FANS OR FRIENDS? LOCAL/TRANSLOCAL DIALECTICS OF DIY ('DO-IT-YOURSELF') TOURING AND THE DIY COMMUNITY IN THE US

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Abstract: ***When studying how rock, punk, and similar cultures relate to place, scholars tend to focus on*** local ***scenes (and on*** concerts ***as constitutive events that establish the rock music community). When they do consider translocal connections, they mostly discuss*** non-face-to-face ***relations, for instance, as enacted through printed or electronic media. In this paper, by ethnographically examining the interpersonal dynamics of several case studies, I demonstrate that the music community of DIY (do-it-yourself) participants in the US is constituted in large part through*** face-to-face ***interaction, not only in local places (through the interaction of DIY participants both within and between music venues), but in translocal space (through touring, and similar traveling practices), as well. Local participants depend on translocal touring participants (who generate flows of ideas, sounds, objects, and people), and the translocal participants depend on their local compatriots (who provide places at which to play, or sleep). Local DIY places, especially DIY participants' houses, play a significant role in this dialectic as items of reciprocal exchange within the translocal "network of friends/favors." In addition, they also function as places of 'intimacy,' in the local context as sites for small and 'intimate' concerts, and translocally as places for hosting touring musicians as houseguests. DIY places/houses thus contribute to an experience of closeness and to the transformation of fans to friends for the DIY participants. In the first part of the paper, I examine the establishment of local and translocal DIY 'communities' through the social practice of touring (culture as travel). In this section, I also briefly discuss historical and geographical factors, and consider the dimensions of race, gender, and sexuality in the American DIY touring experience. In the second part, I subsequently observe the aspects and particular characteristics of DIY touring practices themselves (travel as culture), and how they reflect and generate DIY values and politics.***

Keywords: ***music and place/space; music and mobility; social construction of a 'community;' American DIY cultures, and DIY touring.***

In this paper, I examine how the practice of DIY music touring bridges and crosses particular *local* DIY scenes and constitutes *translocal* DIY communities in the US.[1] To illustrate the practice of DIY touring through ethnographic and personal experience, and to emphasize specific aspects of the intersection between touring and community, I start with a short tour vignette.[2]

In the summer of 2012, I went on a tour with the Portland-based psychedelic and experimental group 3 Moons. They started the tour in Oregon, and went through Northern California before I joined them for the Midwest part of the tour. The band included Jeffrey on guitar and electronics, Dena on keyboards, occasionally myself on gongs, and Jeffrey's dog Ratchet, watching over the van (Fig. 1). *We played house shows, warehouse shows, regular DIY spaces, a coffee shop art gallery, a record store, a Fourth of July block party, and a generator (or guerrilla) show under a bridge. We slept at the homes of show organizers and friends, who often also cooked for us. On the way, Jeffrey visited many of his old friends, who helped us with organizing local shows. Jeffrey had done the same for them when they visited Portland.*

We crossed paths with many DIY participants, musicians, and travelers. We played shows together unexpectedly in Kansas City and Chicago with the Oakland-based group Uncanny Valley (see Fig. 2)*, and we saw the same people from the Kansas City show again at our Winona, Minnesota show. In addition, I re-encountered around twelve DIY participants that I had met on that tour*

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[2] For my PhD research on American DIY cultures, and their DIY spaces, and DIY touring practices, I conducted a three-year intensive fieldwork in the US, mostly on the West Coast. I focused on multiple sites, and combined long-term research (two active years of research in Davis, CA, and nine months in Portland, OR), with shorter visits (about two weeks each) in Olympia, WA, Oakland, CA, and Los Angeles, CA. I made numerous structured and unstructured interviews, lived with DIY participants in DIY show houses, toured with three DIY bands (with two on the West Coast, and one in the Midwest), examined historical, and contemporary, textual and visual, sources on American DIY cultures, and attended and analyzed DIY concerts. During my fieldwork I also organized a couple of DIY house shows by myself, hosted DIY bands in my place, and played music several times with some of the bands I toured or lived with. I had previous experiences with DIY scenes in Slovenia, where I actively participated in them as a radio and club DJ, event organizer, and music journalist.

Figure 1: Dena and Jeffrey aka 3 Moons, playing at the community space Percolator, in Lawrence, KS (July 3, 2012). Photo: David Verbuč.

later at various DIY places around the US. This was my second DIY tour in the US, and I already knew quite a few DIY people from around the country. It was Jeffrey's eighth tour, and he has already created a strong national network of his DIY musical friends.

The tour itself was an act of "deep treading," as Jeffrey called it, comprising long drives in the scorching Midwestern sun, spiced up with our dog's fleas and local mosquitoes. All the troubles and fun times made us grow close. In Jeffrey's words, we established a "group mind."

Touring and traveling, I argue in this paper, is as significant for DIY participants in the US as playing and attending local shows. For that reason, I move beyond the paradigm of "dwelling" local cultures, and approach the DIY music culture in the US from a perspective of a traveling or mobile culture. In this regard, the new "mobility paradigm" advocate, John Urry, argues:

> "[A]ll social relationships should be seen as involving diverse 'connections' that are more or less 'at a distance', more or less fast, more or less intense and more or less involving physical movement. Social relations are never only fixed or located in place but are to very varying degrees constituted through 'circulating entities'" (2007: 9, 46; cf. Clifford 1992; Cresswell 2006).

However, it is also important to examine the dialectical relation between dwelling and traveling (Clifford 1992; Cresswell 2006),[3] and to comprehend in this way how spatial factors (geography, local scenes, and music venues, both as social and physical spaces) shape the traveling experience, and vice versa.

When studying how rock, punk, and similar cultures relate to place, scholars tend to primarily focus on *local* scenes (e.g., Bennett 1980; Finnegan [1989] 2007; Cohen 1991; Such 1993; Shank 1994; Fornäs et al. 1995; Berger 1999; Fox 2004; Fonarow 2006; Holt 2007). When they do consider translocal connections, they mostly discuss *non-face-to-face* relations, as enacted through printed or digital media (e.g., Duncombe 2008 [1997]: 61). In this paper, I demonstrate that the music community of DIY (i.e., do-it-yourself) participants in the US is constituted in large part through *face-to-face* interaction, not only at local concerts, but through the translocal practice of touring, as well.[4]

In the first part of the paper, I examine the characteristics of DIY touring, and the structure of everyday reality on the road, including the dialectics between nightly and daily activities of touring DIY musicians, and the relationship between freedom and hardship, and fun and work. In this section, I also briefly discuss historical and geographical factors, and consider the dimensions of race, gender, and sexuality in the American DIY touring experience. In the second part of the paper, I show how the DIY touring dialectic consequently enables DIY participants to turn local, private, and individual music production into translocal, public, and collective community production, and additionally, to transform mediated and imagined social relations into face-to-face ones, the dominant American space into an alternative DIY place, and purely oppositional meanings and attitudes into positive and productive ones. Throughout the

[3] Tim Cresswell, for instance, argues that movement is "a dynamic equivalent of place" (Cresswell 2006: 3). Furthermore, I similarly distinguish in this paper between the notions of place and space: *place* as dwelling, boundedness, and familiarity, and *space* as movement, boundlessness, and unfamiliarity (Tuan 1977: 3, 6; Cresswell 2004: 1–10; Kenny n.d.).

[4] I consider the notion of face-to-face interaction in this article both as a discursive or ideological agenda of DIY participants, and as its material embodiment through DIY social practice.

Figure 2: Uncanny Valley from Oakland, playing at the Fourth of July block party in Kansas City, MO. Photo: David Verbuč.

discussion, I propose an understanding of the American DIY community as established through touring (i.e., culture as travel), and simultaneously examine DIY touring as based on specific set of DIY values (i.e., travel as culture).

I define DIY culture as a specific kind of alternative music culture that is circumventing dominant commercial and institutional channels. DIY participants enact this alternative approach for both structural and ideological reasons. Given that there are few non-commercial venues for alternative music-making in the US, DIY performers are forced to find non-traditional and non-formal concert spaces. At the same time, they also prefer these spaces because they enjoy freedom from the restrictions encountered at regular concert venues. Concomitantly, they are proponents of DIY ethics and esthetics, which they see not only as a tool toward greater ends (e.g., success, economic profit), but as an end in itself. This DIY culture is an outgrowth of the late 1970s punk culture. However, it later expanded into a more heterogeneous music culture that includes punk, indie rock, and experimental music cultures.

Characteristics of DIY Touring

DIY musicians, to be able to tour, employ specific DIY methods of touring that contrast with "professional" Western popular music touring practices. "Professional" popular music touring is very expensive, and includes employment of tour personnel, reliance on media promotion, and performing in large and commercial venues (Chapple and Garofalo 1977: 142–154; Laing and Shepherd 2003; Reynolds 2008: 5–9). On the other hand, because DIY participants have minimal resources at hand, DIY touring is particularly thrifty and self-reliant. The early 1980s group Minutemen called this approach "jamming econo," which meant they "usually sleep [sic] at someone's house, lugged their own equipment, and learned how to maintain their own van" (Azerrad 2001: 69, 72, 73, 74). Before them, south Californian hard-core punk group Black Flag, considered as pioneers in this regard, established DIY touring as based on "monster" work ethic and "bare bones" approach: playing almost every day while on tour, in any place, demanding no guarantees, sleeping in their van, and eating cheaply or sometimes hardly anything (Azerrad 2001: 23, 41, 54; Rollins 2004 [1994]: 81).[5]

While any place might be welcome for shows, especially when there are no other venues to play while on tour, DIY groups mostly prefer small, non-commercial, and all-ages DIY spaces.[6] These kinds of spaces, in the opinion of DIY participants, enable more intimate, direct, free, and inclusive social and musical interaction at shows (cf. Verbuč 2014).

Another distinction of DIY touring is in its function. In the commercial sphere of Western popular music, touring is considered a promotional tool for

[5] Henry Rollins, when he joined Black Flag as their new singer in 1981, wrote in his diary: "Black Flag/SST was on a work ethic that I had never experienced and have never seen since. Greg, Chuck and their nonstop roadie Mugger were the hardest working people I had ever seen. They went into whatever it was that we had to do without questioning the time it took, the lack of sleep or food. They just went for it. No one had time for anyone else's complaining. If you ever made a noise about anything, Mugger would just start laughing and say something like 'This isn't Van Halen! Get it happening!'" (Rollins 2004 [1994]: 14). In addition, these early DIY bands also established a national DIY touring circuit which was based on DIY and all-ages spaces, small college towns, and any other spaces that proved useful in order to fill in the possible gaps on the nation-wide DIY touring map (Azerrad 2001: 23, 24; Baumgarten 2012: 69–70).

[6] American laws often prevent young people under twenty-one years to attend venues that sell alcohol. Many musicians and organizers thus struggle for establishment and maintenance of "all-ages" music spaces, in part because a large percentage of DIY music audience often comes from this particular age group.

performers and their albums (cf. Laing and Shepherd 2003; Black, Fox, and Kochanowski 2007). With DIY culture, the relation between albums and touring is reversed. For instance, Minutemen considered their albums as tools for promoting their tours, because they particularly valued the live music experience (Azerrad 2001: 84). More literally, an album is not only a promotional, but also a self-funding tool. At concerts, DIY musicians use their album sales to pay for their tour expenses.

DIY participants exemplify several continuities with historic American travel cultures, but also bring new aspects to the traveling experience in the US. Travel is considered both mainstream and alternative in the US (Cresswell 1992: 252, 259). The rhetoric of spatial expansion and discovery have been part of American culture since its origins, which is a legacy that informs most of the later American travel narratives (cf. Lackey 1997: 4, 10, 31).[7] At the same time, with the transcendentalists of the 19th century, travel becomes a form of personal and social transformation, a search for solitude, independence, nature, self-discovery, simplicity, nonconformity, and imagination (Lackey 1997: 80–82; cf. Mills 2006: 35). With beatniks and other consequent countercultures in the second part of the 20th century (including the DIY culture), it also becomes a form of rebellion (Cresswell 1992; Lackey 1997: 28; Mills 2006: 8–9, 35–53; Bill 2010).[8] However, while the beatniks were "solitary wanderers" (Lackey 1997: 94), hippies often traveled in groups. They heightened their travel experience not only through psychedelic substances, but also, as Lackey argues for Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters, through their putative goal of achieving "communal intimacy" (ibid.: 94, 96).[9] In this regard, hippies managed to establish isolated local communities in the form of living communes or appropriated larger urban areas (Haight-Ashbury in San Francisco, and the East Village in

[7] Lackey, for instance, recognizes this "rhetoric of discovery" (as "a wish to reenact pioneer hardships, to recreate an innocent country, and to imaginatively possess the land," and as a "yearning for power and superiority") in 19th and 20th century American travel literature (Lackey 1997: 4, 10, 31).

[8] Beatniks were in Cresswell's opinion both reflecting and challenging the dominant American myths (Cresswell 1992: 252, 259). Roger Bill muses about whether Kerouac was a wandering and rebellious traveler, or a "precursor to mobile mass tourism" (Bill 2010: 398). In addition, transcendental travelers often ignore the material preconditions of travel which brings them into a contradictory situation – they simultaneously reject and embrace the capitalist exploitation and environmental damage (ibid.: 4, 11, 85).

[9] Ken Kesey and his Merry Pranksters were a group of hippies who organized "acid trips" (communal drug experiences), which also included a trip in a van ("Furthur") across the US (from the West Coast to East Coast). Their travel adventures were documented by Tom Wolfe (Wolfe 1969).

New York), and mobile and traveling small-group communities. However, they failed in generating a sustainable and physically interconnected translocal community, something that was at least partly achieved later by the American DIY participants.

Geographic and Temporal Factors of DIY Touring

The US is a big country, and it takes at least five to six weeks to cross it on tour.[10] During those weeks, touring musicians traverse very different climates, and diverse geological, social, cultural, political, and economic areas that affect the touring practices and patterns, the venues and the audiences where they play, and thus also their shows.

The US highway system is one of the most important factors in determining the touring route. People usually first pin down bigger cities and more important scenes (including smaller college towns) to play, and then they try to connect the dots with places to play in between. Since the bigger cities are usually well-connected by the highway system, the smaller places on tour are not far removed from it.

Climate and season are also important factors in the planning of a tour (cf. Blotto n.d.: 5–6). If possible, DIY musicians aim to tour the southern states during the winter and the northern ones during the summer to avoid extreme weather conditions. Many musicians tour during the summer because of vacation time and warmer weather, which allows for swimming in rivers and lakes, and sleeping outdoors. Because of the season's popularity for DIY touring bands, however, it is harder to book shows in the summer. In addition, cars and vans experience more problems in extreme weather (winter or summer). College towns are also more difficult to play during the summer because students, who are often both the bookers and the audiences, are on a school break. There are exceptions to this rule, which some DIY participants are aware of: some college towns with large DIY scenes are vibrant even during summer months (e.g., Bloomington, IN, Burlington, VT, and Olympia, WA).

[10] While the "proper" tour is considered to be five to six weeks long, some bands and musicians also make shorter weekend tours to nearby cities or towns, and regional one- or two-week-long tours. At the other extreme, some musicians regard touring (or traveling), rather than dwelling, as their primary way of life. In that way, they resemble the beatniks who aspired to escape the strictures of place with "endless voyage" and "just going" (Nóvoa 2012: 362–363). After our 2012 tour (see above), Jeffrey and Dena from 3 Moons spent two years traveling around and playing shows, with occasional longer stops in between. I have met other bands, such as Baby Birds Don't Drink Milk, Tracy Trance, or Cannabass, who strived to stay on the road for longer periods of time.

The geographic density (distribution of towns, and the distances between them) of a region is another element that affects touring patterns. The East Coast (especially the Northeast) is considerably denser than the West Coast and parts of the Midwest and the South. Touring there is easier, DIY participants often assert, because places to play are closer together. Touring on the West Coast, and through the Midwest, and Southwest, on the other hand, usually means longer drives and not many good places to play in between the bigger cities.[11] People try to fill these gaps, even if it means playing in bars or other undesirable places.[12] On the other hand, some DIY musicians avoid these kinds of places altogether, and play only DIY and all-ages venues (as on our tour with 3 Moons). In regard to gender differences among various DIY scenes, touring female musicians (from groups Heavens to Betsy and Bratmobile) noticed in the 1990s how "crowds consisted mostly of boys throughout the Midwest, but as the bands neared DC, the final destination of their tour, more and more girls showed up" (Baumgarten 2012: 194).

US DIY musicians do not often tour across the Mexican or Canadian borders. In the north, they have problems with Canadian customs laws.[13] In Mexico, as some of them told me, language and cultural differences, along with the fear of crime, make touring untenable.

American DIY musicians who have toured Europe often talk about the differences in touring between these two places. For them, Europe is usually considered more "professional." Venue staff members are usually "pickier" about sound checks and sound quality; in the US, musicians are happy to play anywhere, and in any conditions. Touring musicians are reputed to receive more money in Europe – counterbalanced, of course, by the increased expenses related to international touring (e.g., airplane tickets) – and are typically provided with food and lodging. In the US, as some of the DIY musicians explained

11 Especially big gaps that are hard to fill, and that DIY participants mentioned to me, exist between Portland and northern California, heading east from northern or southern California, and driving through Utah, the Dakotas, Minnesota, Colorado, and Texas. Some people call the Southwest region a "dead zone" for touring. Florida is also considered as "off the grid" for many DIY touring musicians.

12 This happened, for instance, when I toured with Toning and Dasani Reboot, two experimental musicians from Portland, just two weeks before my tour with 3 Moons. In addition to DIY spaces, Toning and Dasani Reboot also played in one restaurant (in Las Vegas), which ended up being a bad experience for them. The restaurant owner interrupted their show because of the complaint from one of the restaurant's patrons.

13 Canadian laws require working permits for non-Canadian touring musicians (or invitation letters from non-governmental organizations), and tax their merchandise. Canadian musicians claim it is better to tour in Canada, since they have the "grant system" there (governmental support for the arts).

to me, food and shelter are often provided in DIY and "radical" venues, but are less common if musicians play commercial venues (personal communication, Sanders, August 21, 2012; and Kelly, July 22, 2012).

DIY touring musicians also differentiate between big and small cities when it comes to the quality of touring experiences. Big cities seem better at first glance, since they have larger scenes and audiences, and more venues. However, DIY participants often mention that big cities are saturated with shows, which means that it is harder to book there. In addition, audiences are "burned out" from too many shows there and often do not react enthusiastically to performing musicians. Consequently, small cities and towns often turn into the best experiences for touring musicians. Audiences are more "stoked" and "excited" about bands coming through, because these scenes do not have so many regular shows, and thus it is also easier to book shows there. In addition, as DIY musicians sometimes emphasize, they experience the "craziest shows," greater hospitality, and receive more donation money in these smaller and more remote scenes (Kordani, personal communications, April 16, 2012; Sanders, personal communication, August 21, 2012).

Through the practice of touring, DIY musicians learn the cultural and socio-political differences between the regions and states. They are aware of different alcohol laws in different states,[14] and of different cheap and good food options in different regions. Colin from Portland, for instance, told me that when they are on tour in southern California, they eat burritos, in Philadelphia, they go for vegan "cheesesteaks,"[15] in New York and Chicago, they look for pizza, and in the South, they try to eat at least once or twice in cheap 24–hour Waffle House restaurants (Sanders, personal communication, August 21, 2012; cf. Gizmo, in Connor 2011: 45).

Race, Gender, and Sexuality Dimensions of DIY Touring

For non-white, female, and/or queer DIY participants, touring can be a difficult experience.[16] I talked about these issues with a group of DIY musicians from

[14] For instance, a DIY touring guide *Straight Trippin': A D.I.Y. Guide to Going on Tour* (Blotto n.d.) has an insert in the middle that lists all the state laws regarding alcohol sale restrictions.

[15] Vegan cheesesteaks are made of seitan and vegan cheese.

[16] Donna Dresch from a queer punk band Team Dresch, who was playing bass with the band Dinosaur Jr. at the time, explained the following about her touring experiences as a woman: "In the actual industry there is not a lot of women. You have to be really strong, you know? You have to fight a lot of shit. I haven't been on a tour with no hassles. The hassles aren't always too big but they are always there" (Darms 2013: 25).

Oakland (AnalCube, personal communication, November 11, 2013), who identify themselves as "queer brown feminists". A number of them formed the touring collective AnalCube for their summer of 2013 tour, which encompassed the individual projects of Gorgeous Vermillion, Beast Nest, and S.B.S.M.[17] They told me how their particular subjectivities informed their general touring experiences – more specifically, booking, interactions with audiences, and how they responded to some of the problems they encountered.

Booking several shows through friends secured the AnalCube project with 'safe spaces' to play on their tour. The explicitness about their identities and implied political intentions in their promotional material prepared "non-friend" bookers and local audiences to know what to expect.[18] They encountered some booking problems in a couple of cases when local people did not reply or want to book them. They told me it was "hard to get shows," and speculated about possible reasons: racism, sexism, homophobia, bad timing, or perhaps just the differences in musical tastes and political attitudes.[19]

At their tour performances, they were "up-front" about their identities and politics. They wanted to confront the audiences and establish a critical dialogue, but they also experienced a couple of offensive hecklers at one show in Los Angeles.[20] One audience member heckled one of the AnalCube performers, who at the show publicly announced her "complicated relation with sex," and another show participant addressed the other performer, of Japanese descent, with the orientalist, fetishizing term "kawaii."[21]

17 See their tumblr account http://analcube.tumblr.com/, and their Facebook tour webpage https://www.facebook.com/events/186808224803139/ for more information. Four out of five of them identify as queer; four out of five are non-white. On their three-week-long tour, AnalCube played twelve shows in ten places (in California, New Mexico, Texas, Louisiana, and Tennessee). Their last three shows were cancelled because their car broke down toward the end of the tour. Kim from the music projects Believe and Melting Wreck (formerly member of the group No Babies) was also present at the interview session, and she significantly contributed to the discussion. The project name AnalCube comes from a popular game that DIY participants often play while traveling in cars. They would attach word "anal" to brand names of RV model names (for instance, renaming Challenger brand into Anal Challenger) that they see on the road (they themselves at first wanted to use one of their cars, a Nissan Cube, for the tour, thus AnalCube).

18 Their slogan for the tour was: "Sweaty hairy femmes of color combing through the public U.S. in wake of summer" (see http://analcube.tumblr.com).

19 AnalCube projects incorporated synth punk, experimental, and performance based music.

20 They had altogether three shows there. In addition to the hecklers at the Los Angeles show, they were also in a similar situation on a street in Austin.

21 The hecklers were white, as my interlocutors pointed out to me. They have also told me that "kawaii" stands for "cute" in Japanese.

AnalCube performers prepared in advance for these situations by discussing possible problems and tactics for dealing with them. They composed speeches and agreed to support (and "brace") each other (cf. Marcus 2010: 124–125).[22] They acknowledged that the Los Angeles hecklers put them in "vulnerable" and "un-safe" positions, and that their everyday lives (including touring) are "traumatic" and "anxious" experiences, because they have to "constantly process these things," which is "tiring," and "exhausting" in general, and "inhibiting" in performance situations.

Touring as a collective was essential for them, because otherwise they could get into dangerous and "scary" situations. They also emphasized how their touring experience is different from the touring of white, male, and heterosexual DIY performers, who can get drunk and party harder while on tour without having to be cautious. They believe that white male DIY participants are usually "reinforced" in their actions and get an easier "access" to spaces (for instance to music venues, music instrument stores, and official practice spaces), while they themselves often experience discouragement, objectification, and belittlement in these same places.[23] Touring for "queer brown feminists" is partly about building a non-oppressive translocal DIY community, and, as some of them emphasized in our conversation, a journey of personal "self-discovery." However, it can also be a "traumatic" and "inhibiting" experience, more so than for other DIY touring musicians.

Dialectics of DIY Touring

I now turn to the first dialectic of DIY touring: hardship and work versus fun and freedom. As Carry Brownstein from the group Sleater-Kinney put it, "touring is mundane and filthy as much as it is glamorous and otherworldly" (Brownstein 2008; cf. Jaffe and Clarke 2009: 9; Cometbus 2002: 103–104; Cahill, et al. 2013).[24]

[22] In addition, when touring with No Babies, Kim would open their shows with a short speech about their band's safe space policy at shows, and "covered language use," and "derogatory words," so to prevent any offensive behavior at shows.

[23] While American DIY communities strive toward greater social equality and inclusion, for instance, through often defining their DIY music venues as "safe spaces" (where any forms racism, sexism, homophobia, or transphobia are discouraged), it happens regularly that many of the female, queer, and/or non-white DIY musicians and participants report about the persistence of these same oppressive attitudes and practices within the DIY scenes and communities themselves (Nguyen 1997, [1998] 2010, 2002; Atoe 2012; Vo 2012; cf. Warner 2002: 63).

[24] Aaron Cometbus describes DIY touring as "gaining" and "loosing," and as "daydream" and "nightmare" (2002: 103–104). The front cover of the book about DIY touring stories suggests a similar dialectic: "tour rules" vs. "tour sucks" (Cahill, et al. 2013).

In one way, touring is commitment: driving from one place to another every day to perform in front of audiences requires a lot of commitment and determination. Furthermore, car problems accompany almost every tour, compounded by burglaries and theft. Then there is heat or cold, uncomfortable long drives, bad traffic, long waiting periods, hangovers, rising interpersonal tensions among band members, inglorious sleeping situations, scarce showers, occasional police harassment, and far-from-ideal shows, with no promotion, small audiences, unresponsive audiences, no donation money, bad sound, late shows, canceled shows, and "flaky" bookers and venue owners. Add to this all the troubles that non-white, female, and/or queer touring DIY participants have to go through, and you get close to the "nightmare" side of the tour (Cometbus 2002: 103–104). Different people I toured with called this DIY touring lifestyle "deep treading" (Jeffrey, from 3 Moons) and "roughing it" (Cody, from Toning).

But there are occasional and often only brief moments that pierce the monotony and hardships of touring with enthusiasm, joy, fun, exploration, creativity, inspiration, lucidity, and the sense of freedom and community. For instance, Jeffrey told me that after the initial preparations for the tour,

> "[Then] the fun begins. You get on the road and scream FREEDOM at the top of your lungs out the open window on the highway and have wild parties every night doing what you love and meeting the most brilliant and amazing new friends and connecting with old ones. You hope to make enough money to gas you down to the next town and do it all again" (personal communication, June 12, 2013).

For DIY participants, touring is both "deep treading" and freedom, work and fun, commitment and exploration. DIY participant Amber Eagle, for instance, captures this dialectic well:

> "I want it to be a road trip. Filled with variety, unknown circumstances, freedom. I want to learn how people live and not think of them as unusual. Taste their food. Celebrate their holidays. A road trip is always an interesting concept. A debate about whether it is a mission with a goal or a totally and completely free-to-roam-the-open-road-trip. Basically, Exploration Road Trip vs. Touring Road Trip. I like the combo. Then I feel like there is goal to accomplish each day and, frankly, less like a mooch" (Eagle, in Connor 2011: 30).[25]

[25] I think the "combo" concept in this quotation confirms how DIY communities think "dialectically" about touring (as both "mission" and "freedom").

This quote also points out how DIY touring does not represent aimless travel, or (only) rebellious oppositionality, but establishes a sense of "accomplishment" and positive meaning for DIY participants.

Many aspects of DIY touring are structured as either daytime or nighttime activities. Daily routine means movement through mainstream America, passing strangers, spending long and dull hours on the road, consuming gasoline, and engaging in capitalist exchange, although on a minimal, "econo" level. Nightly routine means pause and dwelling in alternative America, meeting old friends and making new friends, spending a couple of short and lively hours playing music, working as musicians, interacting with audiences, and having fun at shows and after the shows. Nightly activities of playing shows also reverse the process of the daily consumption of gas into the nightly reception of gas money through show donations, and are a promise of a communal and reciprocal exchange (more on this later).[26]

This specific culture of DIY touring and its dialectics of hardship and fun, commitment and freedom, and nightly and daily activities also enables the transformation of local, private, and individual music production into translocal, public, and collective community production. Shane from the experimental project Dasani Reboot confided to me that he considers composing and recording music as a "private thing," and touring as "socializing" (personal communication, June 8, 2012). For many DIY musicians, as it did for us, on our tour with 3 Moons, touring represents a shift from individual, private creation in one's own room, studio, and house, to living publicly on the road, sharing spaces with others 24 hours a day, socializing, and publicly presenting music to a DIY community and beyond. On a local level, house shows and collective living situations similarly transform private into public dwelling spaces – in words of a resident from a show house in Portland, DIY show houses are about "living publicly" (cf. Tucker 2012).[27]

Some scholars argue that rock musicians tour to enhance their music skills, to "certify" themselves as musicians (Nóvoa 2012: 356–362), and ultimately to 'make it' or to succeed as professional and commercial musicians. For instance,

[26] DIY musicians often experience and practice *reciprocity* while touring in the following ways: at shows, through the interaction and exchange of energies with audiences, through receiving free food and free shelter from hosts; in exchange for music and place that they will potentially offer when this time's hosts will tour as musicians through their town (see below).

[27] I also lived in this same house for around two months during my fieldwork research, and I can attest that the house was like a "living room of Portland", as another resident called it.

Steven Taylor from False Prophet argues that touring is about, as he calls it, the "cycle of [music] production," which includes (a) composing music, (b) touring (which means "improving" musically, and "developing an audience"), and (c) recording music (Taylor explains it is done best after the tour, when material is well rehearsed) (Taylor 2003: 105).

Taylor's band is goal-oriented toward "[spiral] growth" (from playing "local bars to larger clubs, from regional, and then national touring, and finally to the international circuit" – ibid.). Others similarly talk about "developing an audience" (cf. Nóvoa 2012), and 'making it' (cf. Shank 1994: 169; Nóvoa 2012). DIY musicians, on the other hand, also strive toward mastering their music skills and their music through touring; for them, however, it is often less about the "cycle of [music] production" (Taylor 2003: 105) and more about, what I call, the cycle of *community* production.

This cycle is not about linear and goal-directed progression towards music production, recognition, and success, but a circular movement that includes reciprocal relations of trading shows and consequently building a community. In addition, it is less about "audiences" and "fans" (see, for example, Taylor's quote above about the cycle of music production, emphasizing the "audience"), and more about the "community" or "friends." In regard to the latter, consider for instance the following quote from a DIY fanzine about touring:

> "It's the best breath of fresh air to leave my home town for a while, hang out with really interesting people from different places, and to be able to take that experience back home and create a whole new perspective on my own situation. The whole trip comes full circle when you can return the favor for really awesome friends and show them how you make things work for you in your town [...] Being part of a community like that makes me feel great about all my efforts because I'm not just having fun for myself, and I'm sharing with EVERYONE EVERYWHERE!" (Ohm, in Connor 2011: 40).[28]

The emphasis in the DIY discourse thus shifts both from individual aspirations ("having fun for [one]self," focusing on one's own music) to community goals ("sharing", circular reciprocity, and creating translocal networks and communities). This is still a dialectical relationship, since the DIY participants

[28] The difference can be also seen in the format of writing. Taylor publishes his thoughts in a book (2003), while Ohm channels his/her ideas through a zine format (Connor 2011).

do not choose one or the other, but aspire to balance both sides (some of them often focusing more on one or the other).

Furthermore, touring generates community on three levels: on the micro-social level (as "music groups"), on the local level (through "shows"), and on the translocal (through the touring network of reciprocal exchange). As band members, often joined by friends, hanging out together for 24 hours per day while on tour is a communal experience that "deepen[s] the bonds" among them (Nóvoa 2012: 361), and, as Jeffrey from 3 Moons claims, creates a "group mind" (see above).[29] At the same time, it is a test for the band as a community, to establish if it is able to undergo the challenges on the road and thus become even a stronger social entity (cf. Shank 1994: 170–171). The long hours of waiting and driving together, the confessional conversations, the fun group activities (including shows), and, at the same time, all of the hardships of touring, in the words of Ian MacKaye from Minor Threat and Fugazi, "unite" the band (Azerrad 2001: 387; cf. Jaffe and Clarke 2009: 16):

> "The trip up was a twelve-hour drive just to play someone's basement; everyone in the van was miserable. Then Picciotto passed a Queen compilation tape up front. 'We were rocking out to the Queen tape,' says MacKaye. 'And that's when I knew we were a band.' A one-month U.S. tour that spring inspired further bonding. A week or so in, the van's radiator conked out and the band was stranded for three days in Miles City, Montana, waiting for a replacement part to arrive. After checking into a motel, all they could do was walk around town, killing time. After a day or so the locals would even stop and ask them how the repairs were going. And the experience united the band. 'We were all living in this one motel room together,' says MacKaye. 'That was a great galvanizer, I always thought, that experience.'" (Azerrad 2001: 387; cf. Jaffe and Clarke 2009: 16).[30]

On another level, touring bands bring together the community of local participants through playing local shows on their tours (see the quotes about the intimacy of DIY shows below). Moreover, as non-local participants, touring

[29] Danielle from Taxpayers told me when they are on tour with her band, they operate as "family unity."

[30] For the band on a tour, the van (or a car) is a private sanctuary from police and strangers (Bennett 1980: 74, 75; Drew, in Jaffe and Clarke 2009: 15), a space for a band's "mutual tuning-in" (Bennett 1980: 76), and a "Petri dish in which the [band] culture grows, [...] a tree fort in which [the] gang makes its pact of allegiance" (Drew, in Jaffe and Clarke 2009: 15, 16).

musicians generate a translocal community through their interaction with various local communities around the country. Practices of playing shows and touring thus represent two sides of the same coin. Touring musicians ensure the fresh influx of live music to localities across the US, while the US translocal networks thus created provide touring bands with local venues to play, gas money, sleeping options, free food, friends to hang out with, and other support options. In addition, through the exchange of contacts, sounds, ideas, and music recordings at shows, DIY participants establish an intensive translocal musical cross-pollination of sounds, and cultural and music translocal collaborations.

This translocal DIY community is created through the reciprocal relation of playing and booking each other's shows. To be able to tour, touring bands use the favors of local DIY participants (who organize shows for them, in their houses, or elsewhere), while the local DIY participants, when they go on their own tours, later seek out the return of the same favor. All parties stay in contact after the show to secure shows or tours in the future, and to nourish friendships and the DIY community. This reciprocal relation is also reflected through the type of organization of DIY shows, which conveys the importance of touring bands and touring practice for the DIY community: touring bands get the best spots on the program (not playing first or last), and receive all of the donations, while the local bands play first and last, receive no money for it, organize the shows, and host the touring musicians.

The type of translocal community generated through DIY touring is a network of "friends." As Danielle from the Portland band Taxpayers noted to me, the whole translocal DIY network is based on the "network of favors," and added that "friendships are born out of that" (Kordani, personal communication, April 26, 2012; see Fig. 3, and Fig. 4). Some other people assert, and write about it in their zines, that all of their friends are made out of touring and interacting with DIY participants: "Almost all of my friends from out of town were made having shows for touring bands and going on tours with my friends' bands" (Connor 2010: 13; see also the introductory vignette).

DIY participants, while on their translocal travels through the US, constantly meet and cross paths with one another. As Heather Blotto noted in her zine about touring,

> "What started out as a passion and a common interest, then morphed into a weird quasi-businesslike relationship (booking), becomes a friendship based on passion and common interest. Amazing. This is why the huge, informal-but-totally-functional

network of kids all over the place doing D.I.Y. shows and going on tour is actually a revolutionary underground movement and not just a bunch of people trying to promote their individual agendas. Soon you may notice that all of your new friends all over the country already know each other. Welcome!" (Blotto n.d.: 56, 57).

Through going to shows, touring, traveling, and moving, DIY participants consider the DIY transnational network as a community where everybody is a "friend," "friend of a friend," or "potential friend" (cf. Kruse 2003: 134–136).[31] Simultaneously, this community is not as much an "imagined" community based on mediated and imagined relationships (cf. Anderson 2006 [1983]), or a "nonspatial [and virtual] network" (cf. Duncombe 2008 [1997]: 61),[32] but a face-to-face, participant-to-participant, and place-to-place community, based on direct and physical ties (see above; see Fig. 3, and Fig. 4).[33]

However, as I noticed on my tours with DIY musicians, aside from the community-building, there is also another side of this effort, which is manifested

[31] One DIY participant from Portland, while talking to me about the DIY touring network, told me that while on tour "everybody considers each other as friends", even people that you have just met. He also gave me an example, saying that you can immediately start using the "f" word with them, while within the regular job situation, for instance, it usually takes months to do that (personal communication, August 18, 2012). Others express similar ideas, in regard to bands they meet on tour: "Though we would only know one another for a night, we were brothers" (Coyne, in Connor 2011: 19; cf. Vo 2012: 39). As an excerpt from a Jeffrey Lewis' comic book (Lewis [2007] 2009: 73; see Fig. 4) shows, meeting so many people on the road can also be a slightly overwhelming and anxious experience.

[32] Stephen Duncombe studies some of the same American DIY communities as I am describing in this text, but only through their practice of making and communicating through zines (2008 [1997]). Thus, he only notices how these DIY communities form (and "hold together") "virtual" and "nonspatial" communities through zine writing and zine distribution (ibid.: 60–61), but not through other forms of spatial and face-to-face communication (for instance, touring, or organizing and attending conventions). Interestingly, Duncombe discusses DIY tours and DIY travel, but only as seen through the narrative of "tour guides" and "road trips" published in DIY zines, as "shadow maps" of the "underground [bohemia]" (ibid.: 65). John Urry, on the other hand, allows for the possibility of face-to-face relations nourished at a distance, but mostly recognizes this in regard to small scale communities, such as families, friends, or business communities (cf. Urry 2007: 164–169, 230–252).

[33] There is a sense that everybody in the DIY translocal community is removed from each other the most by "one-degree-of-separation" (cf. Blotto n.d.: 9–11, 57), either as a friend or a friend of a friend. In contrast, the "small world" effect acquires five to six degrees of separation among any two people in the world to (mostly in theory) reach or know each other (cf. Hannerz 1980: 195; Urry 2007: 214, 215). While the global 'community' (i.e., the six-degrees-of-separation 'community') is an anonymous, physically displaced, and only theoretically connected community, the American DIY community, also a physically displaced community, is inter-personal, and physically connected, a one-degree-of-separation community. In addition, DIY communities are seen as built "one person at a time" (Oakes 2009: 80).

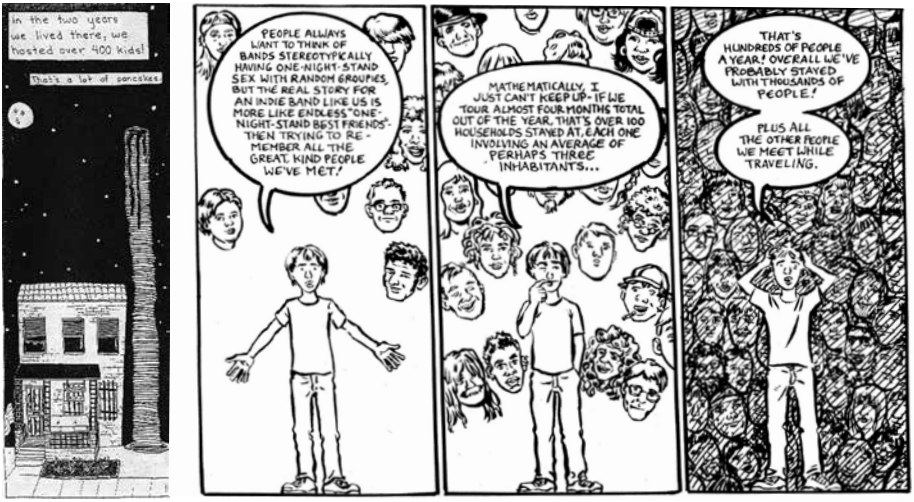

Figure 3: Two contrasting comic book perspectives (dwelling versus traveling) about the translocal DIY community (Connor 2010: 25; Lewis [2007] 2009: 73).

Figure 4: A drawing from a comic book, showing audience members as friends, and as hosts from band's previous tours (Lewis [2007] 2009: 73).

through an occasional inability of DIY participants to establish an affective connection. This comes to the fore, for example, when DIY bookers and hosts fail to meet the expectations of touring musicians, or vice versa, or because of the lack of interest of the audiences at some shows. Disappointments and failed connections are part of the game, but they also add to the learning experience, and thus strengthen and shape the whole translocal DIY community, and the practice of DIY touring.

I end by pointing out the significance of place and space in regard to the creation of translocal DIY communities. First, the place is treated as an 'item' in a translocal reciprocal exchange of shows and of booking and playing shows on a tour. Therefore, it carries a great material importance. Furthermore, the place determines the quality of relations established between the touring band and the locals. Inferring from our own touring experience with 3 Moons, and as many other DIY participants acknowledge (Lewis 2009 [2007]; Connor 2010, and 2011; personal communication with DIY touring musicians), hanging out with locals and sleeping in their houses instead of in motels not only reduces traveling costs, but also generates more close and personal relationships (see Fig. 3, and Fig. 4).[34]

Through these relationships, touring musicians know they are welcome and thus feel intimately at "home" at DIY places all over the country (cf. Connor 2011: 19; Lewis 2009 [2007]).[35] I emphasize here that DIY participants similarly describe DIY shows that happen in small and non-commercial places as "intimate" and see this quality as a contribution to the feeling of friendship and community (cf. Lipsitz 1994; Herzfeld 1997; Berlant 2000a; Berlant 2000b; Boym 2000; Stokes 2010).[36]

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34 African-American musicians touring the 'chitlin' circuit' stressed a similar relationship between place and community: "'We couldn't stay in the white hotels,' bandleader Andy Kirk recalled. 'I'm glad now we couldn't. We'd have missed out on a whole country full of folks who put us up in their homes, cooked dinners and breakfasts for us, told us how to get along in Alabama and Mississippi, helped us out in trouble, and became our friends for life'" (Lauterbach 2011: 90).

35 Consider, for example, these excerpts from Kimya Dawson's song "My Rollercoster" (Dawson 2006): *[...] And if we keep up this pace / pretty soon we'll know the name / of every kid and every grown up / booking house shows in their town [...]. And if home is really where the heart is / Then we're the smartest kids I know / Because wherever we are in this great big world / We'll never be more than a few hours from home... [...]. On the road again / Just can't wait to get on the road again / The life I love is makin' music with my friends / And I can't wait to get on the road again [...].* In addition, many musicians also claim that touring and the journey itself become their "home" (Jaffe and Clarke 2009: 10, 137).

36 See for instance these two quotes: "House shows are better. They're smaller, more intimate, your gear is at stake because of this, but it's worth it because we're fucking punk [...] It's louder, you're in

Finally, DIY touring is also about the double dialectical transformation of place and space (Tuan 1977; Cresswell 2004: 1–11; cf. De Certeau 1984: 117–118; Geertz 1973: 13–14; Rosaldo 1989: 39; Anonymous 2000). On one level, it is about familiarizing the unfamiliar: discovering DIY places and meeting DIY participants and communities, locally through going to shows, and translocally, through touring. In this way, DIY participants familiarize themselves with DIY places and DIY participants from around the country, and through the process, transform the imagined DIY community into a concrete and face-to-face one, and an imagined space of national DIY scenes into a concrete, meaningful, and "intimate" place of translocal DIY venues, places, and networks.

On another level, it is about defamiliarizing the familiar, a "semantic rearrangement" or "recontextualization" (Hebdige 1979: 93; 1979: 102; cf. Duncombe 2008 [1997]: 65; cf. Hall and Jefferson 1976: 93) of the dominant American spaces into DIY places. Locally, this means turning private houses, disused warehouses, or public parks into DIY music venues (this also means turning private spaces into collective and public ones, and vice versa, pervading public spaces with intimate collectivities). Translocally, it represents refashioning the dominant American capitalist space into alternative DIY place through spatial practice. DIY participants achieve this through the DIY approach to touring that subverts the dominant types of travel in America (for instance, tourist, family, or business travel, associated with high expenses and relatively isolated travel). DIY travel, on the other hand, challenges these norms of the American travel landscape (materialized in consumerist and spectacular spaces) through thriftiness, traveling as both fun and work, following both individual and communal goals, and nourishing larger community on the road. In addition, DIY participants in this way defamiliarize their status as "non-productive" citizens (who engage in thriftiness, reciprocal relations, and grey economy – all of them "non-productive" for the capitalist

the crowd, it's in your face. Quality often does not matter as much as community and fucking family and the ways, like being emotional and playing, and could be one of the band" (Chris). Chris's friend added: "You could be naked, and no one will arrest you" (Chris's friend) (Chris from Religious Girls, personal communication, January 23, 2011). "The epitome of a friendly homey space. The place is small in general but mostly well kept. The backyard has a home-made stage and is lit by Christmas lights. There is often home-baked goods for offer as well. Inside has the intimacy of the DAM house, but with couches right next to the performance space that chill the energy out. Feels the least like the space has been altered to become a venue and the most like a friend just came over to hang [out] and play a bit." (Fergus, personal communication, May 5, 2011).

market – cf. Cornehls 2006),[37] and reimagine themselves as "productive" participants aimed toward generating alternative lifestyles and communities.

In conclusion, DIY touring (as culture) is constituted by DIY participants through dialectical relationships between fun and hardship, freedom and commitment, travel and work, day and night practices, alienated or capitalist and communal or reciprocal relations, dwelling and movement, local (shows) and translocal (touring), individual and community, private creativity and public sharing, music production and community production, and the familiarization of the unfamiliar (DIY place) and defamiliarization of the familiar (mainstream space) (see Fig. 5). This dialectic of DIY touring conveys the nature of DIY participants, who are like amphibians, straddling both the capitalist and the DIY worlds. Moreover, it illuminates DIY touring as a particular culture, and simultaneously constitutes this DIY culture as travel. In this way, DIY participants incorporate both sides of the dialectics in their endeavors toward a larger ideological and political goal to transform an "imagined" translocal DIY community into an "intimate" face-to-face one.

fun	hardship
freedom	commitment
travel and exploration	work (playing)
day (alienated, capitalist relations)	night (communal, reciprocal relations)
local place (dwelling; shows)	translocal space (movement; touring)
individual aspiration	community goals
private creativity	public sharing
music production	community production
familiarization of unfamiliar (DIY place)	defamiliarization of familiar (US space)

Figure 5: Dialectics of DIY touring.[38]

[37] Shane from Portland told me people look down on him because he is doing music and not pursuing a career like other people. In that regard, he said, DIY touring is also not acknowledged as "worthy" by American society.

[38] In a manner of "fractal distinctions," each side of the dialectic can incorporate elements from the opposite side as its integral parts (cf. Gal 2002: 80).

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