

PUBLICATIONS OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND

*Dissertations in Education,
Humanities, and Theology*



UNIVERSITY OF
EASTERN FINLAND

SALLI ANTTONEN

**A FEEL FOR THE REAL:
DISCOURSES OF AUTHENTICITY IN POPULAR MUSIC CULTURES
THROUGH THREE CASE STUDIES**

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Publications of the University of Eastern Finland
Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology
No 108

University of Eastern Finland
Joensuu
2017

Juvenes Print, Suomen Yliopistopaino Oy
Tampere, 2017
Sarjan vastaava toimittaja: Vesa Koivisto
ISBN: 978-952-61-2556-5 (nid.)
ISSNL: 1798-5625
ISSN: 1798-5625
ISBN: 978-952-61-2557-2 (PDF)
ISSN: 1798-5633

Anttonen, Salli

A feel for the real: discourses of authenticity in popular music cultures through three case studies, 79 p.

Publications of the University of Eastern Finland.

Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology; 108

ISBN: 978-952-61-2556-5 (print)

ISSNL: 1798-5625

ISSN: 1798-5625

ISBN: 978-952-61-2557-2 (PDF)

ISSN: 1798-5633

ABSTRACT

This doctoral dissertation explores the concept of authenticity in popular music cultures. The main research questions of the work are: *How (and by whom) is authenticity constructed in the selected cases, and what kind of discursive elements construct the concept in this process? What are the functions of these authenticity discourses?* Through three case studies, from three different music genres and with different types of research material, I illuminate discourses of authenticity from three different angles, and thus aim at increased understanding of the phenomenon, strongly visible in cultural debates still today.

In this qualitative multiple case study, the main method is discourse analysis (DA). According to the selected method and its epistemology, in my work, authenticity is seen as a discursive phenomenon, a cultural construction built with language and communication. What is being said about authenticity or inauthenticity engenders changes. Music media and critics construct what authenticity is—and in turn, what is left outside of it.

The work consists of two parts: a large introduction and three research articles. In the introduction, I present the theoretical and methodological frameworks of the work, as well as suggest a conclusion on previous authenticity research, categorizing authenticity discourses into four themes: 1) origin: community or tradition, 2) subject position: creative individual, 3) subject position: opposition and 4) subject position: self-invention. Furthermore, I recapitulate the discursive elements that construct the concept of authenticity based on this work: *Genre demands* guide the expectations placed on a performer or music. *Gender* is interwoven with genre, as women are associated with pop, men with rock. Demand for *originality* has its roots in Romantic notions of artistry, as well as expectations of *suffering* or *madness*. *Truth* refers to the tendency to expect sincerity, and *correspondence* of art and artist from performers. Experiencing an impression of *intimacy* with the performer increases the addictive and enigmatic effect of celebrity images. *Anti-commercialism* indicates the demand for honest self-expression without the stain of commercial motives. *Authenticity of intended audiences* refers to the notion of an abject audience that diminishes an artist's authenticity and needs to be cast out. *Subversiveness*, valued especially in rock and metal, denotes a countercultural allegiance and a demand to reject mainstream values.

In the first article of the work, I explore the media image of Lady Gaga through qualitative DA of three interviews with her in the magazine *Rolling Stone*. I investigate, what types of discourses are used when talking about Lady Gaga in rock media interviews, especially in terms of authenticity. Based on the analysis, I argue that the interviews utilize two contradicting strands of authenticity discourses—Gaga's per-

sona is both constructed as performance, and as her true self, which creates fruitful friction around her public image.

The second article explores the Canadian band Nickelback, who has faced substantial negative feedback in the media. This article examines discourses constructed in the critiques of the band, focusing on the theme of authenticity, by analyzing reviews of the band from Finnish media in the time frame of 2000–2014. I research the different discourses that are used when talking about Nickelback's value and quality and that are used to either reinforce or question their authenticity as a rock band. Traditional discourses of authenticity are widely present in the critical reception, valuing anti-commercialism, subversiveness, correspondence of art and persona, originality and truth in particular. The article also investigates the role of music journalism and criticism as a guardian of taste for the rock community.

The third article explores limiting expressions in the transgressive genre of metal, paying special attention to the value of authenticity. Focusing on the case of the Finnish metal bands Turmion Kätilöt and Stam1na, the study firstly charts the instances of (self-)censorship the two bands have faced, starting off from their reactions to the Kauhajoki school shooting in Finland, and secondly investigates how these instances have been discussed and interpreted. Additionally, this article entailed a meta-level research question: *how can authenticity be applied in analyzing other music-related phenomena, such as censorship?* The analysis of the research data, which comprised Internet material and three qualitative semi-structured interviews, identified seven discourses that construct a multifaceted image of (self-)censorship, ranging from useless and illogical to justified, further intertwining with the value of authenticity.

Discourses of authenticity hold significant power especially in value judgments: with them, certain artists are cast as important and valuable, others as rejects and outcasts. However, the explored cases also introduce alternatives to the hegemonic views of authenticity: counterdiscourses that aim to free our musical tastes. Discourses of authenticity serve as a fruitful viewpoint that successfully deepens our understanding of phenomena such as Lady Gaga's media image, Nickelback's negative critical reception, and censorship in the metal genre.

Keywords: authenticity, discourse analysis, popular music, censorship, criticism, journalism, music journalism, music criticism, case study, genre, Lady Gaga, Nickelback, Turmion Kätilöt, Stam1na

Anttonen, Salli

Aitouden kaipuu: Autenttisuuden diskurssit populaarimusiikin kulttuureissa kolmen tapaustutkimuksen kautta

Joensuu, Itä-Suomen yliopisto, 2017, 79 s.

Publications of the University of Eastern Finland.

Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology; 108

ISBN: 978-952-61-2556-5 (nid.)

ISSNL: 1798-5625

ISSN: 1798-5625

ISBN: 978-952-61-2557-2 (PDF)

ISSN: 1798-5633

TIIVISTELMÄ

Tämä väitöskirja tarkastelee autenttisuuden käsitettä populaarimusiikin kulttuureissa. Työn päätutkimuskysymykset ovat: *Miten (ja kenen toimesta) autenttisuutta rakennetaan valituissa tapauksissa, ja millaiset diskursiiviset elementit rakentavat käsitettä tässä prosessissa? Mitä tarkoituksia nämä autenttisuusediskurssit palvelevat?* Valotan autenttisuuden diskursseja kolmesta eri kulmasta: kolmen eri tapaustutkimuksen kautta, jotka kukin sijoittuvat eri musiikillisiin genreihin ja joissa kussakin on erityyppiset tutkimusaineistot. Pyrin lisäämään ymmärrystä tästä ilmiöstä, joka on voimakkaasti näkyvillä edelleen myös nykypäivän kulttuurikeskusteluissa.

Tässä laadullisessa monitapaustutkimuksessa pääasiallinen tutkimusmetodi on diskurssianalyysi (DA). Valitun metodin ja sen epistemologian mukaisesti työssäni autenttisuus nähdään diskursiivisena ilmiönä, jota rakennetaan kielessä ja sosiaalisessa vuorovaikutuksessa. Se, mitä autenttisuudesta tai epäautenttisuudesta sanotaan, aiheuttaa muutoksia. Musiikkimedia ja -kriitikot rakentavat autenttisuutta — ja samalla sitä, mitä suljetaan sen ulkopuolelle.

Työ koostuu kahdesta osasta: laajasta johdannosta ja kolmesta tutkimusartikkelista. Johdannossa esittelen työn teoreettiset ja metodologiset viitekehykset ja esitän johtopäätöksiäni edeltävästä autenttisuustutkimuksesta. Luokittelen autenttisuusediskurssit neljän teeman alle: 1) alkuperä: yhteisö tai perinne, 2) subjektipositio: luova yksilö, 3) subjektipositio: vastarinta, ja 4) subjektipositio: itsen uudelleen luonti. Lisäksi kokoan yhteen ne diskursiiviset elementit, jotka tämän tutkimuksen perusteella rakentavat autenttisuuden käsitettä: *Genrevaatimukset* ohjaavat odotuksia musiikkia tai artistia kohtaan. *Sukupuoli* nivoutuu genreen naisten assosioituessa popiin, miesten vuorostaan rockiin. *Omaperäisyyden* vaatimus pohjaa romanttiseen taiteilijamyyttiin, samoin kuin odotukset *kärsimyksestä* tai *hulluudesta*. *Totuus* viittaa taipumukseen odottaa esiintyjiltä vilpittömyyttä sekä taiteen ja persoonan *vastaavuutta*. *Intiimiyden* kokemus suhteessa esiintyjään vuorostaan lisää tähti-imagon vangitsevuutta ja arvoitussellisuutta. *Epäkaupallisuus* viittaa vilpittömän itseilmaisun vaatimukseen, ilman saastuttaviksi koettuja kaupallisia motiiveja. *Kohdeyleisön autenttisuus* sisältää ajatuksen abjektista yleisöstä, joka vähentää artistin autenttisuutta ja joka täytyy torjua. *Kapinallisuus*, joka on arvo etenkin rockissa ja metallissa, ilmentää vastakulttuurista lojaaliutta ja vaatimusta torjua valtavirran arvomaailma.

Työn ensimmäisessä tutkimusartikkelissa tutkin Lady Gagan mediakuvaa laadullisen diskurssianalyysin keinoin kolmessa *Rolling Stonen* haastattelussa. Analysoin, millaisia diskursseja käytetään, kun puhutaan Lady Gagasta rockmedian haastatte-

luissa, etenkin autenttisuuden näkökulmasta. Analyysin pohjalta väitän, että haastattelut hyödyntävät kahta vastakkaista autenttisuuskäsitteiden säiettä – Gagan persoonana konstruoidaan sekä performanssiksi että hänen aidoksi itsekseen, mikä aiheuttaa hedelmällisiä jännitteitä hänen julkisen kuvansa ympärille.

Toinen artikkeli tarkastelee kanadalaista Nickelback-yhtyettä, joka on saanut paljon kielteistä palautetta mediassa. Tässä artikkelissa tutkin niitä autenttisuuden diskursseja, joita yhtyeen kritiikeissä rakennettiin suomalaisessa mediassa vuosina 2000–2014. Kartoitan diskursseja, joita käytetään, kun puhutaan Nickelbackin arvosta ja laadusta, ja joilla joko vahvistetaan tai kyseenalaistetaan heidän arvoaan rockyhtyeenä. Perinteiset autenttisuuskäsitteet ovat laajasti läsnä kriittisessä vastaanotossa arvostaen eritoten epäkaupallisuutta, kapinallisuutta, taiteen ja persoonan vastavuuttoa, omaperäisyyttä ja totuutta. Artikkelin selvittää myös musiikkijournalismin ja -kritiikin roolia makujen vartijana rockyhteisössä.

Kolmas artikkeli tutkii ilmaisun rajoittamista rajoja rikkovassa metalligenressä kiinnittäen erityistä huomiota autenttisuuteen arvona. Keskityn kahden suomalaisen metalliyhtyeen, Turmion Kätilöiden ja Stam1nan, tapauksiin kartoittaen ensin yhtyeiden kokemuksia (itse)sensuurista lähtien liikkeelle heidän reaktioistaan Kauhajoen koulusurmiin. Artikkelin sisältää myös metatason tutkimuskysymyksen: *kuinka autenttisuutta voidaan soveltaa muiden musiikkialaisten ilmiöiden, kuten sensuurin, tutkimuksessa?* Internet-aineistosta ja kolmesta puolistrukturoidusta laadullisesta haastattelusta koostuvan aineiston analyysin pohjalta erittelin seitsemän diskurssia, jotka rakentavat monitahoisen kuvan (itse)sensuurista, ulottuen hyödyttömästä ja epäloogisesta perusteluun, nivoutuen samalla yhteen autenttisuuden kanssa.

Autenttisuuden diskursseilla on huomattavaa valtaa etenkin arvolausumissa: niiden avulla toiset artistit asemoidaan tärkeiksi ja arvokkaiksi, toiset taas hylkiöiksi. Tutkitut tapaukset toivat kuitenkin esille myös vaihtoehtoja hegemonisille autenttisuuskäsitteille: vastadiskursseja, jotka pyrkivät vapauttamaan musiikillisia makujamme. Autenttisuus tarjoaa hedelmällisen näkökulman syventää ymmärtämystämme Lady Gagan mediakuvasta, Nickelbackin kielteisestä kriittisestä vastaanotosta sekä sensuurista metalligenressä.

Avainsanat: autenttisuus, diskurssianalyysi, populaarimusiikki, sensuuri, kritiikki, journalismi, musiikkijournalismi, musiikkikritiikki, tapaustutkimus, genret, Lady Gaga, Nickelback, Turmion Kätilöt, Stam1na

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As often is said, a doctoral dissertation is made to look like the endeavor of a single individual, when in fact it feels like anything but. I would like to express my gratitude to the numerous individuals and institutions that have made this work possible.

I am greatly indebted to my supervisor, Professor Helmi Järviluoma-Mäkelä, who has guided me from my master's studies onwards, and showered me with support and inspiration time and time again. My sincere thanks also to my other supervisor, Professor Pekka Suutari, who has guided me throughout the dissertation process with insight and calm.

The Finnish Doctoral Programme of Music Research (MuTO) not only provided me with a supportive and stable network and structure, but also funded my doctoral work, without which the dissertation would not have been possible. I have also received additional funding and support from the Doctoral Programme in Social and Cultural Encounters (SCE), at the University of Eastern Finland (UEF), Karjalaisen Kulttuurin Edistämissäätiö, and the Department of Humanities in UEF. I am very grateful for this financial support that facilitated the work. In addition, the spring and winter schools, and the possibility to consult other supervisors that both MuTO and SCE have offered, have been priceless assets. I also want to thank Kaarina Kilpiö, our superb coordinator at MuTO, for her help and advice.

I would also like to express my gratitude to the University of Glasgow and their department of Music, as well as the Department of Humanities at the University of Eastern Finland, for the possibility to spend three months in Glasgow as a visiting scholar in the spring of 2015. Many thanks also to Ifa Ramialison, my library and knitting mate, for making my stay in Glasgow so pleasant. In addition, university libraries in both Glasgow and Joensuu have been irreplaceable treasure troves of wisdom, where I have always gotten help when needed. Furthermore, I would like to thank Music Archive Finland, for the opportunity to spend a week at their premises in Helsinki obtaining crucial material for the second article of the work.

Our collective of cultural studies and music studies scholars, in UEF's Doctoral Programme in Social and Cultural Encounters, in the Department of Humanities in UEF, and in the Finnish Doctoral Programme of Music Research has offered vital help, discussions and peer support in (innumerable) times of need. I would especially like to thank Aino Tormulainen, Juhana Venäläinen and Tuomas Järvenpää from Joensuu, and our Spain posse of Kim Ramstedt, Lari Aaltonen and Sini Mononen, as well as Inka Rantakallio, my friend and colleague in all things authentic.

I have had the honor to belong to the network Researching Censorship, led by Annemette Kirkegaard, for which I am highly thankful. The network has offered numerous seminars and valuable insight into the issue of censorship, as well as amazing encounters with amazing people, such as Alexis Kallio. Thank you, Alexis, for all your help, in all issues ranging from proofreading to encouragement.

I wish to extend my warmest thanks and deep gratitude to my external examiners, Professor Martin Cloonan and Associate Professor Line Grenier for all their efforts and wise feedback on my dissertation. I also wish to thank and include the countless people, who have also advanced this work: for example, the anonymous peer reviewers and editors of my articles, whose insights and critique made the texts better and clearer, and participants from seminars and conferences in Finland and abroad, who

guided me with insightful critique. Any remaining errors are naturally solely my responsibility.

I would also like to express my deepest gratitude to my interviewees, Antti Hyyrynen, Kai-Pekka Kangasmäki and Petja Turunen, from Stam1na, and Turmion Kätilöt, for their time and participation in the interview process. I hope I have succeeded in reporting their experiences with the respect and dignity they deserve.

Anna-Leena Toivanen, my office mate, has been invaluable to me. Thank you for your wisdom, kindness and experienced advice, and the good working atmosphere of our shared room.

Finally, I want to thank my family and friends for continuous support and encouragement. Without calming walks, ice swimming, anxious rants and to have someone to listen to them, I would have given up on the work countless times.

Joensuu, October 2017
Salli Anttonen

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

The articles are reprinted with kind permission of the publishers.

- I “The lie becomes the truth”: Constructions of authenticity in *Rolling Stone’s* cover stories of Lady Gaga. *Etnomusikologian vuosikirja 2015*, vol. 27, pp. 82–111. Eds. Meri Kytö and Saijaleena Rantanen. Online: http://julkaisut.etnomusikologia.fi/EVK/EVK_Vol_27_2015.pdf

- II “Hypocritical bullshit performed through gritted teeth”: Authenticity discourses in Nickelback’s album reviews in Finnish media. *Metal Music Studies*, 2:1, 2016: 39–56. DOI: 10.1386/mms.2.1.39_1

- III From Justified to Illogical: Discourses of (Self-)Censorship and Authenticity in Cases of Finnish Metal Bands. *Popular Music and Society*, special issue on Music and Censorship. 40:3, 2017: 274–291. DOI: 10.1080/03007766.2017.1294521.

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1 INTRODUCTION

A century ago, not many people were concerned with how authentic a piece of music was; now the concern seems, at times, overwhelming.

Barker and Taylor 2007, 324

Authenticity in popular music has intrigued both music listeners and popular music scholars since the advent of rock. A sobering experience concerning my own demands for authenticity happened in March of 2015, during my exchange period at the University of Glasgow, when I went to see a gig by the Finnish Eurovision winner Lordi. As I was standing in the venue and the band appeared on stage, with their skulls, chains, masks with scarred skin and horns, I strongly realized the existence of my own snobbish tendencies regarding music. This was ridiculous and fake, was it not? However, as the show went on, and I emphasize the word show, I began to enjoy it enormously. The performance was hugely entertaining and well designed. The structure of the show was divided into smaller sections with recurrent numbers: solos by the drummer, bassist, guitarist and keyboardist, and a magic trick by the drummer. Extramusical features were abundant: naturally the costumes of the band, but also a smoke cannon used by Mr. Lordi, confetti, a flashlight to point at the audience, and two extra performers dressed according to the song (for example as clowns in a circus-themed number).

To me, there was nothing “real” about the performance, considering the costumes and the personas adopted by the musicians. However, what struck me as real later on was the dedication and will of the band to give a great performance to the audience. Having grown up in a time of “realness” in music, the golden era of grunge just preceding my teenage years, the show element of music was unknown to me. Although the gig made me question the emphasis of authenticity instead of performativity and being entertaining, exemplified with the seemingly deconstructive and artificial nature of today’s star identities such as Lady Gaga and Nicky Minaj, our everyday life is still full of examples of claiming authenticity. Discussing the topic at my friends’ apartment, we stared at a soda advertisement on the street, which claimed that this soda was the “authentic and original” one. Although the topic of authenticity is at times claimed to exhaust academics and rock critics, it “is still rife in the reception of rock albums” (Jones 2008, 35). As an abundant phenomenon, even to the point of being unavoidable, as it seeps through our everyday life and culture, authenticity is a rich topic for research—especially as it connects to questions of power as a means to justify the value of certain music types.

The roots of this dissertation lie in 2011 when I joined the Nordic research network Researching Music Censorship (RMC). As I began considering a suitable topic for my dissertation in relation to censorship, credibility struck me as an interesting angle to the topic—accompanied by my own memories of watching uncensored music videos from MTV in the middle of the night, feeling a sense of danger. However, after some investigations, credibility as a concept turned out to be underrepresented in scholarly debates, especially contrasted with authenticity, of which there seemed to be an abundance of research, discussions and even heated arguments, on which to build my dissertation. As the research process progressed, the concept of authenticity itself turned out to be so complex, slippery and evocative that my main research focus shifted to it, censorship taking a secondary role.

1.1 POINTS OF DEPARTURE: PREVIOUS RESEARCH

In previous research on authenticity¹, the concept has been approached in numerous ways—so many in fact that one word seems almost inadequate to capture all the trajectories. When it comes to music, one trajectory is the authenticity in classical music or the early music movement, which usually connotes historically authentic performance practices, instruments and tunings, or the search for the authentic score or the composer’s authentic intentions (see, e.g., Kivy 1995; Dutton 2009; Lindholm 2008, 26–27; Sherman 1998). In popular music, the term has been widely discussed (see, e.g., Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010; Keightley 2001; Shuker 2013; Fornäs 1995a; Grossberg 1993; Grossberg 1992), denoting different expectations on artists and music, usually concerning a Romantic ideal of sincerity and originality (see, e.g., Keightley 2001; Lindberg et al. 2005, 51) or the folk ideology of authentically representing a community (Frith 1981). It is further often connected to the birth of rock, as a way for the genre to validate itself as serious music, not mere entertainment (Keightley 2001, 131; Grossberg 1992; Section 2.1.3 in this work).

Authenticity is approached as a side note in many rock textbooks (e.g., Shuker 2012; 2013), or included in detailed analyses of a band or a performer (see, e.g., Armstrong 2004, on Eminem), but in my work, the key theoretical influences have been works that approach authenticity as their main research focus. I have concentrated on studies that lean towards the constructionist and discursive approach I also use. Authenticity is then approached as a cultural construct, not as an inherent trait of an artist or music. This approach has been used, for instance, by Weisethaunet and Lindberg (2010) and Moore (2002).

One method of this approach has been theoretical, including such articles as Allan Moore’s “Authenticity as authentication” (2002) and Keir Keightley’s “Reconsidering Rock” (2001), where the issue has been explored in a more abstract and general level, producing new typologies and categorizations of authenticity discourses (see also Fornäs 1995a; Grossberg 1993; Grossberg 1992; Section 2.1.5 in this work). These previous works offer significant theoretical input to the study of authenticity in popular music cultures but rarely provide concrete examples with dedicated research material, rather approaching the issue on a more general and theoretical level. In my work, I wish to address this gap by offering specific analyses of cases, basing my suggestions of authenticity discourses on concrete material and examples, while focusing on authenticity rather than dismissing it as a side note. Furthermore, previous research, while addressing other works on the issue, has often presented their own dichotomies or divisions of discourses of authenticity, rather than editing or building on top of the previous models. In this work, I want to offer a version of synthesis of the issue, utilizing and combining all the strength of the previous work, rather than proposing another singular model. Furthermore, this work aims to serve as a denominator between theory and practice, by including both theoretical reflections and developments, and detailed case analyses.

Another approach to authenticity has been to investigate it historically using, for instance, music media corpuses as data. Richard A. Peterson’s insightful *Creating Country Music: Fabricating Authenticity* (1997) is historically inclined, focusing on the timeframe of 1923–1953. Hans Weisethaunet and Ulf Lindberg’s article (2010) is

¹ See also Chapter 2 in this work for a more detailed exploration of previous works.

based on their previous work on the history of rock criticism (Lindberg et al. 2005), exploring such magazines as *Rolling Stone*, *Melody Maker* and *NME* in the timeframe of 1964–2004. Kembrew McLeod’s article (2001) dissects different authenticity discourses in the reviews of winning albums and artists of *The Village Voice* Pazz & Jop rock critics’ poll in North America from 1971 to 1993. Although these last two works are close to my research material and context as they, too, adopt the discursive approach to authenticity and revolve around music journalism, I wanted to see the proposed authenticity discourses in action—how they would work as tools of research. Moreover, I wish to respond to the call for an investigation of authenticity discourses in the now—whether or not the discourses are still present in music journalism of the day, and not only elements in history.

It is also to be noted that these previous central works on authenticity, perhaps apart from Weisethaunet and Lindberg (2010), are somewhat dated. Although this work still focuses its investigation on quite traditional media, such as *Rolling Stone* and music critiques, it also discusses questions of postmodernism and the possibility of counterdiscourses for authenticity, in addition to inauthentic authenticity, proposed by earlier studies.

Authenticity as a cultural construct that shifts and changes along with the times and contexts, is worthy of constant exploration, especially in increasingly changing popular music cultures.² This work aims to offer an updated look on the topic that was at the center of heated attention at the beginning of the millennium, to the point of becoming a cliché, but in recent years the interest in the issue has somewhat waned—apart from the works of Leanne Fetterley (2007), and works concentrating on authenticity in hip hop, such as Laura Speers (2017), and Elina Westinen (2014), for example. Fetterley’s dissertation is especially close to my work as it, too, includes both theoretical developments of the concept of authenticity, and case studies of different artists from multiple genres (rock, new age and rap)—however, my work investigates somewhat different genres and moreover, it brings forth new contexts instead of the common Anglo-American focus (e.g., Grossberg 1993; Grossberg 1992; Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010; Keightley 2001; McLeod 2001; Peterson 1997; Speers 2017), such as in the case of Finnish metal.

Authenticity has effects also on academia and research since it affects what is seen as valuable enough to be the topic of research. The discourses of rock criticism, where authenticity reigns, “spills over into the academy, helping to shape the canon [sic] of ‘respectable’ artists worthy of scholarly study” (McLeod 2001, 58). In my research, I wanted to challenge this setting, and explore popular artists such as Nickelback that are considered mainstream and successful, but not revered as very artistic or “cool” (see Tagg 2000), which can, and has, led to their exclusion from the realm of popular music studies.

²The effects of digitization on authenticity serve as an important topic for future research. The research data of this work is that of “traditional” media: music critiques in magazines and interviews in *Rolling Stone*, thus it does not show the effects of digitalization directly, although on the Internet data of Article III, demands for authenticity were still to be seen. The context of the artists in question are traditional, or as in the case of Lady Gaga, aims to work in the context of traditional rock and old school rock stars or artists, where authenticity still plays a crucial role. The demands for YouTube stars, for instance, may be quite different.

1.2 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this research was to increase understanding of authenticity as a discursive phenomenon, through three case studies of Lady Gaga, Nickelback and Finnish metal, where media material and semi-structured interviews formed the research material. I approached the topic through two overarching research questions:

- How (and by whom) is authenticity constructed in the selected cases, and what kind of discursive elements construct the concept in this process?
- What are the functions of these authenticity discourses?

This research commits to a constructionist view on authenticity, and accordingly, I do not try to seek out whether or not the musicians in question are authentic—I even consider if that question is at all relevant (see also Frith 1987, 137). Instead, I research the different discourses that are constructed when talking about the artists' value and quality and that are used to either reinforce or question their authenticity. As Simon Frith (2004, 19) states that there is no bad music, only the concept or category of "bad music" in "an evaluative context, as part of an argument," similarly I see that there is no authenticity *per se*, but rather it exists as part of an argument: it is constructed to be used in aesthetic debates. In my research, authenticity is constructed or deconstructed through text, through arguments, logics, and choices of words. According to Janne Mäkelä, popular music researchers seem to agree that authenticity is not something natural but instead a cultural construction that is constantly used to legitimize and justify certain forms of music (2002, 156–157; see also Fornäs 1995a, 275)—this does not indicate, however, that audiences could not experience authenticity as natural. My interest is towards where that authenticity is created, how and by whom.

This thesis argues that authenticity discourses still play a crucial role in popular music cultures. Constructions of authenticity hold significant power especially in value judgments: with them, certain artists are cast as important and valuable, others as rejects and outcasts. However, the explored cases also introduce alternatives to the hegemonic views of authenticity: counterdiscourses that aim to free our musical tastes. Furthermore, the thesis illustrates that discourses of authenticity serve as a fruitful viewpoint for research, successfully deepening our understanding of phenomena such as Lady Gaga's media image, Nickelback's negative critical reception, and censorship in the metal genre.

Popular music as a concept is a very broad term. In my text, I follow Philip Auslander, for example, and use the term pop "to refer to rock's ideological Other", whereas "popular music" denotes the wider realm of musics that includes both rock and pop, along with many other genres (Auslander 2008, 79). This division is discussed in detail below in Section 2.1.3.

1.3 THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

This part of the dissertation is divided into four chapters. This chapter introduces the topic and the aims of the research. The second chapter focuses on the theoretical framework of the research through central concepts: authenticity and censorship. Previous research on authenticity is explored at length as it provided an important backdrop to the analysis. The third chapter concerns methodology, and introduces central elements of it such as case study, discourse analysis, and the different research materials. Discourse analysis (DA) in its essence is not only a method but entails a certain theoretical and epistemological worldview; however, I have decided to investigate the wholeness of DA under the third chapter for the sake of clarity. The fourth chapter presents the conclusions of the research process, and discussion of further research. The ethical issues of the research do not have their own chapter, but rather they are interwoven in the text and explored in applicable parts of other chapters. For example, the ethical dimensions of different research materials are discussed in the respective chapters focusing on materials.

Next, I will briefly introduce the publications of the dissertation; the conclusions of the articles are discussed more thoroughly throughout the dissertation in later chapters. The themes and topics of the publications are presented below in the figure: Article I focuses on Lady Gaga, Article II on Nickelback and Article III on two Finnish metal bands and their experiences of censorship.

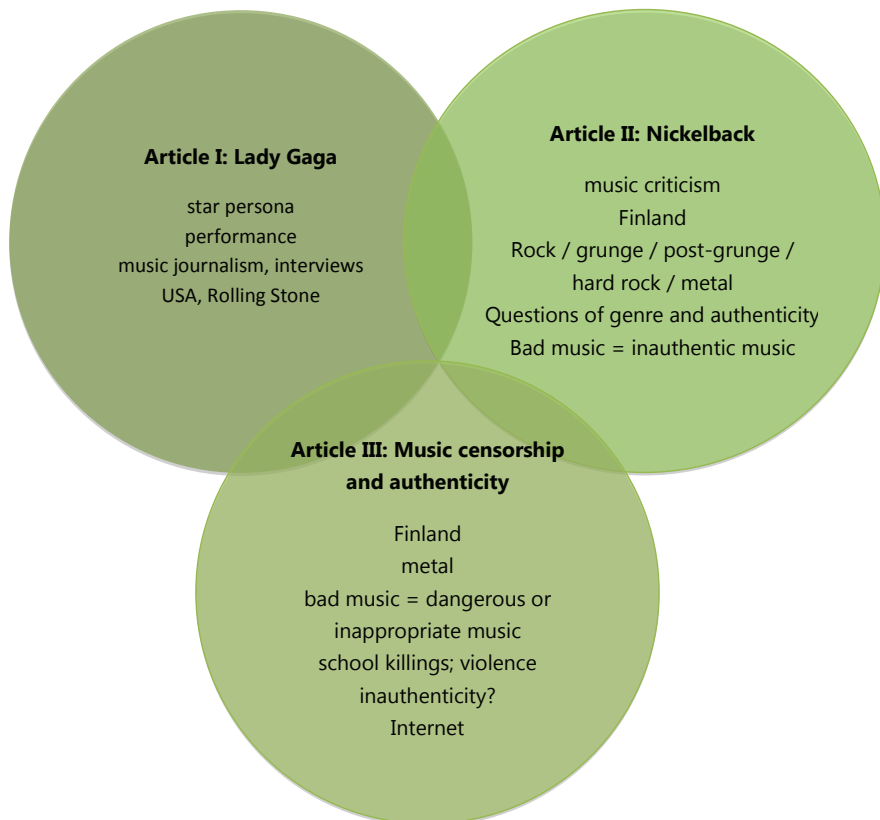


Figure 1: Themes and data of the articles

Although the primary theme of Article III turned out to be censorship, thus differing from the main sphere of Articles I and II, actually (music) criticism and censorship are not necessarily very distant phenomena from each other. As Richard Burt argues in the context of theater research,

[c]riticism is a form of censorship insofar as it involves legitimating certain dramatic discourses and delegitimizing others. Criticism operates productively in terms of establishing exclusive hierarchies and repressively as censure (the aim being a kind of postpublication censorship) in order to secure these hierarchies (Burt 1998, 25).

By and large, both (music) criticism, the context of Articles I and II, and censorship, the context of Article III, operate in order to construct and delimit the sphere of “acceptable speech” (see, e.g., Butler 1998, 248). Both construct some forms of music as undesirable or even unacceptable, while validating and authenticating others.

1.3.1 Article I: “The lie becomes the truth”: Constructions of authenticity in Rolling Stone’s cover stories of Lady Gaga

The first article of the dissertation concerns Lady Gaga and her cover story interviews in *Rolling Stone*. It is published in *Etnomusikologian vuosikirja 2015* [Finnish Yearbook of Ethnomusicology]. The aim of this article was to investigate the conflicting image of Lady Gaga from the viewpoint of different authenticity discourses. I classified discourses presented in previous research into two categories: the traditional and the (more) modern³ strand. As one possible solution to the enigma of Gaga’s image, I suggested that the confusion is a result of combining these two strands of different authenticity discourses.

This article also strived to address the issue of context and the agenda of different players in the authenticity game in popular music, investigating the role of music journalism in discussions of authenticity in particular. I chose *Rolling Stone* because it reads as such a hegemonic cornerstone of music journalism and in the discussion around popular music. Because of the magazine’s long roots in the history of rock and its countercultural political activities, my interpretation was that it is more crucial for *Rolling Stone* to keep this image up and running, instead of succumbing to being a mainstream, openly commercial medium. In the case of Lady Gaga, a highly successful female dance pop artist, this attempt is all the more critical, because of the gender, genre and commercial success of the artist.

1.3.1 Article II: “Hypocritical bullshit performed through gritted teeth”: Authenticity discourses in Nickelback’s album reviews in Finnish media

The second article of the dissertation investigates Nickelback and their album reviews in Finnish media during the time span of 2000–2014. It is published in *Metal Music Studies* 2(1). My aim was to understand the massive negative impact Nickelback has

³The “modern” strand draws from Keir Keightley’s (2001) *Authenticity of Modernism*, which in turn parallels Weisethaunet and Lindberg’s (2010) discourse of Authentic inauthenticity, or Grossberg’s (1992) discourse with the same name. See Section 2.1.5 for a detailed description.

faced in the media and to explore how this criticism relates to issues of authenticity. As with the Gaga article, the role of music journalism, in this case criticism in particular, was at the core. As was my initial hypothesis, many accusations towards Nickelback targeted them particularly on the basis of authenticity claims.

In the beginning of the research process, I collected reviews of Nickelback from the biggest international music magazines, such as *Rolling Stone* and *NME*. However, in the end, I decided to focus on the Finnish material with a specific timeframe, firstly to form a coherent corpus, and secondly, to utilize my own position as a Finn and the advantages this brings to the interpretation of Finnish material and the cultural connotations operated in the texts.

Critical reception, and especially its power of exclusion in Nickelback's case is linked to Foucault's thoughts on commentaries, which keep certain discourses and texts alive and in rotation. The tendency to focus critical analysis and scholarly interest only on canonical texts affects what is seen as worthy of analysis and which texts are then maintained in circulation. (Mills 1997, 68.) Texts excluded from the canon are thus often seen as not worthy of scholarly attention. This was one side agenda I had with the Nickelback article—I wanted to pay attention to a very popular band and their music, which is excluded from the canon of popular music studies, and which easily could be categorized as not worthy of research, possibly because of being seen as commercialist and mainstream. This is comparable to the previous discussions on topics formerly seen as unworthy of scholarly study, such as popular music in general. The debate is an ongoing continuum, exemplifying the power of research as a form of legitimation. The Foucauldian power of discourse is visible also in the selection of research topics.

Similar to Auslander's arguments that evaluation of authenticity must be based on both aural and visual evidence (2008, 88), in this article, I took also the aural and visual imagery of the band as the material for discourse analysis, thus committing to the view that non-linguistic elements can also work as parts of discursive formations. This entailed listening to the band's albums and watching their music videos.

1.3.2 Article III: From Justified to Illogical: Discourses of (Self-)Censorship and Authenticity in Cases of Finnish Metal Bands

The third article of the dissertation, published in *Popular Music and Society* 40(3) in a special issue on music censorship in 2017, focuses on the discourses of censorship and authenticity. The article has an applied approach: to employ and connect the investigation of authenticity discourses to another research topic. The previous two research articles had authenticity as their main focus; the third one concentrates on discourses of censorship, thus maintaining the discursive view, and simultaneously exploring the possible connections between censorship and authenticity. Thus, in addition to its main research aim of investigating firstly, *what kinds of discourses are constructed when discussing (self-)censorship in the selected cases of Turmion Kätilöt and Stam1na, and secondly, what these discourses articulate about censorship on the one hand and authenticity on the other in the metal genre?*, this article entailed a meta-level research question: *how can authenticity be applied in analyzing other music-related phenomena, such as censorship?* According to the analysis, discourses of authenticity were interwoven also with the debates of censorship, highlighting its ubiquitous nature.

This article was the one I started working on first. It was a product of my membership in the Nordic Researching Music Censorship network, which I joined in 2011, while just having started my postgraduate studies. The aim was to examine the intertwinement of censorship and authenticity in a genre that values transgression. As a conclusion, I dissected seven different discourses concerning censorship and authenticity from the research material, aiming to give voice to the band members to determine and delimit censorship as they saw fit.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND CENTRAL CONCEPTS

2.1 AUTHENTICITY

In this section, I will explore previous authenticity research in more detail, investigating the different strands it has brought forth to the concept of authenticity. Setting off from the roots of the concept, I will move on to examine credibility, a close notion. Secondly, I will explore defining authenticity, its role both in popular music cultures through the dichotomies of art vs commerce and rock vs pop, and in the music industry. The previous discourses of authenticity are then investigated at length, followed by my proposition of conclusions and new categorizations of the discourses. Finally, I will investigate the different strands and connections the previous authenticity research has presented through the themes of authentic artifacts, postmodernism, and value judgments.

Authenticity is a widely discussed term in popular music studies (see Section 1.1. in this work). Its roots, however, are much wider. The word as such originated in ancient Greece, referring to the “self-made,” to someone being the true origin of their work (Keightley 2001, 134; Fornäs 1995a, 274). The development of the modern worldview from the 16th to 18th century in Western Europe planted the crucial concepts that facilitate the ideal of authenticity. Most important events in this development were the reformation of Christian sensibility, the rise of modern science and the emergence of the idea of society as man-made, instead of natural (Guignon 2004, 27–33). Authenticity is a product of Romanticism, born at the end of the 18th century. The writer and philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712–1778) was one of the most crucial contributors to the advancement of both authenticity and Romanticism—Lindholm even terms him “the inventor of modern authenticity” (Lindholm 2008; Guignon 2004, 55; C. Taylor 1991, 27). In the 18th century, concerns of authenticity and sincerity had saturated both literature and philosophy, and in Romanticism, these concerns escalated (Sinanan and Milnes 2010, 2). Now firmly a part of Western consciousness, the then new notion that each of us has a unique way of being, promoted by Herder, develops. In contrast, “before the late eighteenth century no one thought that the differences between human beings had this kind of moral significance.” Being true to myself, living my life *my* way and not imitating anyone else, became an ethical ideal. (C. Taylor 1991, 28–29.) These historical roots, although summarized very concisely here, emphasize the central position of authenticity in the development of Western thought and subjectivity in general, not just in arts or music in particular. Due to its salience and age in our culture, it is no wonder authenticity has such a fundamental role also in popular music culture.

In the arts, the rise and pursuit of authenticity and the modern idea of art are closely connected—the ideas of “art” and “being an artist” as how we understand them, connected to fine arts, are actually fairly new notions in Western thought. The 19th century idea of the cult of the genius emphasized authenticity, abandoning skillful imitation (*mimesis*) or pleasing the audience as values. What rises to the focus is creation: the artists’ authentic expression of themselves (Guignon 2004, 70–71, 75–76; C. Taylor 1991,

62). In literature, this meant focusing on “the authenticity of the selves” of the writers “as well as the sincerity of the feelings they expressed” (Sinanan and Milnes 2010, 2).

Foucault (1981, 54) argues that the division between true and false and our “will to truth” are also “historically constituted”; the truthfulness of a statement has not always resided in the content of a statement but for example in Greece in the sixth century BCE in the “ritualized, efficacious and just act of enunciation” itself. A century later the division had been established, giving “our will to know its general form,” although the will to truth continues to shift to this day. (Foucault 1981, 54–55.) In other words, “truth” has not always meant the same thing but is instead historically contingent in its meaning. Similarly, our will to truth or to authenticity is historically constructed and a product of cultural struggles. According to Foucault, this will to truth, which is institutionally supported and distributed, is also visible in Western literature’s tendency to base itself on “the natural, the ‘vraisemblable,’ on sincerity, on science as well—in short, on ‘true’ discourse” (1981, 55). The fixation on truth, similarly as the fixation on authenticity, is thus seen as a centuries-old cultural construction, not as natural or absolute.

Despite its long history, authenticity has not become extinct yet. On the contrary, it is widely pursued in forms of authentic food, art, music or people—it is an “absolute value in contemporary life” (Lindholm 2008, 1; Cobb 2014, 2; Fetterley 2007, 63; Speers 2017). In popular music, the obsession with authenticity is even blamed as being responsible for the deaths of Kurt Cobain, Richie Edwards, and Sid Vicious, for example (Barker and Taylor 2007). Similarly, Lindholm argues that the controversy between the seeming spontaneity and the work, the planning, the skill, the organizing effort that goes into a performance might drive musicians more towards self-destructive and excessive lifestyles, in order to somehow balance the tension between being real and performing real—“For idols of authenticity, being really, really real can mean being really, really self-destructive” (Lindholm 2008, 37–38). As Barker and Taylor (2007, x) argue, “[a]uthenticity is an absolute, a goal that can never be fully attained, a quest.” However, that does not stop people and our culture from constantly pursuing it, with at times even tragic consequences.

2.1.1 Credibility

I started out my PhD project with the aim of researching authenticity from the angle of credibility that has been a less covered concept in the research of popular music. However, it turned out to be quite difficult to find research that would explicitly discuss or define credibility; meanwhile, there is a great deal of material on authenticity. Thus, I decided to focus on the concept of authenticity, as then I would have the basis of earlier substantial research to set off from—to follow the advice of Umberto Eco, who instructs a student to “climb onto the shoulders of a giant, at least one of modest height, or even onto another dwarf” (Eco 1977/2015, 16).

Helen Davies separates the two concepts as follows: credibility can be used almost synonymously with critical acclaim; it equals good and valuable, whereas that which is not credible, is bad and worthless. Credible music also equals intelligent and serious. Authenticity on the other hand requires that the music is an accurate representation of the performer, and it is produced for personal self-expression, not because of financial gain. However, Davies states that being perceived as credible is contingent on whether a performer is considered authentic. Thus, the two terms are described as

correlating with each other. (2001, 304–305.) My understanding of Davies’ thinking is that credibility is about proficiency—if somebody is a credible artist, that indicates if the performance is approved or bought as the acts of an “artist.” Similarly, the Finnish word *uskottavuus*, directly translated as believability or credibility, is intriguing in the sense that it emphasizes the performance’s ability to make us listeners believe in the act—as opposed to authenticity, which as a term requires ontological authenticity: that the performance is essentially authentic at its core, not just able to create the illusion of something we can believe in. Based on this, I would argue that credibility is to some extent a learnable skill that comes with the profession of musicianship, a skill that one can train and acquire. Authenticity, on the other hand, is more slippery—as the folk artist Lucky Fonz III proposes, the moment you start striving for it is the moment you lose it (Schaap 2016). As stated in Article III, credibility can be seen as a subconcept of authenticity, illustrating one of “the many strands of meanings that the established theoretical concept of authenticity encompasses.”

In Finnish, the word authenticity is seldom used in everyday situations. When discussing music or musicians, in my experience words like genuineness [*aitous*] or believability / credibility [*uskottavuus*] are more common. In my work, however, the issue is not so much about a specific word, but rather authenticity as a concept works as a sign representing all these aspects of “good” music-making. As McLeod points out (2002, 105), many words—real, genuine, honest, believable, credible, true, for instance—can construct the discourse of authenticity, although the term itself is not mentioned.

2.1.2 Defining authenticity

Defining authenticity in this work, and in general, is complex: it is suggested that some failure is “the price—and even perhaps the condition—of success in the quest to understand ‘authenticity’ and ‘sincerity’” (Sinanan and Milnes 2010, 2). Lionel Trilling further proposes that the concepts are “best not talked about if they are to retain any force of meaning” (2009, 120). On the one hand, I explored the research material for authenticity discourses, thus using a certain filter in my gaze. I looked for all statements regarding the realness, genuineness and sincerity of musicians, and furthermore the opposing poles of these features, such as fakeness, unoriginality and dishonesty. To lock down the definition of authenticity before the analysis would have possibly prevented me from seeing all the concept can entail. On the other hand, does searching for authenticity discourses only result in circular reasoning—finding only what was expected to be found in the material? Would I have found only discourses of artificiality if I had started the research process with that filter in my gaze? However, I strived for trying to falsify my initial hypothesis and searched for statements that would refute it. Regarding the research material of each article as a whole and viewing the discourses as part of a bigger picture affected the emphasis in each article on different elements. For instance, originally in the censorship article, my hypothesis was tightly interwoven with authenticity, but as the interview material concentrated on issues of censorship, the role of authenticity in the first article became subordinate. For the purposes of this dissertation, however, its findings of authenticity are highlighted in this discussion. Furthermore, in Lady Gaga’s and Nickelback’s case, the counterdiscourses of artificiality and freedom of tastes question the dominance of traditional authenticity.

In this research, authenticity is thus loosely defined, so that the approach to analysis would be as broad as possible, not to exclude any unexpected elements in advance. However, I set off with certain expectations in my gaze, focusing on the mentioned realness, genuineness and sincerity of the artist. According to Richard A. Peterson, authenticity's definition in popular culture concentrates on "being *believable* relative to a more or less explicit model, and at the same time being *original*, that is not being an imitation of the model" (Peterson 1997, 220, emphasis in original)—a definition that also resonates with my findings of Nickelback's relation to genre expectations. In his work on fabricating authenticity in country music, Peterson begins his investigation of the concept in Oxford Dictionary's definitions of authenticity, which Peterson further summarizes into six uses. Firstly, "Authenticated, not Pretense" draws the attention on an external authority judging the authenticity of the object (1997, 206). Secondly, "Original, not Fake" refers particularly to objects, where an original is the authentic one, as opposed to a copy or a fake. However, this viewpoint is poorly applicable to the context of music, since repeated performances can be regarded as copies per se (1997, 207). Thirdly, "Relic, not Changed" is in Peterson's study representative of some promoters of old-time music, who considered the music "living fossils of authentic musical forms" (1997, 207). Fourthly, "Authentic Reproduction, not Kitsch" discusses for example the authentic reproduction of historical sites, or of musical styles—a case in point would be the performance or instrumentation choices of Baroque art music or of country (1997, 208). Fifthly, "Credible in Current Context" "centers on being *believable* or *credible* to the contemporary general observer." What is seen as credible changes over time. (1997, 208–209.) Finally, "Real, not Imitative" opposes "real," "sincere" or "true" with "imitative," "artifactual," "phony" or "contrived," focusing on judging the performer or the performance in question (1997, 209). In my research, the concept of authenticity is mostly defined by the last use: sincere and real as opposed to imitative or fake. In addition, the first usage of "Authenticated, not Pretense" is crucial as I interpret the material in question—criticism and reception—as striving for defining what is authentic and what is not; especially in the cases of Lady Gaga and Nickelback, the focus was on institutionalized critique, which I see as authenticating certain acts. However, it is not my stance, nor does this research aim at judgments on the authenticity of the researched acts.

These six uses also aptly introduce the different trajectories with which authenticity has been approached: in my view, uses two to four connect to the idea of an authentic artifact, discussed further in Section 2.1.6, where authenticity is seen as located in a concrete object: an authentic document, an unchanged cultural form, the historical authenticity of a performance style. This is not the stance of this study, but as the idea of authentic artifacts is one of the central strands of authenticity research, I find it deserving of its own section. I understand the fifth use as also time-dependent and historically oriented: it describes an attempt to represent a phenomenon so that the observed object seems credible in this space and time, "to the contemporary general observer" (Peterson 1997, 208). The historical dimension of this fifth use also situates it outside the scope of the concept in this work, which concentrates not on historical credibility, but on more abstract demands of authenticity of the self, and how music and musicians should be sincere and true to themselves.

I view authenticity *discursively*, as a part of art-related discourse and thus, having to do with socio-cultural power relations (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 466). Thus, it is not to be found inherently in any artist or music. It is also because of this that I chose to include popular music cultures, not just popular music, in my dissertation title. In

this research, I see authenticity discourses not to be found only in popular *music* but in all the phenomena, especially all the discourses that surround the music itself—for instance in popular music journalism, artist images, and music criticism. Including the notion of popular music culture aims to capture this discursive assembly.

Timothy D. Taylor describes the tricky nature of the concept of authenticity as it can be seen as both a “real thing” and “a discursive trope.” As a musician, Taylor realizes that he has an “inflexible idea about what is ‘authentic’ in that music” (1997, 22). Similarly, I, too, as a musician and as a listener, have firm, partially nonverbal and subconscious ideas about who and what is authentic. However, in this work, I will not entail those notions in the investigation, and will approach the issue of authenticity purely from a discursive viewpoint.

To use the language of post-structuralist discourse analysis, authenticity can be read as a *floating signifier*, such as “democracy” in Laclau’s example (1990, 28; 2014, 20–21)—“its meaning changes depending on the context in which it is invoked” (McLeod 1999, 139).⁴ This would also explain the differing notions of authenticity depending on the genre: authenticity can be made to connote what it is needed to connote, by discursive action.

Discourses are unstable in the meaning that “no discursive totality is absolutely self-contained—that there will always be an outside which distorts it and prevents it from fully constituting itself.” No discourse can grasp the totality of the phenomenon or give us an ultimate “what it is.” (Laclau and Mouffe 1987, 89–90.) In other words, “no discursive formation is a sutured totality and the transformation of the elements into moments is never complete” (Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001, 106–107). Instead, Laclau and Mouffe argue that “[h]uman beings socially construct their world, and it is through this construction—always precarious and incomplete—that they give to a thing *its being*.” This also connects with materialism, where the world is seen not as “fixed forms constituting the *ultimate* reality of the object”—idealism—but instead the “relational, historical and precarious character of the world of forms” is highlighted. (Laclau and Mouffe 1987, 89–90, emphases in original.) In terms of this research, this entails that the discourses of authenticity, analyzed by me or in general, do not offer a total or fixed image of the issue. Instead, the discourses are always on the move, in constant struggle and always lacking something. Hence, a fixed or ultimate definition of authenticity does not exist, which would tell us, once and for all, “what it is.” We can, in turn, explore, what definitions it does get—how it is discursively constructed—in this point in time, in this context, in this selected material.

The approach to theory in my work is an abductive one: a term between the inductive and deductive poles of reasoning, entailing that my analysis has been guided by previous theory and research (Tuomi and Sarajärvi 2002, 98–99), especially authenticity discourses presented by Weisethaunet and Lindberg and Keightley. The analysis is thus not directly based on theory or a previous model as in deductive reasoning, nor is it purely inductive, that is, I have not built theory based purely on the research material. Instead, I have gone back and forth between the previous research and my own material, the former informing my gaze into the latter. Hence, I will explore the previous authenticity research next.

⁴See also Helmi Järviluoma’s article (1990) on folk music in Finland, where the folk music movement is seen as constantly rearticulating different popular elements in differing cultural and societal situations, hence constantly changing their, and its, meaning. Hence, folk music can also be read as an example of a floating signifier.

2.1.3 Constructing on dichotomies: art vs commerce, rock vs pop

Authenticity, in addition to being constructed on descriptive dichotomies such as real—fake, genuine—artificial, is also intertwined with dichotomies of art—commerce and rock—pop (see also Article I, 86). Authenticity is often the tool with which to separate rock from pop, and art from commerce (Fornäs 1995b, 112; Shuker 2012, 23). It serves also as protection against commercialism accusations, guaranteeing that “rock performances resist or subvert commercial logic” (Frith 1987, 136). The division of art and commerce is also at the heart of rock discourse and journalism, emanating from romantic ideology along with authenticity, forming a twofold “myth-structure of rock” (Weinstein 1999) illustrated below. The word *myth* is to be highlighted as rock arguably is commercial mass popular culture (see Keightley 2001; Frith 1987, 136–137)—rather, the division is about constructing myths that legitimate rock.

Table 1: The twofold “myth-structure of rock” (Weinstein 1999)

art	commerce
rock	pop
authenticity	inauthenticity

As Barker and Taylor (2007, 324) argue, the concern over authenticity in music has proliferated in recent decades. For example, rock ‘n’ roll and Elvis as its embodiment was “at its core self-consciously inauthentic music,” and it was not until the mid-1960s when authenticity seized the genre, transforming it into rock with a demand for sincerity (Barker and Taylor 2007, 149, 157). Although as a wider cultural phenomenon and as a demand for an individual it was well established, popular music’s obsession with authenticity is thus a fairly new phenomenon, although often seeming like a timeless absolute.

According to cultural studies scholar, Lawrence Grossberg, the post-war society in the US is seen as an explanatory context to the birth of the demand of authenticity in rock. The atomic bomb and the Holocaust had left a permanent stain on post-war generations, wiping away any ideal of ultimate values or truths, and the end of the world lurked behind the corner every second. All the changes in the post-war society meant that it was difficult for the youth to find a place, an identity for them in society, or see future as something to look forward to. The experiences of the post-war generation were in contradiction with the dominant ideology. Rock became the site where the gap between affect and ideology could be transcended, where their affects and ideology could finally meet. It also offered them places of belonging and identification. (Grossberg 1992, 201–205.)⁵

Grossberg states that rock’s foothold was “enabled by its articulation to an ideology of ‘authenticity’”, which helped to compensate for the lack of its own authentic past. Rock’s authenticity was not justified with historical origins, but its ability to express the historical conditions to the post-war youth in a way that they could relate. Rock

⁵ This description is close to those of postmodern society, where ultimate values and truth are similarly dissipated, resulting in a search for authenticity (see Section 2.1.7).

also created a differentiating machine: empowering the generation to find their own ways to make meaning. At the same time, it used it on itself, differentiating itself from other cultural forms and thus legitimating why it was meaningful and important. (Grossberg 1992, 205–206.) The opposite, from which rock was separated, was pop and its vulgarity as opposed to the “sincerity, legitimacy and hegemony of rock,” and authenticity is a crucial tool in this demarcation (Fornäs 1995b, 112).

I concur with Grossberg in that rock as a formation is always on the move: it constantly shifts its authentic center as it is always on the verge of becoming inauthentic, being threatened both internally (rock’s internal alliances, sub-genres) and externally (commercialization). Thus, the essence of rock is to be unstable or mobile, and consequently stable in its constant movement: “Rock must constantly change to survive. It must constantly move from one center to another, transforming what had been authentic into the inauthentic, in order to constantly project its claim to authenticity.” (1992, 209.) What is not regarded as authentic is seen not just as bad or inferior rock but as mere entertainment. Rock is something that matters, and it does so by using its claim to authenticity. (1992, 207, 209.) Hence, to me, inauthenticity is as crucial to rock as authenticity is. The pole shifting between these two extremities forms the never-ending dance that is at the core of rock formation.

The countercultural capital on which rock journalism heavily founded itself, is seeming to fade—Grossberg states that “I thought that [popular music] had at least the potential to serve as an organizing site, if not force, of resistance and alternatives. It no longer strikes me as having any such privilege in the field of popular cultures” (1999, 100). I would parallel this with the rise of counterdiscourses that question the belief of rock having transgressional or life-changing power.

McLeod (1999) has approached authenticity from the viewpoint of cultures under threat of assimilation. Authenticity is then being utilized as a means to maintain a sense of “purity” of the culture, for instance hip hop culture that became part of mainstream culture and success, even though having deemed itself partly as against mainstream values (1999, 136). I would apply the idea of assimilation also to rock: today its countercultural capital and rebellious power is questionable, which can be interpreted to be lost to mainstream assimilation. Yet, rock should maintain its value through this ideal, as the original spirit of the rock movement is where the genre derives its value (cf. Frith 1996, 89). As well as hip hop, rock, too, can be seen to “balance large sales and mainstream success with a carefully constructed authentic self” (McLeod 1999, 146). In short, authenticity is one way of maintaining the original identity of the genre and demarcating the value inherent in the original countercultural political movement, even though the spirit might not be present anymore and rock can be read as merely a fully commercial form of cultural products.

The rock / pop division has been argued to be an artificial one. For instance, Fornäs (1995b, 112) views “rock/pop as one single, continuous genre field rather than as distinct categories.”⁶ “Contrastingly, Helen Davies uses the term “serious pop music” or “serious rock music” for music that is constructed in the music press as cerebral, not making the differentiation between rock vs pop, as, she notes, “there is often little generic difference between artists viewed as ‘serious’ and ‘not serious’”. Similarly, denoting the difference between terms such as “alternative” or “independent” is equally

⁶ A similar argument and conceptual demarcation is visible already in the title of Motti Regev’s “Pop-rock music: aesthetic cosmopolitanism in late modernity” from 2013.

misleading according to Davies, since many of the artists in question are on major labels and sell substantial amounts of records. (2001, 301.) Especially in Article I, the differentiation between rock and pop in the case of Lady Gaga is explored. I argue that the case is more about to which genre and discourses Gaga's music is strived to be articulated into, not about the sounds of the music per se. Using established *rock* musicians, or an electric guitar instead of synthesizers, links Gaga's work more to the genre and discourses of rock, which culturally is often associated with seriousness and art. This, however, does not invalidate Davies' point: the actual sound and style of Gaga's music may still be very *pop*. What is crucial is what those sounds are constructed to mean. I would parallel this to the binary of rock and pop in general: there is no clear demarcation in the types of music themselves of whether they belong to rock or pop. Rather, certain sounds are constructed as rock, others as pop, as a means to (in)validate them.

Similarly, the art-commerce dichotomy has been critiqued. According to Frith, both producers and musicians actually "expect art and commerce to be intertwined" (1996, 60). Moreover, the opposition is becoming less and less believable along with the changes in the music industry. However, this does not mean that the myth has lost its power—on the contrary, Weinstein argues that it is "promoted and probably believed in as much if not more than it ever has been." The myth is sustained as long as it continues to produce profits—"money, identity and prestige, or a common critical standard"—to multiple agents in the field. (Weinstein 1999, 67–68.)

Attempts have been made to deconstruct the dichotomy by valuing the transparency of the pop industry instead: "Some critics of this rock establishment have on the other hand turned the same dichotomy upside-down while allegedly dismissing it, as they deride the authenticity illusions of the rock establishment and elevate the honest construction of the pop machinery" (Fornäs 1995b, 112). This is also called *optimism*, which refers to the view that there are no guilty pleasures anymore, but only pleasures—pop can be as significant as any "serious" rock, which has led to the redemption of several artists and genres condemned in the past (Wilson 2012, 299). However, following Fornäs (1995b, 112), this does not disentangle us from the demands of authenticity, since honesty remains a value in this viewpoint as well—authenticity is just approached from another angle.

2.1.4 Authenticity and the music industries⁷

These divisions of rock and pop bring us to larger questions of the music industries' role in authenticity discourses. Genre divisions in popular music intertwine with processes of the recording industry. The concept of genre refers to a certain set of rules for musical forms, which in turn help categorize music. Often it is interwoven with questions about social groups, subcultures and institutions associated with the genre. The classic definition of genre is by Franco Fabbri (1982, 52), the pioneer of genre research: "a set of musical events (real or possible) whose course is governed by a definite set of socially accepted rules." Fabbri further dissects these generic rules

⁷Following Willamson and Cloonan (2007), I use the plural form "industries" to emphasize the multi-faceted and heterogeneous nature of the field of music-related industries. For clarity, I have done so systematically, although at times it conflicts with another scholar's writings, such as Frith's tendency to use the singular form of the term.

into five categories: formal and technical, semiotic, behavior, social and ideological, and economical and juridical rules (1982, 53–59). As can be seen, genre rules thus refer to a far wider set of qualities than only musicological traits of a song. For instance, genres also determine what the ideal form of agency and the expected role of the artist is in each genre—such as a creative self-expressing author in rock (Ahonen 2003, 45).⁸ It is a way for music, as well as all cultural industries, to format the products while minimizing the risk of failures, guiding the consumer to expect certain experiences from the product (Hesmondhalgh 2013, 31–32). Originally, genre labels were a vehicle for the music industries to organize and enhance the marketing process: they enable targeted advertising for different audience groups, while creating these idealized consumers—a genre simultaneously constructs its listeners and dictates what the music means for them (Frith 1996, 75, 85). As genres are constructions “*within* a commercial/cultural process” (Frith 1996, 88–89), the expectations we place on music actually originate from the industries.

As the industries benefit from these genre labels, and as genre labels dictate what is or is not a “true” representative of a genre, industries simultaneously create the demand for discourses of authenticity. The industries also utilize, create and revamp genre labels in order to market certain music “as new and/or authentic” (Holt 2007, 14). Frith (1987, 137) concludes that “The myth of authenticity is, indeed, one of rock’s own ideological effects, an aspect of its sales process: rock stars can be marketed as artists, and their particular sounds marketed as a means of identity.” Authenticity then becomes one factor with which to construct good representatives of a genre—that is, a good sales product.

The discontent towards Nickelback, and one main argument of Article II connects with genre demands: as Frith notes, disappointments are due to either following genre rules too tightly and predictably, or not well enough (1996, 94). The artists should manage to satisfactorily dance on the fine line between change and repetition in order to please the audience.

Because of the market’s fickle nature, Frith proposes that the industries use the star system as one element with which to control the demand (2001, 35)—the nature of consuming a star is more stable than that of consuming particular records. He further suggests that star-making is actually the core activity of a recording industry, rather than record selling (2001, 35). Moreover, as film scholar Richard Dyer states, authenticity is what makes the star phenomenon work (1991, 137)—as I argue in Article I (105), the power of even the most artificial star is based on the obsession with authenticity of several popular music cultures. Thus, from the viewpoint of music industries, authenticity works as an essential element in constructing lasting and compelling popular music stars, which, following Frith’s argument, is also at the core of the monetization process of the music industries.

⁸In this work, genres are seen as social constructs, as in the case of rock and pop: certain music can be constructed as pop or rock as part of their validation process (see previous Section 2.1.3). Genres as social constructs are mobile and fuzzy, which results in constant struggles around definitions—as Fornäs states, a clean and monolithic definition of a genre would reject all dynamic and life from the concept (1995b, 120). Instead, genre is an elusive concept, “being neither a textual essence nor a comprehensive code” (Toynbee 2000, 103). I read the generic rules that Fabbri discusses thus not as static but being in constant motion, discursively and socially defined and redefined in a never-ending process (see also Negus 1999, 26; Brackett 2002, 67). Thus, the same cultural product may be placed in different or several genres depending on time and place (Heikkinen 2008, 18; Brackett 2002, 67).

The ever increasing centrality of live shows in music industries (see, e.g., Cloonan 2012) also emphasizes the construction of authenticity, perhaps even more so in the digitalized age of music production, as digital reproduction has brought forth new questions concerning authorship (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 468)—live shows are the place to see artists “really” at work: it is “the authentic musical experience” (Cloonan 2012, 164; see more on liveness, e.g., Auslander 2008). It is also one location for inauthentication: in forms of playback, too much technology, or simply the wrong sponsors for the tour, which can lead to accusations of “selling out” (Anderton, Dubber and James 2013, 135–136).

It is also to be noted that apart from the industry agents, also artists and performers themselves are active participants in the construction of authenticities. The attempt to “stay true” or “keep it real,” or to construct such an image of oneself, is a constant in artistic work. Although the main context of this work is that of music journalism, where the material at hand only offers a view of how a certain artist is constructed, the active agency of musicians is not to be forgotten. For instance, in Article I, apart from my argument that *Rolling Stone* has something at stake to present Gaga as belonging to the genre of rock, and as a true artist instead of a manufactured pop star, it could also be argued that Lady Gaga is actively constructing herself as an enigmatic figure, as well as connecting herself firmly to the genre and values of rock, especially in the context of *Rolling Stone*, by skillfully and successfully utilizing both Modern and Romantic poles of authenticity discourses. Although, I am wary of the ability of mediated texts to reveal such intentions (see 3.3.3), when considering Gaga’s publicity stunts around the celebrity interview format (see Article I, 85), this type of conscious utilization of identity constructions seems to be a viable interpretation.

The demand for authenticity also affects and shapes production trends. For instance, the tendency to favor “authentic” sounds can be read as one manifestation of constructing and emphasizing authenticity, such as in the case of Johnny Cash’s *American Recordings* (1994), produced by Rick Rubin (Barker and Taylor 2007, 331). According to Barker and Taylor, because of the emphasis on authenticity in valuing popular music, producers are skilled in using certain effects and tricks to “accentuate authenticity—by using traditional-sounding effects and acoustic sounds, and by allowing rough edges to show” (2007, 331).

Digitalization of the music industries has also had its effects on authenticity.⁹ One case in point is the social media presence of performers—such as Lady Gaga’s active Twitter feed. Social media offers a new site for making authenticity claims for the artists (Speers 2017, 108–112): they are more accessible than before, showing the audience a side of their “private” lives, which can in turn either strengthen or diminish their perceived authenticity. The fast-paced nature of the media can also cause problems in the form of rash tweets, resulting in backlashes in an artist’s image and relationship with fans (Anderton, Dubber and James 2013, 122). Furthermore, digitalization may cause changes in the listening and consuming habits of audiences: the changes in music consumption and the immaterialization of music brought forth by digitalization has been read by Magaudda (2011) as a crisis of authenticity, gen-

⁹The rise of the Internet has caused a shift in the role of music media as well: different interactive formats on the web, such as ezines and blogs, have become prospective promotional sites for both record companies and artists (Anderton, Dubber and James 2013, 110–111). The increase in these grass-root level media outputs deteriorates the monopoly position of established music magazines.

erating a sense of loss of meaning or personal, material relationship with the music and artist, which, in turn, may induce listeners to change to vinyl, as a tangible music technology. Although a deeper investigation of the effects of digitalization on authenticity is beyond the realm of this dissertation, it serves as a significant topic for further study.

Artists' selection of a record label is one factor tied to the issue of authenticity, as major labels are often seen as epitomes of the "bad" of the music industry: the commercial, the corrupt, the inauthentic, whereas "indies," independent labels are more connected with the art, the authentic, and the anti-commercial (see Wikström 2009, 28). Certain labels in certain genres can work as a sign of authenticity in themselves, such as Blue Note in the genre of jazz, or Sub Pop in the era of grunge. Correspondingly, a potentially authenticating label does not automatically guarantee authentication: in the case of Nickelback and Roadrunner Records in Article II, I suggest that the established metal label, with regard to Nickelback's style and mainstream success, could problematize the band's attempts to articulate to the metal genre only further.

Furthermore, I suggest that authenticity is interwoven into the music industries in yet another way: through its connections to authorship and copyright. The centrality of the author in relation to copyright is a fairly new phenomenon, set in motion in the 19th century (Marshall 2005, 29). Through centralization and elevation of the author in Romanticism (Marshall 2005), the basis for the current author-central copyright practices were laid. Authenticity, that is, the importance of a creative self, is thus also built into the current monetization model of the music industries.

2.1.5 Previous authenticity discourses

The research on authenticity forms a jungle of concepts and discourses. In this section, I will strive for summarizing the previous discourses and present their close relations to each other. In the research articles, the authenticity research that has guided my analysis the most has been by Weisethaunet and Lindberg, Keightley and Moore, but due to the limited space of articles, I could not present their discourses of authenticity in detail. Thus, next, I will first introduce the core elements of these discourses, in order to illustrate what has informed my analysis in the articles, while explaining their connectedness.

Weisethaunet and Lindberg (2010) analyze in their article in which ways the concept of authenticity has been seen in rock discourse. Based on their previous work on the history of rock criticism (Lindberg et al. 2005) from 1964 to 2004, they introduce six authenticity discourses: "*folkloric authenticity*", "*authenticity as self-expression*", "*authenticity as negation*", "*authentic inauthenticity*", "*body authenticity*" and "*authenticity as transcendence of the everyday*". Popular music scholar, Keir Keightley (2001), also setting off from a historical viewpoint, charting the pre-history and dawn of rock, approaches the concept by presenting a division between *Romantic and Modernist authenticity*. Musicologist, Allan Moore, in his article "Authenticity as authentication" (2002), proposes a tripartite division of authenticities: *first, second and third person authenticity, or authenticity of expression, authenticity of experience and authenticity of execution*, respectively. Moore argues for shifting the academic gaze on authenticity from the intentions of the performers to the experiences of perceivers; from *what* to *who* is being authenticated.

I approach these previous discourses by categorizing them into four themes: 1) origin: community or tradition, 2) subject position: creative individual, 3) subject position: opposition and 4) subject position: self-invention.¹⁰

Origin: community or tradition

In *folkloric "authenticity"* one of the general ideas is that music is seen as a way to express the cultural values and experiences of a *community*, such as in blues and R&B (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 470). Simon Frith discusses the same issue: according to him, this ideological stance of folk authenticity was used by rock fans in the 1960s to define rock as a more authentic form of music than pop: even though rock was commercial, it still reflected the experiences of a community and symbolized it (Frith 1981, 159–161). Correspondingly, Allan Moore's *second person authenticity* or *authenticity of experience* has to do with a sense of life experience; that the music and the performer succeed in expressing how life is for the listener, that "that listener's experience of life is being validated" (Moore 2002, 219–220). This can be seen to have close ties with folkloric authenticity—that music should represent the experiences of a community. Similarly, Lawrence Grossberg, who isolates three different types of rock authenticity, suggests the first one to be usually linked to hard rock and folk rock, and has to do with the music's ability to express private and common feelings to a community (1993, 202). Johan Fornäs continues Grossberg's thinking, naming the first type *social authenticity*, where the judgment on authenticity is based on the values and norms of a community, "an anchoring of a voice (work, style, genre) in a collective community" (Fornäs 1995b, 116).

Also related to origins, Barker and Taylor's (2007) *cultural authenticity* can be read as related: music reflecting a cultural tradition. Although it does not focus precisely on community, it, too, emphasizes the origins of the music. Similarly, T. D. Taylor's *authenticity as primality* centers around origins: the expectation that the music is connected to "the timeless, the ancient, the primal, the pure, the chthonic" (1997, 26).

Subject position: creative individual

"*Authenticity*" as *self-expression* has its roots in Romanticism and in the notion of the artist as a creative genius. The demand for originality is crucial—an artist is regarded as authentic when they have originality. Famous examples of these are John Lennon, Jimi Hendrix, Björk and Bob Dylan, to name a few. (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 470–472.) Moreover, Allan Moore's *first person authenticity* or *authenticity of expression* can be seen as a parallel discourse. It has to do with integrity: "an originator (composer, performer) succeeds in conveying the impression that his/her utterance is one of integrity, that it represents an attempt to communicate in an unmediated form with an audience" (2002, 214). Similarly, Fornäs introduces *subjective authenticity*, where the legitimation is based on an individual's mind and body (Fornäs 1995a, 276); Barker and

¹⁰ In this categorization, I do not mean to diminish or disregard the different contexts and uniqueness of the referenced works—however, the decision to focus on the commonalities of these different strands and discourses of authenticity, instead of their differences, was a necessity in order to make this categorization as clear and readable as possible.

Taylor's *personal authenticity* is analogous, focusing on the person making the music, and whether or not that music succeeds in reflecting the author (2007, x). T. D. Taylor's *authenticity of emotionality* also relates to the sincere expression of one's emotions, which in the realm of world music is often interwoven with spirituality (1997, 23–26). Although Taylor's discourses primarily concern world music, they are at least partly applicable also to Western popular music. Keightley's *Romantic authenticity* is further connected to both of the two previous discourses, of folkloric authenticity and that of self-expression, as it values sincere and direct expression of artists' deepest emotions, close contact between an artist and the audience, a sense of community, and a connection to tradition and roots (2001, 135–137).

Subject position: opposition

"Authenticity" as *negation* concentrates on opposition: the artist must oppose the music industry and stay true to their artistic independence. The image of an artist as a rebel is born. In addition, the music industry's demonization gives birth to the phrase "selling out." (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 472–473.) T. D. Taylor's *authenticity of positionality* is parallel: the core value is not to give in to commercialism (1997, 22–23).

Subject position: self-invention

"Authentic inauthenticity"¹¹ connects with pop music: artificiality and artistic identities as constructions are in the key role, as opposed to rock, where truthfulness is demanded in artistic identities. Especially glam rock and punk brought forward these artificial elements in self-production. Madonna and David Bowie are good cases in point—in their constant self-creation and construction, and producing different artist selves, such as Ziggy Stardust in Bowie's case. (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 473–475.) It parallels Grossberg's third type of rock authenticity that has to do with self-consciousness, and awareness that the difference rock makes is always an artificial construct by the creative artist (1993, 202–203), as well as with Fornäs' *cultural or meta-authenticity* (1995a, 276): "a meta-honesty that stresses the self-reflexive consciousness of one's place within a symbol-making process" (1995b, 116–117) (The latter is not to be confused with Barker and Taylor's above-mentioned cultural authenticity that stresses the cultural tradition behind the music). According to Fornäs, this form of authenticity has become ever more important in late modern popular culture, as the demand for reflexivity has increased (1995a, 276). Furthermore, this can be linked to Keightley's *Modernist authenticity*, where true artists must always keep moving and reinvent themselves. Innovation, development, change and experiments are key words. It is more important to stay true to your own artistic ambitions than to think of the audience, as opposed to the close relationship between artist and audience in authenticity of Romanticism. Shock effects and the use of technology are celebrated. (Keightley 2001, 135–137.)

¹¹ A current example of this discourse is uttered by the indie-rock artist, singer-songwriter, Father John Misty, who states that he wants to be "authentically bogus rather than bogusly authentic." (Paumgarten 2017)

Categorizing authenticity discourses

As can be seen, previous research and the discourses of authenticity it has brought forth can easily seem like a conceptual maze—especially when this is only a portion of the field, including only the most central discourses to my work. To clarify the abundance of discourses, I have made visualizations of them. Firstly, in Figure 2, the connections also elaborated above are presented visually, illustrating the relationships between the four themes: 1) origin: community or tradition, 2) subject position: creative individual, 3) subject position: opposition and 4) subject position: self-invention.

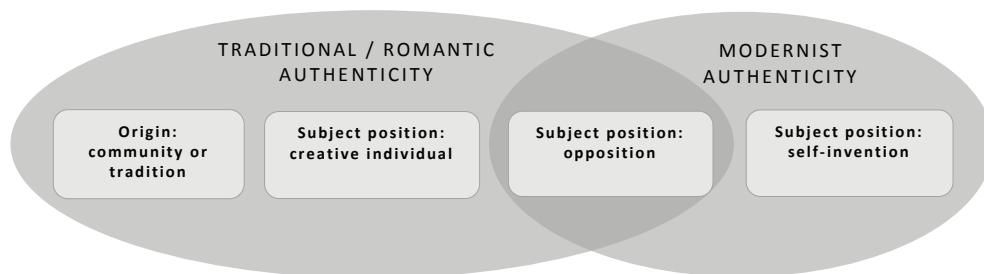


Figure 2: Categorization of previous authenticity discourses into four themes

In Article I, where I argue that the construction of traditional authenticity in Gaga’s interviews successfully combine both “folk and art discourses,” quoting Frith (1983, 39–57; 1987, 136), the folk discourses correlate with Theme 1, emphasizing the community, and the art discourses in turn with Theme 2, focusing on the creative individual. Furthermore, Keightley’s Romantic authenticity equals Article I’s “traditional authenticity,” including both themes 1 and 2. Modernist authenticity by Keightley encompasses Theme 4, which also equals Article I’s second, more modern strand of authenticity discourses. Theme 3 is a feature in both Romantic and Modernist authenticity, as both are suspicious of commerce and condemn corruption (Keightley 2001, 136).

Themes 2 and 4 can also be illustrated with a metaphor of a gap: According to Barker and Taylor, behind the question of authenticity, there is an issue of the gap between the person one feels she is, and the persona that other people see. There are two solutions to this problem. Firstly, one can celebrate the amount of faking, and theatrically take on one or more roles, as stars such as David Bowie, Madonna and Freddie Mercury have done. This approach, which means widening or glorifying the gap between one and one’s stage persona, equals Theme 4. Secondly, by contrast, one can try to minimize or eliminate the gap altogether—“try to project the authentic person and also live up to the persona that you project,” which equals Theme 2. (Barker and Taylor 2007, 243–245.) In Article I, I argue that the texts analyzed construct an image of Gaga using both of these approaches.

In Figure 3 (next page), this categorization is presented in a more detailed way, including the individual discourses in each theme, as well as other discourses that remain outside these groupings. These include firstly *Body* “authenticity,” which is well put in Weisethaunet and Lindberg’s quote “an act should kick butt.” Elements

in this bodily experience are on one hand the physical appearance of the artist, to which they have limited power. There are the clothes and the accessories that they can choose, and then there are the qualities of age, gender and ethnicity in which they have less power. On the other hand, there is rhythm and sound that give the audience bodily experiences. (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 475–476.) Grossberg’s second form of authenticity, common in dance and black music, is similar, and focuses on the construction of a sexual, rhythmic body (1993, 202). Secondly, “Authenticity” as transcendence of the everyday highlights that music should enhance the experience of now and obliterate time (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 476). Time stands still and everyday worries disappear when one encounters good music. This might especially have to do with live situations: in a good gig, one might lose oneself in the situation, everyday life disappears and all that is left is the music—that has the capability to make time disappear and as such, according to this discourse, has authenticity. Thirdly, Moore’s *third person authenticity* or *authenticity of execution* has to do with appropriation: Moore takes as his example Eric Clapton and his correct execution and appropriation of blues. This type of authenticity “arises when a performer succeeds in conveying the impression of accurately representing the ideas of another, embedded within a tradition of performance.” (Moore 2002, 215–218.) Finally, Barker and Taylor’s *representational authenticity* denotes simply that music is what it claims to be (2007, x, 23).

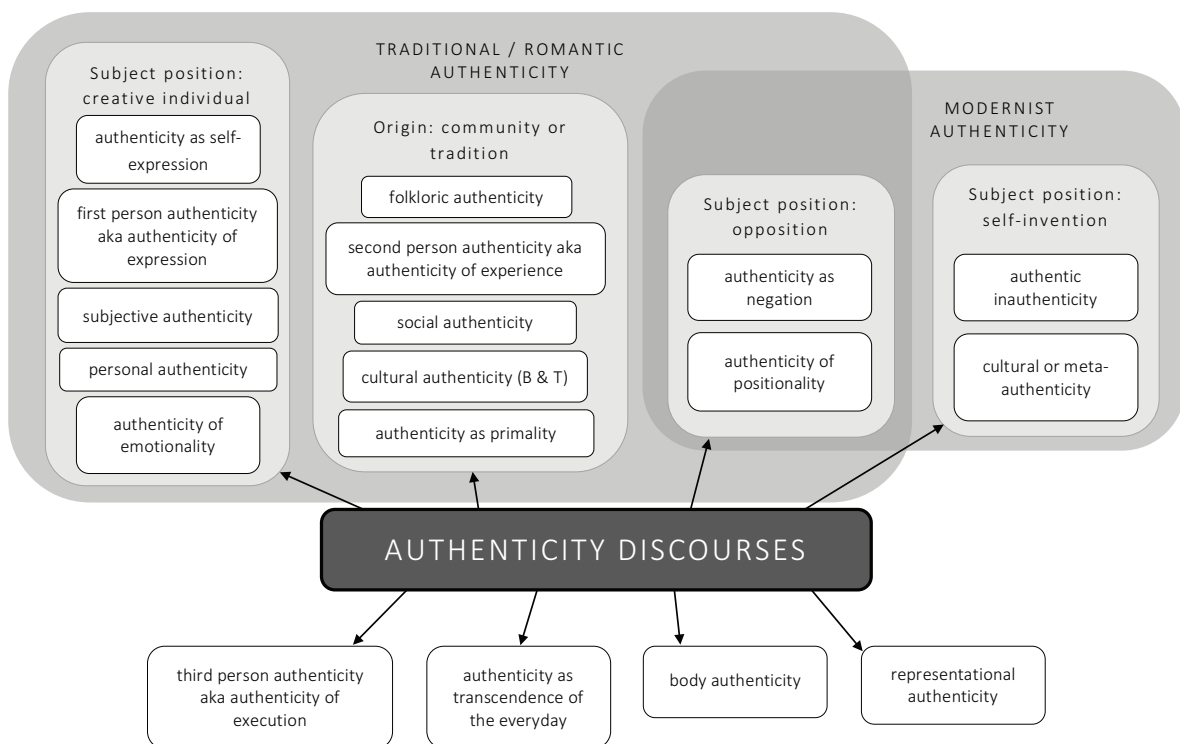


Figure 3: Detailed categorization of authenticity discourses

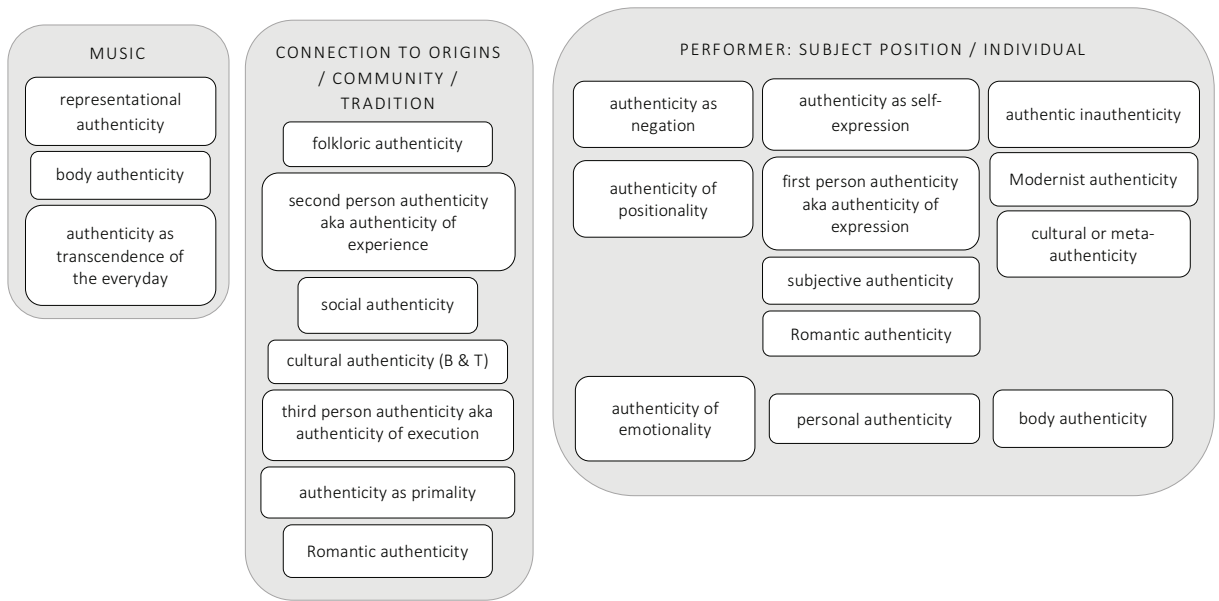


Figure 4: What is judged when authenticity is evaluated

In her doctoral dissertation, Leanne Marie Fetterley (2007, 69) builds her own model of authenticity, where an “imagined ideal” to which a text is compared is based on two categories: origins and a particular subject position. In origins, the text in question is connected to “an origin that is perceived as authentic itself”, and this ideal origin then authenticates the work (Fetterley 2007, 69–70). It is to be noted that this ideal origin may as well be an imagined one, such as in T. D. Taylor’s authenticity as primality, where the music is linked to the pure and the primal (1997, 26). An ideal subject position, in turn, is connected to the idea of a sincere and genuine self (Fetterley 2007, 71–72). The text is then compared to these two ideals, and its distance from the ideal defines the text’s degree of authenticity—the closer the more authentic. This, in addition to influencing my thinking on figures 2 and 3, guides my construction of Figure 4 in particular, where the discourses were grouped on the basis of what is being judged when authenticity is evaluated. Under the theme of performer, I include Fetterley’s category of subject position, which I understand quite broadly here, including all the assumptions or expectations that target the performer’s identity, from being creative and self-expressive, not “selling out” or giving in to the music industry, to being self-inventive, constantly evolving, and playful with one’s artistic persona.

However, I noticed that not all previous authenticity discourses succumbed to the two-part division, but rather, in some, it is the music itself that is seen as the source of the authenticity in question. Hence, in addition to Fetterley’s division of the music’s connections to its roots, and the performer and his/her subject position, I added music as a third group. In discourses such as body authenticity, authenticity as transcendence of the everyday, and representational authenticity, I interpret that it is the music itself that is being judged: its ability to move us, to transcend time, or to simply be what it claims to be. However, as has been noted before, this does not mean that authenticity would reside *in* the music per se, but that it is constructed as such.

In Figure 4, it is also to be noted that body authenticity is found in two categories, as the discourse includes both the judgment of the music’s ability to move us, and the perceived authenticity of the “performer’s physical presence” (Weisethaunet and Lindberg 2010, 475). Similarly, I situated Romantic authenticity in two categories, as to capture its demands regarding both a creative individual, and the connection to roots and community.

In Table 2, I categorized what, to quote Allan Moore, is authenticated in the different discourses, summing it up to four categories: 1) origins, 2) performer / subject position, 3) music and 4) listener.

Table 2: What is authenticated

origins	folkloric authenticity; social authenticity; cultural authenticity (Barker and Taylor); third person authenticity, authenticity as primality; Romantic authenticity
performer / subject position	authenticity of positionality; authenticity as negation; authenticity as self-expression; first person authenticity; subjective authenticity; personal authenticity; Romantic authenticity; authentic inauthenticity; Modernist authenticity; cultural or meta-authenticity; authenticity of emotionality; body authenticity
music	representational authenticity; body authenticity; authenticity as transcendence of the everyday
listener	second person authenticity

Moore’s third person authenticity denotes that “a performance can authenticate the experience of absent others.” As a difference to Moore’s categorization, I have firstly categorized Moore’s third person authenticity under origins, and not to “absent others”: I see the discourse connected to and aiming at authenticating the origins of the music, as it denotes striving to successfully appropriate and represent the origins and the tradition the music comes from, and thus, authenticating them (2012, 269; 2002, 214–218). Secondly, I have added the category of music to Moore’s tri-partite system.

In Moore’s second person authenticity, it is the audience and their life experiences that are authenticated in turn. Similarly as in Figure 4, body authenticity is found in two categories: both under the performer and music. Likewise, Romantic authenticity is under two categories: both under origins and the performer.

Even though origins may not be explicitly visible in all of the authenticity discourses, it can be seen as a backdrop to all of them. The claims for the performer or music can be justified with the past, or at least an imagined one. For instance, “authentic” (dance?) music that moves us, authenticated by the discourse of body authenticity, can be seen to be authentic because the “original” (-> origin) forms of dance music moved its audience (at least in our imagination).

In her research on artist speech in Finnish media, Anna Logrén concludes that “good” artistry is defined by genuineness, honesty and internal truth—all synonyms for authenticity, in fact. In addition, it is ideal that the artists distance themselves from trends, conscious image-building, self-commodification and deliberate pursuit of financial gain. The basis for artistic endeavors and the selected means of expression should reflect the artist’s own tendencies. (Logrén 2015.) Overall, these findings parallel the above-mentioned authenticity discourses, reminding that authenticity is a wider phenomenon in all arts, not just music, and the main features of the phenomenon are often same and repeated.

2.1.6 Authentic artifacts

Although in this work, authenticity does not reside in any object, but rather is constantly produced through discursive action, the craving to locate an authentic object in music, similar to the idea of historical authenticity of an object, forms one of the central strands to approach authenticity. In this section, I dissect these different versions and attempts to assign authenticity to a specific object. For me, all these differing versions of the “authentic artifact” further manifest the power of discourses to construct authenticity as something residing in various objects.

Authenticity can evoke ideas of forgery or plagiarism (Dutton 2009), concerning the authenticity of a specific artifact: is this a real Rembrandt, or a fake? In music, this can entail evaluating the authenticity of a score or an instrument, for instance (Fetterley 2007, 16). The idea of an authentic artifact also includes the notion of conservation: of preserving and restoring the “authentic” version of an album, for instance (see, e.g., O’Malley 2015). This is visible in the abundance of remastered or restored records or movies. Furthermore, the idea of an artifact relates to Walter Benjamin’s concept of *aura*, which wanes as a result of reproduction, which affects the object’s authenticity by cutting the object’s ties with its tradition and historical uniqueness (1970, 222–223). Whereas previously the value of an artwork was tied to its cult value, with secularization, authenticity reclaimed that place, emphasizing its role in the evaluation of art (Benjamin 1970, 246, n. 6). As Lindholm (2008, 13) puts it, we seem to still need “totems,” just different ones—authenticity becoming the new “sacred” in society.

However, it has also been argued that in music, an ephemeral art form, “there is no concrete object to worship or copy, only the act of performance” (Lindholm 2008, 25). Nevertheless, this has not prevented the search for such an object—on the contrary: in Fetterley’s model of authenticity, one category is the notion of an ideal origin for a specific musical practice. Since music, unlike visual or plastic arts, is not a tangible object, locating this ideal origin or the “authentic” object is much more difficult than, for example, in the case of a painting that is seen as the ideal origin of a style. Musical practices separated by time or geography offer knowledge about them only through their context. Hence, the attempt to move the ideal of an origin has been to locate it in a more tangible form, for instance as *a certain recording* or *a certain score* of a musical piece. (Fetterley 2007, 70–71, emphasis added.) Although in this work authenticity is not seen as inherent in any object or person, this illustrates the craving to ascribe it to locate in a specific and stable object as if to stabilize it and to get hold of the slippery concept.

The authentic artifact in rock can, for instance, be argued to be *recordings*, “the most characteristic medium of rock” (Gracyk 1996, 75–77), which the live performance then attempts to authentically replicate (Marshall 1997/2014, 153; Gracyk 1996, 77). Recording technology has enabled canonizing musical performances in their frozen and captured form on tape (Jones 2008, 81–82). However, it has been argued that the record does not actually “record” anything, but constructs an “ideal event” (Eisenberg 2005, 89), perhaps impossible to recreate live (Auslander 2008, 76; Frith 1996, 211).

A second alternative of authentic objects is proposed by Auslander who argues that in rock, the aura is located not inherently in a single object, but *between the recording and the live performance*, and that “this relation of mutuality” provides both objects with their authenticity (2008, 96–97). The importance of live performance in rock is connected to authenticity: the live performance is one way of acquiring proof that the performers are who they claim to be, and that they indeed are the authorial origin

responsible for the music (Auslander 2008), and able to concretely produce it as well, which works as “the visual mark (and proof) of authenticity” (Grossberg 1993, 204). Secondly, an authentic rock performer should have a history of live playing – which also concerns the ideal of “paying one’s dues” (Auslander 2008, 88). Grossberg (1999, 113) sees live performance “both [as] the imagined originary event and the site for authenticating the claim of authenticity” in the apparatus of classic rock, which parallels the idea that also the live experience can be seen as the ideal event and authentic artifact artists strive to reproduce on later occasions.

A case in point of the importance of liveness is apparent in the behavior of Finnish metal bands in award shows: they often choose to play live even though the common practice is playback or singback due to practical demands of the televised show. The choice to play live may even result in terrible output as the stage and the arrangements do not enable good conditions for live playing. The reluctance to succumb to the rules of the award show, which represents commercialism, is also at times visible in the general behavior of the bands. Their thank you speeches may be sarcastic in tone – Kotiteollisuus famously retorted, “what a shitty party and really ugly women” – or they may refuse to speak at all, as Stam1na did in 2015 after winning the Emma award for the metal album of the year. For the audience, these all work as signifiers of counterculture and opposition to mainstream values. However, the most rebellious thing would perchance be to dismiss the award show altogether and not participate. Yet most of the bands will not do that, perhaps because the promotion potential of a televised event of this caliber in Finland cannot be ignored – the show has the potential of reaching also those members of the audience that are not active record buyers or fans. The rebelliousness that no one sees – such as not attending the show at all – is not powerful. One has to rebel in public in order to manifest one’s rebelliousness.

Furthermore, another option of authentic objects is *the score or the composer’s intentions*, which can also be constructed as the object of worship, related to the authenticity of a performance especially in classical music. Then, the question becomes, whether or not a performance of a musical piece succeeds in revealing the “single ideal interpretation of a piece of music that performers must strive to recreate.” (Jones 2008, 16.) Similarly, in classical music, the concept of authenticity can refer to the historical performance movement that attempts to preserve the “authentic” performance style of pieces, for instance by only using period instruments (Lindholm 2008, 26–27; Sherman 1998).

In addition, *the artist* can also be seen as an artifact. As David R. Shumway argues, “we are led to the conclusion that stars might be the most important of the many objects produced by rock & roll” (2014, 22). Similarly, in Article I, Lady Gaga can be read also as a commodified object produced for consumption – that she herself is the work of art, rather than her music (see also Toynebee 2000, 32).

2.1.7 Postmodernism and authenticity

It has been argued that traditional authenticity discourses have become outdated in the postmodern age. For instance, Grossberg introduces logics of authenticity that

offer strategies by which individuals can continue to locate themselves within affective maps, and continue to struggle to make a difference, if not in the world, at least in their lives, even though difference has become impossible and possibly irrelevant (1992, 233).

Through affective investments, people authorize and eventually authenticate certain forms of popular culture to speak for them. This affective investment is required since in the postmodern ideological climate, nothing inherently matters anymore—“only the affective commitment, however temporary or superficial, matters” (1992, 226). Here, traditional authenticity has become extinct and impossible, and it has been replaced by authentic inauthenticity: “If every identity is equally fake, a pose taken, then authentic inauthenticity celebrates the possibilities of poses without denying that that is all they are” (1992, 226). Authentic inauthenticity further divides into different affective strategies: ironic, sentimental, hyperreal and grotesque inauthenticity (1992, 227).

However, for example Cobb (2014, 3) argues that actually postmodernism did not result in the dissipation of meaning, parallel to Benjamin’s (2008, 23) idea of the “decay of the aura” caused by increased reproduction, but controversially in a greater yearning for authenticity. Similarly, Fetterley argues that the postmodernist ethos, where truth and absolute value have become extinct, has not resulted in abandoning authenticity altogether, but instead led to a more fervent craving for authentic meaning. The claims of authenticity have the power to circumvent the collapse of hierarchies of value in postmodernism. (2007, 4.) According to this view, postmodernism and its absolute relativism are still overcome by authenticity and its power to form attractive dichotomies and hierarchies of value (Fetterley 2007, 5). Fetterley (2007, 51) further argues that “while claims of authenticity are fundamentally incompatible with postmodernism, it is precisely this opposition that propels authenticity to prominence in contemporary culture.” Because of the negative tone of the prevalent views on postmodernism, the modernist values of truth and meaning have lingered on haunting the cultural value discussion. The discourses of authenticity are one tool of battling the anxiety caused by the certain view of postmodernism, offering “constructions of identity and modes of existence that value real and essential qualities” as opposed to the ones offered by postmodernism. (Fetterley 2007, 62–63.)

This view entails a critique towards the previous dichotomous views of authenticity of modernism versus the inauthenticity of postmodernism presented for example by Grossberg: that authenticity in postmodernism is no longer valid or serves only as one option among other roles or poses, as opposed to modernism where authenticity was built as a central cultural value, especially in the context of rock culture (Fetterley 2007, 64). This skepticism towards traditional authenticity is visible also in the writings of Lindberg et al. who argue that the locus has moved from authenticity to a so-called meta-authenticity, resembling Grossberg’s authentic inauthenticity. According to them, the dominance of traditional authenticity discourses broke up already in the late 1970s. Now mostly replaced by meta-authenticity, traditional authenticity discourses mainly haunt in the background, at times surfacing especially in rap criticism. (2005, 8, 340.) However, Fetterley argues that it is not only rock, or rap, where authenticity is still crucial, but also “no aspect of contemporary popular music is untouched by claims of authenticity” (2007, 65). Similarly, Richard Middleton maintains that despite the emergence of irony and self-deconstruction in popular music since the 1970s, “the discourse of authenticity within the music culture still holds much of its critical primacy” (2006, 203). It is easy to agree with Middleton that there seems to be a “disjunction between vernacular and academic discourses” of authenticity—the former still utilizing it, the latter given it up as outdated (2006, 203–205).

2.1.8 Authenticity and value judgments

In my viewpoint, following Frith (e.g., 1987), authenticity is closely intertwined with *value judgments*—what is good music and what is not—as the “rock aesthetic depends, crucially, on an argument about authenticity” (Frith 1987, 136). Fetterley supports this view, arguing that “claims of authenticity are equated with cultural value” (2007, 3). In my view, authenticity cannot be discussed without its connections to issues of value; discourses of authenticity are used to assign value to certain musics and artists as a criterion—that is their crucial function, not mere superficial commenting on whether someone is genuine or not. Without value, there would be nothing at stake with authenticity, and hence its position in today’s culture would not be as crucial as it still is. Article II serves as a case in point, arguing that Nickelback’s negative critical reception is interwoven with debates on authenticity: their perceived valuelessness is justified by inauthenticity.

According to Frith, “rock criticism depends on myth—the myth of the youth community, the myth of the creative artist,” combination of folk and art discourses introduced above, which hides the reality of rock being a commercial product sold for profit. If, then, the music is not actually made “authentically”—which would mean being non-commercial, non-profit, non-industry—how can its authenticity be judged? (1987, 136–137.) In the end, almost none of the music we listen to actually is authentic in terms of their origin—already the fact that it has come to our attention usually implies some sort of mass media and music market involvement. Justifying the value of a band that has sold thousands of records with authenticity cannot refer to the music actually being born authentically; it must refer to a construction by the media and the industry of music journalism. It is a code name for values that are conventionally defined, and constantly reconstructed, especially in the field of music journalism. It is a way to ascribe value to a music that very probably is not “authentic” in its origin.

For example, in her doctoral thesis on Finnish hip hop, Elina Westinen states that “authenticity construction should be (re)viewed locally, in each given context.” She approaches authenticity through concepts of scales and polycentricity, as opposed to dichotomies or oppositions, as previous research often has. (2014, 71.) Scales refer to “spatio-temporal frames of meaning-making,” such as the local or the national, polycentricity in turn refers to “various centers of norms” (2014, 18). If I look at Westinen’s work from my own viewpoint, the issue is not how Finnish rappers position themselves differently in relation to the center (of different scales), but *why*—why it is critical to be in that specific position. I would argue it is because certain positions are authenticated, made to matter, made to be valuable according to the norms and values of the genre through the discourses of authenticity. The positions can vary and still be justified with authenticity, only differently. The position as such does not matter without its value connotations that authenticity discourses facilitate. For example, for the Finnish rapper Cheek, his central position is intertwined with his authenticity construction (Westinen 2014, 264). However, I interpret that this does not mean that being in the center would be valuable in itself—rather, this can raise suspicions of commercialism and being a “sell-out” (and it actually has: see, e.g., Westinen 2014, 154). Instead, the central position is validated through authenticity discourses. Similarly, a margin position may construct an underground and thus more valued rapper image, not by inherent value, but through authenticity discourses and their value connotations.

As the value judgments on music may entail an ethical dimension to the distinction making, seen in concepts *good* and *bad* music, where the aesthetic and the ethi-

cal intertwine (Frith 1996, 72), bad music can also refer to the music being ethically questionable. This brings us to questions of censorship.

2.2 CENSORSHIP

The understanding of the concept of censorship in this research, investigated in Article III, is informed by New Censorship Theory, including thinkers such as Helen Freshwater and Michael Holquist, and the texts of Michel Foucault and Judith Butler, among others. My approach to the concept has been to map the field of censorship studies, to search the borders of the concept and explore the different ways it has and can be conceptualized.

I have set off from Martin Cloonan's definition that censorship is "the process by which an agent (or agents) attempts to, and/or succeeds in, significantly altering, and/or curtailing, the freedom of expression of another agent with a view to limiting the likely audience for that expression" (2003, 15). It includes external or internal, direct or indirect, governmental or non-governmental hindrance of (others') expressions. However, I do not aim for a strict definition as the purpose of Article III was to explore the *discourses of censorship*, which entails listening for the texts and the interviewees to freely define censorship in their own terms, and investigating precisely the different ways in which censorship can be delimited. Because of this, the concept of censorship in Article III is an inclusive one, setting out from a continuum ranging from Foucauldian micro-level discursive censorship to state-sanctioned overt censorship. The definition is discussed in more detail in Article III.

Self-censorship, the concept visible also in the title of Article III, is in this work seen as part of the category of censorship. As Schauer puts it, "the standard use of the word *censorship* applies it to the nonspeech of an agent whose non-speech is a function of fear of imprisonment, fine, civil damages, or social ostracism", a definition that applies to self-censorship as well (1998, 165, emphasis in original). I would further broaden the motivating factors to a more general "fear of legal or social repercussions" (Schauer 1998, 165), which better apply for the reasoning behind the cancellation of the gig after the school killing in Kauhajoki, for example (see Article III).

As proposed by Schauer, censorship is connected to power hierarchies: the external censoring agent "uses some form of greater social, political, or economic power to interfere with the communicative preferences [...] of someone with less social, political, or economic power" (1998, 151), which impedes and complicates the resistance of censorship.

Foucault's analysis of power, where it is seen as productive, as "dispersed throughout social relations, [...] produc[ing] possible forms of behaviour as well as restricting behaviour" (Mills 1997, 20), parallels New Censorship Theory's view of censorship. According to this view, censorship can also be productive, instead of only restricting—that censorship can also work as "incitement to discourse" and produce new ways to discuss a repressed issue (Foucault 1990; Bunn 2015). A similar view is offered by Butler: "the effort to constrain the term culminates in its proliferation"—a ban presupposes evoking the act or word itself (1998, 250).¹²

¹² A vernacular and controversial example of this is suggested by the standup comedian Louis CK, who argues that the utterance "n-word" actually only conjures the expression the speaker is trying to bypass into the listener's mind, forcing them to think it, while circumventing the speaker's own responsibility of evoking the term (Infante 2010).

This idea of censorship as also productive is discussed especially under the discourse of paradoxical censorship in Article III. The name of the discourse draws from the notion of the paradoxical power censorship is seen to have, for example in New Censorship Theory (e.g., Freshwater 2003). This paradoxical power can entail the heightened interest in a musical product, *because of*, not despite of censorship fell upon it. Sara Thornton (1995) illustrates the issue by describing how “moral panic,” a term especially engraved to the stereotypical image of metal (see, e.g., Article III; Hjelm, Kahn-Harris and LeVine 2011; Hecker 2012, 22–23), can also be seen as a form of hype, as the aim of certain cultural industries rather than a misfortune of media coverage. It can be used as a marketing strategy that offers widespread media attention, possibly with increased longevity, and protection against selling out accusations. Thornton suggests that for instance Madonna, Ice-T and Oasis have benefited from this marketing strategy in the 1980s and 90s; similarly, the Parental Advisory sticker can serve as a useful promotion rather than a prohibition tool in the US. (Thornton 1995, 122, 136.)

New Censorship Theory has brought forth the idea of the ubiquity and unavoidability of censorship (Bunn 2015, 27; Holquist 1994, 16). Similarly as power in Foucault’s view, censorship is seen as omnipresent in our social relations and interaction. A conflicting view, proposed for instance by Schauer (1998), argues that the whole concept of censorship is problematic, since it cannot clearly be distinguished from other human behavior as something that exclusively “restricts our communicative possibilities,” when “all human behaviour both constitutes and restricts our communicative possibilities” (1998, 149). Schauer opposes the idea of censorship as something that could be eliminated (1998, 153), but is wary of the opposing view of omnipresent censorship as well, since this might lead to a view where the concept of censorship “seems on closer inspection to be so expansive as to be empty” (1998, 160). Instead, he suggests that censorship “does not describe a category of conduct, but rather attaches an operative conclusion (ascribes) to a category created on other grounds.” In other words, certain acts receive the stamp of censorship while others do not, even though both might be “equally deserving of the label ‘censorship’ in a strictly descriptive sense” (Schauer 1998, 160). How this is determined has to do with “professional competence” — *who* is behind the censoring action determines if the act is seen as censorship or as editing, for example (Schauer 1998). Regarding Article III of this dissertation, the concept of competence is crucial: “The language of censorship is thus the language of professionalism, the language of expertise, the language of institutional competence, the language of separation of powers.” The silencing authorities who are not from the same expertise field as the bands in question and who do not have the same competence to understand the culture and its rules than for instance the audience, are thus seen as censoring — as opposed to, for example, the “selection decision[s] [...] made by professional librarians,” which are seen as choice, not censorship, according to Schauer (1998, 161). The line between being inside or outside of a culture is emphasized; the “separation of powers” would suggest that agents inside a culture are more likely to be seen as having the competence to make knowledgeable choices, whereas agents outside a culture, for instance the religious agents in the case of Tampere Arena in Article III, silencing for example Turmion Kättilöt, PMMP and Alice Cooper, are seen as censors.

Butler argues the connection of defining censorship and power:

Any decision on how to decide [among practices of censorship] will be implicated in a process of censorship that it cannot fully oppose or eradicate. In this sense, censorship is at once the condition for agency and its necessary limit. This paradox does not refute the possibility of decision, but merely suggests that decision's implication in power is not to be overcome, and that, as political, it is prone to ambivalence. (1998, 256–257.)

According to Kärjä (2015, 93), “it is the usage of the notion [of censorship], instead, that is more intriguing. In other words, what are we driving at when we are labelling something as censorship?” My interpretation of these theoretical views is that if one strictly defines censorship, that definition process is already intertwined in censoring processes, and most notably, power relations. Because the labeling interlocks with power, it can be seen as a political act, which results in the boundaries of censorship to be unstable (Butler 1998, 256–257). A more intriguing question according to Kärjä (2015) would be to investigate why something is labeled as censorship. What does the label do? In Article III, this connoted investigating what meanings censorship gets, and how it is constructed as a phenomenon in the interview speech.

The selected methodological framework of discourse analysis guides my gaze of the research objects. Hence, I approach both authenticity and censorship through a discursive and constructive perspective. As Kärjä notes, “censorship is a discursive formation in the widest sense of the term,” which also entails the idea of discursive struggle over “who has the authority to define and use the notion” (2015, 104–105). Moreover, from this discursive viewpoint, censorship, which Butler here terms *foreclosure*, also “produces discursive regimes through the production of a domain of the unspeakable,” by constructing the division between permissible and impermissible speech (1998, 255). Although Butler’s term of foreclosure understands censorship as not an action of a subject but rather as “a reiterated effect of a structure” (1998, 255), I would argue that similarly in the sphere of subjects and their actions, labeling something as censorship simultaneously also constructs that which is *not* censorship.

3 METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH MATERIALS

The work is linked to several research traditions, such as cultural studies, popular music studies and ethnomusicology, emphasizing cultural, constructivist and qualitative viewpoint in its approach. Below, I will go through the methodological issues of case studies, discourse analysis and research material.

3.1 CASE STUDY

Case study as a concept does not refer here to a specific method, but instead signifies a research approach or a strategy that can in turn include several kinds of material and methods (Laine, Bamberg and Jokinen 2007, 9). It aims at “deep understanding of particular instances of phenomena” (Mabry 2008, 214), in this case of the phenomenon of authenticity discourses. The selected cases can be classified as *instrumental case studies*, where the case is seen as offering insight into a wider issue and also possibly enabling generalizations (Stake 2005, 445–446). The whole thesis can be described as a *multiple case study* or a *collective case study*, an investigation of a number of cases in order to explore a phenomenon (Stake 2005, 445–446), which in this case is authenticity. The cases are believed to offer information also on the wider issue (of authenticity) and a larger selection of cases (see also Mabry 2008, 214). This is linked to the generalizability of qualitative case studies and research: the results of the analysis are not statistically generalizable, but they can, however, be illustrative of the wider phenomenon of authenticity (see also Alasuutari 1995, 155–157; Article II, 41; Section 4.4. in this work). As part of the issue of generalizability—one of the main criticisms of the method (see, e.g., Woodside 2010, 9; Moriceau 2010)—the role of previous research is important (see, e.g., Silverman and Marvasti 2008, 165–166), as can be seen for instance in articles I and II, where the results of the analysis are compared with other similar studies (Article I, 105–106; Article II, 52). Furthermore, it is worth asking whether the main purpose of case studies is something other than generalizable results: for instance, “the proposition of new ways of looking at situations,” (Moriceau 2010, 422) or the better understanding of a certain phenomenon.

Case study has also been defined as “an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units” (Gerring 2004, 342). A single unit indicates a spatially and temporally bounded phenomenon (2004, 342). In Article I, the unit is all Lady Gaga’s interviews in *Rolling Stone* that had been published by 2014, thus spatially and temporally delimited. The wider context or selection of cases in question are firstly Lady Gaga’s media presence and artist persona generally; secondly, artist interviews in music journalism in general, and how they construct artistic identities utilizing authenticity. In Article II, the unit is Nickelback’s reviews in Finnish media in the years 2000–2014; the possible wider classes of units are Nickelback’s reviews globally, and popular music reviews in general, for instance, and to which extent the traits emphasized in Nickelback’s reviews inform the concept of authenticity in this wider context. In Article III, the approach is closer to a multiple case study: the cases in question are the bands Turmion Kättilöt and Stam1na, and their experiences of censorship, explored with a timeframe end-

ing in the year 2013. That was the temporal end point of the research data collection, including the interviews of three band members in the fall of 2013. The wider classes of units would be experiences of music censorship in metal, or more widely in popular music, and whether or not the analyzed discourses of censorship in Article III resonate with them.

As to the selection of cases, through three case studies, from three different music genres and with different types of research material, the aim was to illuminate authenticity from three different angles, and thus to find more means to better understand the phenomenon. These three different angles are illustrated in Table 3 through comparing the gender, genre, material, context and approach of the three cases. At the end of the process, the selected cases represented three different genres: pop, rock and metal. One of the cases concerned a female artist, the two other male artists. The selection of the cases can be described as purposive or theoretical (Silverman and Marvasti 2008, 166–168), aiming to provide different viewpoints to authenticity, guided by previous research and theoretical debates on authenticity. With the case selection, I strived to illuminate issues raised by previous research: for instance, the correlation between genre and authenticity demands, the widely-debated common division between rock and pop, authenticity and the issue of gender, the hegemonic status of *Rolling Stone*, or authenticity’s relationship to value judgments, of which criticism served as an example.

Table 3: Selection of cases

	<i>Article I: Lady Gaga</i>	<i>Article II: Nickelback</i>	<i>Article III: Censorship and authenticity</i>
<i>Gender</i>	female	Male	male
<i>Genre</i>	(dance) pop	rock, post-grunge	metal
<i>Material</i>	music journalism	music criticism	Researcher-produced data: interviews; Internet material
<i>Context / Location</i>	<i>Rolling Stone</i> ; USA	Finland	Finland
<i>Approach</i>	Focused only on authenticity	Focused only on authenticity	authenticity in relation to censorship

The gender division in the realm of authenticity is important. Women are often excluded from authenticity based on their gender (see, e.g., Davies 2001), while rock is constructed as a masculine tradition and discourse (Leonard 2007, 32, 40). Davies (2001) further argues, although at times in quite categorical terms, that the music press constructs concepts of authenticity and credibility¹³ in a way that excludes women. Similarly, McLeod proposes an ideology of rock criticism that is based on a dichotomy where “serious, masculine ‘authentic’ rock” is revered, while “trivial, feminine ‘pre-fabricated’ pop music” is neglected. Although presented as not the only ideology of criticism, it nonetheless exists and influences what types of artists can be seen as worthy of praise, for instance. In other words, the language of music criticism is gendered

¹³Davies is one of the few scholars I found who uses and explicates the concept of credibility.

in its manner of evaluation. (McLeod 2001, 47; see also McLeod 2002.) Constructing authenticity for a woman is more difficult, as the discourses of criticism is inclined towards equaling feminine with inauthentic.

With this in mind, I selected Gaga's interviews to illuminate the tensional location of her artistic image in the midst of these frictional dichotomies regarding authenticity: (dance) pop vs rock, feminine vs masculine. I saw it as a fruitful case to explore how a female (dance) pop artist would be presented in *Rolling Stone*, a crucial journal in rock culture and in maintenance of authenticity discourses. In a way, Gaga served as a deviant case to test the theory of previous research: are authenticity discourses at all relevant for a female pop star?

3.2 DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Discourse analysis is more of an umbrella term that includes many different analysis styles. These styles have two things in common: the refusal of a realist notion of language—that language would neutrally reflect or describe the world—and a belief in the salience of discourses in constructing our social world. (Gill 2000, 172.) Social constructionism is an important factor in this view: it claims that the world is socially constructed and many theories stress the role of language in this construction. The so-called linguistic turn was an important element that brought forth and emphasized the idea of social constructionism. (See, e.g., Fairclough 2003, 8–9; Pietikäinen and Mäntynen 2009, 12; Eskola and Suoranta 1996/2003, 194.) Due to this epistemological stance, the analyzed material is not seen as a gateway into “some other reality” that lies behind the text, or as clues to “what really happened” but instead, is the target of interest itself (Gill 2000, 174–175).

In music research, using discourse analysis as a method can result in investigating either texts that are musical, such as compositions, recordings and performances, or texts that interpret the former, such as interviews or critiques. In cultural musicology, to which this work can also be seen as belonging, as it focuses on the cultural meanings of popular music and musicians, the latter option is often highlighted. (Heinonen 2005, 7.) This is true also for this research, where the material consists of extra-musical texts discussing music and musicianship: magazine articles, reviews and interviews.

The Finnish tradition of discourse research, especially the work of Arja Jokinen and Kirsi Juhila (e.g., Jokinen and Juhila 1991; Jokinen, Juhila and Suoninen 1993/2004), has had the most formative influence on my thinking. Jokinen and Juhila's style of discourse analysis in turn draws mostly from the works of structuralists and post-structuralists, of whom I have focused on the work of Michel Foucault, Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, in particular.

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is often the style of analysis used in researching media materials. However, I do not use CDA; rather, my understanding and practice of DA has been informed by Foucauldian DA (FDA), discourse theory or post-structuralist DA—a group of concepts that are seen as parallel and sometimes used interchangeably. For instance, in Mills' (1997) writing discourse theory is seen as synonymic to Foucault's work on discourses, while Jørgensen and Phillips connect discourse theory specifically to Laclau and Mouffe (2002, 24). In addition, Braun and Clarke use Foucauldian DA and poststructuralist DA as synonyms (2013, 189–190). The analytical focus of these styles is more on abstract discourse and “general, overarching patterns” than on the detailed analysis of everyday discourse, which is the lo-

cus of discursive psychology, for example (Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 20–21). Points of interest are for example competing discourses, hegemony, and power.

This wider analytical and interpretive frame is what connects my work to the poststructuralist tradition of DA, more so than to some other form of DA—such as CDA, whose traits and differences are explored next. DA and its many styles can be illustrated as a line stretching from the most micro- to macro-scale analysis (see also, e.g., Jørgensen and Phillips 2002, 20), where post-structuralist DA is the “most ‘macro’” (Braun and Clarke 2013, 189) of the styles. My inclination towards macro-level analysis, as opposed to a more-detailed level analysis such as CDA, stems from my epistemological views on the concept of authenticity: as a wide-ranging cultural concept that is very powerful in its popular music context. Although the methodological choices are otherwise qualitative and focused on small-scale data, discourses of authenticity are, in my view, macro-level constructions—“general, overarching patterns” as mentioned above—affecting the value systems of popular music on such a wide scale that the more macro approach of DA also seemed preferable.

However, other scholars equate poststructural discourse analysis *with* critical discourse analysis (Widdicombe 1995, qtd. in Jokinen, Juhila and Suoninen 2016, 301), which illustrates the abundant, and at times confusing nature of the world of discourse analysis. The “critical” attribute can, nevertheless, be used to describe the emphasis of the analysis style as opposed to “analytical” (Jokinen, Juhila and Suoninen 2016, 301), which I would parallel with the scale of macro vs micro analysis. In the former, the focus is on a larger cultural context, power relations and hegemonic discourses, as opposed to the stricter data-based and detailed analysis style of analytical pole (Jokinen, Juhila and Suoninen 2016, 301–302). However, as Jokinen, Juhila and Suoninen (2016, 302) also point out, these styles do not necessarily exclude each other, but both can co-exist in the same study. This would perhaps best describe this study: the macro scale of hegemonic discourses is present at the onset of the study, while the analysis of the data is at times detailed and data-focused. I would describe the process of my analysis as hour-glass shaped: I set out from the larger cultural context of authenticity discourses as a whole, then strive to explore the data with an open mind, allowing the possibility for counterdiscourses or new formulations, and lastly return to a more macro scale, investigating the results of the analysis in a larger framework of authenticity as a cultural construct.

Norman Fairclough, a key figure especially in CDA, links critical discourse analysis more to the realist tradition of science, approving only a moderate view of social constructionism (2003, 8–9, 14). He states that there are limits to social constructionism: that even as institutions may ultimately be socially constructed, they however become “realities which affect and limit the textual (or ‘discursive’) construction of the social” (2003, 8). My viewpoint in this research is in turn more idealistic and interpretative: the analyst does not have access to the world *per se* but our perceptions of the world are always seen through language constructions. That is, for me, social constructions *are* reality. Committing to social constructionism does not mean that discourses would not have “real” effects—for example, authenticity discourses affect ways of consuming, understanding, categorizing and creating cultural products (Fetterley 2007, 9). In this sense, my methodology is closer to Foucault’s thoughts, of discourses “systematically form[ing] the objects of which they speak” (1972/2000, 49). In this research, language is a tool of power, constantly constructing the world and its phenomena, as opposed to telling us what the world in itself, *per se*, is like. The “discursive” and

“actual” world, or thoughts and reality, or the discursive and extra-discursive, are not opposed; instead, discourses are seen *as social reality in itself*, not thought formations well or badly representing reality. (Jokinen and Juhila 1991, 27; Laclau and Mouffe 1987, 82–86; Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001, 110; emphasis mine.)

Only a moderate view of social constructionism that Fairclough represents is incompatible with my commitment to the thinking of Laclau and Mouffe, who abandon the above-mentioned thought / reality opposition, or the discursive / extra-discursive dichotomy (Laclau and Mouffe 1985/2001, 110). Thus, they argue, for instance, that every natural fact is also a discursive fact: the idea of nature is “the result of a slow and complex historical and social construction,” not something that is “already there.” Similarly, a stone being a stone “depends on a way of classifying objects that is historical and contingent.” This does not mean that the stone would not *exist*—without humans, these objects would still be here but they would not be ‘stones,’ “because there would be neither mineralogy nor a language capable of classifying them and distinguishing them from other objects.” The discursive nature of objects does not eliminate their *existence*. (Laclau and Mouffe 1987, 84.) Applying this to the case of authenticity introduces the other side of the coin: authenticity is no less “real” because of its discursive nature. Even though it is not a natural object or something we could grasp in the same way as the stone in the example, it does not exist any less. As long as it is discursive, that is, meaningful to people, it is an existing part of our (experience) world.

Another feature that separates the analysis style of this work from CDA is the lack of linguistic analysis, which here means a detailed analysis of linguistic and grammatical units of the data—which, in CDA, is a key feature: CDA’s “common aim [is that] of integrating linguistic analysis and social theory” (Blommaert 2005, 24). I have not incorporated grammatical analysis to my data, nor followed Fairclough’s three-level process of analyzing discourse (Fairclough 1992; Blommaert 2005, 29) but rather looked at language formations more broadly. According to Blommaert (2005, 35), CDA suffers from a linguistic bias, emphasizing only linguistic analysis, which “restricts the space of analysis to textually organized and (explicitly) linguistically encoded discourse, not to where it comes from and goes to.”

Blommaert argues that “a critical analysis of discourse necessarily needs to transcend the present and address history in and through language” (Blommaert 2005, 37), something that CDA, according to Blommaert, fails to do. Following Blommaert, I have strived to include the history of authenticity discourses in my analysis: to locate the possible roots and ages of the discourses, to contextualize them better and thus increase our understanding of the phenomenon. This parallels Foucault’s own discourse analyses of sexuality and discipline (1990; 1975/2000), which focus on the history of the discourses.

In my work, I define “discourse” mostly as following the second description from Foucault’s three different definitions for the term: as “an individualizable group of statements” (Foucault 1972/2000, 80), as “groups of utterances which seem to be regulated in some way and which seem to have a coherence and a force to them in common” (Mills 1997, 7). Although the actual practice of discourse analysis can be rather difficult to capture in detail (Gill 2000, 177), this is also the view through which I have approached my research material: searching for groups of statements that seem to form a coherent whole, which consequently construct a specific view of the world. According to Mills, discourse is “something that produces something else (an utterance, a concept, an effect),” as opposed to existing in isolation (1997, 17).

According to Laclau and Mouffe, the “totality which includes within itself the linguistic and the non-linguistic, is what we call *discourse*” (Laclau and Mouffe 1987, 82). Discourse is thus not limited only to language, but can include also non-linguistic elements, as long as they are meaningful, are discursive (Laclau and Mouffe 1987, 85). These can include for instance clothes, gestures and images, such as the photos in the cover stories of Lady Gaga. As a second example, Chad Kroeger’s guitar or clothing choices or physical stances, reminiscent of those of Metallica’s James Hetfield, are meaningful and can be read as discursive elements signifying the articulation into the metal genre.

For me, one of the most rousing aspects in Foucault’s thinking is the idea of constant struggle around discourses, which also connotes how arbitrary and strange the hegemonic discourses in culture actually are. Although some discourses may seem “natural” and perennial, they are not fixed but a product of a constant struggle and thus in constant change. (Mills 1997, 16, 26.) Furthermore, the *rhetorical* nature of discourses argues that discourses are arranged to be persuasive, to validate “one version of the world in the face of competing versions” (Gill 2000, 176). That is, the authenticity discourses in the research material are a select few of a number of possible alternative discourses.

Similarly, connoting the struggle and power discourses entail, structuralism and post-structuralism saw language “as a system with its own rules and constraints, and with its own determining effect on the way that individuals think and express themselves,” as a withdrawal of the previous view of language as transparent and expressive (Mills 1997, 8). Language is not a pool of endless possibilities, but instead a system that affects and constrains what we can say; “we speak and act within the bounds of what discourses map out for us” (Mills 1997, 70). Thus, discourses are essentially connected to questions of power—they affect what we can express and how, in addition to constantly constructing the world.

Committing to the framework of DA also aligns where I focus on the analysis of the research material. In this framework, the origins of the relationships between elements are not searched from the thinking subject (Jokinen and Juhila 1991, 18), i.e. the interviewees or the writers of the texts; the social agent is not seen as the sole origin of the discourse (Laclau and Mouffe 1987, 82). The individual subjects’ ways to make meaning is not seen as the source of the discourse; rather, the focus is on how (inter-subjective) meanings are constructed in social practices—even though the number of researched subjects may be few, the emphasis is nonetheless on wider, cultural meaning making processes, not on individual subjects. However, this does not mean that the individual subjects’ experiences are not valued or seen as unique. Rather, it means that in the theoretical framework, the language of individuals is seen to illuminate and represent cultural meanings and discourses, since the system of language only offers a limited number of ways for us to comprehend our world and experiences. This is also called the *intersituationality* of discourses, which Jokinen and Juhila highlight in their approach to DA along with interactivity. It entails the idea that no interaction exists in isolation nor is it the starting or the end point of a conversation. Rather, specific language usage situations also include ways of meaning making constructed and established elsewhere, which in turn can change in these specific interactions. (Jokinen and Juhila 1996, 19–20.)

Moreover, my focus in the analysis is not on the ways of interaction or rhetorical means people use in their speech in order to persuade or to aim their communicative goals. Thus, the more linguistic styles of DA were excluded (such as rhetorical analy-

sis or CDA). In turn, the aim was to focus on discourses as signifying how different cultural phenomena such as authenticity or censorship are conceptualized, and which ways of speech regarding them are possible. The focus, thus, was not on the communicating individuals but on the issue they were communicating about, and how the discourses in question construct the phenomena in question.

Table 4: The concepts of discourse and discourse analysis in this work

Discourse and discourse analysis in this work	Discourses = social reality
	Strong social constructionism (vs moderate social constructionism, Fairclough)
	No grammatical analysis
	The historical roots of discourses
	Can include non-linguistic elements
	Discursive struggle for hegemony; discourses limit and construct possibilities of expression
	The thinking subject not the source of the discursive formation; intersubjective constructions
	Analysis not focused on interaction or rhetorics
	Discourses never total or fixed (see Chapter 2)

Foucauldian discourse analysis (FDA) has been defined as concentrating on discourses as connected to questions of power and legitimation, and the role of language in constituting social life (Willig 2013, 130). In my work, the usage of the term of FDA above all aims to capture the focus and epistemology of the analysis—such as the emphasis on discursive struggles or the view of language as constructive—and not to concretely describe the practical level of analysis in detail, since Foucault did not provide any explicit or coherent methodology or concrete procedure of methods to follow. Instead, I strive to describe the process of my analysis as transparently and in as much detail as possible, for it to be understandable and criticizable to the reader. This entails including many direct quotations from the material in the final text, as well as the context of the interactive situation in the case of interviews: that is, not quoting only the interviewee’s answer but also my leading question to it, so that the reader is able to see where the answer is coming from and what it is a reaction to.

Although referred to as, among other things, FDA, the more correct term might be DA, influenced by Althusser and Pêcheux (see Sawyer 2002, 443), based on a broad usage of the term discourse, as Sawyer claims Foucault’s thoughts on discourse have been somewhat misunderstood. In this work, I use the concept FDA, as it is referred to in the literature, however realizing the problematic nature of the name: that Foucault did not himself actually propose specific methodological guidelines, or practice FDA as it is now presented. Rather, I use elements presented in the field of FDA such as the discursive object, as it aptly describes elements of my analysis process.¹⁴ Furthermore, another aspect of FDA I find fitting for this work is its “potential

¹⁴ It has also been questioned whether there even is such a thing as FDA: see Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine 2008, 105.

to challenge ways of thinking about aspects of reality that have come to be viewed as being natural or normal and therefore tend to be taken for granted” (Cheek 2008, 355)—for me, authenticity in popular music cultures is a good case in point of such a naturalized notion.

Moreover, apart from investigating the roots of the concept, I do not do genealogical analysis, suggested by Arribas-Ayllon and Walkerdine as part of FDA—my research data does not include long time frames nor present historical variability of discourses, but rather focuses on the “contemporary variability of statements”: I am interested in “how the same object [is] talked about differently” (2008, 98).

According to Willig (2013, 131), the first stage of analysis in FDA¹⁵ is “the identification of the different ways in which the discursive object is constructed in the text,” which also illustrates the first stage of my analysis process. The *discursive object* (Willig 2013, 131) I set out to analyze was authenticity in articles I and II. In Article III, the main discursive object was censorship, authenticity being in a subsidiary role. I searched for all references, both implicit and explicit, to the discursive object (Willig 2013, 131). However, in authenticity’s case, this often means only implicit references. As McLeod states, authenticity often leaks into the critics’ writing even if they opposed the concept, in forms of references to “real” or “genuine” music (McLeod 2002, 104–105). Identifying all the references to the discursive object gives a picture of all the different ways the object is constructed in the material, which in turn gives a glimpse of what ways of speech are culturally possible regarding the issue.

After identifying all the instances of reference, I grouped together all the statements that I saw as part of the same discursive formation, and aimed at naming or classifying these different discourses. This parallels Willig’s second stage of analysis, which is to “locate the various discursive constructions of the object within wider discourses” (Willig 2013, 132). That entails investigating the differences between the previously identified references: the object under scrutiny can be constructed in many different ways. In Article I, the wider discourses in question within which I located the references to authenticity, were the previous classifications of authenticity discourses, which I had further arranged into two major strands of discourses: the traditional and the modern strand of authenticity discourses. In Article II, I classified the references under different headings, which illustrate the main overarching idea behind each discursive construction, such as commercialism. Each of these constructions were further seen as affecting and constructing the discursive object, the discourse of authenticity. In Article III, I named these wider discourses myself, such as discourse of idealism.

The two previous stages can also be described as combining observations (Alasuutari 1995, 13–16), by searching for commonalities and differences: grouping together all the raw observations that seem to be part of the same discourse, and differentiating those from another group of statements that are connected by an overarching rule. After the organization of discourses from the material, my aim was to approach the “so what?” question—to explore what is achieved by these discourses. Who do they benefit? What consequences do the discourses have, that is, what kinds of action do they enable, and what do they block or hinder? How does this inform our understanding of the phenomenon, such as authenticity or censorship?

¹⁵Willig’s writing on the phases of FDA includes four more stages, which I have not utilized in my analysis, as I see them connecting more to the psychological approach Willig represents (2013, 132–133).

Throughout the analysis, one of my guidelines was Pertti Alasuutari's explanation of how to approach deviant cases or exceptions in qualitative research. When searching for commonalities in the research material, and trying to crystallize the essence of each discourse, the overarching rule must account for all the individual observations. If there is a deviant case, or an exception to the general rule formed on the basis of the material, the rule must be formulated anew. (Alasuutari 1999, 38–42.) Similarly, according to Gill (2000, 180), "Unlike some styles of analysis which suppress variability or simply gloss over instances which do not fit the story being told, discursive analyses require rigour in order to make analytical sense of texts in all their fragmented, contradictory messiness." The elements of discourse should "fit the story" and if there is a contradictory statement, that is to be taken into account, for example by modifying the key issue of the discourse or raising the abstraction level of the interpretation (Alasuutari 1995, 14). Sometimes these two mean the same thing.

One example of this happened during the analysis for Article III: in the interview I conducted with the singer of Turmion Kättilöt, he discussed the stamp that censorship has left on them and how it has affected their reputation, engendering rumors of their dangerousness. Contrastingly, the bass player of the band Stam1na stated that no one is shocked by censorship anymore — everything extreme has already been done before. Rather, the audience only searches for the censors and criticizes them. My first draft of the interpretation was that censorship would cause or increase the "bad boy reputation" firstly mentioned; however, the latter statements revoked this overarching rule. I resolved this conflict by modifying the general rule with a higher abstraction level in a way that it accounted for all the observations. The newly formulated interpretation stated that the mark of censorship is created by people who do not know the band or are not inside the scene. As to acquainted audiences, the tie between censorship and infamous reputation, or claims of authenticity, is much weaker. (see Article III, pp. 18–20.)

A concept related to discourse is that of *articulation*. Laclau and Mouffe state that articulation is

any practice establishing a relation among elements such that their identity is modified as a result of the articulatory practice. The structured totality resulting from the articulatory practice, we will call discourse. (1985/2001, 105, emphasis in original.)

Articulation has been used in Laclau's own analysis of fascism, where it is seen as "one of the possible ways of articulating the popular-democratic interpellations into political discourse" (1977, 111) — creating a skillful combination of elements by articulation accounted for the persuasiveness of the ideology (see also Silverman 1985, 54). In popular music research, Middleton's analysis of early Elvis suggests that part of his success was due to the successful rearticulation of elements (Middleton 1985, 8–9; see also Article II, 45), which produced an inviting arrangement.

In my research, I have used the concept of articulation for example in situations where I read Nickelback as striving to connect themselves to the genre of metal with certain elements and practices, which in turn alters their identity (see Article II). Another example is Lady Gaga's interviews that according to my interpretation establish a connection between Gaga and traditional art discourses or artists, which again alters Gaga's identity (see Article I).

3.3 RESEARCH MATERIAL

In the table below, I have introduced the different research materials of each article. I will then introduce each type of material and their characteristics in more detail.

Table 5: Research material

Article I: "The lie becomes the truth": Constructions of authenticity in Rolling Stone's cover stories of Lady Gaga	Three cover story interviews of Gaga in <i>Rolling Stone</i> , from 2009, 2010 and 2011.
Article II: "Hypocritical bullshit performed through gritted teeth": Authenticity discourses in Nickelback's album reviews in Finnish media	Reviews of Nickelback from Finnish media, in the timeframe of 2000–2014. Media: <i>Soundi</i> , <i>NRGM</i> , <i>Rumba</i> , <i>Nyt</i> , <i>Helsingin Sanomat</i> , <i>Keskisuomalainen</i> , <i>MTV3</i>
Article III: From Justified to Illogical: Discourses of (Self-)Censorship and Authenticity in Cases of Finnish Metal Bands	Three qualitative, semi-structured interviews; Internet searches of news items and their comment sections; other Internet commentary on music censorship and/or school killings.

3.3.1 Interviews

In Article III, I used semi-structured interviews as one method along with DA. With semi-structured interviews, I indicate the interview format between structured and unstructured interviews. In Finnish, the term *teemahaastattelu* is also used of this type of research interviewing, directly translated as "themed interview," illustrating its focus on different themes, instead of precise questions (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001, 47–48). In my work, this meant that I had an interview outline prepared that included predetermined set of questions, regarding different themes. The themes were fixed for all the interviewees although the precise wording or the sequence of the questions might have varied (see Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001, 47–48). During the interview, I strived to follow the flow of conversation and the topic choices of the interviewee (as long as they were relevant to the themes), deciding the order in which to ask the questions as the interview progressed. I would also change the wording of the questions if the interviewee did not initially understand the question, and add additional questions, to further delve into an issue. I strived for being as open and neutral as possible, not to lead the interviewee into any direction, or impose my own views of the issue on them, not to give them any sense of pressure of "what I wanted them to say." Despite this, it is to be noted that I as an interviewer and the research setting obviously affect the situation and the way the interviewees read it. The answers and accounts always reflect also the interview situation and my presence as researcher and interviewer (Hirsjärvi and Hurme 2001, 49). The interview material is thus to be read as (only) one possible account of the interviewee's experiences.

As the topic of censorship has to do with power, and possibly refusing musicians this power, it felt important to give voice to the musicians themselves, who are often disregarded in censorship issues. Furthermore, as the issue was somewhat sensitive and problematic, dealing with difficult themes such as school killings, semi-structured interviews seemed a good format to give interviewees room to discuss the topic as they saw fit. I recorded the interviews, which lasted from 39 minutes to 73 minutes, after which I transcribed them into text documents. Both the tapes and the transcriptions are in my possession, stored in such a way that they are accessible only by me.

Because of the mediatized nature of the events, and the high profile of the bands in question, anonymization of the interviews was rather impossible. The interviewees were asked for permission to use their names in the texts, which was recorded in the interview tapes. After the interviews, the interviewees signed an informed consent form, giving me the permission to use the interview material in my research. When finished, the transcribed interview texts and the article draft were sent to the interviewees for review and possible corrections, none of which were suggested.

3.3.2 Internet as a source

Using the Internet as a source for research material is complicated. Regarding Article III, where part of the research material was comments about news articles on the web pages of newspapers, the ethical use of Internet comments must be considered. Ethical Internet research remains a topic of debate, with several conflicting views and practices (see, e.g., Markham 2005, 814–815). As a researcher, am I adequately protecting the privacy of those people whose statements I use as material? There are two elements to be considered in the analysis of the Internet comments. Firstly, they are public and visible to anyone visiting the site. All the comments that were used as research material were from non-exclusive sites, where everyone has free access. Some comments were from a Finnish web forum, yet that was free to access without signing in, too¹⁶. None of the sites were thus private venues. Thus, ethically speaking, the people commenting should be aware that they are writing a comment that is visible to anyone visiting the site. Secondly, their identity can remain anonymous and well protected as commenters can use a nickname or post no names at all. In terms of ethical boards, it has been agreed that since the study of Internet archives does not constitute human subjects research, involving direct interaction, it can be paralleled with research that uses public archival material, for instance old newspaper articles or broadcasts (Walther 2002, 207). I have nonetheless left out all names, including nicknames of the commenters in question, to increase the anonymity of the writers. Furthermore, considering the forum messages, where it is more likely that the writers might consider the venue as private, compared to the comments on the newspapers' sites, I included no direct quotations of the comments but only paraphrased them, without the pseudonyms of the writers.

I chose to collect parts of the data of Article III from the Internet as it offers widespread, public and fast reactions to cases of censorship. The Internet is one source of this work, as opposed to being the place, the object or the medium of the study. The target of Article III was to investigate a phenomenon, a case, on the Internet (Laaksonen, Matikainen and Tikka 2013, 18–19; Sumiala and Tikka 2013, 178). As the studied instances of censorship occurred in the past, Internet news archives offered access to pieces of news about the incidents, whereas for example Stam1na's web forum had no (longer) traces of the reactions to Kauhajoki.

Another problem with using the Internet as a source is unsurprisingly the high speed change rate of Internet sites. For example, one review of Nickelback¹⁷ could

¹⁶ Muusikoiden.net; <https://muusikoiden.net/keskustelu/posts.php?c=44&t=93833&o=0>

¹⁷ van der San, Toni (2011): 'Nickelback: Here and Now', <http://www.mtv3.fi/viihde/arvostelut/levy.shtml/1447402/nickelback-here-and-now>. Accessed 29 March 2012.

no longer be found at the time I was finishing the article draft for publication, as the website no longer existed. I strived to print the webpages that I used as material, and additionally save them as webpage files. The analyzed material and printouts are in my possession.

3.3.3 Rock journalism and criticism as a text genre

As also mentioned in Article II (p. 40), the decision to use music journalism and criticism as research material in two of the three articles is due to the argument that those media play a crucial role in value judgments and canon formation in popular music, in which the concept of authenticity is used to validate these evaluations (see Jones 2008, 18; Frith 1987, 136). Secondary material, for instance music journalism and criticism, has been crucial in the formation and support of a canon in the arts, as “Canonical works require secondary material to support their position of greatness in the ongoing debate of value judgement in the arts” (Jones 2008, 18)—hence, the emphasis of music journalism and criticism in the research material.

The role of popular music critics has been that of gatekeepers and mediators of taste (Shuker 2013, 147). With rock journalism, rooted in the 1960s in American music journals and the British underground press, the dominant ideology of rock criticism emerged, where authenticity and originality were highlighted (Atton 2009, 53). American criticism was correlated with the contemporary political movement of leftist counterculture in the 1960s, to which *Rolling Stone* also had close ties (Shuker 1998, 20–21). The emphasis of authenticity discourses in popular music debates, for instance the valorization of rebellion, is thus deeply intertwined with rock journalism, its values and history. Popular music journalism is also a crucial arena in maintaining the discourses of authenticity as part of value judgments. Thus, it is an essential sphere to explore authenticity discourses “in action,” so to speak.

Actually, also the interviews of Lady Gaga can be counted as music criticism in addition to Nickelback’s reviews, according to Lindberg et al. who argue that “nevertheless an attempt at definition [of criticism] should also leave room for the in-depth interview, the overview, the debate article and the essay (or ‘think piece’)—genres in which evaluation need not be at all explicit” (2005, 11), the first of which applying to the *Rolling Stone* pieces featuring Gaga. However, I separate music journalism and criticism in the text for the sake of clarity, highlighting the different formats of the analyzed texts. Yet, I recognize *both* formats’ tendency to evaluation, albeit possibly implicit in the case of the in-depth interview.

Following the epistemological viewpoint of DA, I see the materials of articles I and II as cultural texts, illustrating cultural meaning making. This entails that the writers of the critiques and interviews or Lady Gaga herself are not seen as the exclusive origin of the discourse (Laclau and Mouffe 1987, 82), as also pointed out in Section 3.2. Moreover, my analysis does not focus on the intentions of the writers or Gaga, and I am further wary to assume it would have the ability to reveal such things. Instead, the texts are seen as mediated material, illustrating the construction of cultural meanings. (See also Article I, 85.)

4 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this research was to explore, how and by whom is authenticity constructed in the selected cases, and what kind of discursive elements construct the concept in this process. Furthermore, I investigated what the functions of these authenticity discourses are. These are the overarching questions of the whole thesis, the conclusions of which I will recapitulate below. The discursive elements that constructed the concept of authenticity are presented in detail in Section 4.1. Section 4.2 focuses on exploring the functions of authenticity discourses.

4.1 ELEMENTS OF AUTHENTICITY DISCOURSES ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLES

In conclusion, in the research material there turned out to be multiple, at times conflicting authenticity discourses. I have gathered the elements of these discourses in the table below.

Table 6: Elements of authenticity discourses according to the articles

elements of authenticity	opposing pole: traits of inauthenticity
genre	not following the model of the genre, OR following the model too well
gender	female?
originality	copying, imitation
truth	lies, dishonesty, forced expression
correspondence	faking it, playing a role, pretense, pose
intimacy	no feeling of access to the “inside,” only “exterior image”
suffering, madness	good background, easy path
anti-commercialism	commercialism, commodification; reasons for making music are “wrong;” money the reason to make music
authenticity of intended audience	inauthentic audience: children, teenagers, “girls,” women
subversiveness [rock, metal]	mainstream values, submission, no danger
<i>Grunge</i>	<i>post-grunge</i>
<i>Metal</i>	<i>fake metal</i>

Elements of authenticity are presented here in relation to its opposing pole, because authenticity is often constructed in such a way: in relation to its opposite. Constructions of authenticity in practice work so that a band or an artist cannot be partially authentic—it either is or is not. Indicating the opposing pole of authenticity simultaneously connotes an authentic ideal. (Fetterley 2007, 110.) For example, in Nickelback’s case, accusing them of being generic or repetitive also implies the authentic ideal: of being original and inventive. As in the case of censorship, discursively constructing something as inauthentic simultaneously constructs the opposite: what is authentic, what this thing is *not*.

Genre demands

Genre affects the expectations that are placed on a performer or a piece of music, and thus how it is seen to succeed in being authentic (Peterson 1997; Fetterley 2007). For example, in Lady Gaga's case, the genre of (dance) pop places certain expectations on Gaga—that authenticity should not actually play a very crucial role in the case of a pop performer, or alternatively, that in postmodernist pop it is usually the discourse of Modernist authenticity or meta-authenticity that is valued (Grossberg 1993, 202–203; Fornäs 1995a, 276). However, Gaga's articulation into rock's discourses causes the expectations to shift.

In Nickelback's case, genre affects in different ways. Firstly, post-grunge as a genre is seen as inauthentic in itself. Thus, if the genre as a whole is seen as inauthentic, it consequently affects the perceived authenticity of the artists as well. Secondly, confusion over genre creates confusion over expectations, which makes it more difficult to succeed in fulfilling these expectations. Nickelback is not metal or grunge enough to succeed in fulfilling the expectations of either genre, or to be seen as an authentic example of the genre, but merely as attempting to fake its way into it.

Related to genre, also the auditory aspects of the music itself, as well as other nonverbal elements such as style, image and clothes affect the judgments of authenticity. This further means that in my work, discourses are not necessarily only based on language but can also have other meaningful pieces as their construction blocks.

Nickelback's sonic qualities and their compatibility with the requirements of the genre(s) parallel Fetterley's concept of textual markers of authenticity (2007, 79). Certain musical characteristics can signal authenticity by resembling genre requirements or an ideal authentic musical text. For instance, I read Nickelback's decision to feature Pantera's guitarist, Dimebag Darrell, with his distinctive sound, as an attempt to include a textual marker that connects Nickelback's text to those of Pantera, an established act in the metal genre. Moreover, the digital audio effects used especially in *No Fixed Address* is a marker related to mediation and technology. Firstly, it can be read as increasing inauthenticity, as contrastingly older recording processes work as a marker of authenticity by forming a connection with earlier musical practices (Fetterley 2007, 80). Secondly, the use of effects can be read as reducing "liveness" and increasing mediation, and as Fetterley argues, "authenticity decreases as the level of mediation increases" (2007, 81). The importance of genre requirements is to be noted here: Lady Gaga's use of digital audio effects is not frowned upon as it is a given in the dance genre.

In Article II, I argued that one of Nickelback's problems is illustrated in their latest album title, *No Fixed Address*: Nickelback both follows the genre ideals too tightly, which is seen as being generic and imitative, and tries to articulate into too many genres, which in turn is read as commercial thinking and creates confusion over which model to follow. Yet, this begs the question of whether Lady Gaga's public image does the exact same thing according to my analysis. Is she also not "fixed" but in turn constantly moving and hard to pin down in her fluctuating identity play? However, the genres in question may offer a solution to this contradiction: in pop and dance music, modern authenticity has been more common, and self-reflexive identity play more valued, as the examples of David Bowie and Madonna illustrate. Rock, in turn, has valued more fixed identities and romantic authenticity, where a stable artistic identity of a creative genius is cherished. Accordingly, in rock, the music should represent its creator consistently, and in Nickelback's case, the style shifting may be too severe.

In Article III, the demands of genre were visible, for example, in the negative reaction toward the cancellation of the performance in Kauhajoki, demanding correspondence between hard core lyrics and lifestyle and illustrating the value of transgression in the metal genre. Similarly, the suspicion towards commercial thinking is prized also in the genre of metal, resulting in condemning acts where a band is interpreted as intentionally seeking censorship for increased publicity. This discourse was titled Shock tactics in the analysis. In all, the genre provides a grid of values, guiding the evaluation and construction of authenticity accordingly.

Gender

The lack of perceived authenticity of female performers in popular music, investigated further above in the Section 3.1., is a heated issue, debated strongly by Helen Davies (2001), for example. The canonized, stereotypical image of an authentic performer, in the genre of rock in particular, has been that of a man. The role of women has often been to be cast as the singer but not the authentic artist or creator.

Genre and gender are also intertwined: women are associated with pop, the body and prefabrication, which further excludes them/us from authenticity. The masculine in turn is associated with reason, the cerebral and rock. (McLeod 2001, 47; Davies 2001, 306; Karppinen 2012, 73.) The different dichotomies surrounding authenticity, presented in the table below, often imply that women and the feminine belong on the opposing end of the division, such as subculture—mainstream; cerebral—physical; serious—trivial; where the first of each pairs are connected to masculinity, and also further associated with authenticity (Davies 2001; McLeod 2001).

Table 7: Dichotomies of authenticity

masculine	feminine
subculture	mainstream
cerebral	physical
serious	trivial
rock	pop
art	commerce
authentic	inauthentic

Gaga has managed to attain at least some credibility, challenging the inequality of the music industry—she is regarded as a credible artist, with subcultural capital and rebellion, both features Davies argues to be near impossible for a woman to achieve. *However, in order to do this, I argue that Gaga’s image needs to skillfully utilize the discourses of authenticity to her benefit.* That is, the music industry may not be any more equal than before, nor is the system more liberal towards the classic pejorative accusations. Instead, Gaga’s image is constructed in a way that avoids those accusations, and this evasion is accomplished with the utilization of authenticity discourses. The commercial nature of the music is still something that needs to be hidden, similarly as the focus on the appearance of Gaga needs to be shifted into her focus on making art. Because of her gender, and the history of music industry and women, her image requires even more adamant defense and evasion against these accusations.

Originality

A demand for originality is a longstanding notion of authenticity, connecting to the Romantic roots of the concept. Art should reflect each person's unique way of being. This demand for originality is also emphasized in Peterson's definition of authenticity, of "being *original*, that is not being an imitation of the model" (1997, 220, emphasis in original).

An antithesis to originality is standardization, a famous criticism by Theodor Adorno toward popular music: that it fails to introduce anything essentially new but instead creates the same familiar experience time and time again (1941/1994, 203). Similarly, the concept of pseudo-individualization refers to the notion that songs need to be new but at the same time recognizable, which leads to small variations merely in detail level that lack real diversity, resulting in a standardized and clichéd product (Middleton 1990, 49–50). This resonates with the negative feedback for Nickelback, demanding that music should not be a commodified product that is manufactured as if in a factory, generating slightly different versions of the one object seen to be a success.

Truth

By truth, I refer to authenticity's connection to the general demand for truth, such as the tendency to judge music and artists similarly as a person's sincerity (Frith 2004, 28), and expect songs to be the artists' honest expressions. Truth also connects with the honesty of the motives of making music—they cannot be corrupt or only about financial success, for example. The demand for truth is visible for instance in Article III's example of censorship as protection: where limiting your expressions or hiding details in order to protect yourself and your privacy are read as decreasing the authenticity of the expression. Similarly, in Article II, Nickelback is accused of dishonesty and affectation, of performing "hypocritical bullshit" (Riikonen 2012) or lying even with their mere being by "striving to play a credible rock band" (Romppainen 2012).

Correspondence is a subconcept of truth. It is also related to genre, which in part determines what features are expected of an artist—that the artists correspond to their genre. Gaga as a pop artist is expected to showcase a certain amount of glitz and glamour; Nickelback as a rock band is in turn expected to be rebellious and counter-cultural at least in some amount, whereas their lack of transgression, a value in metal, hinders their access into that genre. In the case of Turmion Kättilöt, their sensitivity and self-cancellation after the Kauhajoki killings resulted in the accusation of faking it, also exemplifying the demand to live the values that the songs preach.

Correspondence also refers to the particular correlation between "what a person says and what he or she truly feels," which is also one notion of authenticity. In early modernity, sincerity—"mean[ing] what was said in a given social situation"—was not enough anymore; instead, her moral core and speech acts needed to correspond. (Cobb 2014, 3.) In music, this means the sense that an artist's life corresponds with his or her art; that their words can be seen to represent their life. This demand or discourse of correspondence between art and artist can also be described by Fetterley's term of "markers" related to subject position (2007, 82–83), which explains the suspicion related to Nickelback's members' consumerist lifestyles while promoting social consciousness in their lyrics. One is required to live the life one sings about.

Intimacy

Intimacy as an element of authenticity surfaced especially in Article I, concerning Lady Gaga and the way she is presented in the *Rolling Stone* interviews. Seeing her offstage, in “private” moments, illustrates the importance of experiencing intimacy with the performer: that we have access to their inner, honest feelings—or at least that we can strongly believe we have that access. The myth of the celebrity is addictive due to this impression of intimacy: the more we get to see of the star, the closer we feel to solving the mystery of the star image—of knowing what is behind the stylized image (see also Meyers 2009; Myrskog 2014; Marshall 1997/2014). In addition, in Article III, the demand for intimacy can be seen in the statements regarding self-censorship as protection of privacy: that omitting full disclosure produces less-credible material.

Suffering or madness

This element concerns the Romantic myth of a struggling artist, living in excess (Weinstein 1999, 64). Creating music is not seen as a learnable skill but rather the outburst of “suffering or mad artists.” This suffering or madness can be further induced by drugs and alcohol, as with poets of the 19th century. (Weinstein 2004, 192.) This is visible in Article I in Gaga’s emphasis on her difficult past and the rise from rags to riches. In a similar manner, in Article II, Nickelback is accused of being “nicely clean” and chided for not drinking during their live performance (Ramsay 2012). A difficult life story is always more interesting than “a quiet middle-class upbringing without incident” (Barker and Taylor 2007, 192). Some musicians intentionally pursue dangerous and excessive lifestyles because of authenticity (Barker and Taylor 2007, 192)—Gaga also admits this in the interviews, stating that she was trying to mimic Andy Warhol, David Bowie and Mick Jagger (Strauss 2010; see also Article I, pp. 93–94).

Anti-commercialism

Both in Romantic and Modernist authenticity, commercialism is treated with suspicion (Keightley 2001, 136). Similarly, discourses such as authenticity as negation and authenticity of positionality specifically highlight the importance of not succumbing to commercial values. In the case of Gaga, as also discussed above in relation to gender, her association with the genre of pop could be read as decreasing the demand for anti-commercialism. However, because of the emphasis on “true” artistry and the authenticity discourses of rock, it can also be argued that also Gaga has to defend herself from accusations of commercialism—especially in the context of *Rolling Stone*. In Article II, reading Nickelback as commercial simultaneously questions their motives for making music—commercial success should not be the reason for making music, but honest self-expression.

Since popular music, as the name already suggests, is however often a commercial form of culture, and some revered artists and bands have also succeeded very well commercially, how, then, to differentiate the “‘good’ multiplatinum artists from ‘bad’ multiplatinum artists,” as McLeod (2002, 96) aptly asks? One explanation would be that some acts have earned their success (seemingly) without commercial motives, or are constructed as such, which exempts their success from inauthenticity accusations.

Distinguishing between good and bad multiplatinum artists can be achieved with the discourse of authenticity, by constructing some as “deserving” the success (Keightley 2001) and others as not.

Authenticity of intended audience

This element and its name stems from Carys Wyn Jones’s argument that “artists are not only measured by perceived authenticity of motivation but also authenticity of intended audience” (2008, 41). For example, Nirvana stated publicly their contempt towards their newly gained popularity and especially the type of fans they had attracted. This secured their authenticity by both having a non-commercial motivation to make music, and having an authentic intended audience. (2008, 41.) In the research articles, the idea of an abject audience that needed to be cast out was illustrated in Article II by describing the audience, either imaginary, or real in the case of a live concert, in pejorative terms. I further categorized these “bad” audiences into two groups: inauthentic, and undesirable. Inauthentic audience refers to teenage girls, for instance, as rock culture treats teenage fan girls with massive suspicion (Warwick 2009, 352); undesirable refers to the audience members possessing questionable qualities that result in the need to cast out and exclude them.

Subversiveness

The idea of subversiveness is valued especially in the genres of rock and metal. Thus, in this work the theme was most apparent in articles II and III. In Article II, it entailed accusations of Nickelback being too dull, nice and clean to be considered an authentic rock band, in addition to demands for a sense of danger. In Article III, it connected to issues of censorship especially in the genre of metal that values transgression (Hjelm, Kahn-Harris and LeVine 2011): a metal band is expected to commit to subversion, opposed to succumbing to mainstream values, which is read as inauthenticity. The demand for subversiveness is visible also in American rock criticism, valuing a sense of rebellion (McLeod 2002, 101), which is in turn related to rock ‘n’ roll’s ties with 1960’s counterculture movements (McLeod 2002, 108–109). To be authentically “rock,” performers are expected to practice what they preach, especially in terms of mainstream values versus subversiveness.

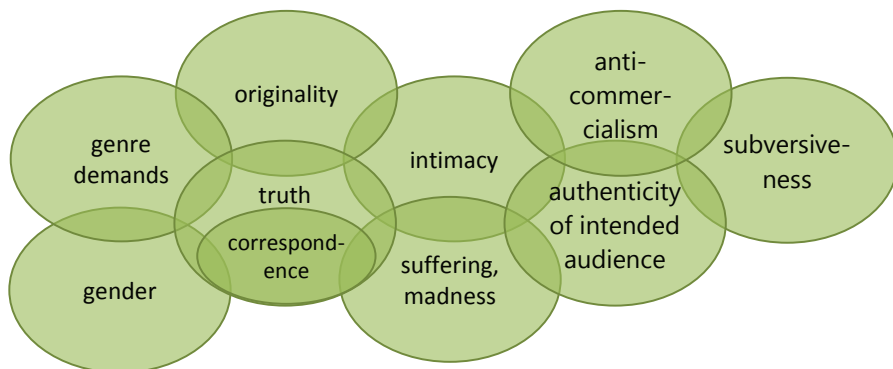


Figure 5: Elements of authenticity

All in all, based on this work, the discursive elements that construct the concept of authenticity are genre demands, gender, originality, truth and correspondence, intimacy, suffering and madness, anti-commercialism, authenticity of intended audiences, and subversiveness.

4.2 FUNCTIONS OF AUTHENTICITY DISCOURSES

Although authenticity is viewed discursively in this research and the demands for being authentic may seem delusive and impossible to meet, authenticity is still used “in a very real way” in popular music culture (Auslander 2008, 82). As Cobb states, “Authenticity, in other words, is an effect, not a reality. This does not, I think, make it any less real.” (Cobb 2014, 8). These “real” effects of the concept are seen for instance in the above-mentioned notions of intentionally choosing excessive or dangerous lifestyles for the sake of authenticity. Furthermore, the critical reception of Nickelback, resulting in the band becoming the general scapegoat for bad music on a global scale exemplifies the concrete repercussions of (in)authenticity discourses.

The functions of authenticity discourses in this work were connected to the entanglement of authenticity and value, visible in the abundance of authenticity discourses especially in music criticism. This entanglement is particularly visible in articles I and II. The core of those articles is not to decide whether or not Lady Gaga or Nickelback is authentic, but to explore whether or not authenticity is ascribed to them in the texts, and what consequences does this have. Constructing Gaga’s authenticity in itself is not so crucial than what this construction *does*: assign value to the artist. In the case of Nickelback, the effect is opposite: by denying Nickelback’s authenticity and instead constructing them as inauthentic, the band’s value is diminished.

In Article I, this included protection from accusations related to Gaga’s musical genre, such as being commercial or trivial. Here, the fluctuating utilization of the discourses further increase the appeal of her persona. In Article II, the role of authenticity was connected to the role of the music press: by inauthenticating Nickelback, it can be seen to authenticate itself, as the representative of a select community with superior taste and counter-cultural capital. In Article III, authenticity discourses informed also the discourses of censorship, protecting the value system of the genre by condemning commercial shock tactics, for instance.

They provide a way to construct “in-group/out-group distinctions” (McLeod 1999, 146), for instance in the context of music journalism, where constructions of authenticity are used to simultaneously establish both the insider bands and artists, and the insider audience. They can also, as suggested above, be utilized in constructing certain acts as deserving their mainstream success, avoiding the accusations of commercialism—the core question being “how rock critics *represent* artists” (McLeod 2001, 55). In the case of Nickelback, their sales figures are one essential element in the negative discourses surrounding them. However, mainstream success is contrastingly not a negative trait, nor is it disregarded in the critical reception in the case of revered artists. With authenticity discourses, certain artists are made to matter and others not.

4.3 POST AUTHENTICITY?

The explored cases expose also traces of counterdiscourses to the dominant discourse of authenticity. In the case of Nickelback, they are counter to rockism, campaigning for us to be able to release our musical skeletons from the closet and celebrating “guilty pleasures” — a view also titled as *poptimism* (see also 2.1.3). Labeling something as a guilty pleasure freezes the dichotomy of music being either good or bad, which in turn hinders a more profound exploration of the reasons why I like this music (Barker and Taylor 2007, 335–336). Strict rockist views can similarly obstruct scholarly analysis of certain musics, neglecting some musical experiences and pleasures.

Music journalist and author Simon Reynolds has proposed that the millennials seem to be a “genre-less generation.” Along with genre, identity formation as connected to music listening lessens. Reynolds fears that this results in the disappearance of attitude: of “the idea of taste-as-stance, choice-as-statement,” and gloomily ends with the argument that “*Poptimism’s* victory = the End of History.” (Reynolds 2016) If these findings are correct, it would mean that the genre expectations regarding authenticity are in flux, as well as locating the authentic origin. When the genre ideal proposed by Fetterley is more and more difficult to find, on which basis does one make judgments on authenticity, and are those even needed anymore? That is, have we, as Grossberg suggests, moved on to a thoroughly postmodern age where authenticity exists only in an “inauthentic” form, as fleeting emotive investments?

Despite the skeptic views of authenticity in the age of postmodernism, it is still to be taken into account: authenticity remains in the background of every debate on the value of popular music. It is visible for instance in the recurrent debate concerning the summer rock festivals in Finland, and whether they have the right to call themselves “rock” festivals anymore, as the headliners are performers like Cheek, representing the genre of rap and the tastes of the masses with his substantial record-breaking sales (Väntänen 2016). Similarly, the discourses are seen at play when authors are considered more interesting when their works are seen as autobiographical, depicting something traumatic and tragic (Raevaara 2016).

Another case in point happened in March 2015, as Finland had just elected its representatives for Eurovision song contest. It would seem that, notwithstanding the competing counter-discourses, the myth of authenticity is alive and well. As the selection of Pertti Kurikan Nimipäivät, a punk band of four men with learning disabilities, caused a media uproar on Facebook and Twitter, for example, the justifications both pro and contra benefited from traditional authenticity discourses, resembling the ones analyzed in this work. The supporters validated their arguments by affirming that PKN were real, and they had a genuine message, which did not include shallow dressing up and supporting, or even drowning, the live act with fancy decorations and stage tricks. The opponents worried that the band will win votes for non-musical features, collecting “pity points” because of their learning disabilities — that the competition should be about the music, and this was bad music. Both arguments benefit from authenticity discourses, demanding pure and genuine self-expression, and focusing on “pure” music.

However, I do not aim to refute the logic of authentic inauthenticity, proposed by Grossberg, or to suggest that it is nonexistent. Rather, traditional authenticity discourses can work as the fuel in authentic inauthenticity — they can provide the content of the image in which the affective investment is then made. The traditional traits can offer an accessible point of resemblance to which affective attachment is easy, as those

are the traits that have long cultural roots and are familiar since they have surrounded us throughout our lives. As Grossberg states,

Authentic inauthenticity says that authenticity is itself a construction, an image, which is no better and no worse than any other. Authenticity is, in fact, no more authentic than any other self-consciously created identity [...]" (1993, 206)

However, what I argue is that this does not result in authenticity becoming altogether extinct and residing in the cultural dustheap. Rather, traditional authenticities can still be utilized in the constructed identities and they can in turn provide them with value and content.

Furthermore, be the pose traditionally or modernly authentic, that is, the artist either hiding or emphasizing the gap between the person and the persona on stage (see Barker and Taylor 2007; Section 2.1.5), both of these poses gain their strength from their relation to truth. An authentically inauthentic identity is valuable in its sincerity of the pose taken, of admitting that you are not authentic, that you “fake it without faking the fact that you are faking it” (Grossberg 1993, 206). The demand for truth has not gone anywhere, it has just taken a new form. It is then worth asking whether the logic of authenticity itself still remains a central phenomenon in Western culture.

The case of Lady Gaga can be viewed as illustrating a postmodernist view of popular music, where traditional distinctions between authentic and inauthentic, for instance, are seen as collapsing (Shuker 1998, 229). The public image of Gaga benefits from the constructions of authenticity surrounding her, but at the same time, the fluctuation between the discourses, diluting categories such as “real” and “fake” or person and persona, question the possibility of total authenticity altogether—which, as has been stated above, is indeed unattainable.

In like manner, Article III reads as deconstructing the myth of total artistic freedom of expression, which is interrupted by the real world and complicated situations where the artists have to consider the context and possibly alter their message. Similarly, the idea of self-censorship as protection avoids total freedom of expression as it can give the audience *too* much of oneself. The values of honesty and genuineness have their limits, such as hiding or altering actual names, places, and events, to protect the creative self. This parallels, and questions, both the myth of the absolute freedom of expression and the myth of total authenticity. However, it does not undermine or diminish the joy and pleasure of music, for both the audience and the performers, but instead aims to bring the discussion away from the myths of total authenticity and freedom, and closer to the practical level of experiences of musicians and their audiences.

Leanne Fetterley suggests that contemporary popular music reception tends to prefer “humour and ironic play over sincerity” (2008), which in turn resonates with Grossberg’s “ironic inauthenticity” (1992). Furthermore, this implies that rock critics would value a notion of authenticity where “ironic investment is privileged” (Fetterley 2008). Considering the cases of Lady Gaga and Nickelback, this would seem to be the case: Gaga’s self-reflexive stance adds to her credibility; in Nickelback’s case, some added irony might improve their reception since their sincerity is argued to “fail as a strategy of authenticity” (see Fetterley 2008). This would imply that “pure” authenticity and sheer sincerity as strategies have had their heyday.

What to do, then, regarding authenticity? Should our tastes be totally liberated, and should the genre of criticism be abandoned altogether? Has the optimist stance

gained more ground in popular music debates? According to music journalist and scholar Jason King, the popoptimist counterdiscourses presented in Article II, criticizing rockist elitism, had faced a new setback by 2013. However, he continues that also the anti-rockist movement is still alive and well. King is concerned that anti-rockism at its worst may lead to flattening all music as equally valuable, and argues for an “anti-anti-rockist” stance: “one that critiques the dangerous relativizing of anti-rockism even as it criticizes the reductive, essentializing limits of rockism.” Music, that is, all music, deserves to be taken seriously, but that does not mean that everything is automatically praised (King 2014, 200–201).

In the end, King argues for “flexible, open-ended and decentered canons,” in which acknowledging the artistic context is crucial (King 2014, 203). The context entails taking the historical trajectory of popular music into account (King 2014, 201–203), or as the music critic Rick Moody, who King takes as an example, states:

But it's the job of the critic to sort through the collision of contemporary music with the history of the form and to assess music based on more enduring values, which are, it's true, partly subjective, but which also come to rest on an understanding of what music has been (a critic is a person who has been listening carefully for a long time) (Moody 2013).

This historical trajectory is parallel to the idea of origins, discussed above, and their role in authenticity constructions. In the case of Nickelback, this anti-anti-rockist stance would mean not automatically celebrating the band or rejecting them offhand either but taking them seriously and giving them a proper contextualized reading—which according to my view on the material, has been quite rare in its critical reception. In the end, the issue seems to be about finding a happy medium between the extremes of total anti-rockism and rockism.

4.4 DISCUSSION

This research has aimed at increasing understanding of authenticity, strongly visible in cultural debates still today, as the examples above have shown. It is a contribution in the field of discursive authenticity research, in particular. Additionally, it participates in the debates on music censorship and the limits of musical expression with Article III, by concentrating on the experiences of musicians themselves through qualitative interview material, and thus offering an inclusive view to the discourses of censorship. In addition, the article's approach explores how authenticity can be applied in analyzing other music-related phenomena, such as censorship.

This part of the thesis has also aimed at contributing to the authenticity research of popular music by clarifying, combining and adding to the previous research and discourses, aiming at a recapitulation of them. I have gathered the discourses under four larger themes, those of music, origins, performers and listeners, to explore *who or what is being authenticated*. Similarly, the groupings to music, connection to origins, and performer explains *who or what is being judged* in evaluating the authenticity of a musical act.

On the whole, in this work, the discursive elements that construct the concept of authenticity, and create different, at times contradictory authenticity discourses, were *genre demands, gender, originality, truth and correspondence, intimacy, suffering and madness,*

anti-commercialism, authenticity of intended audiences, and subversiveness. Based on the articles, I propose the main function of authenticity discourses to be value judgments and demarcation of certain artists: it is a way to make some matter and others not.

As for the generalizability of the research, I view discourses as culturally determined resources. Thus, the discourses that were the result of the analysis can be seen as illustrating the discursive resources that are available in the selected contexts. They are not generalizable in the sense that they would be the only discourses present in popular music culture. However, they can be seen as generalizable, or extrapolated beyond the selected cases, to follow Alasuutari (1995, 156–157), in the sense that they reflect the overall discursive possibilities of Western popular music culture(s), revealing a portion of the discourses established as acceptable speech. It is unlikely that the discourses would be present or constructed *only* in the selected cases and materials, but rather that they reflect the more general tendencies of speech and argumentation in popular music debates. This view can also be called the intersituationality of discourses (Jokinen and Juhila 1996), introduced in Section 3.2., which informs also my viewpoint to the generalizability of the analyzed discourses. The selected materials contain pieces of discursive formations that are larger than the limited piece of data. Simultaneously, the material and the interactions it includes are still regarded as unique and context-bound. Thus, the results of the analysis can be seen to illustrate the more general cultural meaning-making processes related to authenticity.

It also became apparent that although this work is a multiple case study, also in the selected cases, of different contexts and genres, the authenticity discourses started to partly repeat themselves, implying data saturation. Taking the genre differences and the consequent variations into account, it is possible to investigate it as an overarching phenomenon in popular music.

I have aimed to report the research process of each case as transparently as possible, as well as connect it with previous theoretical and empirical research on the subject. The results of the analysis also resonated with other work on the subject, further validating the results of the analysis (for example, see Varriale 2012 on the romantic and folk discourses in an interview of Gaga; Fetterley 2008; Warwick 2009 on Nickelback). In Article III, the central backdrop to the analysis was the theoretical frame of New Censorship Theory, which informed and resonated with the analysis.

In this study, the focus has been on the discursive formulations of authenticity in different texts, and the sonic elements of the music in question has not been investigated. However, drawing from Peterson, who views one element creating authenticity in country music to be its instrumentation, such as banjos and dobros (1997, 228), similarly, Nickelback's distorted guitars and the grungy vocal style of Kroeger can be viewed to be markers of their authenticity. Furthermore, in Lady Gaga's case, the grain of her voice (Barthes 1977) often sounds "natural" despite the otherwise high amount of machines and effects to produce the sound of the songs—one can hear her "real" body in her voice, which gives one proof of the genuine act of singing. In *Born This Way*, including performances by Brian May and Clarence Clemons, with their traditional rock instruments, electric guitar and saxophone, can be read as utilizing traditional rock discourses, with "real" sounds. This angle of sonic elements in relation to authenticity, visible also in producers' skills to utilize certain techniques to emphasize authenticity (Barker and Taylor 2007, 331; see also Section 2.1.4 in this work), suggests one possibility for further investigations.

Nickelback in relation to gender and the scale of hard–soft (see McLeod 1999, 142; McLeod 2002) is one theme for which I did not have enough space due to research-

economic reasons, and thus it was excluded from the third article of the dissertation. In the data, it was not a strong enough theme to be included in the limited space of an article, which always requires selection and in which I could include only the most prominent themes from the data. However, there were a few instances of this kind of gendered discourse, where Nickelback “did not pull out its big guns”, the album was “kicked in the nuts” (Riikonen 2012), or they were “dude¹⁸-music for girls, and vice versa” (Hilden 2011). These emphasize Nickelback’s failure in masculinity or masculine music, expressed through the metaphor of violence, its unwanted popularity among girls, and labeling its music as girly music. This apparent conjoining of culturally feminine traits and inauthenticity, not only in the case of Nickelback but also in popular music culture more widely, serves another interesting topic for further research.

Moreover, their Canadian-ness, in terms of it denoting the countryside and innocent “niceness” is an element that was not featured clearly in the Finnish reviews, nor did it surface in the reference literature of Canadian rock. However, when I discussed the theme with a Canadian journalist, he asked about this cultural connotation, which remained absent from the article, but offers a valid viewpoint for future research. Correspondingly, bands that can be regarded as “Finnish Nickelbacks” offer an inviting research topic, especially when the cultural context is much more familiar than in the case of Canadian Nickelback, and the cultural connotations would then be better recognizable for a Finnish researcher.

The negative discourses surrounding Nickelback seem to be hegemonic. Funnily enough, in the small-scale media frenzy my Nickelback article caused, the story quite quickly got new tones, in the style of the children’s game Telephone: as the story circulated, new articles were written by copying previous articles and during this process the message was altered. For instance, I found quite a few articles¹⁹ where the narrative had been turned upside down: I, having started out as a Nickelback fan, had turned into disliking the band, or even hating it, and was now widely referred to as a “former fan” (for example, see There’s a study 2016). This was not the case, nor has my article or my interviews stated anything like this. In real life, and as I had described in every interview I had, the process was almost the opposite: I started out as a neutral listener of Nickelback, hearing them every now and then on the radio. Through the research process and by intently familiarizing myself with their music, I found my own relationship to it and started to appreciate it more than before. The point of this is that apparently the major narrative or hegemonic discourse that the media struggles to hold on to is that it is impossible to like Nickelback, and if one exposes oneself to their music, one most certainly starts to hate them. My counterdiscourse of the article, which tried to deconstruct this discourse and possibly open up the possibility of the likableness of Nickelback, remains the subordinate discourse in the public eye, to the point where even my own accounts of the issue are transformed into supporting the hegemonic discourse, which, besides being quite disappointing, exemplifies the discursive struggle of everyday life.

¹⁸ Originally *äijä*, a difficult word to translate directly, as it also connotes a certain *äijä* culture that arose in the late 1990s and was embodied in the TV series *Äijät* (2007), where two celebrity men known from rock culture, one a musician in a band, another a rock radio host, engaged in very manly pastimes, such as tank driving. Often refers to a hypermasculine man, sometimes in a pejorative way.

¹⁹ At some point, I stopped following the snowballing process, as it became too wide for me to try and keep up with, and hence have not seen all the stories written about the issue.

When starting out with the thesis, the topic seemed to carry the notable risk that authenticity, as previous research has also stated (see Middleton 2006), is past its due date and trite as a research topic. However, the disjuncture between vernacular and academic discourses suggested by Middleton (2006, 203–205; see Section 2.1.7 in this work) was aptly illustrated by the case of Nickelback and the interest it raised: a “trite” research subject turned out to be very stimulating to the general public. Academic research of authenticity apparently had, and has, lots to offer also to the everyday discussions on popular music. The well of authenticity does not seem to run dry by continuing research on the subject. Everything has not yet been said—how could it, when authenticity as a cultural construct is constantly on the move. Quite the contrary, further research stays in touch with the times and the shifting notions of authenticity: how the discursive construct changes, evolves, gains new meanings and emphases. Connecting to the deeper core of Western thought and subject, exploring the evolution of the concept also provides information on the wider state of our culture and evolving value systems.

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ORIGINAL ARTICLES

ARTICLE I

“The lie becomes the truth”: Constructions of authenticity in *Rolling Stone’s* cover stories of Lady Gaga. *Etnomusikologian vuosikirja 2015*, vol. 27, pp. 82–111. Eds. Meri Kytö and Saijaleena Rantanen. Online: http://julkaisut.etnomusikologia.fi/EVK/EVK_Vol_27_2015.pdf

ARTICLE II

“Hypocritical bullshit performed through gritted teeth”: Authenticity discourses in Nickelback’s album reviews in Finnish media. *Metal Music Studies*, 2:1, 2016: 39–56. DOI: 10.1386/mms.2.1.39_1

ARTICLE III

From Justified to Illogical: Discourses of (Self-)Censorship and Authenticity in Cases of Finnish Metal Bands. *Popular Music and Society*, special issue on Music and Censorship. 40:3, 2017: 274–291. DOI: 10.1080/03007766.2017.1294521.

SALLI ANTTONEN

This doctoral thesis examines discourses of authenticity in popular music cultures. As a multiple case study in disciplines of cultural studies and ethnomusicology, it utilizes discourse analysis and investigates the three cases of Lady Gaga, Nickelback and Finnish metal, arguing for the continuing importance of authenticity in cultural debates. Constructions of authenticity hold significant power, especially in value judgments: with these, some artists are deemed valuable, others outcasts.



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Dissertations in Education, Humanities, and Theology

ISBN 978-952-61-2556-5
ISSN 1798-5625