

Examples of Dichotomies in Heavy Metal

1. Glam metal artists adopted exaggeratedly feminine modes of dressing (highly styled hair and makeup) yet still successfully communicate overtly masculine persona.
2. Commercial success is seen as inauthentic in metal music, yet some level of commercial success is needed for bands to have a viable career.
3. Bands like KISS and Ghost create a provocative image that is at odds with their radio friendly, accessible music.
4. Metal artists draw melody primarily from instrumentation, rather than vocals which tend to be harsh and guttural.
5. Metal music was developed in an industrial, working class setting but now most metal bands come from high income countries with the best quality of life.
6. Metal music is often viewed as unsophisticated even though it requires considerable technical skill to create and is of interest to intellectual thinkers.
7. Women are underrepresented as metal musicians, but when they do appear in metal bands, they tend to be vocalists, a highly visible position in the band.
8. Mosh pits in heavy metal are chaotic, yet specific rules and etiquette are implicitly enforced and followed by participants.
9. Metal scenes are comprised of individuals who often identify as outsiders but *also* are part of a group.
10. Metalheads feel a strong sense of belonging and community even without directly participating in a metal scene or interacting with other fans.
11. Many extreme metal bands have unreadable logos, which is perceived as a sign of authenticity even though it makes it difficult for prospective fans to identify the band.
12. Metal "fashion" is seen as a mark of authenticity, but spending too much time on one's appearance is seen as inauthentic.
13. A relatively small subset of metal artists hold white supremacist or racist views, yet all rock n roll music evolved from the blues, a genre developed by Black Americans.
14. Heavy metal is often seen as "low culture" yet it draws significant influence from classical music, a genre that is widely accepted as "high culture."
15. Attempts to censor metal music, such as the parental advisory system, often resulted in greater popularity for albums that displayed warning labels.

16. Heavy metal is often viewed as hostile toward religion and antithetical to Christianity. However, Christian metal bands exist in virtually every subgenre of metal.