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Klara Nitsche

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“If you could use un-punk colors that’s even *more* punk rock.” : An Analysis of Materiality,
Community Symbols, and Self-Presentation in Atlanta’s Hardcore Punk Scene

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Abstract

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This project investigates scene practices and expressions of local identity through analyzing methods of material, visual, and logistical communication in punk posters taken from the Atlanta hardcore scene between 1980-2009. Since musical posters are expected to adhere to a rubric of visual communication (artist name, venue location, date, etc.) their visual design and material execution is often decorated in order to stress the atmosphere or identity of a scene. Within the context of punk, specifically the 1980’s-2009 hardcore scene in Atlanta, Do-It-Yourself (DIY) ethos guided many production efforts of punk ephemera such as zines, clothes, and band posters. This research blends quantitative and qualitative methods of visual analysis to examine patterns of locality, material usage, scene connections, and visual representations within the Atlanta punk scene. Results showed that local bands had the largest presence across all posters, and that demographic representations of human figures in these posters skewed heavily towards depicting white men. I also found that while the traditional ‘image’ of punk was a visually bold, black and white, high contrast mixture of photography, text, and handwriting, access to new materials resulted in novel punk poster designs that broke out of this pattern. I concluded my study by pointing out how materiality is a tool that can be used to efficiently boost the presence of scene connection if applied alongside relevant visual and logistical qualities. The findings of this study contribute to literature on local scene practices, hardcore punk, Atlanta history, and materiality studies.

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Acknowledgments

I have so much love! I have so many thanks to give and so little room to do so on this tiny one-page sheet! But I would like to start off by thanking my wonderful thesis advisor, Dr. Timothy Dowd for nurturing my vague interest in punk towards pursuing this project. I owe it to your kind generosity and expertise that I am as invested in scene and material studies as I am today. Your patience and encouraging words were always uplifting, and I am grateful to have called myself your student.

To Dr. Tracy Scott, with whom I took my first ever sociology class, I would like to thank your passionate teaching and eagerness for research which inspired me to enter this field. Working on your research team provided me with the skills of visual analysis I used here today and I hope that this project shows you how far I've come from my first paper in SOC 101!

Dana Haugaard, my first EVER professor at Emory and one of the most insightful artists I know, there are not enough thanks to give for your guidance and support in my abilities. I truly would not have come this far as an artist, a scholar, or a student at this school without your teaching. The perspectives on making and materiality that I've learned in your class were always in the back of my mind during this research, and I cannot wait to shape them into artworks, too.

Amelia and Eleanor, my lovely, wonderful peers who I worked side-by-side with this year, thank you for creating such a friendly and supportive research environment! Talking to you two about the epic highs and lows of honors research made this journey so much more fun and genuinely made me look forward to Monday mornings.

To my mom and dad, who I skillfully avoided talking to about this project for dread of explaining what exactly I was 'studying', this is it! Thank you for supporting me blindly and please continue to support me even after you're a little less blind!

Thank you to my ridiculous roommates who live with me in [redacted], there is truly nothing like coming home from a long day of work or research to be shown a photo one of you took of a [redacted] so heinous that "it can't be captured on camera." You bring a certain glow to my life that I'll forever chase through horrible YouTube music videos and cheap Chinese restaurants. I love you guys, thanks for making us a home.

And to any new and unfamiliar bystanders who are reading this far of their own volition, thank you! How exciting to be part of your life, if only for a couple thesis pages. I hope that you, too, have something that makes you excited enough to write 48 pages for. And if not, I hope you find it somewhere.

Table of Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction.....	2
1.1 Visual Communication.....	2
1.2 Hardcore.....	2
1.3 Overview of the Study.....	3
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	5
2.1 Scenes.....	5
2.2 Punk and the Atlanta Hardcore Scene	6
2.3 Punk’s Residual Constructs.....	8
2.4 DIY Scene and Materiality.....	9
2.5 Why Posters?.....	10
2.6 Imagery and Self-Presentation.....	12
Chapter 3: Data and Methods.....	13
3.1 Data Sample and Poster Selection.....	13
3.2 Determining Locality.....	14
3.3 Coding Schemes.....	14
3.3.1 Community and Inclusion.....	15
3.3.2: Material Intentions.....	16
3.3.3: Locality.....	17
3.3.4: Text.....	17
3.3.5: Figurative Imagery.....	18
3.3.6: Additional Notes on Coding and Methods.....	19
Chapter 4: Findings.....	20
4.1 Quantitative Results.....	20
4.4.1: Locality and Image.....	20
4.4.2: Community and Inclusion.....	24
4.2 Qualitative Results.....	26
4.2.1: Community and Inclusion.....	26
4.2.2: Locality Demographics.....	27
4.2.3: Figurative Imagery.....	28
4.2.3.4: Photography, Collage, and Figure Objectification.....	28
4.2.3.5: Illustrations as Explorations of Masculinity and Fashion.....	30
4.2.3.6: Masculinity and Violence Depicted in Atlanta Hardcore.....	31
4.2.4: Material Intentions and Text.....	32
4.2.4.1: Handwriting’s Versatile Materiality.....	33
4.2.4.2: Map Illustrations in the Making of Community.....	34
4.2.4.3: Band Presentation Through Materiality.....	35
4.2.4.4: Screenprinting and the Adaptation of Punk Style to New Materials.....	36
Chapter 5: Discussion.....	38
5.1 The Power of Materiality in DIY.....	39
5.2 Materiality’s Role in Scenes.....	40
Chapter 6: Conclusions.....	42
6.1 Study Limitations.....	42
6.2 Recommendations for Future Research.....	43
6.2.1: Within the Atlanta Punk Archives.....	43
6.2.2: Within the Study of Materiality.....	44
Works Cited.....	46
Audio Sources.....	47
Appendix A: Coding Systems and Individual Codes.....	48

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This study investigates how concert event posters in the Atlanta hardcore/punk scene navigated rules of visual communication and representations of self within the bounds of Do-It-Yourself (DIY) material practices.

1.1: Visual Communication

Visual communication of concert posters refers to a combination of logistical and visual information that efficiently conveys the details of an event. Logistical information would include artist name(s), ticket price, age restrictions, date, time, and venue location. Visual information consists of design choices in typography, color, and images used to communicate details about an event's scene, crowd, and cultural atmosphere.

1.2: Hardcore

Hardcore as both a musical genre and a scene rose to prominence across the United States in the early 1980's. Hardcore was "a simpler, more aggressive, more suburban and more male dominated form of punk," that celebrated grassroots production of music, zines, and community events. (Larsen, 2013) With the anti-capitalist, DIY ethos that permeated the scene's economic and production practices, how did the visual communication of semi-structured products, such as posters, look? What methods of visual imagery, informational content, and applications of materiality did local Atlanta hardcore posters use in order to communicate across the scene? These questions aim to clarify methods of visual communication where materiality, figurative

representation, and community outreach intersect. The theoretical background for this study (detailed in the literature review section) draws on scholars from a variety of disciplines such as sociology, art history, and linguistics in consideration of the range of visual communication properties used in concert posters. By merging theories on social, visual, and textual analysis, I used this case study of Atlanta punk posters as an opportunity to explore relationships between theories of scene practices and studies of materiality not commonly addressed in the scholarship of poster research.

1.2 Overview of the Study

The structure for this study is as follows:

Introduction: This section provides a brief summary of the concept of visual communication and introduces key research questions that will be answered in this study.

Literature Review: This section summarizes key sociological concepts of scenes and material studies. This section also provides details on Atlanta hardcore history, punk history, and the relevance of posters in this study.

Data and Methods: This section details the methodology used for research and breaks down quantitative and qualitative analysis goals. This section also includes detailed explanations of codes.

Results: This section presents findings for both quantitative and qualitative analyses with accompanying figures.

Discussion: This section further interprets findings and uses them to answer questions posed in the study's introduction.

Conclusion: This section summarizes key findings in the research, details study limitations, and offers recommendations for future research in the fields of punk archives, materiality, and visual communication.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1: Scenes

Scenes, as described by Bennet and Peterson in their 2004 book, are where “clusters of producers, musicians, and fans collectively share their common musical tastes and collectively distinguish themselves from others.” (Bennet and Peterson, 2004) As opposed to terms such as ‘subculture’ and ‘community’, the term *scene* is intentional in not segmenting members from non-members in a rigid cultural identity. Rather, scenes are characterized by member porosity. Scholarship on scenes recognizes that most members exist and operate outside of identities taken on in their scenes, choosing not to separate them from society as a unique subcultural ‘group’ but rather to treat participants as actors temporarily entering and exiting a network that holds various degrees of saliency in their life. Studying scenes involves tracing these networks of interaction and the internal structures that make a scene operate within its socio-cultural context.

Scenes are split into three categories, local, trans-local, and virtual. They are distinguished by contexts of member movement and interaction. Local scenes exist within a physical boundary, such as a town or city, in which actors within the scene’s network engage with each other to keep the scene alive. Trans-local scenes are characterized by their range of exchanges moving past local boundaries and into other regions, resulting in local chapters that participate in a larger network. Virtual scenes exist primarily online, with member engagement bypassing physical constraints entirely. (Bennet and Peterson, 2004) Hardcore, as a scene, is generally considered to be trans-local with a wealth of local chapters spread across the world.

2.2: Punk and the Atlanta Hardcore Scene

The study of punk within academia rose around the late 70's and early 80s, with Dick Hebdige's *Subculture: The Meaning of Style* being published in 1979 and offering one of the earliest academic investigations of punk as a subculture, noting visual elements of resistance such as *bricolage* and fashion taste. (Hebdige, 1979) Due to the oppositional nature of punk, developments of local scenes within the trans-local 'punk umbrella' were not always congruent with each other in style, politics, values, or symbolic usage. Scholars such as Bestley criticize an over-intellectualization of punk studies, warning that an "over-concretization of the punk canon" and assertion of punk stereotypes creates problems of such generalizations "becoming embedded facts, and a rigid system of rules and codes of behavior ensu[ing]." (Bestley, 2015)

Punk is regarded as a trans-local scene, with local chapters existing in unique environments that result in a wide range of punk practices, ethos, and styles. Such distinctions can be seen between early British punk and American punk scenes. Early British punk's existence is commonly demarcated by the Sex Pistols' debut, emerging around 1976 and consisting of younger UK citizens coming from a low socio-economic class. Style distinctions of this period include fetishwear, paper collages, colorful hair, and Nazi memorabilia. (Savage, 1991) This British wave is credited with bringing punk into global, mainstream recognition. As the Sex Pistols toured Europe and entered North America a new chapter of punk began to stir-American. Though bands such as the New York Dolls and The Ramones had already been building a punk scene in Northern CBGB clubs before the Sex Pistols stepped foot out of

England, it was the British band's touring that is most credited with lighting the fuse on America's post-punk, hardcore development. (Azerrad, 2001)

American punk evolved across the nation- notable hotbeds included New York City, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Yet, speculations on the emergence of an Atlanta scene were articulated by Dixon's 1979 survey distributed at the very first Sex Pistols concert held in Atlanta. Dixon approached the concert crowd with questions measuring socio-economics status, relatability to punk, and personal values. Dixon compared concert responses with local NORC data to distinguish differences between the general area population and 'punker' crowd members. His results showed that concert-goers were significantly higher in socio-economic status yet less content with work/life situations, less supportive of violence in dealing with criminals (more favorable toward gun control and less likely to own a gun), less traditional in orientations towards religion and sex, more politically liberal, and more open to homosexuality than the average local. (Dixon, 1979) Yet, when contrasting self-identified 'punks' with other concert-goers (such as rock fans, or just people curious to see what all this Sex Pistols fuss was about) Dixon found that there was a weak presence of an actual 'punk' scene in Atlanta circa 1979. (Dixon, 1979)

The Atlanta scene strengthened with the growth of local bands, touring bands, and youthful participation in the area of Little Five Points across the 1980s. Due to its situation in the south, Atlanta punk style developed its own visual language through navigating traditional southern norms of gender, sexuality, and politics. Speetjens and Blanco conducted a study of Atlanta punk fashion between the late 70s and 80s, finding that do-it-yourself (DIY) and rockabilly fashion were particularly favored by local bands. A notable lack of skinhead motifs

also characterized this scene, as hate-groups such as the KKK were still active in local areas and Atlanta punks took great care not to associate with such blatantly discriminatory, ‘redneck’ groups in the South. (Speetjens, Blanco, 2015) Yet, explorations of gender were less common here than in other scenes, with most men staying close to hegemonic standards of masculinity and displaying little to no exploration of gender interplay or androgyny- with the exception of Phreddy Vomit, a singer notorious for wearing feminine makeup and fur. (Speetjens and Blanco, 2015)

2.3: Punk’s Residual Constructs

Whilst examining punk imagery within the confines of visual communication structures, it is important to keep in mind social patterns of inequality that have already been reported on by previous scholars. Lauraine Leblanc’s ethnography on girls in punk highlights the double standards of sexuality and physical strength many female punks are held to; while men repackaged masculine standards of aggression, violence, and control. (Leblanc, 1999) Similar critiques of inequality in a supposedly ‘equal’ scene are voiced by punks of color and reflected in scholarship criticizing the majority white population within punk. (Larsen, 2013) Uses of the swastika and other Nazi memorabilia are especially potent amongst early punk imagery, while the emergence of skinhead scenes around punk areas led to further safety concerns for non-white members. (Larsen, 2013) Though punk is a trans-local scene, each chapter has unique visual flares as a result of different geographical and cultural environments. As a result, some chapters are more inclusive than others.

Atlanta's residual constructs included adherence to masculine constructs of fashion as demonstrated by Speetjens and Blanco's study. (Speetjens, Blanco, 2015) However, it is worth noting that a considerable queer scene emerged with punk in the 80's, notable figures including Ru Paul, an internationally recognized drag queen who frequented punk spaces. Women were also present in the Atlanta punk scene, and notable figures such as the members of Pagan Holiday worked towards dismantling patriarchal standards through protests and benefit shows. (Nelson, 2023)

2.4: DIY Scene and Materiality

Archival studies of punk often focus on tokens of materiality to measure identity and community expression; fashion depicts visual landscapes across scenes (Speetjens, Blanco, 2015) and zines explore networks of community built through DIY channels. (Piepmeier, 2008) Zines are a particularly favored medium of analysis, as their self-published, self-generated nature offers unfiltered insight to social networking methods, anti-capitalist efforts, community building, and visual style explorations. (Farmer, 2013)

Materiality is a significant element in the punk visual scheme. The tearing, marking, gluing, and visual pirating of something works directly within its anti-capitalist, DIY ethos. Materiality itself has recently been approached by scholars as a significant element in analyzing an object's presence and influence on interaction:

We can see how, treated as material instantiations in the world, the physical qualities of ink or paint cause symbols to change, altering their capacity to represent and signify:

whether a vanishing self-portrait of da Vinci (Domínguez Rubio 2016), the degraded paint on classical marble sculptures leaving only the now-iconic white representations (Greenland 2016), or the fading red ink of a red AIDS awareness ribbon into a pink breast cancer ribbon over time (McDonnell 2010). When we analyze objects through the lens of qualities, more than just symbols, the capacities for objects are inherently more open. An object quality may symbolize, but it may also interact with physical environments, degrade, permit or deny circulation, and more. (McDonnell, 2023)

Given the archival nature of my study, I am forced to reckon with *only* materials and compounded with the relevance that scrappy, DIY efforts had in keeping punk production afloat, materiality and attention to material interactions is a particularly relevant theme in my research design.

2.5: Why Posters?

Scenic practices include creating music, attending events for this music, and crafting for the sake of the scene. (Bennett and Peterson, 2004) Scenes create artifacts such as zines and posters as a scenic practice, but the structure of such crafts still rely largely on pre-existing standards for these forms. Zines are one of the most popular materials to discuss in punk literature, as the self-publishing, self-directed, and self-distributed nature highlights principles of community outreach, self sufficiency, and self production prominent in DIY spaces. For this reason, zines are heavily associated with the punk scene and are often attached to ideologies of anarchism, marxism, and anti-capitalism. (Farmer, 2013)

Concert posters, on the other hand, are discussed less. Posters offer a look at more intricate forms of visual resistance. Since a poster's effectiveness relies on its ability to visually communicate information, punk bands have to abide by more structured conventions when creating posters than they would when making zines. The layout of a poster necessitates clarification on the date, time, price, location, and name of the band(s) playing. These expectations must be met in order for the poster to function. Per my definition, a 'functioning' poster effectively communicates the details of an event clearly enough that interested persons could understand the atmosphere of the event and find a way to attend it, if they so please. The atmosphere of an event is largely conveyed through visual cues- illustrations, type font, color choice, and other signs or symbols that viewers may associate with either the band or the venue to better grasp the cultural climate of an event.

Public encounters with punk posters transfer a sense of what 'punkness' looks like to an outsider. Much public understanding of punk comes from media coverage, which plays an integral role in shaping what the punk identity is through ascribing to it a number of norms and expectations. (Debies-Carl, 2024) However, an integral ethos to the punk scene is its *inability* to define punk. As such, excessive media coverage and interpretation has legitimately killed some smaller sects of punk, such as the Riot Grrls, through attempting to define and resultantly misrepresenting its existence. (Schilt, 2004) For this reason, studying posters provides a more flexible insight to how punks choose to define *themselves* in a public space.

Posters as materials have an extensive relationship with music scenes. Created with the intention of advertising a show, they highlight a point of tension between punk's aversion to capitalism and structured society with their necessary usage of its form for successful gathering.

Though punk shows were far less expectant of profit, the general reliance on forms associated with musical advertising still required a degree of adherence to communication norms. Posters are used differently once produced (hung up in bars, kept in rooms, framed, etc.) but they are created with the intention of connecting to a certain audience. (Strong & Whiting, 2018)

Therefore, an investigation into how punks chose to represent themselves through the poster medium in defiance of (or agreement with) these norms could uncover new methods of visual resistance previously overlooked by focus on zines or media coverage in the effort to define ‘punk’.

Additionally, posters are community projects. They are made by bands for the community and are calls for literal assembly and bonding. By leading people to events where collective effervescence and social gathering could occur, posters are active agents in shepherding the punk experience.

2.6: Imagery and Self-Presentation

Differences in type of handwriting, photo to illustration, and black & white to color can come together to create different narratives of what a band’s concert experience may be like. Many of these visual cues rely on symbols that punks already associate with, making posters an interesting intersection between bands’ choice of self representative signs and symbols that resonate with the larger punk community. Self-presentation through graphic symbols is a large part of punk band identity. Simple designs are made easy to replicate to encourage their spread throughout the punk scene through practices of graffiti, drawing, and t-shirt making. (Larsen,

2013) Similarly, a general ‘language’ of visual presentation distinguishes a punk poster from other non-punk posters that may surround it.

Punk as a visual silhouette has become a fairly standardized concept. Its visual schema can and has been replicated over and over by a variety of creators. Corporate hijacking of this rebellious ‘bricolage’ style has its own set of design ethics, but studying this early unfolding of punk visuality offers insight to the origins of key visual elements, mechanisms of community signaling and self representation in the Atlanta hardcore scene.

CHAPTER 3: DATA AND METHODS

Due to the visual nature of my dataset, I will be employing both qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis to best summarize visual and social trends presented throughout Atlanta hardcore posters. My quantitative analysis will focus on examining quantitative dispersions of visual mediums and their co-occurrences with human figure depictions, band locality, and other visual mediums. Qualitative analysis will more closely examine trends from the quantitative results as well as trace material usage and themes such as gender, race, violence, and politics expressed through figure positioning within posters. I will focus primarily on mediums of imagery as well as depictions of humans, elaborating on trends found in the quantitative section.

3.1: Data Sample and Poster Selection

My data sample consists of 274 posters retrieved from the Stuart A. Rose Manuscript, Archives, and Rare Book Library courtesy of their Atlanta (Ga.) Punk Rock Collection curated by Randy Gue. I will be coding each document on the software program MAXQDA, which offers extensive image tagging for visual analysis projects.

All posters in this dataset were selected because of their direct association with an Atlanta venue, meaning that all shows advertised were played at local event spaces. This measure is to narrow down both physical and cultural influences to best isolate patterns found within Atlanta's scene alone, as well as offer insight to local patterns of imagery and material engagement.

3.2: Determining Locality

To determine a band's locality status I will individually search for information regarding a group's location on the sites Discogs. Discogs is a user-generated e-commerce and database platform where users can peruse, buy, and sell second-hand merchandise of musical groups, such as mixtapes, vinyls, and CD's. In order to add a listing, sellers must submit information on the artist and label with which the merchandise is associated with. In order to be approved and enter the marketplace, submissions are voted on by other Discogs users before publicly listing the submission. Discogs' emphasis on collecting historic and unpopular music coupled with the user-generated submission strategy makes it a reliable place to find remnants of small, local punk bands. However, the lack of digital archival practices available to bands in the 80's- (such as Facebook or MySpace where users could add details about their band locality) coupled with the general fickleness of small punk bands forming, disbanding, and changing names makes a significant portion of the bands listed in my dataset at risk to stay unidentified. I do my best to search for bands across Discogs and the wider Web, but as I categorize bands to be 'Local' or 'Touring' there will be a third category of 'Unidentified' to demarcate unknown bands without excluding them from all analysis.

3.3: Coding Schemes

I will be using the analysis software program MAXQDA to visually tag my data according to the following codes.

3.3.1: Community and Inclusion

This coding system focuses on efforts of direct inclusion through age, socioeconomic expectations, scene blending, and specific community-based events such as benefit shows. This category exists to analyze direct attempts to cultivate community. Through explicitly listing age restrictions, events dictate who can and cannot enter a space thus influencing the demographic of an event and limiting the scope of a concert's audience. Similarly, barriers such as ticket price may either encourage attendance (low price or donations are more considerate of low-income punks) or set a standard for audience income as well as the quality of one's concert experience. A large number of bands may be indicative of attempts to cultivate a wider audience (fans from just one band may show up and end up seeing the others play) but it is also indicative of community building between bands/bandmates themselves. Scene relationships can be glimpsed through continuous event pairings. Events that are centered around a certain cause (such as a benefit show) offer more direct insight to social and political ideas shared amongst performing bands. These specific events are pointedly *for* the community and supported *by* the community.

Additionally, the amount and specificity of the posters selectively curated in this archive reflect the porous nature of scenes blending into each other. A rewarding feature of studying punk as a scene and not a subculture is that the porous nature of scenes allows flexibility into who could be considered 'punk'. Similarly, since punk was not the only scene existing in Atlanta at this time and scenes often operate in relation to each other, chances for environmental mixing allow scenic blending to occur. Within the punk archives themselves there are many posters for

non-punk events; jazz, blues, classical, etc. Support of other communities through playing shows together or even including such non-punk posters within the *Punk Archives* will be noted through the code of ‘scene blending’

3.3.2: *Material Intentions*

Scrappiness and bricolage are two poignant elements in the ethos of DIY. Usage of easy, accessible materials is both an economic incentive as well as a loose standard amongst the scene. Collage and material appropriation can serve as forms of visual deviance (Hebdige, 1979) and self-production works as an anti-capitalist resistance method (Farmer, 2013). Therefore, I will be taking into consideration the degrees of materiality both visually and physically present in posters. Due to the popularity of xerox and copy machines to create these posters I will measure all degrees of materiality visually present and will include an additional variable that discerns specifically between copy/printed visual materiality and tangible/physical detections of material changes in a poster.

Measuring materiality in this project will span across numerous variables such as text and imagery. Because of the intersection between so many visual design elements and their ability to be created through a variety of crafting methods, materiality as a variable will be measured through ‘degrees’. For each inclusion of one of the following demarcations of materiality a poster will chart 1 point (one degree) of materiality. The more diverse material methods used, the higher a poster will rack up these degrees. Saliency of these degrees will be evaluated in the analysis portion where I will qualitatively analyze how all of these variables work together to create the visual communication style of a poster.

Demarcations of handwritten, hand-drawn, handmarked, or otherwise discernable traces of human mark contribution will count as a degree of materiality. This extends to the discernable presence of crafting materials such as pen marks, crayon, paint, marker, ink stamps, etc.

Collaged elements such as magazine text, newspaper print, glued paper chunks, and similar crafts will also be considered as a degree of materiality. Palpable physical distinctions of such elements where viewers may touch and feel the changes in material are also counted as a degree of materiality.

3.3.3: Locality

Comparing visual and logistical exposure of local Atlanta bands to touring bands may reveal visual characteristics distinct to the Atlanta scene's communication style. Additionally, demographics of racial and gendered representation will be recorded to consider the most common 'look' amongst local flyers. Though one poster is not definitive of an entire locale's social demographic, such comparisons may highlight patterns of biased visual representation within the scene.

3.3.4: Text

The most standardized part of music posters is the textual information displayed. Text communicates the logistics that make a poster 'function' by giving information on the date, location, band, and price. Text may be displayed handwritten or through a typographical font—both contribute to creating the visual landscape of a poster. Handwritten signs leave a literal impression of human touch and operate as signals to interaction (Wei & Hua, 2021)

Handwriting's peculiar character makes it an endearing asset in the construction of zines, which also work towards building embodied communities through engagement with materials.

(Piepmier, 2008) (Farmer, 2013) Analysis on the amount of handwriting, the handwritten content, and the material transfer of handwriting on posters (is it xeroxed, copied, and printed en masse or hand-penned directly with Sharpie?) may reveal patterns of community calling and assembly through the usage of personal penmanship.

Typographical fonts offer more range in visual expression and are used liberally to create bold punk poster designs. Recording the variety of fonts as well as their ratio to poster borders and non-text imagery will show design choices of what logistical elements are being prioritized. Additionally, analysis on extreme color and contrast within posters punctuates intention for guiding audience attention. Demanding attention through the brash design choices of high contrast image/text points at an attempt to catch a potential viewer's eye- regardless of whether it is to confuse, ridicule, or convince them to join the show.

3.3.5: Figurative Imagery

When images are present in a poster, they will be recorded and noted as either illustrative, graphically designed, or photographic. Similar to handwritten text, hand-drawn illustrations (or illusions to hand-drawn illustrations through xerox and printing a drawn piece) are traces of human material engagement and mark that space to be a transfer site for human contact.

(Piepmeier, 2008)

Graphically designed images include images sourced on and printed by a computer. Such elements include clipart, vectors, graphics, or otherwise recognizable imagery that is not

discernibly hand-drawn or photographic. Studying graphic design elements will also show trends of preferred symbolic presentation, as graphics are considerably less difficult to make/find when compared to illustrations and do not suffer the image degradation susceptible of early printed photographs.

Photographic images are direct calls to the viewer's understanding of culture and society. They serve as the most direct vehicles to communicate a band's self-representation by allying their name and event with a pictorial representation that the viewer can situate themselves in and around. Photographs may be of the band members themselves or they may be calls to popular cultural references. Particularly when photos, graphics, or illustrations of people are used I will note demographics such as sex, perceived race, active/passive movement, fashion, and other notable features of identification.

Figurative imagery refers to images of recognizable forms- in other words, the imagery of a distinguishable figure. This includes people, places, and objects that contribute to the visual communication of an identity or an event. When figures of humans or other anthropomorphic forms are found they will be categorized as human, regardless of their identification as illustrated, graphic, or photographic. This is to isolate and examine expressions of self as presented by the band/poster designers and intended to connect with punk viewers. These depictions of self offer insight to the forms of deviance and rebellion preferred by punks used to distinguish themselves from 'normal' society and contribute to the overall self-definition of what 'looks' punk. All figures that are distinguishably not anthropomorphic (such as an image of a car, or a house) will be classified as non-human.

3.3.6: Additional Notes on Coding and Methods

It is worth noting that many of these elements that I've isolated for coding often intersect with one another to create a visual component. For example, a poster's text may be tangibly screen-printed in the color red as opposed to the expected plain black text typed font. This is to be expected. There is much interaction between all visual qualities of a poster and such combinations of elements will be counted for their individual implementations as well as their contribution to larger communication trends.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

4.1 Quantitative Results

4.1.1: Locality and Image

Of the 274 documents in this study, there were 269 (90.6%) reports of at least one local band, 208 (70.0%) reports of at least one touring band that was not from Georgia, and 147 (49.5%) reports of unidentifiable bands. Because the posters themselves range from displaying 1 to 5+ bands in any given document, localities often intersect. According to the co-occurrence chart displayed in **Fig. 1** which shows how many documents contain two codes, local and touring bands appeared together on the same poster 81 times. Local and unidentified bands co-occurred 57 times, and unidentified and touring bands co-occurred 35 times. While there is a significant portion of unidentified and touring bands, these posters are overwhelmingly inclusive of local bands. The relationship between local and unidentified bands suggests an even larger net of local musicians or hardcore bands who may not have been documented enough to be located online.

Figure. 1: Co-occurrences of Band Locality

<i>Code System</i>	Unidentified	Touring Band	Local Band
Unidentified	-	35	57
Touring Band	35	-	81
Local Band	57	81	-

There were 239 posters tagged with figurative imagery. Of those, there were 72 (30.1%) instances of illustrations, 87 (36.4%) graphics, and 106 (44.6%) photographs. A co-occurrence analysis showed that there were 12 posters where graphics and illustrations overlapped, 9 between graphics and photos, and 6 between illustrations and photos.

Figures were individually tagged as many times as they appeared on a single document, resulting in 220 tagged figures within 204 documents. The number of figures that were tagged as human totaled to 162 (73.6% of all figures), whereas non-human tags totaled to 58 (26.4% of all figures). As seen in **Fig. 2**, the highest number of co-occurrences between medium of figurative imagery and the form of a figure is between photographs and human figures, with 86 co-occurrences (53.1% of all human imagery). Additionally, there are only 7 instances where human and non-human figures exist on the same poster.

Figure. 2: Co-occurrences of Figure Medium and Figure Form

<i>Code System</i>	Graphic	Illustration	Photo
Non-Human	27	17	20
Human	42	47	86

On connections between locality and figurative imagery, local bands had the highest co-occurrence of human depictions (107). Local bands also had the highest number of photographic connections, which compared to **Fig. 2** suggests a strong contribution to the human/photo group.

Figure. 3: Co-occurrences of Locality and Figure

<i>Code System</i>	Unidentified	Touring Band	Local Band
Graphic	40	35	55
Illustration	23	35	48
Photo	49	52	75
Non-Human	22	21	41
Human	64	84	107

There are 137 documents with handwriting (50% of all posters) with the highest number of locality co-occurrences being 99 (72.3% of all handwriting), with local bands. Font dispersion follows a normal distribution, with the most common amount of fonts used on a single poster being 3-4. (See **Fig. 4**)

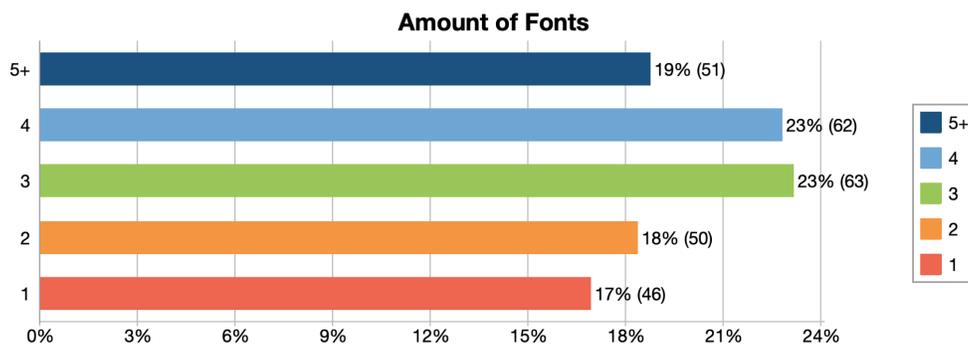


Figure. 4: Bar Graph depicting numerical distribution of fonts.

The overall visual landscape of each locality is listed in **Fig. 5**. Even with assumed intersections between band localities, local band presence on a poster is most highly correlated

with elements of attention grabbing (color, high contrast), material marking (handwriting), and human imagery (human, photography).

Figure. 5: Visual Landscape by Visual Segment Co-Occurrences with Locality

<i>Code System</i>	Unidentified	Touring Band	Local Band
Color	33	48	74
High Contrast	86	103	158
Low Contrast	26	20	34
Handwriting	48	61	99
Amount of Fonts			
5+	19	31	34
4	30	29	36
3	25	22	46
2	18	20	37
1	19	20	36
Graphic	40	35	55
Illustration	23	35	48
Photo	49	52	75
Non-human	22	21	41
Human	64	84	107
Text Only	18	18	34

4.4.2: Community and Inclusion

The most common number of bands listed on a poster was 1-2, resulting in a distribution curve skewed to the right as seen in **Fig. 6**.

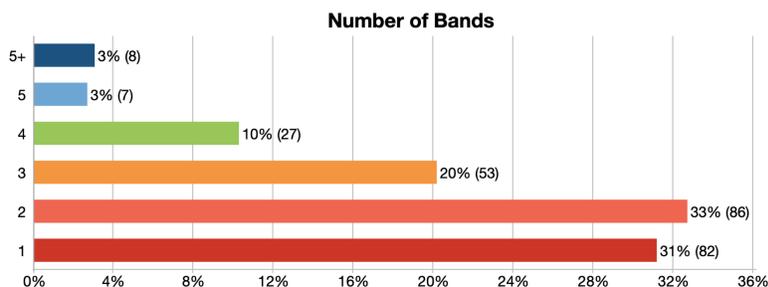


Figure. 6: Bar graph depicting numerical distribution of bands.

Introducing the logistical elements of community building as described in my data and methods section, **Fig. 7** shows an array of logistical communication tactics present in posters with all localities. The ‘additional tips’ tag refers to personalized instructions, including phone numbers to call for directions, hand-drawn venue maps, and comments on what to expect from the show. This category was reported in a total of 100 documents (36.5% of all posters) and its co-occurrence 77 times alongside local bands shows a strong correlation between locality and community inclusion. Additionally, the number of co-occurrences between price and additional tips almost mirror each other, with price similarly being reported in a total of 109 documents. Faint rises in co-occurrences of handwriting with the codes of price and additional tips (57 documents and 52 documents, respectively) suggest another layer of marking materiality.

Text-only posters made up only 35 of the 274 documents (16.4% of all posters), suggesting that figurative imagery was significantly more utilized to communicate a band and event identity.

Figure. 7: Community Logistic Co-occurrences with Locality

<i>Code System</i>	Unidentified	Touring Band	Local Band	Handwriting
Number of Bands				
5+	5	7	8	1
5	2	6	6	5
4	15	19	24	12
3	23	32	42	25
2	34	44	63	47
1	31	11	41	41
Additional Tips	43	50	77	52
Genre/Scene Blending	13	8	13	10
Age Specifics	18	44	45	36
Benefit Show	2	1	9	4
Price	34	68	76	57
Undefined		35	57	48
Touring Band	35		81	61
Local Band		81		99
Text Only	18	18	34	23

4.2 Qualitative Results

4.2.1: Community and Inclusion

Elements of age and cover price for shows were relatively similar between touring and local bands. All ages were welcome to almost every show, providing no barrier to entry for younger members of the hardcore scene. Prices for shows generally pooled between the margins of \$2-\$3 and \$5-\$10, if listed at all. Touring bands typically operate under more financial stress than local bands playing local shows due to travel costs associated with tour life, so slightly higher prices were both expected and found on posters advertising exclusively touring bands or touring bands with local openers.

There were 10 posters that explicitly stated 'No Cover Fee', 9 of which had a roster of all local bands. There were 9 benefit shows, also all consisting of local performers, which ranged from supporting individual musicians, to raising money for the local Atlanta punk festival, to supporting a 'Food not Bombs' initiative, to 'empty the shelters!' and more. These benefit concerts asked members to donate between \$3-\$5 for the cause and offered on average 4-6 bands as the musical compensation.

The most common number of bands displayed on a poster was 2-3, with local and unidentified bands playing singular shows far more than singular touring acts (41 local, 31 unidentified, 11 touring). The most popular venues bands played at were the Metroplex and 688, both of which had created recognizable graphics for their respective names and which were often used in poster designs, visually linking individual fliers to each other through their association with the physical event space. For lesser known venues, such as houses or smaller clubs, instructions, maps, and additional details were added to guide interested participants to the

correct spot. Certain posters even had phone numbers one could call for help or further instructions on an event's location. It is worth noting that these 'additional tips' were almost always written in by hand and xerox-ed into the final version of a poster.

Scene blending was celebrated through visual figures, musical line-ups, and inclusion of posters in the archived collection. I counted 18 accounts of explicit scene blending where a non-hardcore musical group or act was either advertised alongside hardcore acts or in its own poster included in the collection. Of these 18 instances, 13 included figurative imagery and 5 were exclusively text. The most popular blend was with rock and rock-adjacent acts, though the specificity of those varied such as self-described rock operas, red-bat rock, rock 'n blues, cosmic rock, and rock and soul. Cousin genres such as mod and emo-pop were also explicitly stated and welcome on posters alongside hardcore bands, with one more flier describing a 'Reggae & Hardcore Nite'. Blues, rhythm, and two theater play posters were also included in the collection, as well as a paper for one comedy show.

An unexpected addition to the community and inclusion results was the trend of notifying viewers where certain touring bands were from, expanding the scene to a trans-local level. Certain posters would add small descriptions below the titles of touring bands, saying something along the lines of "hardcore band from (city), (country)". Most such bands were from the American Northeast and West Coast, but there were multiple acts from the United Kingdom that pushed the scene towards a global awareness.

4.2.2: Locality Demographics

Local bands made up the majority of acts on all 274 posters, appearing across 90.6% of them. Touring bands appeared on 70.0% of posters and unidentified bands were spread across 49.5%. As reported in the quantitative section, local bands were also responsible for the majority of photographic and human figurative depictions.

Of the 162 total images tagged as human, 106 included men, 30 included women, 10 included children, and 17 depicted images of anthropomorphic monsters such as skeletons, cyclops, etc. When I could distinguish a human's race (often only possible through photographs) I counted 76 white figures and 13 non-white figures. It is worth noting that most non-white persons who were photographed were already established as popular artists in the hardcore scene, such as the Bad Brains, a prominent group from Washington DC featuring multiple Black members.

Throughout this study's visual analysis of figurative imagery, men were found to be represented significantly more than women. In both numerical appearances and thematic framing of male versus female bodies, men were consistently portrayed as strong and confrontational through a mix of photographic contrast, eye contact with the viewer, and confident posing. Women, in the few instances they appeared, rarely made eye contact with the audience and were often shown with either closed eyes or physically positioned away from the viewer. The overall face of Atlanta hardcore in the 80's looked to be a white male, and was encountered far more often than any of his black, brown, or female counterparts.

4.2.3: Figurative Imagery

4.2.3.4: Photography, Collage, and Figure Objectification

As seen in the quantitative analysis section, photographs were the most popular medium of figurative imagery, appearing in 106 individual documents and representing the majority of human figure depictions. Almost all of these photographs were printed in a stark black and white, contributing significantly to the visual contrast of a poster by exaggerating light and shadows across the human figure and visually integrating them with other bolded elements, such as typed font and blocky handwriting.

An interesting feature present in almost all photographs was the intentional posing of figures so that they made direct eye contact with the viewer. This was done primarily by men, though there were three select cases amongst all 30 representations of women where they, too, stared back. Both individual artists and entire groups posed in this manner. Due to the high-contrast black and white production of xeroxed photographs, these images were confrontational in both posture and visual tone. Such black and white photographs are reminiscent of newspaper images, replicating (or in a more punk fashion, pirating) the image of 'truthfulness' and physically pasting the faces of these artists into the local scene. Strong eye contact and contrasts in value made such images difficult to ignore. While individual faces are difficult to recall, this language of a black and white newspaper visage has been replicated in many other punk chapters along the trans-local scene and is generally considered one of its key visual silhouettes.

Though women were less holistically represented in this sample, several posters isolated images of their lips and eyes to cut, paste, and collage their features for more sensual designs. This differed from collaged elements of male facial features, which lacked sexual connotations

and instead worked to create a sense of visual discordance through rearrangement of form and additional graphics.

4.2.3.5: Illustrations as Explorations of Masculinity and Fashion

Whereas female features were highlighted through photography and collage for their explicit feminine appeal, illustrations exaggerated masculine features such as muscle size and body hair. Poorly drawn penises were also scattered throughout a small handful of posters, but unlike the usage of photographic feminine traits, these drawings served a more humorous purpose to toeing the line between public indecency and simple potty humor.

Illustrated drawings enunciated mens' physical flaws such as pimples, unkempt hair and distasteful facial expressions. Illustrations were also common mediums for more 'monstrous' depictions of the human figure, such as skeletons, cyclops, and other anthropomorphic ghouls. The creative liberties permitted through this medium meant that artists intentionally added these features of 'ugliness', visually distinguishing punk characters from typical standards of beauty to show their social 'otherness'.

Signs of punk fashion were more prominent in illustrations than in photographs. Where photographic contrast likely degraded the appearance of detailed clothing and makeup, illustrations drew upon punk fashion to create distinguishable caricatures of scene members. Common fashion items used in illustrations of 'punks' included heavy jackets, torn clothing, cropped or spikey hair, and occasional piercings. Added traits such as pimples, facial hair, and

displeased expressions built up the disgruntled tone of illustrated characters- most of which were men. The few photographs of female punks offer far more detail in depicting fashioned hair, makeup, and clothing.

However, punk fashion was not the most common clothing style amongst male figures in these posters. Instead, button up shirts, ties, and dark slacks were paired most with male figures across both illustrations and photographs. These clothes' associations with business wear and traditional masculinity could have made them vessels for venting out frustrations on bureaucrats, capitalists, and bosses. However, it also could have indicated scene blending as in multiple images of suited figures they are depicted to be dancing, suggesting celebration in music rather than mockery of a clothing form. Multiple posters depicting these figures cross-blended bands with blues, rock, classical, and country artists, of which the clothing standards may have influenced poster design. Additionally, a very small handful of posters depicted ranchers/ cowboys holding guns and dressed in Western style clothing.

4.2.3.6: Masculinity and Violence Depicted in Atlanta Hardcore

Violence as a masculine trait was present in the figurative imagery of these posters. Echoing double standards within the punk scene as reported by Leblanc, men are expected to enact violence while women are subject to both harm and disregard for their own physical strength. (Leblanc, 1999) Imagery of violent political figures, guns, and corpses were present in 25 posters, with gendered patterns of men wielding violence and women being victim to it. One particularly intense poster depicts a woman slumped, tilting her head to the side as a bloodied ax sticks out of her head. Another alludes to the same fate by crossing an X over the forehead of a

photographed punk girl, seemingly caught mid-dance. Although the majority of female figures in this dataset do not meet such a gruesome fate, it is worth noting that none of the men do either.

Guns were the most common symbols of violence, but images of wrestling matches, knives, spikes, and skulls also appeared more than once. As the most common weapon depicted, guns were used to depict shooting others, shooting oneself, and as general props held alongside a figure. All figures who wielded weapons were discernibly male, with the exception of one image of a young, visibly non-white girl warily holding a long sword. Her image, though unidentifiable through online reverse-image search engines, suggests a violent context, presumably in a third world country as alluded to by her physical injuries, torn clothes, dark complexion, and uniquely shaped weapon.

Such overt political themes were not common amongst other posters. Rather, most references to politics followed a loose condemnation of the American flag, military, and police. Given the lack of dates on many flyers, I can only anchor certain political symbols to the time period of 1980-2009, the years that this collection spans. Political symbols themselves were quite rare, appearing less than 10 times throughout the entire data set. Images of Hitler appeared twice, once on a Black Flag poster illustrating him as a sock puppet and a second time through a photographed protest sign urging his supporters to 'Follow your leader!' written under a picture of him firing a gun into his mouth. The swastika appeared only once and was on a poster made by the Minutemen, a California band who had a controversial history of engaging with the symbol. The Anarchy 'A' sign was also uncommon, and when present occupied a fairly small portion of the poster page. The most common image of political resistance was critique of America through various methods of visual mockery. Pirating and writing over images of a

burning American flag, American military troops, and cops were common methods of visually spitting on the country's structures.

4.2.4: Material Intentions and Text

The degrees of materiality within posters largely hinged on their usage of handwriting, evident collage, or physical change to the face of the paper. Most documents had at least one degree of materiality shown through either handwriting, cut up type font, photography, graphics, or illustration. These elements were often visibly collaged together and copied through a xerox machine, removing the physical existence of material borders but keeping their visual distinctions in the final product. Rarer instances of physical materiality arose in select posters who used the medium of screen printing,

4.2.4.1: Handwriting's Versatile Materiality

The scratchy, often crude handwriting that covers over half of these posters does not always adhere to standards of efficient textual communication. Thin pencil marks, thicker pen lines, and even thicker marker strokes bleed and cross into each other. Some notes are written horizontally, others vertically- requiring viewers to either turn the paper sideways or crane their necks to read. Not all handwriting is even legible! I had to squint for over two minutes trying to make out someone's chicken-scratch cursive letters before calling it a day and coding that section accordingly, but that is part of the charm that this material presence brings. Handwriting on posters brings the author's message, personality, and penmanship style into public consciousness and creates a textual element imbued with individualistic grit that viewers can latch onto. Most

of us know how to write with a pen and paper and have been doing so for most of our lives, thus, we are already sensitive to the look of our own handwriting when compared to others. Where fonts can be digitally replicated and replaced, it is not so easy to grift a perfect execution of another person's handwriting.

More refined penmanship marked the larger design elements of some posters, with thick marker lines, detailed penned drawings, and boldly written letters spelling out band names, venue places, price, age restrictions, and more. Handwriting was utilized as a tool for poster composition, spreading the cast of materiality further than just one-off written comments and notes in the margins. Since such compositions advertised more important information (such as band names) individual characteristics of personal handwriting style were ironed out in favor of replicating existing font design styles by hand. Such styles included bubble letters, bolded letters, blacked out letters (marker colored in all negative spaces of a word to create high contrast between letters and the rest of the paper), wobbly letters, thick letters, thin letters, and more! Though aspects of individual materiality present in handwriting style were diminished through the process of trying to replicate a certain typographical font style, evidence of these fonts being clearly handwritten also adds to the materiality of a poster.

4.2.4.2: Map Illustrations in the Making of Community

Illustrated 'tips' in the form of hand-drawn maps were added to posters in an attempt to clarify venue locations. They were utilized most in posters with venues further outside the city, house shows, and uncommon clubs. These maps took up a decent chunk of poster space- about 1/8

of the total paper- and included a combination of written words and sketched guidance to inform the viewer about a venue's location.

Such drawings were markers of both physical and symbolic community, shepherding interested punks towards correct venue locations and communicating it through hand-written means. This addition of maps was not required by any logistical expectations of poster standards, yet its occurrence throughout numerous fliers suggests that this was an active attempt by the local community to promote smaller shows and safely guide members of the scene to their locations.

4.2.4.3: Band Presentation Through Materiality

Very few posters were composed of 100% typed text, rather a combination of handwriting and text font was used to communicate band presence. Band typography, the specific font/display of a band's name that makes it visually distinguishable from others, also incorporated layers of materiality. James Demer, designer and bandmate of the Atlanta-based group Neon Christ, described how he initially made their logo by chipping away portions of the typed text with a razor blade, creating a distressed look that further eroded over time through copy/printed reproductions. (Demer, 2024) Such layers of copied materiality were present in other bands' personal imagery and varied from bold handwriting to stenciled shapes.

Graphic symbols and their ease of replicability- whether for DIY merchandise or graffiti efforts- has been established as an element of the hardcore visual scene. (Larsen, 2013) Repeated

use of such self-identifiable graphics was seen throughout popular hardcore bands in this data set that had a recognized presence across the scene. Notable touring bands that utilized signature imagery included 7 Seconds, Black Flag and the Circle Jerks. Local superstars who repeatedly cropped up in this collection were Neon Christ, Car vs. Driver, Chocolate Kiss, and the Hal Al Shedad. Band graphics often utilized imagery of illustrative marks, stencils, and spray paint, but were standardized enough to replicate across multiple poster designs. Not all depictions of a band name were done through their signature typography, but more often than not bands chose to align themselves with either a recognizable poster layout design or a signature graphic that established their presence across fliers within the scene.

4.2.4.4: Screenprinting and the Adaptation of Punk Style to New Materials

In one rare case of physical materiality, the medium of screen printing was used numerous times by the local band Neon Christ and once again by another local band, Crisis Under Control. Neon Christ's screen prints were a result of fortunate circumstances, as band member James Demer recalled his fellow bandmate getting a job in a screen printing store and being responsible for the physical production of all posters thereafter. (Demer, 2024)

This wave of posters are distinctly unique from the rest of the band's fliers in the collection. Whilst their previous posters included familiar bold, black and white imagery to create the strong contrast seen throughout other fliers in this collection, Neon Christ's screen printed posters used bright colors as their only ink for printing projects. Bright orange, red,

green, blue, and a flirty splash of magenta defied the heavy black and white imagery I had come to expect in my findings.

True to the DIY ethos, Neon Christ navigated poster design within the confines of what materials were most accessible. Whilst handwriting and xerox machines were available to the other bands, unique circumstances allowed this band's designs to take on new mediums and explore a less popular realm of materiality.

The physical junction of where paint and paper meet is tangible in both sight and touch. Directly engaging with these posters brings to light the difference between paper and paint longevity. Yellowing poster paper was curved at the edges and, occasionally, dirtied from whatever circumstances it may have endured before its archival. Crisis Under Control, the other local band to screen print, did so on top of even thicker paper- they printed on a vinyl record cover! This reappropriation of a physical object 'pirates' the body of the original artist on the vinyl, and the additional degree of screen printing which applied the same bright colors used by Neon Christ broadened conceptions of what 'looks' punk.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The posters in this study navigated expectations of standard poster design by intentionally creating brash, jarring imagery through intense value saturation, bold text, and provocative figurative depictions to set a visual tone across the scene. While still adhering to logistical elements such as displaying the band name(s), price, and venue location, posters took many liberties with self-expression of band identity to establish not just their visual presence on the scene but also align themselves with confrontational, and DIY aesthetics. Additions to posters included community aids such as personal handwritten notes detailing venue or event instructions, phone numbers to call for help, and occasional snark. Posters sometimes listed hometowns of touring bands underneath their titles, explicitly showing the national and even global connections that made up punk's trans-local scene. Community aids such as illustrations of maps were added to posters with unfamiliar or untraditional venue locations, ensuring that members knew their way around before embarking for a show.

Usage of materials such as photographs, illustrations, and graphics revealed patterns of representational inequality where white men were significantly more represented in both visual and thematic content. Photography trends showed a common pose where figures (usually bands or artists) would stare at viewers directly in the eyes, creating a sense of confrontation amidst the stark black and white values their figures were printed in. Illustrations allowed for more freedom of stylistic presentation and resulted in drawings of monsters, punk clothing, and violent weapons which embodied themes of resistance and social disruption expressed by the hardcore

scene. Graphics included similar depictions of weapons, minimal political signs, and a surprising amount of suits as masculine fashion.

Subversions of design expectations through access to new materials, as seen with Neon Christ's screen printed posters, unfurled new methods of material and visual design that did not fall within visual expectations of punk design. But, as Demer himself put it: "if you could use un-punk colors that's even *more* punk rock." (Demer, 2024)

5.1: The Power of Materiality in DIY

When discussing DIY practices, materiality can be read as both a tool of visual resistance and a beacon for human connection. The power in punk visuality lies within its DIY efforts, as displayed by the diversity of imagery used in Atlanta hardcore posters. Access to cheap and replaceable materials resulted in patterns of visual similarity, but when new circumstances proposed access to novel materials, poster designs expanded accordingly. However, the influence of materials on poster design is undeniable, and some of the most impactful images came from a combination of materiality, visual design, and logistical information working together.

McDonnell defines studies of materiality as placing a "focus on the material qualities of objects and the contingent ways those qualities shape the meaning and use of those objects," and emphasizes that studying materiality "attends to how objects are enrolled in lines of action." (McDonnell, 2023) Materiality is one aspect that may impact an object's role in affecting the process of its own meaning-making, and while McDonnell generally refers to more three-dimensional objects when discussing the effect of qualities on this process of meaning-making, the approach of materiality as a study of actions recontextualizes my findings to consider how

two-dimensional implications of material qualities contribute to the overall impact of meaning communicated by visual and logistical elements in my posters of study. My examination of individual qualities and ‘lines of action’ in visual elements such as illustrations, photographs, and handwriting is not meant to speculate on individual artists’ design choices, but rather to point out situations where materials, visual design, and logistical information synergize to create meaningful moments of communication.

Materials that connect viewers to a direct trace of human touch, such as handwriting and illustrations, can be strategically used to activate a sense of community and encourage scene members to gather at events. Examples of effective intersections between material, visual, and logistical elements that elicit such results depicted in this study include map illustrations and handwritten notes. When compared to broader uses of handwriting such as penning stylish band titles or listing the price of a show, the more impactful map illustrations converge points of community, personality, and material presence that can be individually discerned but, when together, elevate the viewer’s connection to multiple forms of communication resulting in a deeper permeation of meaning. Both penning a band name and illustrating a map are circumstances that use handwriting, and both contain degrees of materiality. However, the *application* of a material quality to different visual and logistical elements of a poster influences its propensity to connect with the viewer, which is why the map illustrations elicit a deeper sense of connection with the hardcore and DIY scene than stylized band names.

5.2: Materiality's Role in Scenes

Scenes are built on continuous engagement between members and as a result networks of communication develop accordingly to each scene. (Bennett and Peterson, 2004) The Atlanta hardcore scene qualified as both a local and trans-local scene, but for the purposes of this study I narrowed down research interest to just local networks of communication. Within local scenes, physical space plays a significant role in organizing engagement with members. (Bennett and Peterson, 2004) Atlanta's hardcore scene relied on various methods of communication, such as zines and newspapers, but the usage of posters and flyers were one of the most common ways to alert people of upcoming shows. Posters as a material form allowed punks to place their mark on any flat surface, offering a cheap and accessible mode of communication as well as an opportunity to mildly deface public property with their own image. Such materials gave physical indications of social connections, and within the borders of a local scene their appearance offered relevant logistical and cultural information about hardcore to potentially interested newcomers.

CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS

This study demonstrated the impact of materiality on informational and visual design methods on a local scene by investigating 274 posters taken from the Stuart A. Rose Library's Atlanta Punk Rock Archive at Emory University. The case study of local Atlanta posters brought to light visual trends of figurative representation, figurative mediums, and local relationships with touring bands. Findings strongly supported suspicions of unequal gender and racial representation within the visual punk scene, as suspected by the literature review. Relationships between mediums of imagery and execution of figurative image gave insight to not only usage of materials but also their affordances for self-presentation as expressed by Atlanta punks. Dark contrast in photographs was paired with posed eye-contact to create a confrontational tone directed at the viewer. Illustrations exaggerated visual depictions of bodies, faces, and fashion to emphasize social resistance to hegemonic beauty standards. Graphics and symbols communicated themes of masculinity, violence and scenic blending through their simplistic designs. And applications of materiality were found to have considerable impact on communication styles that utilized material qualities alongside visual and logistical information design.

6.1 Study Limitations

All posters in this study were sourced from the Atlanta Punk archives located in the Stuart A. Rose Library at Emory University. The curation of this dataset was meant to isolate all flyers advertising events for local Atlanta venues and for that reason did not include other posters

in the collection that were taken from venues outside of Georgia or the United States. Though there is an interesting pocket of posters from Sweden, due to the local Atlanta band Hal Al Shedad's apparent relationship with numerous Swedish artists. Due to the biased nature of archival collection, collection limitations within the punk archive itself, and the inability to access every poster hung in the hardcore scene between 1980-2009, this data is not meant to be representative of the entire Atlanta hardcore scene.

Given the heavy emphasis of visual interpretation needed for the qualitative section of this study, my own personal subjectivity could limit interpretations and impact findings. Access to the archived materials was regulated per structural limitations in the archive and as a result I may have missed some posters that should have been considered in this data set. Additionally, the number of unidentified bands posed limitations on clearer comparisons that could have been drawn between local and touring bands should we have known which category they fell into.

Unfortunately, due to a combination of copyright law and an inability to contact remaining punk groups for copyright permission I could not publish any posters, drawings, photographs, or images referenced in this study.

6.2 Recommendations for Future Research

6.2.1: Within the Atlanta Punk Archives

There is a plethora of information harbored in the materials archived at the Stuart A. Rose Library, and especially within the Atlanta Punk Collection. Within the context of this study, I would be interested to see more in-depth examinations of gender and racial relationships present

in the archive. Analysis on the locations of event spaces and investigation of social relationships between hardcore venues would also provide useful data on the Atlanta hardcore scene.

6.2.2: Within the Study of Materiality

Working within the structural confines of an archive meant that I could not spend significant portions of time with each poster individually. Rather, I photographed materials and observed their visual elements through a digital depiction on my screen. This removed a crucial aspect of material engagement and presence and brought these posters into a larger conversation of digital materiality and material vernacular as present on computer monitors. Though the hardcore 80's scene in Atlanta was a product of its time, it is increasingly more difficult for scenes to remain completely void of virtual expansion, whether through intentional efforts or outsiders spreading and discussing them online. New youth who are interested in punk imagery and punk crafting efforts are being exposed to them primarily through online accounts- consuming virtual text, images and video on the scene's history and development. Such digital expressions of a traditionally material-based scene throws punk into the light of another subject of materiality studies- that of digital materiality.

Many of these posters were guided through the process of xerox copy reproductions because they were the easiest methods at the time. Now, with digital tools such as Canva, Photoshop, PicsArt, and more widely available to the public, how do our relationships to these materials change? How are hand-applied materials used in DIY spaces now? Does digital interpretation of an image elicit its own degree of materiality, and if so, how does that degree work with other layers of materiality to generate presence and meaning?

Some scholars, such as Peck and Good, are asking similar questions around the virality of handmade protest signs, noticing that photographs of people holding handmade signage mobilize users to disrupt political spaces with ‘vernacular materiality’ which “harnesses the affordances of physical and social media”. (Peck & Good, 2020) In future studies, I hope to examine similar relationships between these degrees of tangible and intangible materials, investigating digitality as a new quality of materiality and further developing theories of materials and their effects on meaning-making processes.

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AUDIO SOURCES

Demer, James. Oral History Interview by Klara Nitsche. 8 March 2024.

APPENDIX A

Table of coding categories, with color assigned to individual coding groups.

Coding Category	Code	Description	What it Measures
Community and Inclusion	<i>Additional Tips</i>	Any unnecessary or excess notes, markings, or indications of advice left on a poster that is not required information per poster communication standards.	Attempts to reach out to scene members.
Community and Inclusion	<i>Age Specifics</i>	Explicit details about the age members have to be in order to enter an event.	Age-specific barriers to enter scene events.
Community and Inclusion	Benefit Show	Shows hosted for the explicit cause of raising money for a community concern.	Community support
Community and Inclusion	Genre/Scene Blending	Any mentions of distinctly non-hardcore acts.	Scene porosity and tolerance.
Community and Inclusion	Price	Ticket or cover price for entering an event.	Financial barriers to entry.
Material Intentions	Collage	Collections of newspapers, photographs, graphics, text, and other images removed from their source material and visually stacked on top of each other to create a new design.	Degree of materiality
Material Intentions	Copy/printed distinctions of visuality	Scraps of materials such as layered pieces of paper, stray marks, and other collaged elements that are not physically discernable due to xerox/copy/printing of posters but can be seen visually.	Degree of materiality

Material Intentions	Handwriting	Recognizable penmanship, writing obviously done by hand.	Degree of materiality
Material Intentions	Physical Materiality	Physical, tangible materials such as paint, tape, ink, etc. that can be tactilely engaged with when in front of a poster.	Degree of materiality
Locality	Touring Band	Bands or artists not from Georgia.	Local status
Locality	Local Band	Bands or artists that are from Georgia.	Local status
Locality	Unidentified	Bands or artists whose locality could not be identified.	Local Status
Text	Number of Fonts	Number of fonts distinguishable and unique from each other featured on a singular poster. Numerical measurements range from 1 to 5+.	Visual patterns and calls for audience attention
Text	High Contrast	Extremely bold visual contrasts between visual/textual elements.	Visual patterns and calls for audience attention
Text	Low Contrast	Weak visual contrasts between visual/textual elements.	Visual patterns and calls for audience attention
Figurative Imagery	Illustrations	Hand-drawn figurative imagery.	Medium of figurative imagery
Figurative Imagery	Graphics	Clipart, simple symbols, or other imagery not immediately recognized as an illustration or photograph.	Medium of figurative imagery
Figurative Imagery	Photographs	Photographic depictions of a figure.	Medium of figurative imagery

Figure	Human	Any recognizably human or anthropomorphic figure.	Representations of humans
Figure	Non-human	Any recognizable non-human or anthropomorphic figure.	Representations of non-humans