as well.

A number of examples in which artists argue or have argued that cellphones are hindering interaction can be seen through Pulp singer Jarvis Cocker, Jack White, Black Crows, Bjork, Prince, Beyoncé, and Adele. In an interview with the Guardian, Jarvis Cocker compared concert videos taken on cellphones to wedding videos, in which the material captured "...undermines the experience because it seemed like a really good moment, and now [one] can see it were crap..."<sup>311</sup> For Adele, an audience member's use of a tripod-mounted video camera during a performance in Verona, Italy, prompted Adele to tell the audience member to see her "in real life" emphasizing that this fan could "...enjoy it in real life rather than through [their] camera."<sup>312</sup> Beyond statements during performances or interviews, some artists, such as Prince had done, instituted a no-phone policy during performances in which security is used to enforce said policy.<sup>313</sup> While these artists' demands cause frustration amongst their audience members, it is important to understand the desire behind it. In order for certain performers to get the most out of their experience, there is a need to "feel the vibe." In other words, the necessity of an engaged audience "...in every aspect of the performance" is key to a successful show.<sup>314</sup>

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<sup>311</sup> Tracy Moore, "The Phone Backlash at Shows Is Increasing, But Some Artists Are Embracing It," *620 CKRM: The Source*, 2016, <http://www.620ckrm.com/2016/03/29/colin-the-phone-backlash-at-shows-is-increasing-but-some-artists-are-embracing-it/>.

<sup>312</sup> Jason Osler, "Sorry, Adele: Taking Photos at Concerts Enhances Experience, Study Says," *CBC News*, 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/photos-enhance-experience-adele-concerts-1.3636625>.

<sup>313</sup> Medicine Hat News, "Rock Ramblings: Concert Fans on Cellphones Make It Hard for Performers to 'Feel the Vibe,'" *Medicine Hat News*, 2016, <http://medicinehatnews.com/entertainment/local-entertainment/2016/04/14/concert-fans-on-cellphones-make-it-hard-for-performers-to-feel-the-vibe/>.

<sup>314</sup> Medicine Hat News, "Rock Ramblings: Concert Fans on Cellphones Make It Hard for Performers to 'Feel the Vibe,'" *Medicine Hat News*, 2016, <http://medicinehatnews.com/entertainment/local-entertainment/2016/04/14/concert-fans-on-cellphones-make-it-hard-for-performers-to-feel-the-vibe/>.

While the examples used stress the notion of disconnect or distraction on part of audience members, it is this disconnect that is preventing their interaction.

### **Etiquette/Respect**

One of the issues presented with phone use during concerts is the lack of respect/etiquette demonstrated by phone users during performances. In the contemporary concert space, the felt lack of respect or disrupted concert etiquette creates strained interpersonal interaction for audience members and artists. In addition, these feelings reveal modifications to understandings on acceptable forms of concert experience, in which cellphones hold a key place. Similarly, Lindholm explained how due to changes caused by communication technology, modifications to social practices, norms, and understandings of authenticity will evolve.<sup>315</sup> Therefore, understandings of acceptable interaction and what becomes unacceptable reveals the stage of acceptance to the changed circumstances.

For example, the lack of concern for other audience members is seen to be a central problem for audience members opposed to the use. "Chilling on your cellphone, texting, and scrolling through social media" are actions which are found to be a question of respect and etiquette to the performing artists and nearby audience members.<sup>316</sup> While Danielle Subject describes recording concert material on a different level than "being glued" to one's phone, artists such as The Eagles and Don Henley are not in agreement. The Eagles banned phone use during a 2014 show, and Don Henley likened recording concert material on cellphones to "madness...

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<sup>315</sup> Lindholm, *Culture and Authenticity*, 144-145.

<sup>316</sup> Danielle Subject, "Changing the Subject: Cell Phones at Concerts," *The Ontario*, 2015, <http://www.theontarion.com/2015/11/changing-the-subject-cell-phones-at-concerts/>.

rudeness... [and] thoughtlessness..."<sup>317</sup> Henley goes on to explain the following: "Constantly looking at the world through a viewfinder is not seeing. Listening to live music while recording on a 'smartphone' (or texting every 5 seconds) is not hearing. Experiencing life second-hand is not living. Be here now."<sup>318</sup> The concern demonstrated two points, one being the issue of lack of respect/etiquette amongst audience members, potentially indicating an issue of a lack of control, and the second an issue of the inability of audience members who record to enjoy the live performance. The prioritization of a live experience without cellphones is clear in the provided cases, yet it is not a unanimous opinion.

On the other hand, audience members have demonstrated in their own usage that they are taking into account the feelings of other audience members:

**Interviewer:** *Do you use your own cellphone within a concert venue?*

**Sanger Yoo:** *I do, but I try to limit myself. So there's always the type of person that's going to record every single song, and like they are like, I'm kind of like a photography buff, so they've got their phone, you know, placed vertically in, you know, in portrait mode and they're screaming and shaking at the same time, and I know that like, that footage is going to come out like trash but they just, it's out there. The entire time, and it bothers me a lot. Whereas I take short snippet of maybe like the chorus of a very good song or like my favourite song, throw it up on Snapchat. Pretty much, I try to limit myself, because I know it's very distracting to the people behind you and to the artist.<sup>319</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned taking a picture of yourself or those you're with before and after, why then?*

**"Bailey Edwards":** *... I hate when other people do it, so why should I do it? There are people behind me, why should I, again going back to that concert etiquette, why do I want to bother people?<sup>320</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned keeping the phone down and turn the brightness down, why do you do this?*

**Michael Friedman:** *Just not to bother people. It can be very annoying if you're trying to watch a concert as someone has their phone in the air blocking your view.<sup>321</sup>*

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<sup>317</sup> Tracy Moore, "The Phone Backlash at Shows Is Increasing, but Some Artists Are Embracing It."

<sup>318</sup> Tracy Moore, "The Phone Backlash at Shows Is Increasing, but Some Artists Are Embracing It."

<sup>319</sup> Sanger Yoo, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>320</sup> "Bailey Edwards," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>321</sup> Michael Friedman, Interviewed by Erica Melamed

The pattern of concern towards the lack of respect or etiquette reveals resistance to the acceptance of phone use within the venue. On the other hand, audience members' use is being modified in order to decrease the disturbance posed by their phone use within concert venues. This change may be representing a shift in audience members' use. As the technology's use has had a few years within this context, audience members are learning the boundaries of use and disturbance, coinciding with Wei and Leung's argument for phone usage to be self-controlled.<sup>322</sup>

### **Phone Use as a Distraction/Disconnect vs. Everyday Practice**

A central concern towards phone usage within concert venues surrounds their potential to cause audience members to disconnect or become distracted from the concert experience. This idea has already been mentioned within the subtheme of interaction, as cellphones are seen to disconnect interaction between audience members and audience members with the artist. The cellphone's mediatization of the concert experience is changing the parameters of interaction, causing strain on established interpersonal interaction, while the ability to connect with those beyond the venue is an acceptable everyday practice. The cellphone's mediatization of the concert space is undergoing an uneasy transition as an acceptable concert accessory, but a transition nonetheless.

The following provides an example of the frustration felt towards the distraction that cellphone use creates:

**Interviewer:** ...*what do feel when you see cellphones used during concerts by others?*  
**“Ryder Smith”:** ...*In my opinion, to truly be in the concert experience you have to be off of your devices for a while and just be with whoever is around you, whether it be your friends, whether it be the audience itself, or whether it be the connection you have with*

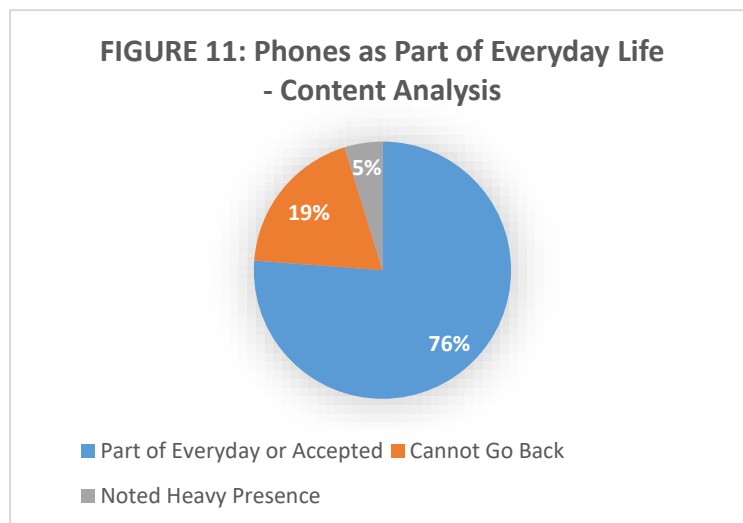
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<sup>322</sup> Wei and Leung, “Blurring private and public behaviors in public space,” 25.



*the band. So you're feeling more of a loss of connection, the more that you use your cellphone at a concert; and that's personally annoying to me to see people pay a lot of money to go to go to a concert and not enjoy the experience, because they're on their phone. And when someone else pulls out their cellphone at a concert, it's visually distracting to myself and other audience members, because you look over at their phone, and then you remember, like it kind of takes you out of the moment for a second, and then it takes you time to get back into that moment, where it's almost like you're being on your own phone, when you're distracted by someone else's.*<sup>323</sup>

While the example given highlights the felt disconnect based on cellphone usage, this concern for cellphone's negative attributes was not the only opinion found. Alternatives to the concern for disconnect include the acceptance of the use as an everyday experience or even a neutrality towards this use. This not only coincides with the participant observation findings in which cellphone usage was common, it would reflect the increasing acceptance of cellular phones within and during concert performances. The following chart breaks down how the content analysis conducted revealed patterns in viewing phone use in concerts as a part of everyday life:



<sup>323</sup> "Ryder Smith," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

Beyond the content analysis, some of the interviewees responded towards cellular use in a similar manner:

**Interviewer:** *So how do you feel when you're seeing other people use their phones during the show?*

**“Olivia Williams”:** *[Feel annoyed] ... Like can you imagine, I feel like early on in the days of cellphones you could've been like “hey, can you put that away,” and I feel like if I asked someone that, like I would be the jerk in the situation, even if they were holding it up in front of me and my face, would be like how dare you. Like this is how we live now.<sup>324</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones during concert performances?*

**“Mia Young”:** *I think it's just like part of it now, like a lot of the concerts I go to, I really don't see very often, like you get like every once in a while someone will pop it up to take a few like pictures, or like if it's someone that's part of the band PR, I will be taking photos and videos and stuff like that...<sup>325</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *What do you do when you see other people use their cellphones?*

**Sanger Yoo:** *Roll my eyes that's the extent of what I can do, I guess. I would, I love to visualize or, like you know fantasize about, like you know snatching their phones and saying live in the moment, like but that's not really my place. It's actually so, these days that, it's kind of the norm now, which is kind of sad, but what can you do?*

**Interviewer:** *What's the norm?*

**Sanger Yoo:** *Having your phone out and taking photos, because that's just what it is.<sup>326</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *How do you feel when you see people using their phones during a concert?*

**“Levi Roberts”:** *There would be, I guess there was a time when that sort of would have been annoying, but I don't really care about it now, sort of accepted that as the way some people want to enjoy the experience or remember the experience or whatever. And if that makes someone happy, fine, as long as it is not interfering with me, I guess [laughs]. So as I said, if it's not in my view or something, again out of the line of sight.<sup>327</sup>*

While certain audience members saw cellphone usage as a part of the concert experience or that it has become the norm, when audience members were asked about their feelings towards others' use, majority found it distracting and there were issues surrounding the amount and

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<sup>324</sup> “Olivia Williams,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>325</sup> “Mia Young,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 10, Transcript.

<sup>326</sup> Sanger Yoo, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>327</sup> “Levi Roberts,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed

duration of recording. Further, the phone's light as well as the raised arms of *filmmers* were seen as an obstruction to their experience or connection with the performance. The following provides an example of such a concern as well as the concern for acting in this way while capturing footage:

**Interviewer:** *What do you mean one of those people?*

**Sharon Nutzati:** *Like one of those people who just like you know, like I see a lot of people who just like watch the show through their phone. They're just like taking video every song, through their phone and I'm like, and it just looks, like I feel almost embarrassed taking videos, I'm just like, oh, I'm one of those people right now.*<sup>328</sup>

According to the findings of all three methodologies conducted, cellphone use in concerts is widespread. No participants of the interviews conducted were unaware of cellphone usage during concerts. Therefore, media-related change in the concert venue involves the widespread use of phones, yet the numerous complaints towards cellphone usage suggest two potential options. On the one hand, the apparent dichotomy between acceptance and resistance can be seen as representing a transitional period in the mediatization process in which a new equilibrium must be found,<sup>329</sup> or it can be viewed as the “conscious decision” to remove the practice, echoing Marshall McLuhan argument that the removal of a practice, such as photography, from a particular context is an action which requires skill.<sup>330</sup> One approach mentioned by a number of audience members was the limiting of phone use. While a few mentioned the removal of phones as ideal, more of the interviewed audience members complaints’ regarded the duration of usage, such as recording for the “whole” concert, and the general solution was limiting the use.

The concern over the disconnect or disrespect cellphone use creates prompted one company to create technology to limit its use. When audience members enter a venue, they will

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<sup>328</sup> Sharon Nutzati, Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 30, Transcript.

<sup>329</sup> Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 1st ed. (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1994), 202.

<sup>330</sup> McLuhan, *Understanding Media*, 192.

be asked to place their cellphones into Yondr cases, which can be kept on their body during the show. While the cellphone may be on the person, the case is locked while within the venue.

These cases allow for "cell free zones" in which audience members have their cellphones on their body, yet they are able to "enjoy the experience without distraction."<sup>331</sup> If an audience member would like to use their cellphone, they need to exit the "Yondr phone-free zone" to have their case unlocked.<sup>332</sup> The creation and use of these pouches stresses the deep concern over the use of cellphones for recording material during live performances. Beyond Yondr, interviewed audience members describe similar sentiments in which a limited approach model would be ideal:

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones during concert performances?*

**“Noah Wilson”:** *I mean, I guess people can do what they want, I mean, ideally. I would probably want to limit it more to camera and video use especially, because it can be distracting to other people in the audience, but I'm not necessarily opposed if it doesn't distract other people...*<sup>333</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cell phones during concert performances?*

**“Liam Moore”:** *I think limited use is a good approach. I find that over usage gets kind of distracting and it takes away from actually like experiencing the concert. I look at concerts as an experience, and I find that to the over usage of cellphones kind of detracts from that and, but limited usage probably provides a better balance.*<sup>334</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Do you use your own cellphone within a concert venue?*

**Sanger Yoo:** *I do, but I try to limit myself. So, there's always the type of person that's going to record every single song, and like they are like, I'm kind of like a photography buff, so they've got their phone, you know, placed vertically in, you know, in portrait mode and they're screaming and shaking at the same time and I know that like, that footage is going to come out like trash but they just, it's out there. The entire time, and it bothers me a lot. Whereas, I take short snippet of maybe like the chorus of a very good*

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<sup>331</sup> Joanne Wilder, "A Solution to Cell Phones Ruining Concerts," *Q107 Toronto*, 2014, <http://www.q107.com/2014/10/01/a-solution-to-cell-phones-ruining-concerts/>.

<sup>332</sup> Joanne Wilder, "A Solution to Cell Phones Ruining Concerts," *Q107 Toronto*, 2014, <http://www.q107.com/2014/10/01/a-solution-to-cell-phones-ruining-concerts/>.

<sup>333</sup> "Noah Wilson," Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 5, Transcript.

<sup>334</sup> "Liam Moore," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

*song or like my favourite song, throw it up on Snapchat. Pretty much, I try to limit myself, because I know it's very distracting to the people behind you and to the artist.*<sup>335</sup>

The desire to appropriate a limited use approach is increasingly coming forward.

Examples regarding artists desiring limited use was mentioned earlier. In the cases provided here, companies and audience members are arguing for limited use, not only for others, but also understanding that they too must limit themselves. The mention of self-regulation comes through in Interview 19. Sanger Yoo was not the only participant who mentioned participating in this practice. In order to gauge the validity to the limited approach taken by certain audience members and even companies such as Yondr, a few ideas ought to be discussed. The concerns of memory, economics, and quality will reveal arguments in favour and against phone use. Through these arguments, potential methods towards phone use in the future will be assessed.

## **Memory**

The major dichotomy in terms of memory and cellphone usage surrounds the conflicting beliefs whether cellphones can act as a memory aid or if their use will detract from the memory of the concert. An additional important pattern found in relation to the topic of memory was the relationship between music and memory. This secondary relationship will be discussed, as it is based on the value associated with the music that audience members' treatment varies. The following selections discuss the correlation between music and memory as felt by interview participants:

**Interviewer:** *Can you also describe your experience at the concert?*

**“Miles Anderson”:** *It was a great time, knew all the words to all the songs, we were all singing along. It was very nostalgic, I feel like for like a lot of people because we grew up*

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<sup>335</sup> Sanger Yoo, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

*when most of their hits came out, and we were also recording a little bit and then on Snapchat...*<sup>336</sup>

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned earlier that there are some bands you've seen more than once, what will make you see a band more than once?*

**“Violet Baker”:** *I guess the baseline of that is how much like that album, like the music they've produced. I don't know for someone like, for a band like brand-new let's say, that's music I listen to when I was like grade 7, grade 8, grade 9 all throughout and I still listen to it, so it also depends on the emotional associations I have with that music and certain songs. And did you do something for me at a meaningful time in my life, or something like that? So I think those are some of the things that make me drawn towards certain musicians, while others I can say are just sort of passing like I enjoy it for the time being, but it's not something that is like near and dear to my heart. Yeah.*<sup>337</sup>

**Interviewer:** *And what factors help you feel best connected with the artist or band that you're seeing?*

**Sanger Yoo:** *Like my previous experiences with them, so I've seen Kanye like four or five times now. And every single time, he does something very different which is good. My connection to the artist it like depends, like I tend to associate specific music with specific trips that I've been on. So, for example, the first time I went to New York, I was listening to Interpol the whole time, and whenever I hear Interpol it reminds me of the first time I went to New York. And when I saw Interpol live and they were performing that song, those songs from that album, it made me kind of nostalgic for that time and it kind of brought good memories, so.*<sup>338</sup>

In the examples provided, the attendance at certain concerts is not simply about enjoying a live performance, but it is based off of a previous connection with that music and attending the show has the potential to revive those feelings or memories. For example, in the cases of “Miles Anderson” and Sanger Yoo, both describe the nostalgic potential of experiencing music live. In the case of “Miles Anderson,” the live performance referred to presents the opportunity to relive music popular when he was growing up. On the other hand, Sanger Yoo highlights the music’s ability to revisit specific memories based on the consumption of music during those specific periods or trips. Similar to Bennett and Rogers’ argument that different modes of physical playback correlate to different life stages of the listener,<sup>339</sup> in the case of the music itself,

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<sup>336</sup> “Miles Anderson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>337</sup> “Violet Baker,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>338</sup> Sanger Yoo, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>339</sup> Bennett and Rogers, “Popular Music and Materiality,” 36-7.

listening to the music acts as indicators of previous life stages. In the case of Sanger Yoo, it is not simply the connection between music and a memory, but the emotional connection as well. It is in this example that the emotional element to memory comes forward, as not only is music an emotional experience, but the ability to revisit or relive that memory is guided by the strength of the emotion associated with it.

In regard to the relation between phone use and memory, the Uses and Gratifications section already highlighted the correlation, as memory is one of the guiding motivations in phone use during performances. The basis of the section to follow is not simply the motivation to remember, but also the way in which material is or is not revisited as well as any negative implications on memory based on phone use.

The desire for memory was seen in the content analysis, where one concert participant was frustrated by the no-phone policy at an Alicia Keys concert, and argued that “[their] phone is how [they keep] their memory.”<sup>340</sup> From the interviews conducted, the motivation for memory was apparent in answering questions relating to what was done once the photos were taken in terms of revisiting material, yet the mention of memory had the highest concentration when interviewees were asked why they take pictures or videos. The following include some of the answers given by audience members to this question:

**Interviewer:** *Why do you take pictures?*

**“Alexandra Jackson”:** *I take pictures, because you're having such a good time in the moment and you know that it's going to be something that you're going to remember for a while and, so it's good to have photos just to look back and remember those good memories, just something to help you remember, I guess. Just to start that memory again.*

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<sup>340</sup> Caitlin Connelly, “Alicia Keys bans phones at her concerts,” *The Social*, June 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, <http://www.thesocial.ca/News/Entertainment/Alicia-Keys-bans-phones-at-her-concerts>.

*But, I guess, some people take photos also just to remind themselves or remind others that they are having a good time, but yeah.*<sup>341</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Why do you record and take pictures? Why do you record videos at concerts?*

**“Ethan Carter”:** *Taking photos again it's just, just to say I was there. This is what it was like, again my own personal history. Recording video like I said I'm trying to stop that. But just more of, yeah, I lived this live performance. This is that performance performing or saying something or doing anything.*<sup>342</sup>

**Interviewer:** *So why do you record videos and take pictures?*

**“Ava Hall”:** *I think it's nice to look back on them, to remember that moment. Sometimes it's nice with friends, because I don't get a lot of pictures with friends, because usually we're just hanging out at home, it's not the kind of thing where you take a picture. Whereas obviously it is at a concert. It's nice to have that, or same with my boyfriend, it's nice to have a video of us, because I never get that.*

**Interviewer:** *How long do you keep the photos or videos once they're taken?*

**“Ava Hall”:** *I do keep them forever; it's just a matter of if I keep them on my phone, or if I load them on the computer and delete them on my phone. I generally keep pretty much everything on my phone. If it's been years, I'll put it on the computer and get rid of it on my phone, but that's mainly if it's the long 4-minute videos of songs, because it takes up a lot of space obviously. I really plan on keeping all of these little videos and photos on my phone. So one other thing you said what do I do with photos; I put them up on the wall, like I've made a collage of the bunch of pictures, and there's a couple of fun concerts on there.*<sup>343</sup>

**Interviewer:** *So why do you record?*

**“Sadie Martin”:** *I think I record to like capture moments in time that I don't want to lose, or that I want to go back to, or like I want to keep in some kind of way...*<sup>344</sup>

In the cases provided, the desire for extending a memory through technical extensions is clear. The desire for collecting memories external to the human mind is also clear. Kitzmann et al. referred to this practice as the externalization of memory; the raw material and techniques for remembering have been externalized to “film, photography, TV and the digital visual media.”<sup>345</sup> While this mediatization of memory is not new, since the twentieth century this process has been

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<sup>341</sup> “Alexandra Jackson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 8, Transcript.

<sup>342</sup> “Ethan Carter,” interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 9, Transcript.

<sup>343</sup> “Ava Hall,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 19<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 12, Transcript.

<sup>344</sup> “Sadie Martin,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>345</sup> Andreas Kitzmann, Conny Mithander, and John Sundholm, *Memory Work*, 1st ed. (Frankfurt am Main: P. Lang, 2005), 11-12.



occurring more and more often as technology evolves.<sup>346</sup> Therefore, when considering the use of phones within concerts, while the volume of phone use has increased, the practice of taking pictures is not a new phenomenon. Further, the desire to maintain these memories either for themselves to review, or the possibility of revisiting down the line, highlights the value of this material. It is not a simple matter of blind recording and then forgetting about the material; photography and videography are active processes, in which audience members are doing so with specific intentions. In this case, reviewing the material is an active process, as one may review collected material from other experiences. The use of pictures, videos, and audio clippings from concerts represents digital material which holds cultural and personal weight to audience members.

On the other hand, several audience members answered that they do not engage in the practice of revisiting or it simply happens by chance. In these cases, a positive memory may emerge for the audience member, or they will delete the photo upon viewing. The second example provides an alternative to what was discussed earlier. In the cases of deleting the material, three patterns emerge: the picture's quality is low, space is needed on the phone, or there is a lack of value held for this type of material.

**“Ryder Smith”:** *No, generally as old as my phone will be, I will have pictures from then. I don't tend to delete many pictures or unless or I need more space in my phone, then I'll go and delete some of the duplicates from concerts. So, if I have 20 pictures from a concert that look very much alike, I will delete 5 or 10 of them.*<sup>347</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Do you revisit material now based on past concerts?*

**“Mason White”:** *Not, not often now. Like I think, whatever material that I look at it from past concerts, I've basically looked at it once to try and organize the stuff. I delete stuff that I didn't like...*<sup>348</sup>

**Interviewer:** *What do you do with the photos or videos once they are taken?*

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<sup>346</sup> Kitzmann et al., *Memory Work*, 14.

<sup>347</sup> “Ryder Smith,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed

<sup>348</sup> “Mason White,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed

**Sharon Nutzati:** *If they are not posted online, usually I will just delete it after. Just because it like takes up so much space and I don't know. It was so weird because I'm like, I don't like too much, like I don't like clutter in general, especially on my phone. I don't have the space for like 100 photos, of some photos, that when I'm going to look back I'm not going to know what band, I'm not even going to look back at it. How often do you like take a good jillion photos, you post them online and then you're like oh I want to look back, remember that great time that we had like, like I never do that. I looked through my phone and I'm like why do I still have this photo? When did I even take this photo?*<sup>349</sup>

Another trend in the discussion of memory is the potential for recording to diminish one's memory of the event. The parameters of this research were concerned with the preference for a memory in opposition to a recording. While this was the primary concern, the work of Henkel describes quantifiable loss in recalling memories associated with picture taking based on different picture-taking practices.<sup>350</sup> While this work reveals the potential loss of recalling details beyond the picture's frame, Henkel notes that future research must consider how memory is affected when a person is free to take pictures of what they choose.<sup>351</sup> The following provides an example of an interviewee who felt that memory was in opposition to recording:

**Interviewer:** *Recently, Adele actually stopped her performance to speak with an audience member who was recording during her concert and asked, telling them that she was there in real life and to enjoy it as such, and I'm just wondering what your thoughts are on Adele's statement?*

**“Piper Green”:** *At her statement, I totally believe it. I think that our whole generation is so distracted with keeping those memories, and posting them, and making sure everyone else knows about how happy they were at that point, but they weren't really experiencing it. They were just watching it through their phone, which they'll do the next day and the next day. They weren't actually watching her.*<sup>352</sup>

The work of a team of researchers from the University of Southern California, Yale University, and the University of Pennsylvania found that the act of taking a picture can enhance

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<sup>349</sup> Sharon Nutzati, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>350</sup> L. A. Henkel "Point-And-Shoot Memories: The Influence of Taking Photos on Memory for a Museum Tour," *Psychological Science* 25, 2 (2013): 401, doi:10.1177/0956797613504438.

<sup>351</sup> Henkel "Point-And-Shoot Memories," 401.

<sup>352</sup> "Piper Green," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

the experiences had.<sup>353</sup> Contingent on this enhancement is intention; therefore, in order for enjoyment to be increased through photo-taking, the process must involve a conscious decision in what is photographed and how.<sup>354</sup> Hence, the concern over blind recording remains, yet the inclusion of recording material during performances cannot be automatically considered detrimental to individual experiences of the concert. This coincides with van Dijck's argument that memory is an active process, as it involves a decision made to freeze time.<sup>355</sup> The following examples include audience members' efforts to capture a memory through the use of their cellphones:

**“Ryder Smith”:** *So generally, my personal use of cellphones is heavier towards the beginning, because I like to take my pictures, and then turn it off afterwards. That way, I can feel more connected, and I don't have to have my phone with me at the concert...*<sup>356</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Do you use your own cellphone during concerts?*

**“Liam Moore”:** *Yes, so I take pictures, usually before, during and after. I take maybe one or two videos, but that's about it.*

**Interviewer:** *Why do you use your cell phone for those reasons?*

**“Liam Moore”:** *Let's say, you know, I like a song from a particular artist and they happen to be performing it live. I tend to use that as a memory. Something I can go back to on my phone later on and be like oh yeah this was cool, I was here and I got to experience that.*<sup>357</sup>

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned taking a few photos towards the beginning, when towards the beginning?*

**Sharon Nutzati:** *Like in that first song that the band plays. Usually like this is a little trick, that's usually when the photographers come out, they'll play two or three songs and generally a photographer has those first 15 minutes to get their shot, and then they have to leave, so the light shows usually like really good in the beginning. The band knows that people are there taking photos, so they're going to be a little bit more photo genic, they're not as sweaty, they're not like you know, I've seen tons of shows, people you know, it gets hot up there, the lights are freaking hot and you're going to start taking off parts of your cool outfit and at the end of the show, people look so much different than the beginning...*<sup>358</sup>

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<sup>353</sup> Osler, "Sorry, Adele."

<sup>354</sup> Osler, "Sorry, Adele."

<sup>355</sup> van Dijck, "Mediated Memories," 263.

<sup>356</sup> "Ryder Smith," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

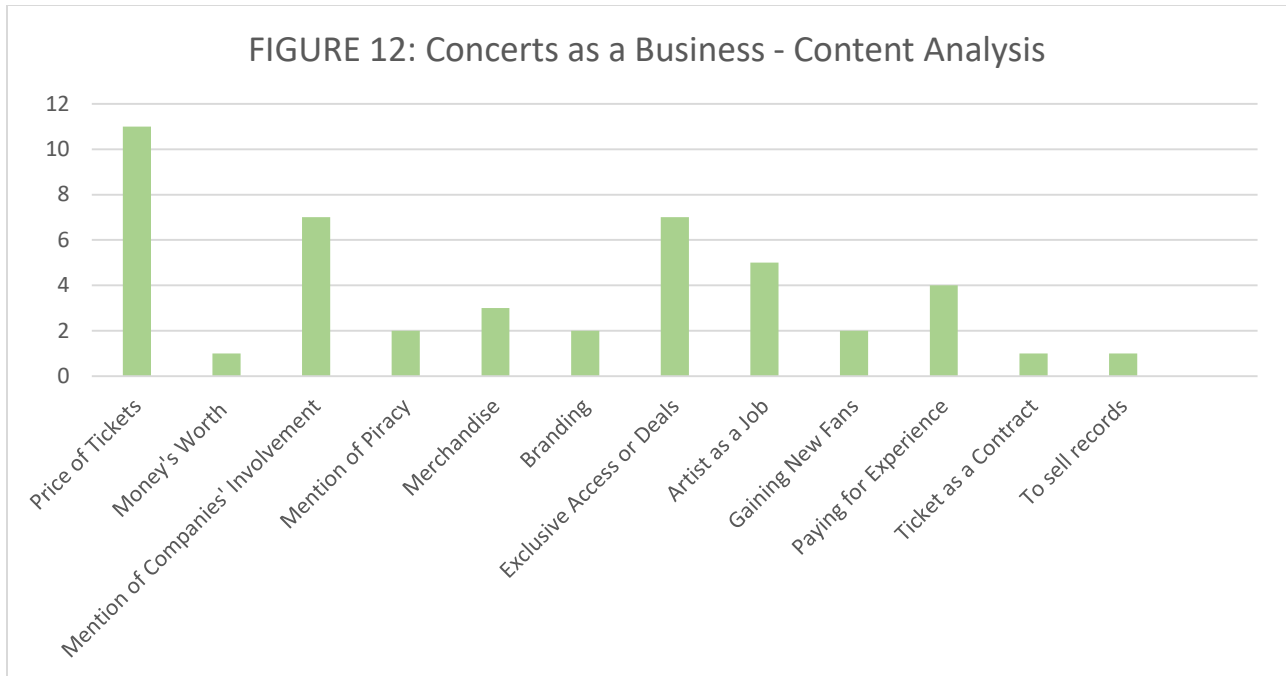
<sup>357</sup> "Liam Moore," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>358</sup> Sharon Nutzati, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

This practice of capturing a memory shows the value associated not only with the concert, but the ability to have a piece of it once the experience is over. Not only is evidence desired, but specific aspects. For example, the desire for photo taking towards the beginning of a performance can be seen by “Ryder Smith” as a way to enjoy the experience afterwards, or according to Sharon Nutzati, it provides the best picture quality. Furthermore, this coincides with the view that audience members are active individuals, and even in the pursuit of the same goal different methods are employed.

## **Economics**

While the discussion of cellphone usage and the concert experience until this point has been concerned with the interaction between audience members or between artists and their audience in terms of connecting or the ability to capture these finite experiences, there has been no mention of the economic angle of this discussion. To discuss the findings relating to economic concerns, this section will be broken down into the following subthemes: the concert as a business, cost of tickets as a mediating factor, and the benefit of phone use for artists. The following were the economic trends found within the content analysis’ findings:



The chart above breaks down the 46 mentions of the economic nature of concerts in terms of pricing, a company’s involvement, and methods of gaining income through concerts. References to the business side of the concert experience raise questions for how it affects audience members:

*“It’s like the bigger the act gets the more expensive it is, so it’s really frustrating,” said Camacho.<sup>359</sup>*

The reasons for these rising costs were varied. For example, despite the popularity of an artist, there has been a decline in record sales, therefore if the business is to be profitable, the cost of tickets needed to rise.<sup>360</sup> Further, Jon Weisz, founder of concert promoter Indie Montreal, emphasized that while CD and records contained a great deal of information on the artists and

<sup>359</sup> Katherine D’Adamo, “Why Are Concert Tickets So Expensive?” *The Concordian*, 2015, <http://theconcordian.com/2015/03/why-are-concert-tickets-so-expensive/>.

<sup>360</sup> D’Adamo, “Why Are Concert Tickets So Expensive?”

their music, with the advent of digital music files, it is now through live performances that audience members are able to interact with the artists.<sup>361</sup>

Regarding the influence of economics on audience members' experiences, in the interviews which did not include questions of financial influence, the interviewees brought up the topic themselves. Based on this fact, the economic side to concerts has an influence on the experience of audience members. For example, the cost and location of seats revealed the economic influence of concerts for individual concertgoers:

**Interviewer:** *When you go to a concert typically what factors impact where you'll, where you're located, if you're sitting or standing, as well as where within the venue, in general?*

**“Alexandra Jackson”:** *For me, usually, I look at the cost of the ticket. So, I'm not going to spend 300 dollars on a floor ticket, if I could spend like \$40 or \$50 on a ticket that's further away, so I would say that price definitely impacts the most. But if it's a free concert I guess it's just how much I like the band, how early I want to show up for the concert, and usually I would try and get as close as possible, but obviously like time, like how long do you want to stand in line, how much do you want to pay?<sup>362</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *Do you typically see bands more than once?*

**Danielle Knoll:** *I guess that also depends on the factors you just asked me, like it depends on the cost, date and time, because I mean like I'm seeing Alessia Cara tomorrow and I saw her when she was here in November so I feel like my favourite artists, I, I'll always try and see them whenever I can, same with like friends in the city who are bands and artists, I'll try and see them as much as I can. Yeah, I guess, I would go if it was always available and like affordable. I would always go again, because why not? If it's good and you enjoy it, then why not, right?<sup>363</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *What factors influence your attendance at a given concert?*

**“Bailey Edwards”:** *Oh, like cost, so my budget. Depending on also the seats, so like if, if the ideal, like we were talking about the seats that, ideally, we'd choose, so if it's too expensive, I won't go. That's probably it, even if I, company doesn't bother me. If my friends I want to go to concert with and I want to go, if I could afford it I will go. I don't mind going alone. I have not done that before, but I would if... If nobody would want to*

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<sup>361</sup> D'Adamo, "Why Are Concert Tickets So Expensive?"

<sup>362</sup> "Alexandra Jackson," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>363</sup> Danielle Knoll, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

*go with me, but it's mostly cost and travel. So, if it's not local, if it's like in Quebec or something, like how, how would I get it? Like those are the two factors.*<sup>364</sup>

In the cases provided, the concern for cost is important. In accordance with the findings of Brown and Knox,<sup>365</sup> the price of tickets acts as a motivator or potential deviator for audience members to attend live performances. Further, depending on the performer, an audience member may be more or less willing to attend. Again, the price is not the sole factor in audience members' decision to attend.<sup>366</sup> For example, "Bailey Edwards" emphasized that depending on how much an artist is liked as well as the cost, she would be willing to attend the performance alone. Further, Danielle Knoll mentioned the desire for repeated attendance as long as she is available and the performances are affordable to attend. Other audience members mentioned only being able to repeat attendance if the artist was well liked by them, yet their previous attendance could justify not attending as the cost could be attributed to other artists.<sup>367</sup>

Another trend coming from audience members in relation to cellphone use was sentiment based on their purchasing tickets; their experience should not be dictated by others. In other words, they should be able to pay for their desired experience. Interestingly, audience members in favour and against phone use have used this argument.

The following selection comes from an audience member in relation to Adele stopping her performance to ask an audience member to stop using their cellphone during the performance:

**Interviewer:** *Can you just expand on that?*

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<sup>364</sup> "Bailey Edwards," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>365</sup> Brown and Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts?" 9-10.

<sup>366</sup> Brown and Knox, "Why Go to Pop Concerts?" 9-10.

<sup>367</sup> "Levi Roberts," Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 28, Transcript; Sharon Nutzati, interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 14<sup>th</sup>, 2016, interview 30, transcript.

**“Emma Jones”:** *If you're the one paying to go to see a performance, you're the one who has put in the time and effort. You've put out of your life to actually go and experience this, and what you take away from it should be your choice, not somebody else's. But I understand where she's coming from in the sense that she wants her audience members to live in the moment as well as not distract other people's experiences in that moment.*<sup>368</sup>

The following quote comes from an audience member who attended a private concert in the home of George Stroumboulopoulos in which for one take no phones were to be used:

**Interviewer:** *And what were your thoughts on their request, what was your reaction?*

**Danielle Knoll:** *I just thought it was completely fair like if you're going to be filming something... and it was free too, so like we were invited so, you know, yeah, it's one thing if, you like paid to go to a concert and then you're like well I can use my phone; I paid to be here, but being invited into their homes, yeah, I think that was very fair.*<sup>369</sup>

Within the two cases presented from the interviews conducted, the notion of getting one's money's worth clearly plays a role. Most concerts are not free, and therefore, like any other paid experience, a negative experience is undesirable. In relation to phone use, both presented cases arguing in favour of an individual choosing to use their phone or not. In addition, Danielle Knoll emphasizes the difference between a free and paid experience. If the experience is free, then more accommodation will occur than if the experience were paid.

On the other hand, the desired limitation of phone use as described by audience members and particular artists has not remained unnoticed. While Apple has begun research into the potential for limiting phone use or implementing a watermark on material captured during concerts, this has yet to come into effect.<sup>370</sup> The company Yondr was created for the sole purpose of limiting phone use during concert performances. The company's founder, Graham Dugoni, created the company after seeing what he felt was inconsiderate phone use between audience

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<sup>368</sup> “Emma Jones,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>369</sup> Danielle Knoll, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>370</sup> Avneet Dhillon, "Apple Patents Technology That Could Stop You from Recording Concerts," *CBC News*, 2016, <http://www.cbc.ca/news/trending/apple-patent-concert-photos-1.3657720>.



members. The technology involves a locked pouch in which audience members must keep their phone in for the duration of the performance.<sup>371</sup> The pouch can stay on their person, yet it limits the possibility for inconsiderate or unwanted use. While this pouch is seen to be providing the opportunity to limit leaked footage as well as provide artists with their desired experience of minimizing phone use, the company itself is dependent on audience members' desire to use their phones in the context. Further, while Yondr has the ability to prevent phone use, the issue of cost remains. "Who is going to pay for it? The venue? Not likely."<sup>372</sup> Further, the issue of how venues can ensure that phones are not hidden remains ambiguous. When not all artists are viewing phone use as an issue, how often would this policy be instituted, and would it be economical to incorporate this technology into the performance of some artists?

Another trend under the economic influence of concerts relating to phone use is the beneficial potential of phone use for helping artists gain exposure or new fans. Within this trend, it is audience members' recording of material through pictures, video, or audio and then sharing the material that it would actually work in favour of artists. In accordance with Dallas Smythe's theory of "audience commodity," the audience members are valued for the labour they conduct on behalf of the artist/s.<sup>373</sup> The artists most interested in this potential come from emerging or local artists who are working to gain a larger following or the necessary exposure. The following comes from local artists interviewed who described the benefit of phone use:

**Interviewer:** *What are your thoughts on cellphone usage during a performance?*

**Danielle Knoll:** *I think I said this earlier, I think as an independent artist trying to get out there and gain more exposure and fans, it's really helpful to me when other people take videos and pictures of me and post them. So, from that standpoint, I like it and it*

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<sup>371</sup> Geoff Edgars, "How Alicia Keys Banned Phones from Her Concert," *Toronto Star*, 2016, <https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/music/2016/06/22/how-alicia-keys-banned-phones-from-her-concert.html>.

<sup>372</sup> Wilder, "A Solution to Cell Phones Ruining Concerts."

<sup>373</sup> Dallas Smythe, "On the Audience Commodity and Its Work," 195.

*makes me feel good. I haven't experienced too much like flash and stuff like that to make it like really annoying, but I've also only kind of been playing smaller shows. Yeah so, I think maybe it's just like where I'm at, like my level right now, I don't find it's been affecting me negatively, yeah.*<sup>374</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Just shifting gears a little bit, just towards you as an artist. As an artist, what are your thoughts on cellphone usage during a performance?*

**Jonathan Friedman:** *I think it's really helpful for me as a, as an artist who doesn't have a lot of followers yet. It's kind of just starting for us, so when somebody takes a photo with us or videotapes any content and posts it, it's really helpful, because then more people see oh that is Six At Best. And a lot of people who don't know us will then be like "oh, when are they playing next?"*<sup>375</sup>

**Interviewer:** *What are your thoughts as an artist on phone use?*

**Sharon Nutzati:** *Oh, I love it. I love it because that's the thing again like if someone took a photo of me at a show and then they posted it, I'm like oh my G-d! Wow! Someone cared enough to post this photo of me, like that's so cool. It makes you feel like great, it makes you feel great. Also, like who doesn't like photos of themselves, like even if they are horrible, even if it's a horrible photo, I will repost it, I don't care what I look like. This is great, someone took an action shot from the crowd, like this is cool. So yeah, I just love it, yeah.*<sup>376</sup>

The desire for material captured by the audience mentioned demonstrates more than the desire for a confidence boost. The benefit of the audience's labour mentioned here echoes Galuszka's "fans as filters." While Galuszka's case involved certain audience members as publishers through netlabs,<sup>377</sup> the ability of cellphones to capture images and then post material online expands the pool for potential publishers. In the contemporary context, in which cellphone ownership, with online capabilities, has increased significantly, the ability to publish material has never been faster or easier through the use of social media platforms. This type of help has not been unnoticed by audience members. Interviewees who were not artists themselves discuss the benefit of phone use for artists:

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<sup>374</sup> Danielle Knoll, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>375</sup> Jonathan Friedman, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>376</sup> Sharon Nutzati, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>377</sup> Patryk Galuszka, "New Economy of Fandom," *Popular Music and Society* 38, 1 (2014): 37-8, doi:10.1080/03007766.2014.974325.

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones during concert performances?*

**“Sadie Martin”:** *...And just, like I know a lot of DIY musicians and musicians who are out there like writing every day, and a lot of what they do is give away free music. A lot of what they do. So, one of my friends, Rich Aucoin, so after every show, he'll put up his personal phone number, and he'll say text my phone number and I'll send you my entire album for free. And he does that every single show, and everybody who texts his number gets his entire album for free, and, and I don't, like I think that that just promotes, you just listen to the album and you're like I want to go to a show again. I want to like buy the new album coming out, because like, it's this idea where like now you've shared something with the artist and now you have this personal connection with him. Then the other thing that I think is really good for DIY artists at least is... It's really marketing. Any kind of, any kind of video that somebody shares, their friends, like I'll share a video and my friends will be like what band is this, who is this, when were they in Toronto? And it's like this, it's like marketing, because you have, if I'm in something, there's a chance that at least 15 people in my social media circle would also be interested in the same kind of music so it's really, I think in the artists' best interest to have these short 15 minute videos that gives people a taste of maybe not like a full concert recording, I only think that because, who has like the attention span, but like, the short 15 minute videos where you get a glimpse into a concert you weren't at, and you get to that like FOMO and you want to go and you're like "oh I missed something, I want to, I wanted to be at that concert. That looks like so much fun."<sup>378</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *Do you use your own cellphone within a concert venue?*

...

**Michael Friedman:** *...Knowing that they had some high-quality videos online already and yeah after watching them once or twice, I found that like after that I wasn't really gonna watch it again, and I would probably just turn to those higher quality videos anyways, so yeah. I'm just like there's no point unless the band has no exposure and you are helping to get them exposure. Which you always are when you post stuff online, but if they already have better quality online and people watch that it doesn't really do much.<sup>379</sup>*

The selections taken from the audience members' perspectives show the acknowledgement that cellphones have the potential for benefits to the artist. Michael Friedman states that he will only share if he knows that the artist has a lack of a presence online. On the other hand, “Sadie Martin” is clearly in favour of the use. “Sadie Martin” also mentioned during the interview how she has on occasion worked with more DIY artists, who value this phone use. Further, “Sadie Martin” mentioned cases in which the attempt was made to capture the perfect

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<sup>378</sup> “Sadie Martin,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>379</sup> Michael Friedman, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

picture of an artist-audience interaction, for an artist who is her friend to have their desired visual effect to be captured on camera. The description of labour described by “Sadie” can be understood according to Galuszka’s “fans as co-creators” in which an individual will help an artist/band with PR or organizing shows.<sup>380</sup> The difference in the case presented here is that “Sadie” was already friends with the artists she helped, rather than forming a connection on the basis of labour as demonstrated by Galuszka. Finally, “Sadie” stresses audience members’ participation through their phone use as a free form of marketing, in which potential future fans or audience members are given a taste of the experience to raise interest and attendance at the next performance. This type of audience labour, again, refers to fans as “filters” or publishers, who can act in favour of the performer/s.

The consideration of economic implications of phone use revealed the rising cost of tickets, audience members’ concerns with rising prices, the potential decrease in attendance based on price, as well as the potential benefits of phone use for local or DIY artists. Interestingly, while phone use has been described as a source of disconnect/distraction from the concert experience, there were no comments from audience members on how phone use specifically would decrease the likelihood of their repeat attendance. Concerns regarding repeat attendance included the quality of the performance, new material, the cost of tickets, and availability. The advantageous applications of phone use as free marketing are not a point that should be minimized. This action is aiding in the circulation of material when shared through social media and increasing the confidence of these smaller artists, as audience members are using their cellphones to connect and interact with the performing artist. The lack of complaints from local artists regarding the recording of material during performances reveals a potentially

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<sup>380</sup> Galuszka, "New Economy of Fandom," 33.

tiered approach towards phone use among artists. Perhaps larger artists such as Adele, Jack White, and Peter Frampton are taking issue due to a lack of connection felt in the larger venues in which they play, where phone use may be more widespread. It is worth noting that one of the artists interviewed stressed that while performing in local cafés, the lack of engagement from audience members caused negative feelings for the artists as well as bruising their egos.<sup>381</sup> Therefore, the issue of a lack of interaction can be seen even among local artists.

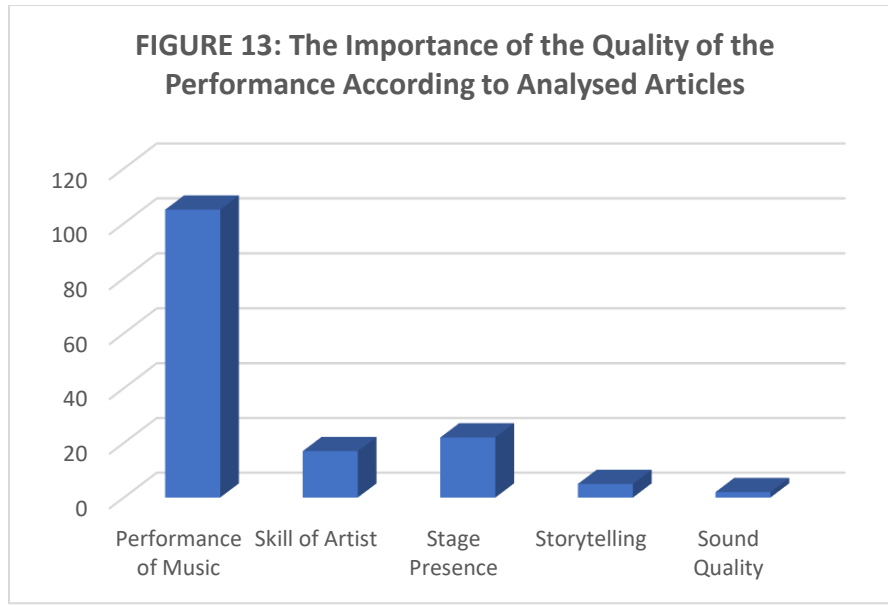
## **Quality**

A central topic important to audience members' concert experience surrounded quality. The concern for quality in a concert experience is no longer limited to the quality of the artist/s performance. Cellphone use has created two additional streams in which quality is assessed; firstly, other audience members' cellphone use has become a mediating factor to which one's concert experience is appraised, and secondly, the quality of material captured on one's cellphone is measured in terms of quality for "share-ability" and revisiting that lived finite experience.

The highest category coming out of the content analysis was the "quality of performance central to the experience." The breakdown on this category is as follows:

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<sup>381</sup> "Levi Roberts," interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, interview 28, transcript.



The importance of quality is central to the authors of the analysed articles. Given that a majority of the articles considered were essentially concert reviews, the dominance of this “Quality” category did not come as a surprise. The highest category, “performance of music,” included evaluations of an artist/ band’s performance. The second highest categories were references to the artist’s presence on stage, both positive and negative. The lowest categories included direct mentions of the skill of an artist or the sound quality of a venue. While this category was dominant, further research was needed to see whether this category was important to audience members or was it simply a result of analysing concert reviews.

During the concerts attended in the participant observation stage of the research, phone use peaked during instances of audience engagement, such as when audience members were standing, singing along, etc. Audience members stressed, during the interview stage of this research, that quality was central to their experience. Audience members' concern for quality includes: a concern for the artist’s engagement and performance, interacting with other audience members, and sound quality. In terms of cellphone use mediating the quality of experience, both

positive and negative accounts are found. The negative accounts on phone use during concert experiences include the inability to see the performance and the practice of restricting mobility in the process of picture taking. On the other hand, there is a great deal of effort and thought that audience members are putting into their picture taking process as well as the potential for altering the captured material, in which quality is paramount.

The following include a selection of quotes coming from interviews in which audience members stress the quality of the performance viewed:

**Interviewer:** *Is your seat important to you within a venue, and if so, why?*

**Michael Friedman:** *Well yeah it is if I like the band, I'm going to want, like it depends on if I know that the band presents in a certain way. So I know this band called Let Live, and like I know the show is very important. He is like always moving around, jumping a lot, throwing water on fans, running around and since it's like metal, he's like screaming and stuff, so like you feel that energy and it's more, you could feel the energy more, so. For that, I would like to be closer up for that. But if it's like an old time band that I like, like Supertramp or something like that, or Styx, it's not as important to me to be way up at the front, especially if it is sitting like I am, yes just. The more I like the band or the more I feel like the band's energy plays a big role based on where I'm sitting, that's where I will stand or sit.<sup>382</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe the last concert you attended?*

**“Penelope Lee”:** *Anyways I went to, I can't remember the name of the band at the moment. They are some crazy weird little hipster Icelandic band that mostly sings in a made-up language, and so it's more about like the visceral experience of the music and like the lighting and stuff like that. So they did this very cool light show, where initially they were in front of the light screens and they do light screens to try and mimic like the supposed effect that they're trying to come up with their music, and then in the second half they went behind the light screen. So it was really cool, because it had like the actual I guess like the shape of the band members, and like how they were playing, and stuff was much larger in terms of the screens, so it sort of magnifies the experience ...<sup>383</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe the last concert that you attended?*

...

**“Owen Collins”:** *I went with my friend Ryder and he and I both were going to see this band that we both enjoy, and it was at the Phoenix in Toronto. And the Phoenix is a, it's a Dancehall that you can tell was definitely used for something like a Canadian version of the acid testing in the 60s. It was dark, it was quaint, it had an elevated band at the top*

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<sup>382</sup> Michael Friedman, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>383</sup> “Penelope Lee,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

*where people could stand and be in some sort of a boxes. And we walked in and there were, the only noise coming out of the main speakers was... like I remember it so vividly because it was a small stage and the opener came up, the opener was the most horrendous piece of shit I've ever seen in my life. Excuse my language, but he was awful. He walked on stage with this persona that he was a troubadour but mixed with Jack Whitechutzpah to him, and he walks up, and he had a shirt with one button done up and he proceeds to plug-in and play music that is so out of tune and so unrehearsed with his bandmates, it was so out of place. I relented, because I assumed that someone obviously paid him enough money that he showed up and played crap for 35 minutes, I looked at my friend Ryder and he is very much taller than me, and I looked up to him and I said "when will this shit end?" ...<sup>384</sup>*

Based on the information gathered, the quality of a performance involves an artist's engagement as well as their skill as an artist. This can be seen through Michael Friedman's interview, where it was through an artist's engagement that a connection was formed. On the other hand, "Owen Collins" provided an example in which the performance quality was extremely poor. The interviewee notes on issues of stage presence, dress, and a lack of musical ability. The inability of the artist to perform well left this audience member with a clearly negative attitude towards the experience.

Other than the skill of the artist or interaction with them physically, "Penelope Lee" reveals the ability of technical production to "[magnify]" the experience. "Penelope Lee" goes into detail of the artists' efforts to create an experience for the audience and their performance. While this effort can be considered a form of engagement, the use of technology is important to note. Once again, it reveals the concert space to already have been mediatized, in a way which enhances the experience, coinciding with Auslander's argument that the concert is already a mediatized space.<sup>385</sup> Furthermore, "Penelope" also mentioned the importance of proximity for a visual experience such as the one referred to above.<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>384</sup> "Owen Collins," Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016, Interview 23, Transcript.

<sup>385</sup> Auslander, *Liveness*, 90-98.

<sup>386</sup> "Penelope Lee," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.



In addition to interaction with the artist as an important marker for quality, a few of the interviewees noted on the importance of their experience in relation to other audience members.

Based on this, audience interaction also plays a role in the quality of the experience.

**Interviewer:** *How would you describe your ideal concert experience?*

**“Bailey Edwards”:** *I'll tell you, [last] it's a good question. OK, I went to a concert this, this past summer with this like Yemenite/Arabic/Jewish band, it's like three sisters from Israel who came in, and it was, this is a little bit of my ideal concert. I didn't know the language fully, but I enjoy their music and I was with my really good friends and my parents as well came. So my family was there as well, and it was in a bar setting, so there was bars on the sides, where you know you could order drinks, but what was so amazing about this, this experience was that there weren't any seats. Everyone is standing very close to the stage. Actually, there weren't that many people there, so we were just dancing the whole time. And like there was room to do that, but like, they got people to go on stage and dance. The encores were amazing. After we even met them and had a conversation with them.*

*... We were just like singing and dancing and it was more intimate and there were no seating and I felt like there was no judgment. And not that many people had their cellphones out. I don't think anybody had, I think I took like two pictures. There weren't that many cellphones because everyone is just too busy enjoying the music and... And it wasn't, it wasn't just standing there and listening to a band, I was singing and dancing to it and not, no judgement basically...<sup>387</sup>*

**Interviewer:** *How would you describe your ideal concert experience?*

**“Sofia Parker”:** *My ideal concert experience. I don't know, I think, think the people I'm with have a really big impact on my ideal concert experience...*

*I don't know, my friend, one of my friends does this one part in his act where he brings out a parachute and everybody pulls the parachute over their heads, and then everybody gets like really quiet under the parachute and he's singing and then as the song builds, there's a moment where everybody is just like raging under the parachute, and it brings back those feelings of when you were little kid at gym class and you were like, they got the parachute out and everybody was really excited for it. And this is like that, and you just have this communal moment with like 300 kids you don't know, and you're just like, you're singing about, his songs have a lot to do with like living in the moment and, and like allowing yourself to enjoy your life. So you have this very euphoric feeling and you're connecting with all these strangers, you don't really know but you're just like looking at each other in the eye and smiling and dancing and having this like really important like moment, and he's right in the middle of, he's not like on stage performing to you, he's like right in the middle and you're like screaming into his microphone, and it's just like this is he, sweaty dance party under a parachute. And like nothing else exists outside of the*

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<sup>387</sup> “Bailey Edwards,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

*parachute. It's a really fun, I think that's my favorite. I think I've done it like, probably over 15 times. [Laughs]. So, it's just the best.*<sup>388</sup>

While the two examples given for audience interaction are long in length, they demonstrate the importance of interaction between the participants. For “Bailey Edwards,” the fact that so much of the audience was standing and therefore dancing, provided the desired interaction with other audience members. Further, for “Bailey Edwards,” while a few photos were taken, the overall interaction without phone use was desirable and allowed for further interaction. Therefore, for “Bailey Edwards,” phone use ought to be considered for holding the potential to limit interaction.

For “Sofia Parker,” on the other hand, having a personal connection with the artist, it is through the artist’s work to connect the audience members to one another that interaction can be achieved. The ability to look at other audience members and see them smiling or dancing within the parachute mentioned provides an experience in which nothing exists beyond the space. Further, the repeated engagement in this parachute practice emphasizes the value held by “Sofia Parker” towards this type of interaction. Some of the local artists interviewed described that during their performances, their attention is focused on playing the music, and it is through music they are connecting with their audience.<sup>389</sup> While the sharing of their music is a primary concern, some of the artists highlighted further forms of interaction with their audience:

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned talking to your audience, but what are the forms of interaction with your audience?*

**Danielle Knoll:** *I like to be really casual, like I feel like a lot of artists plan out or write out their banter, and I kind of tried to do that when I was younger and starting out, but it's just, it's just, I just personally like to just you know speak as it happens. And like the night, every night is different, every time you're going to feel a difference, you're gonna say different things. And I just like to play on the crowd, so you know if somebody in the*

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<sup>388</sup> “Sofia Parker,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 27, Transcript.

<sup>389</sup> “Levi Roberts,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 28, Transcript.

*back like shouts something out that's silly, I'll be like what was that? And like you know talk about it, so just, just casual playing on whatever is happening.*<sup>390</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Why do you do live performances?*

**Sharon Nutzati:** *It feels so good. Oh, it's the best. It's the best feeling, because you're sitting there and no matter how shitty you are, people are still going to clap for you. It's crazy! It's like the most nuts thing ever! But it just, it feels good. Like I don't know, I write a lot of songs, and when you are being creative, there's a lot of self-doubt that goes into that, just in general. With anything that you do you know you're always like "oh, is this good enough, are people going to like it, like am I going to like it?" Like things like that. And then when you show people what you've done and they clap for you or they tell you how great it was, or like I have had people that come up to me and say like "this song made me cry," or "this song helped me through this thing," or like "your album is like getting me through my break up right now." And I'm like, "what? Are you sure?! Me?!" And that just feels amazing, because like my album was about me through my break up, because that is how I wrote it...*<sup>391</sup>

The quote from Danielle Knoll highlights how she chooses to interact with her audience during her performance beyond her music. Further, Danielle Knoll mentioned during the interview, how she evolved from prepared banter to the described "casual" version in which she interacts with her audience in real-time. This change is important to consider as the form of interaction with her audience was placed as valuable, and therefore effort went into changing it to its current format. The quote coming from Sharon Nutzati presents another important aspect of interaction, the gratification achieved through playing to an active audience. The interaction beyond the performance, speaking to audience members, shows the value associated with this type of interaction for learning the value of their music to their audience members and potential for learning how to improve moving forward.<sup>392</sup>

Another trend in which quality played a role for audience members was found in sound quality. Audience members described positioning themselves in specific locations within the

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<sup>390</sup> "Danielle Knoll," Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>391</sup> Sharon Nutzati, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>392</sup> Danielle Knoll, Interviewed by Erica Melamed; Sharon Nutzati, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

venue, in order to achieve the best sound quality possible. Another example found involves the sound quality of the space as a marker for a good venue. In the cases described in which sound quality plays a role, it is the quality of sound that reflects the value of the experience. The following provides one example in which the importance of sound quality can be seen to contribute to the overall quality of their experience:

**Interviewer:** What factors help you feel better connected with the artist or band that you're seeing?

**Danielle Knoll:** So, like I said about the interaction, but specifically, in terms of what you asked ... Like if the artist is going into detail about like you know why they wrote this song, or why they're doing what they're doing. Also, also when I was talking about the sound, like if the sound is really good, each band member will shine and like, you know, because I feel like sometimes you can like see a band member really rocking out, but you can't really hear what they're doing, because their guitar or their keyboard is not loud enough, so definitely proper sound helps with connecting with the band members more just like musically and like hearing what they're doing.<sup>393</sup>

The importance placed on the quality of experience through interaction and sound quality begs the question of how the use of cellphones is changing forms of interaction and opinions on how it is affecting feelings of quality. In terms of the negative sentiment felt towards cellphone use during performances, trends found include the obstruction phones possess from connecting to the experience as well as the lack of body movement while taking pictures:

**Interviewer:** *How was your concert experience once cellphones were removed?*

**“Liam Moore”:** *Much better.*

**Interviewer:** *How so?*

**“Liam Moore”:** *You actually got it take in a lot more than you would being on your phone, because the phone I find it's a form of distraction to the person. You're not able to, like, take in everything, and you could miss some like, like a song, or like when an artist engages the crowd, you can miss that.*<sup>394</sup>

**“Bailey Edwards”:** *... To have cellphones, whenever anybody asks me about concerts I'll tell you, I don't like, I take pictures with my phone, I don't take videos. I don't think that, I don't want to experience a concert through a screen, but the worst part is because I'm shorter and I'm standing you know close to, closer to stage and I can't see anything,*

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<sup>393</sup> Danielle Knoll, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>394</sup> “Liam Moore,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

*like look behind and my dad's like oh there's thousands of people, and I looked behind me and I can't see anybody. So, you know trying to look at the band on the stage it's kind of annoying that I have to experience a concert sometimes through someone cellphone, which literally happened to me a few times, which pissed the hell out of me, because you know, I'm here to see this band that I may not see you ever again, and I'm experiencing it through someone cellphone...*<sup>395</sup>

**Interviewer:** *You mentioned that if you have to reach above your head you won't...*

**“Lucas King”:** *Yeah. I find it annoying when people in front of me reach their phones high, so I don't like to do that to other people [laughs]. It's, it's so distracting to have a screen near you, even if it's showing what you're looking at. Your eye is automatically drawn to it, and I try to get in people's way as little as possible in the way of their concert experience.*<sup>396</sup>

While “Lucas King” provides the distraction caused by arms being raised and the luminescence coming off the phone, “Bailey Edwards” describes her inability to interact with the performance based on the phones being raised and therefore blocking her view of the actual performance. “Liam Moore” describes his experience following the request for phones to be removed from the concert experience. This question was asked of participants to not only gauge whether they have ever experienced this practice from an artist, but what was their reaction to it and why. In the case of “Liam Moore,” the removal of cellphones allowed for an increased connection felt to the performance. Furthermore, it allowed for the audience to be further engaged in the performance and not miss key elements, such as artist interaction, due to concentrating on their phones.

Another practice found in the quest for quality in material captured was keeping one’s body still while recording or taking a picture. The following example provided describes the practice involved in the picture taking process in terms of the individual’s body position and the disbelief that cellphones are limiting the quality of the experience:

**Interviewer:** *How do you position your body when you take your video?*

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<sup>395</sup> “Bailey Edwards,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>396</sup> “Lucas King,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

**“Miles Anderson”:** *I never really thought about how I position my body, I think I usually just stand the same way I would at a concert, but I hold my phone up like this like really high, so I can get the band. So yeah, I guess my hands are really the thing, my arms are the things that are the most affected, my actual body positioning, so I guess you don't get to throw your hands in the air and dance like you just don't care the same way you normally would. But I don't know if that actually really affects the concert experience, right, like does the band really sound or feel any different by not moving your arms around like you still, you're still there, you're still part of it, and it's still a great show.*<sup>397</sup>

The following example furthers how the practice of keeping one's body still is a method to ensure picture quality:

**Interviewer:** *When you're taking your photo or video, how do you position your body?*  
**Sanger Yoo:** *Shoulders straight arms up, or what. I'm tall, so it usually works out well for me. I try to like you know spread my legs like apart, so that I have good balance. I like keeping stable videos.*<sup>398</sup>

The two examples provided reveal another strand in the importance of quality to the concert experience, the value in the quality of material captured:

**Interviewer:** *You take a photo or video, when you do it, how might you alter its image, if you do it all?*

**“Emma Jones”:** *I normally don't. If I do, all I really try to do is brighten it up a little bit, so you could see features more, because venues tend to be very dark. So, or I'll zoom in a little bit just, so you can see a little bit more clearly.*

**Interviewer:** *And why do you do these alterations?*

**“Emma Jones”:** *Cameras can't capture the same way eyes can. So, trying to get as specific picture you see with your eyes on picture never works out, so I try and kind of match it as much as I can.*<sup>399</sup>

**Interviewer:** *And when you're taking your photos or videos, how do you position your body?*

**“Zoey Lewis”:** *I took a lot of photography classes in high school, so I stand in the way that my camera will or my phone will, pause for a second if I'm taking a picture. If I'm taking a video, I'll move my hand to the side and look at it, and see if it's in a place that it will be pointing, and then I'll just watch and have it hanging out on the side and then like glance at it every now and then and make sure it's still actually pointing at the stage and not pointing at the ground. So, it depends if I'm taking a video or a picture, because pictures are just like there and it's done, and videos are more of a prolonged thing...*<sup>400</sup>

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<sup>397</sup> “Miles Anderson,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>398</sup> Sanger Yoo, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>399</sup> “Emma Jones,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>400</sup> “Zoey Lewis,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed, October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2016, Interview 13, Transcript.

The effort made by audience members to either monitor the material captured or modify the material seen stresses the value of this material. The quality of material is important to the audience members capturing the content. If there was no value placed on the material, it would not be captured. Beyond the desire for the material, the concern over quality must also be understood in relation to the desire to revisit the material as well as to share the material with others. The value added can be understood as the “cultural capital” held by audience members, which if shared would allow for an increase in the capital associated with the *filmmers* themselves online.<sup>401</sup> The desire to revisit the material can be seen by “Emma Jones” who describes the desire to have the material as close as possible to what was seen. Further, this information can be revisited as it was close to what was experienced, or it can be shared with others to show her perspective. “Zoey Lewis,” on the other hand, does not share the same value in pictures, yet when it comes to the video taking process, there was a standard practice which would ensure the quality of the footage.

A final benefit found to the inclusion of cellphones in the concert experience was the use of phones in place of lighters. While there were two interview participants who mentioned that they did not engage in the practice, they were the only two to mention it. The following quotes show the benefits felt by audience members towards the practice of using cellphones as lighters:

**Interviewer:** *Can you describe your thoughts on the place of cellphones during concert performances or within a venue?*

**“Zoey Lewis”:** *... And concerts are really exciting. Also, the phone has become the new lighter, which is really exciting. I think it's better than the lighter because everybody has a phone. If you don't have a phone, I don't know what planet you're on, and I don't understand how you work because it's really an extension of yourself now. You have to be connected to the phone or there's so many things where you get less stuff. But a lot of bands have been using the phone as the light and it's, I like the atmosphere when*

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<sup>401</sup> Throsby, “Cultural Capital,” 9.

*everybody has their lights up and they're waving them, and it's a slow song, and you really get into it...*<sup>402</sup>

**Interviewer:** *This is kind of similar but, what factors help you feel best connected with the artist or band that you're seeing?*

**“Lucas King”:** *I'm going to say slow songs. One of my favourite things at concerts, I tend to be a bit of a sappier guy when it comes to music, so when everything slows down a little bit and they play like a nice, moving, slow song and the lights come down and people don't get their lighters out anymore, but people get their cellphones out now. [laughs] I just always find to be a magical experience. Any time that I have ever like been moved to tears at a concert or something has been like during one of those moments hearing, hearing an artist sing a meaningful, slow, just heart wrenching sort of song and just being there in that experience is, is something incredible.*<sup>403</sup>

**Interviewer:** *Before finishing off, is there anything else on this topic that you want to add?*

**Sanger Yoo:** *Oh, you know the lighters at the concerts that usually was a thing in the 90s, but like you know people usually use their phones' flashlights for that now, I think that's another good use for a phone there, like Kanye West has this song called All of the Lights and during that song everybody has their phones out with the flashlight on and it's usually a nice sight. So that's, that's a good place for a phone to be, I guess.*<sup>404</sup>

All the interviewees included here mentioned the benefit of using a phone as a lighter. As described by “Zoey Lewis” and “Lucas King,” there is a potential for a feeling of increased connection to the music and other participants. The acceptance of this use reveals the adoption of this media-related change through which audience members can further interact with the performance. Whether or not it is during a slow song, as suggested by “Zoey Lewis” and “Lucas King,” the practice can be seen across different genres from pop punk to hip-hop. Further, “Zoey Lewis” highlights the prevalence of cellphone ownership, and therefore the transition towards the cellphone is one of natural progression.

The combination of a content analysis, participant observation and thematic interview analysis allowed for the investigation into cellphone use within concerts from multiple facets.

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<sup>402</sup> “Zoey Lewis,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>403</sup> “Lucas King,” Interviewed by Erica Melamed.

<sup>404</sup> Sanger Yoo, Interviewed by Erica Melamed.



The content analysis provided indications in potential areas of interest to audience members. The content analysis indicated ‘the disconnect’ from phone use, the quality of the experience, and the importance of interaction. The participant observation revealed the widespread use of cellphones by audience members. It stressed that personal use such as texting, scrolling social media, email, or the like was concentrated during downtimes of the experience. Further, participant observation revealed the shift in social media used from Facebook and YouTube,<sup>405</sup> as suggested by the literature, towards a preference of Snapchat and Instagram. The interview stage of the research allowed for clarification as well as explanations of interviewees’ motivations in their uses, or lack thereof, as well as revealing the sentiment towards the increasing presence of phones within this space.

Central to audience members was their interaction with the artist and with other audience members. Central to the matters found was the different motivations of audience members, not only towards their experience but also for desirable material captured. Furthermore, in terms of cellphone use, based on what was wanted from the material captured, different material was taken and different methods were employed. In addition, the desire for quality in the material captured emphasizes the value held in relation to this material. Despite the value held for the material, audience members understood that the concert experience was one many shared in, therefore personal mediation was undergone in order to limit the disturbance of personal phone use for others.

While one interviewee stressed that the use of cellphones to record or take pictures during a concert is a selfish act as it is a shared space, the same can be true for the forced removal of

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<sup>405</sup> Rui and Stefanone, "The Desire for Fame," 403-6; Colburn, "Filming Concerts for YouTube," 62-3.

cellphones. To decrease the disconnect felt by audience members towards phone use, a potential approach to adopt has been practiced by particular artists in which they utilize periods of time in which photo taking is encouraged, and therefore once it is over, the use overall will hopefully decrease. While security measures have been seen in response to phone prevention policies, audience members stressed that security was more of a distraction than the phones themselves.

Overall, based on the research conducted, the concert space is already mediatized, yet it has been mediatized further based on the widespread use of cellphones, despite resentment found. While some artists have demonstrated their frustration with phone use, the lack of unity among artists suggests that the removal of phones from the concert venue will be unlikely overall. While the benefits of phone use can be seen for their use as a memory aid, personal history collection, or a method to increase one's social status online or with friends, the issues of the obstructed view and distracting light source remain. The contradiction between benefits and limitations reveals that the contemporary experience of cellphones represents an intense period of change in terms of media-related use, and therefore the resentment is clear while the use is growing. Therefore, in order to move forward and potentially limit the negative attributes associated with phone use during concerts, limited use approaches would provide the most valuable outcomes, as both sides would be represented, and motivations of the different sides would be acknowledged and met.

## **CHAPTER 5: FUTURE DIRECTIONS OF RESEARCH**

Potential approaches for future researchers interested in mediatization or the concert experience include: the consideration of different mediatized spaces, a generational examination into cellphone use at concerts, controlled studies, and research into the policy proposed. Alternative methods or modifications of analysis could be utilized. Further, a deeper cross-generational investigation into cellphone use could be conducted. The analysis conducted in this research has revealed the contention of the mediatization within the concert venue as well as the continued concern of technology's infringement on everyday life. On the other hand, with new technology and applications, audience members are using the technology to achieve specific gratifications, and, therefore, the active audience is a perspective that cannot be ignored in the Canadian context.

The mediatized experience found in concerts can be compared to other experiences in which phone use is becoming increasingly popular. A consideration of phone use in additional contexts could allow for a comparison of norms of use, complaints, as well as the value system associated with that place and how the cellphone relates to that context.

In terms of the concert context, further research can be done into forecasting what policies could be instituted within the next 10 to 20 years as well as examining the new policies as they arise. An analysis of this type would reveal the dominant values of the society in which they are found. Further, if the study is generational, one in which individuals of different generations are involved, the potential to see evolving values could be revealed. Another complaint found in the research conducted was that younger audience members are heavy users. A generational study or one with a wider age range for participants can test whether this is valid

within the concert context. Further, a generational study could reveal earlier experiences of mediatization in the concert venue which have not been examined.

The proposal of semi-controlled studies would aid in an investigation into the impact of photo and video taking on memory when audience members are free to take pictures as they please. The argument for semi-control would involve the recruiting of concert participants after a performance. A recording of the concert, with the permission of the artist, would serve as an object which their memories will be compared to. Further, what may prove interesting is the impact of focus groups in which one's memory may trigger that of another's.

The findings of the research done revealed a shift in social media usage towards Instagram and Snapchat, away from Facebook and YouTube. The desire for posting through these sources over others should be further examined. Furthermore, research can be conducted into the labour involved in audience members' posting and sharing of material. Additionally, in the spirit of the sharing culture found, experiments can be conducted on the potential benefits of venues having a sharing platform for material captured at performances. It could simply be the promotion of a certain hashtag through alternative sources or the creation of venue specific sharing clouds. The relationship between artists and audience members, through the material shared, would benefit from further study. For example, are artists interacting with the material audience members are posting? If yes, which, to what extent, and why?

As the research conducted was primarily concerned with the audience experience, further research would benefit from focusing on the artists' perspectives. Interviewing both local and larger artists for their opinions on social media and cellphone use within concerts would provide a new facet of research. This research would consider their opinions outside of just considering instances of public statement. The analysis of the artists' perspectives will deepen an

understanding of the potential effect cellphone use is having on an artist's performance. The consideration of artists from different levels of success can gauge whether the resistance to phone use is a concern for larger artists or if the concern is more widespread.

Regarding the proposed policy, further research can be conducted on audiences' opinions on such policies as well as the reactions of those around them. Further, and perhaps more valuable would be working with artists themselves, who have proposed the restriction of cellphone use, to test different limitations and audience members' opinions could be gauged.

While the study conducted implemented a content analysis, further research could utilize a survey methodology. Research relating to audiences commonly includes survey material. Based on the findings and topics presented, future research can use these findings to base their surveys from in order to assess potential evolutions in the values or norms associated with concert attendance. Furthermore, the utilization of focus groups would prove useful, as it is through focus groups that participants are able to delve deeper into their personal opinions based on the discussion had with other participants. The few examples provided reveal the potential expansion of research into the mediatized experience as well as the evolving concert venue.

## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION

The investigation into the use of cellphones during concert performances revealed active audience members making conscious decisions on how to use or not use their cellphones in these cases. The relevance of this topic was seen based on the increased ownership, and subsequently, the use of cellphones by Canadians. Furthermore, between the years of 2002 and 2016, the discussion of the practice of cellphone use in concerts, circulating through Canadian sources, continued to climb. The increased discussion of cellphone use can either be tied to increased ownership or an increase in artists' public comments against phone use. In either case, the increased discussion reveals that the practice has been growing. The first mention found was during 2002 and this has only increased over the years.

This research allowed for the understanding that the concerns regarding cellphone use in the concert as representing improper behaviour, coincides with early concerns of cellphone use surrounding improper use, as can be seen through Wei and Leung's work on improper cellphone use. Furthermore, the conflict represented in the discussion of cellphones' place in concert venues represents a conflict of values during this media-related change to the space. The perception that phones are invading a space they ought not to be, stresses resistance to the increased presence of phones, yet the reason for the influx in resentment and anger towards phones is the increased convergence in cellphones' capabilities. These smartphones are extending the possibilities of use, and with more possibilities, comes further use. Therefore, the increase in cellphone usage within the venues coincides with the increased resentment towards phone use.

The tri-leveled analysis allowed for audience members' actions to be detected and understood as well as their opinions on the influence of phone use on the concert context. The

combination of qualitative and quantitative elements to the research allowed for the limitations of each method to be restricted by the use of the other. The combination of participant observation and interviews seemed a natural segue based on the commonality of this pairing by qualitative research of this nature. The decision to utilize a content analysis, rather than surveys which are more common in other scholars' work, was due to the need to identify trends rather than leading the trends based on a survey conducted without the data gathering necessary for such a practice.

The use of interviews demonstrated the decision making involved by audience members to all different aspects of the concert experience, from the decision to attend to desirable material for footage captured. While the content analysis provided an indication of motivations, the participant observation revealed forms of use, and the interviews allowed for a deeper understanding into the spectrum of motivations. For example, while the motivation of sharing was dominant, audience members would choose to share material through different channels as well as to a different extent. Audience members' actions and motivations allow for an understanding of common patterns in the outlook of phone usage, the centrality of interaction for feelings of authenticity, as well as the increased mediatization of the concert space.

The dominant uses found included: taking pictures, videos, audio, the use of social media for both sharing and scrolling through, as well as the waving of phones. The motivations for such use included: sharing, proof, memory, wanting a piece, safety/coordination, brag, practice, keepsake, a method to keep in touch, along with boredom. While these motivations for cellphone use were mentioned, the dominant or most recurring ideas mentioned included: sharing, memory, and proof/bragging. Regarding material captured, examples included those relating to the stage set up, lights, songs liked, demonstrations of an artist's skill, novel material from the

performance, or a humorous moment. The effort and decisions involved in the photo, video, or audio recording process stress these practices to be active in nature, and audience members are doing so on an individual basis, which accounts for the variations in actions as they connect according to the motives followed. While not mentioned as a motivation, cellphones are commonly being used as an evolution of the lighter. The commonplace of cellphones has exceeded that of the lighter.

The following topics were found: interaction, mediatization, etiquette/respect, memory, economics, and quality. In terms of interaction/engagement, which was dominant throughout the findings, it revealed the importance of proximity to the artist, a desire or appreciation for novel material, as well as the importance of engaging in an experience as one that is shared. While there was minimal discussion on the communal sentiment of a concert experience, the experience and actions of those around audience members influence their individual experiences. In the case of interaction/engagement, numerous interviewees and analysed articles stress the disconnect felt by phone use. On the other hand, phone use allows for interaction with those beyond the venue through material shared. Within the venue, the cellphone as lighter practice reveals a common and growing practice where communication is extended within the concert venue as cellphone ownership has become mostly ubiquitous. As explained by “Miles Anderson” and “Zoey Lewis,” artists are encouraging the use even further by playing in the dark and requesting the audience to light up the stage. In these cases, audience members are especially active participants in the performance.

In terms of mediatization, the work of Auslander stressed the concert space as one that is already mediatized, therefore this research was analysing whether this space has been further mediatized. In answering this question, as Auslander suggested, the terms of live and recorded



depended on one another, yet interestingly, the increased inclusion and mediatization, through video, was not perceived as negative or anything other than live, for the most part. While certain audience members preferred the interaction of smaller venues, the influence of cellphone use did not present a distinction in use between the different sizes. The main concerns regarding the inclusion of cellphone use surrounded the obstructed view, raised arms present, combined with the LED luminescence coming from the phone's screen. These concerns represent apprehensions that communication and physical interaction is being mediated by phone use. The data found on the importance of body language while recording shows this to be true to an extent. On the other hand, the interviewees' advocacy for limited use and restrained personal use shows that audience members are limiting the disturbance of phone use on their own.

While the concern of distraction was prominent, phone use in concerts can be seen as early as 2002, as shown by the content analysis. Further, the uses of cellphones in concerts have expanded as a phone's applications have increased due to convergence. Hence, the incorporation of phone use into concerts and the phone's general replacement of lighters highlights a media-related change has been undergone. The question which remains is whether this change will stay or if conscious efforts to remove the cellphone will be achieved. While particular cases will continue to reduce phone use, cellphones will not be removed altogether.

Central to mediatization and interaction is the importance of etiquette/respect between audience members and between artists and their audience within the venue. While the content analysis only revealed a small concern regarding improper or non-respectful phone use, the interview process revealed a wider unease regarding the lack of respect between audience members, especially regarding those who record an entire set. Additionally, the concern represented resentment for those who displayed a lack of concern for others while using

cellphones. Further, the disgruntlement with other audience members using their phones for personal reasons, such as texting or scrolling through social media, or even editing photographs, is seen as a sign of disrespect to the artist. On the other hand, the personal mediation of cellphone use by those interviewed represents a respect for other audience members' concert experience. Furthermore, in response to Adele's statement against phone use, the majority of audience members interviewed responded in agreement with the artist or at least understood the position, stressing the audience members' respect overall towards artists' decisions in concurrence with cellphones' distractive properties.

The recurrence of the importance of memory can be seen for attending performances as well as a key motive for phone use in terms of recording or taking pictures. The connection between music and memory is not one to discount in audience members' motivation to attend concerts; not only will previous experiences with the music lead to attendance, it may allow for repeated attendance. Furthermore, attendance at performances has the potential to revive feelings or memories associated with previous consumption of the music performed. In terms of using cellphones to record material, this practice is not new. While the cellphone may be a latest version in the use, the externalization of memory through media is not a new process. The only difference is that from the twentieth century moving forward it has been happening faster. The motivation for recording material as a memory aid or to relive the experience, is not necessarily experienced soon after the event or even for a scheduled time. The desire for the ability to look at the material later seems to be the dominant motivation, not necessarily looking at the material within a certain amount of time. On the other hand, certain interviewees demonstrated a lack of interest in looking back at the material, and therefore enacting practices in which material was

periodically deleted. This practice stressed the lack of value associated with the material; some interviewees even referenced not using their phones knowing they would not look back.

In terms of the economic perspective of the concert experience, three trends were found. Firstly, the rising cost of tickets played a role in audience members deciding whether or not to attend a particular performance. Further, depending on the price, repeat attendance was also affected. Secondly, the concern over the disruption cellphones present highlights the motivation in the creation of Yondr. While the motive to limit use is clear, the question remains of the applicability of the technology's use, in terms of who is willing to pay for this material. Further, what will be the effect of the technology's use on audience attendance, in terms of audience members who favour filming? Thirdly, the presence and use of cellphones during performances was found to be a benefit for an artist's exposure. It is in the cases of smaller, local, or DIY artists that audience members have the opportunity to act as filters through which their material can be shared. In these cases, the social media platform is an aid for interaction between artists and their audiences beyond the venue. Further, it provides the opportunity for artists to expand their fan networks. Additionally, audience members with personal connections to these local artists demonstrate their role as co-creators through which they help in the organization and running of the performances.

The importance of quality was central to audience members, influenced other concerns audience members had, and influenced their cellphone practices. While the topic of quality was prevalent within the content analysis conducted, this was no surprise based on the fact that most of the material analysed included concert reviews. The interviews conducted revived the importance of quality beyond a review of a concert, but the importance of quality to their experience. For example, the quality of interaction and engagement during a first concert

experience will have an effect on whether the audience member will desire to engage in that experience again. Another stream in which quality was important was that of sound quality, based on the venue style or location within the venue. Particular interviewees favoured a location within the venue in which sound quality was superior over a proximity to the artist. In terms of cellphone usage, the disruption to interaction between audience members remains a point of contention. Finally, the topic of quality is central to the capturing of concert footage through pictures or video. While audience members seemed to favour one over the other, the importance of quality could be seen from the photo/video-taking process, to the editing of the material, and finally, to the decision over what material is to be shared.

Overall, in each of the topics presented, both sides of the argument have value. The ‘disconnect’ cannot be ignored, as it is a point of contention in two out of three of the methods implemented. On the other hand, phones have been used within concert venues in Canada for over ten years. The intensification of the debate can be seen in relation to the widespread ownership of phones as well as an increasing number of artists making public statements against phone use, within the venue and beyond. While the resentment was seen for phone use as a source of disconnect, the value held towards the quality of the material captured by audience members reveals the personal and cultural value held for material of this kind. The concert space has been mediatized by cellphone usage. According to the conducted research, due to the lack of unity among artists and audience members in regard to phone use, this use will not disappear.

For those artists that are unwilling to adopt the limited approach method, the no-phone policy should be included on the ticket. This method will allow for audience members to make the decision to engage in a concert experience, understanding before attending what is expected of them. Several artists have already begun engaging in this practice. Further, this will allow for

venues to have more time to prepare for concerts enforcing this policy, which will hopefully reduce the security dangers that a lack of warning can include.

The concert space was previously mediatized by microphones, speakers, and video screens; now, the cellphone has further mediatized the concert space. Based on the majority of interviewees, the cellphone, while useful, is acting as an obstacle to interaction within the venue. The use of cellphones in concerts is influencing the future of the concert going experience, based on how artists interact with their audiences and how memories of the events are dealt with. The case of cellphone use during concert performances reveals the way interpersonal interaction is changing based on the use of this technology. The increasing use of phones for picture taking in everyday life by audience members stresses the need for the adoption of a limited use policy for artists against phone use. The utilizing of security to minimize cellphone use in no-phone policies is shown to present a greater disruption to a concert experience than the use of phones. While some interviewees were in favour of the removal of cellphones, a number of these interviewees were *filmmers* as well. The argument for a limited approach will allow for both kinds of interaction, with cellphones and without, and be predicated on a respect and understanding for both positions. The adoption of designated periods of recording or image capturing has the potential to satisfy both sides. The respect necessary would involve audience members' limiting their use to select periods, while artists will have to respect the desire of audience members to share, record, or have proof of the experience through the use of their cellphones.

The cellphone will not be disappearing from the concert venue altogether, therefore, in order to move forward, the issues of overuse and obstruction are those which need to be dealt with in order to find equilibrium towards phone use during this period of transition. The concern over experience, through advocates of limited or restricted use, are once again cases of how we

are experiencing a time of change in which interpersonal interactions and memories are being dealt with in new and evolving ways. This is significant, because the next generation of artists will be those who have grown up with smartphones, and the use of this technology will already have been normalized into their everyday lives. While there is currently resistance to cellphone use during concerts, this practice will endure and therefore change the concert experience forever. This leads to the experience of concerts without cellphones as a non-existent or a subordinate experience. The resentment towards cellphone use will lessen, as it is already occurring amongst audience members. The cellphone will be normalized within the concert space, and self-regulation will likely be the natural progression of how the use is treated, unless extenuating circumstances occur. The concert venue is just one of the spaces in which our lives are changing, and how experiences are being understood in new ways. What concerts mean to the audiences and the artists is evolving; the resistance to this change cannot be undervalued, for it reflects conflict towards a shift in the prioritization of lived experiences in which personal technology plays a key role. The intrusion of cellphone use in this case study reveals how the contemporary concert experience and everyday life is changing interpersonal interaction and understandings of established experiences based on our use of this technology.

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