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Neoliberal Working Conditions, Self-Promotion and DJ Trajectories: A Gendered Minefield

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Over the last forty years, scholars have explored the obstacles faced by female musicians wanting to be recognized as legitimate professionals in various musical “worlds” (Becker 1982) such as classical music, jazz, rock, pop, rap and electronic (dance) music (e.g. Buscatto 2007, Cohen 1997, Whitely 2000). While all these studies arrive at the conclusion that female musicians find it more difficult to develop a sustainable career, they also provide insights into the gendered and racialized practices ingrained in the specific musical world for accessing resources, gaining recognition and making a living from music-making. In this article, we present some of our findings on the careers of female DJs in electronic dance music scenes in consideration of the changing relationships between culture and society associated with neoliberal economics, which increasingly force cultural producers to adopt an entrepreneurial position (Gavanas 2009, Gavanas and Reitsamer 2013, Gavanas and Östrom 2016[1]; Reitsamer 2011a, 2011b, 2012, 2013). In the first part of the article, we outline the working conditions in electronic dance music “scenes” (Peterson and Bennett 2004) and illustrate how patterns of gender inequality, exclusion and segregation are reflected in the narratives of female and male DJs. We then describe the relationship between technology and masculinity as one of the key gatekeeping practices in electronic (dance) music that results in negative effects for female DJs and music producers. In the third part of the article, we describe the “burden of representation” (Puwar 2004) faced by female DJs in the context of “postfeminism” (McRobbie 2009, Gill 2011). Finally, we discuss how female DJ networks develop diverse strategies for advancing the careers of their

members and how the success of women is devalued by male DJs. Our findings are based on 75 interviews with DJs active in the (trans-)local electronic dance music scenes in Berlin, London, Vienna and Stockholm conducted between 2005 and 2011, complemented by recent interviews with DJs based in Stockholm and an analysis of discussions on an internet forum for female DJs between 2009 and 2011.

Working conditions in electronic dance music scenes

Numerous scholars have explored the working conditions of musicians in diverse musical scenes by highlighting the endemic features of creative labour: precarious employment, low and sometimes non-existent wages, dense social networking, the holding of multiple jobs to sustain livelihoods and music-making and the blurring of work and leisure that often leads to self-exploitation (e.g. Banks 2007, Hesmondhalgh and Baker 2011, Zwaan et al. 2009). These working conditions seem to be reflected in (trans-)local electronic dance music scenes in Western cities. As Reitsamer (2011a) illustrates in her study on the economically successful careers of DJs in Vienna, Austria, today's club DJs tend to promote the neoliberal economic ideal of an autonomous cultural entrepreneur by combining self-organisation and self-marketing with unregulated labour and a gendered construction of artistic identity. However, the neoliberal encouragement of up-and-coming DJs to become cultural entrepreneurs is a fairly recent development within (trans-)local electronic dance scenes, thus marking a break with the previous employment practices of DJs. In the 1970s and 1980s, many DJs sought out "residencies" at local clubs where they played music several times a week to entertain particular audiences, with some of them even being employed by the club owner or the management. In his study on the white gay club scene at the club "The Saint" operating from 1980 to 1988 in New York City, Tim Lawrence (2013) illustrates how neoliberal shifts in employment practices in the 1980s were embedded into a more general shift towards one-off, flexible contracts that has become the hallmark of market-driven neoliberalism and employment practices in the cultural industries. According to Lawrence, the club management of "The Saint" framed the dancers as individual consumers rather than participants in a collective practice and, by so doing, encouraged them to form an attachment to the venue rather than to individual DJs. As a result, the management introduced a revolving roster of DJs positioned as hired entertainers serving the "dancers-consumers". Ultimately, Lawrence observes, these changes led to a neoliberal framework in which DJs became freelancers who could expect to spin records once or twice a month as opposed to having regular DJ residencies.

Similar developments can be observed in Vienna's and Stockholm's electronic dance music scenes. Today's DJs are self-employed, combining DJing with other activities such as producing music, running record labels and organising club nights in order to make a living. At the same time, they face an increasing fragmentation in the (trans-)local electronic dance music scenes in relation to musical genres, class, ethnicity and sexual and political orientation (Gavanas and Östrom 2016, Reitsamer 2011a and 2013). Moreover, the digitalization of music and the availability of digital music technology have enabled an exponential spread of dance music tracks and DJ mixes accompanied by a sharp increase of the number of DJs and music producers now competing for public appearances at local bars and clubs (Fikentscher 2013, Karpetz 2014). In the interviews that we conducted in the course of our studies, the DJs describe how these changes have resulted in deteriorating working conditions and low payment rates, as the following quote from a female DJ active in Stockholm since the early 1980s illustrates:

In 2015, some employers wanted to pay the same salary that I got in 1983 and that is not okay. And other things have started to occur like: 'If it rains, we cancel [*the open-air club night*] and you don't get your salary' or 'instead of payment, you can invite your friends for dinner and alcohol'. And DJs increasingly compete with each other by charging lower rates than their colleagues to get the job. [...] I wish all DJs would stand up and demand decent payment and working conditions and not only work for fun. Certainly, it's fun to be a DJ, but fun doesn't pay my bills (DJ, female, Stockholm 2015).

Several theorists have explored the relationship of music, emotion and everyday life by suggesting an understanding of music as a source for forging self-identity and self-realisation (e.g. DeNora 2000, Finnegan 1989). In the quote cited above, the DJ refers to this relationship when she hints to the hedonistic pleasures involved in DJing. Under neoliberal working conditions, however, these hedonistic pleasures may also lead to self-exploitation and competitive individualism. As Hesmondhalgh (2013: 56) notes, "[T]his emphasis on intrinsic rewards can lead to self-exploitation in artistic labour markets characterized by massive over-supply of willing workers, and reward systems hugely skewed towards the successful few."

While all our interview subjects generally describe similar impacts of the neoliberal changes in electronic dance music scenes by highlighting the increasing difficulties to make a living from DJing and corresponding activities, it seems that women DJs often experience segregation by gender as well. Statistics compiled by members of the DJ network *Female Pressure* (www.femalepressure.net) illustrate the underrepresentation of female musicians among the performers at 47 international electronic music festivals that took place in 2013: Of a total of 3,284 musicians and bands, the number of women performers amounts to 10.3 per cent (338 women). 263 bands (8 per cent) included female musicians, while the

remaining 2,683 musicians and bands (81.7 per cent) were male. Similar gender inequalities are documented in other creative and cultural industries such as film (e.g. Jones and Pringle 2015) or classical music, where established orchestras remain the domain of male musicians and conductors (e.g. Allmendinger and Hackman 1995).

Analysing the interviews with the DJs, it became clear that the stark patterns of gender inequality, exclusion and segregation also manifest themselves in gender-specific narratives on how DJs found access to their earliest DJ appearances at the beginning of their careers in the early and mid-1990s in Vienna[2]. At that time, the DJs began their careers by playing regularly at local bars and small clubs – a practice that might have changed in recent years as up-and-coming DJs also make use of the possibilities afforded by the internet in order to promote their DJ mixes and participate in online DJ and remix competitions (Karpetz 2014). In the following quote, a male DJ who entered the business in Vienna in the early 1990s describes how he got his first gigs by organising club nights:

I started spinning records in '91. That was the time that techno [in Vienna] had taken off so extremely, and I was there, because we had thrown the first techno parties in Vienna, where I DJed. It was enormous luck that I was at the right place at the right time, and then everything totally took off (DJ, male, Vienna 2008).

This DJ presents himself as a co-founder of the Viennese techno scene who profited from its increasing popularity and became known at the beginning of his DJ activities through performances at self-organised club nights. As a consequence, he could increase his number of appearances, which he attributes to chance, or to being at the right place at the right time. Thus, he conveys the impression that a successful DJ career cannot be planned, because his own career flourished as a result of good fortune. Another male DJ who started spinning records few years later in Vienna describes his access to his first DJ appearances as follows:

I always went to the *Trife Life* parties, where I also got to know the guys from the *Trife Life* crew. We were on the same wavelength and since I was already pretty good at spinning records at the time, they took me in. They let me play at their parties and whoever could DJ with *Trife Life* was immediately in demand. You have to be at the right place at the right time to get a chance. The rest is just practice, practice, practice, persevere and be lucky too (DJ, male, Vienna 2008).

This DJ highlights how membership in an established DJ crew marked a turning point in his career, which seems again to deny any planning. As he explains, his success was due to the seemingly coincidental opportunity to work with an established DJ crew and impress his colleagues and audience with his DJ performance. Clearly evident in this narrative is the fact that DJ crews can exert considerable influence over the careers of unknown DJs, as the actors involved in these informal scene networks can extend invitations to perform at their club nights. This kind of inclusion or exclusion is instrumental in the recognition and

distribution of “symbolic capital” (Bourdieu 1993) in music scenes – capital that DJs can obtain only through the recognition and valuation of their colleagues and other scene actors.

While the two male DJs received recognition from scene networks, the overwhelming majority of our female interviewees described how, especially in the beginning of their careers, the informal scene networks ignored their DJ activities. As one of the female DJs explains:

I always notice that I cannot gain access to the male networks. The guys don't want to have anything to do with you as a woman, and certainly not when you're starting out. They mutually invite one another, regardless of whether they have a good selection and can mix or not, and they sit and talk about music as if it were a science, and make collaborative music. And then I had the idea to develop my own structures, and even make my own club. This way, I got more bookings, but it was hard work (DJ, female, Vienna 2008).

This female DJ locates her lack of integration into “male networks”, with closed borders and firmly defined membership, not as an isolated social phenomenon that only she had experienced. Fundamentally, unknown female DJs have difficulty in securing legitimate positions in music scenes because of their gender (Gavanas 2009, Farrugia 2012). This female DJ used a typical method to compensate for her exclusion from male-dominated scene networks: she organised her own regular club nights, to which she invited other DJs and where she herself performs, and she set up her own networks. Taking into consideration the above quote from the female DJ, it becomes clear that the narrative is based not on chance or luck, as the two male DJs had justified their performances at club nights at the beginning of their careers; nor does she present herself as a co-founder of the techno scene or as a good DJ. The female DJ views the turning point in launching her career as labour-intensive event organisation, which gave her the advantage of starting her own informal scene network in which to gain the recognition of colleagues and club audiences.

Self-organisation and work on the one hand, chance and luck on the other – these are the central concepts of gender-specific narratives that result from inclusion into or exclusion from informal scene networks. In the 1990s, the majority of the female and male interviewees took on this dual function of DJ and club promoter at the beginning of their careers. They occupy a decision-making position in the music scenes, which allows them to participate in the game of recognition and power and as a result, they affect the career progression of the next generation of DJs significantly. However, in addition to experiences of exclusion from informal organised networks that are generally dominated by (young) men (see also Cohen 1997), female DJs have to cope with further gatekeeping practices.

Technological Mastery

One key gatekeeping practice in electronic dance music scenes is the relationship between technology and masculinity, which negatively affects women who wish to become musicians, DJs and/or music producers. In electronic dance music, which evolved in the early 1980s, the use of machines and digital music technologies has become essential preconditions for DJing and music making. As a result, technological mastery has become central to the values and social interactions as well as the ideals and passions related to DJing and music making. For instance, the work and aesthetics of Kraftwerk – one of the seminal artists of electronic dance music – exemplify the association between technology and masculinity, men and machines. Likewise, in the literature about electronic dance music, men and machines are featured as foundational (e.g. Eshun 1998, Goodman 2010, Taylor 2001), while female DJs and music producers tend to be ignored (see for example the documentary “Modulations: Cinema for the Ear” (1998) or the majority of the studies in electronic dance music cultures, e.g. Brewster and Broughton 1999, Collin 1997, Poschardt 1997, St John 2009). Consequently, musical styles and practices are actively coded as male and crucially effect female DJs’ narratives when talking about their technological involvement. For example, one female DJ said:

I like to work with technology; I have always messed about with cassette decks and recording sounds on different channels and [that is] not normal. Perhaps it is normal for a guy who builds loudspeakers [...] it is more natural for them to do that. But I think I am probably the third sex (*laughs*). Perhaps not very feminine (DJ, female, Stockholm 2006).

This DJ addresses the symbolic association between masculinity and technology in society in general and in electronic dance music scenes in particular, such that technological competence has come to constitute an integral part of male gender identity, and, vice versa, a specific notion of masculinity has become central to our very definition of technology (Cockborn and Ormrod 1993). As Wajcam (2004: 106) puts it: “Technology must be understood as part of the social fabric that holds society together; it is never merely technical or social. Rather technology is always a socio-material product – a seamless web or network combining artefacts, people, organisations, cultural meanings and knowledge.”

Since they participate in music scenes where women are not seen as the normative figure of authority, the capacities of female DJs are viewed with suspicion; there is a significant burden of doubt as to whether female DJs possess the required competencies and capabilities to measure up to the job (Puwar 2004, Wahl et al. 2011). As a result of such

prejudices, women artists are assumed to lack the assertiveness and drive for success – a view that is reinforced by a male interviewee:

Women are more modest, which makes it harder for them to establish themselves in the scene. At the beginning [...] as an unknown DJ, you have to be really pushy to make it, because it doesn't work with good looks alone. (*laughs*) There are a few female DJs, but much less than men, of course. Male DJs have a bigger hunger for fame, and they stick around, while many women give up. But if a woman really wants [to become a DJ] and has a good [music] style, I am sure she can make it (DJ, male, Vienna 2008).

This DJ assumes that a “good” DJ style and “good” performances at club nights can lead to recognition and success. Women do not seem to measure up to this achievement principle, because the attributes necessary to access DJ performances – namely, perseverance, tenacity, persistence and the desire for recognition – are attributed to men. This association of specific attributes with masculinity, coupled with the social association of technical competence with male gender identity, produces the idea that only men can be “good” DJs and are thus likely to be successful (Reitsamer 2011b). In order to combat under-expectations and doubt, female DJs constantly have to prove themselves. In this process, self-representation may prove to be a minefield.

Gendered self-promotion and self-representation in the context of post-feminism

As mentioned above, creative labour is increasingly governed by values of entrepreneurialism and musicians are encouraged to think and act like cultural entrepreneurs. In this context, self-promotion becomes a crucial strategy for advancing one's own career. According to Mäkinen (2012: 16), “[p]romoting the self [...] refers to processes in which different forms of marketing and branding are combined with ‘advancing the self’ in one way or another”. In the following quote, a female DJ describes self-promotion as a time-consuming activity that includes a variety of strategies:

I need a lot of time for my self-promotion because I go out often to meet people and I must update my websites regularly and do all that stuff on the Internet. That's really time-consuming, but it's very, very important that you have your networks. But I also need a lot of time to train myself artistically to improve my DJing and music-making takes also a lot of time and also all the gigs, especially if you go abroad. But I'm self-employed and I can decide myself when I want to do what and how big or small my business is (DJ, female, Vienna 2008).

For this DJ, self-marketing means maintaining and expanding her (trans-)local and online networks by using new media technologies and meeting people at local parties. Such networking practices aimed at producing intensive, short-term relationships, along with the blurring of the boundaries between work and leisure and between friends and colleagues,

amount to what Wittel (2001) calls “network sociality”. This form of sociality and the corresponding strategies of self-promotion are regarded as essential for a successful career (Wittel 2001, McRobbie 2002). However, as Scharff (2015) illustrates in the empirical study on female musicians advancing careers in classical music, strategies of self-promotion are gendered and female musicians have to navigate several gendered difficulties. Her female research participants, Scharff argues, took on broad entrepreneurial discourses by describing their work and themselves as products that had to be sold, but the majority of her interviewees expressed a dislike of self-promotional strategies. Their dilemmas relate to normative expectations that women are modest as well as the association of women who sell themselves with prostitution, among other gendered constraints. Scharff’s research on female classical musicians reflects a general trend in contemporary popular culture, namely an overwhelming focus on the visual appearance of women and femininity, along with a sexualisation according to heterosexual ideals (Buszek 2006, Holland 2004, Puwar 2004). McRobbie (2009) addresses the recent pervasive sexualisation of contemporary popular culture within the wider context of neoliberalism. She argues that this dominant economic and cultural mode of Western societies encourages girls and young women to turn their bodies into vehicles for individual achievement. Such an aspirational model of equal opportunities and advancement pervades the current “postfeminist” popular culture. Gill (2011: 137) suggests an understanding of “postfeminism [...] as a sensibility” that allows an exploration of “the contradictory nature of postfeminist discourses and the entanglement of both feminist and anti-feminist themes within them”. Within this neoliberal framework, the ways that women represent themselves and style their bodies seems to be of immense importance (Puwar 2004: 148). In addition, hyper-sexualized images of (young) women have become a dominant marketing technique in advertising, magazines, internet sites and cable television, where many of the images contribute to what Gill (2011: 138) calls “porno chic” – the blurring of the boundaries between pornography and other visually mediated genres. As the media place more importance on the appearance of women, female DJs have to manage their femininity both in terms of the connotations and issues they raise as well as their physical appearance (Puwar 2004: 95).

Historically, we can identify three types of gendered representations for female musicians (McClary 1991, Rodgers 2010). First, the work of women musicians is often perceived as representing an essentially “feminine” aesthetic (McClary 1991). For instance, Öström (2011) describes how female DJs based in Stockholm are often portrayed by journalists as sensual, having a feel for melodies and “adding a touch of female finesse”. Second, music journalists tend to compare the work of female musicians reductively to other women artists simply

because they are women. The experiences of many female DJs reconfirm what Puwar (2004: 58) coins as the “burden of representation” that falls on women in male-dominated professions. As a result, female DJs are seen as representing the capacities of women as a group, for which they are marked and visible per se (Puwar 2004: 62). These patterns of representation enact a double reinforcement of electronic music’s male domain by gendering important stylistic developments as male, while grouping women together as the ghettoized counterpart of this master narrative (Rodgers 2011). Third, the recent pervasive hyper-sexualisation of contemporary culture also manifests itself in representations of female DJs and music producers in music magazines (for example, *URB*, *DJ*, *IDJ*, *Mixmag*), posters and flyers, as music journalists and club hosts pay more attention to their appearances than to their musical skills and their work. The sexualized representations of women artists correspond to the invitation politics of certain club promoters as a female DJ from Berlin notes:

You always had kind of waves that focus on female DJs [...], always from the exotic way of looking at it [...]. Like girls in men’s professions or so, which sucked [...] because you’re always feeling like an example, not like an artist – an example of something which is so untypical. And [...] it also had this aspect that organizers were organising parties with female DJs [...] like stupid ones and more interesting ones. [...] It also had parties where there would be housewives from the 50s on the flyer [...] and champagne was 2.50 for girls coming before midnight [...]. Like this kind of thing [...], which we agreed that we should stop that, you know (*laughs*) (DJ, female, Berlin 2006).

This interviewee speaks of “tokenism” (Kanter 1977) on the part of club organizers and music journalists as an established strategy in Berlin’s electronic dance music scenes. According to a number of women, they also experience the ambivalent advantages of such tokenism, paradoxically changing the minority status of female DJs in club culture. For example, an interviewee from London said:

When I first started DJing, it was extremely male dominated and there were not many women DJing – only a few. You would get a lot of attention, but I used to hate it when a promoter would decide to have an all-girl DJs night as a novelty. I especially hate it when that is the only time you get asked to play! Nowadays, there are a lot more women DJs and I can see that the ratio of male and female DJs is now slowly starting to balance out. I am happy that I have been part of this progression (DJ, female, London 2006).

A similar statement is made by a female DJ in Stockholm, who argues that “the advantage of being a woman [in a male dominated scene] is that it’s easier to stand out and get noticed in this super-hard competition. You’re not just one of the crowd. The disadvantage is that men get jealous and see you as a threat” (DJ, female, Stockholm 2011).

Playing along with problematic strategies of self-promotion and self-representations in electronic dance music scenes may increase the chances for gigs and media attention, even

though it decreases the chances of recognition in peer networks, such as informal social networks among male and female DJ colleagues, as well as scene-based internet forums (Gavanas 2009), precisely because it contradicts the all-encompassing norm in the musical world in general and electronic dance music scenes in particular: that “real” DJs should be “all about the music” (Farrugia 2012, Gavanas 2009). As a result, while few of our female research participants go along with what Gill calls “porn chic”, the majority of them articulate their resistance to pressures for (young) women to cultivate their visual appearance, as one female DJ puts it:

We all have choices in how we want to be represented as female and as DJs. And I’m sure there are people who buy in to the aesthetic on your website. But there are also some of us who don’t wish to further sexism by marketing to what you think men want to see (DJ, female website forum 2011).

In line with more radical feminist perspectives, we also identified forms of visual self-presentations that amount to “alternative” femininities, as the following description of a female DJ illustrates:

My appearance is quite sexualized, but not in a heterosexual way. I like to mix all kinds of female styling, heavy lipstick, make up, sometimes I wear a wig with long black or blond hair, a tight red dress and big glasses and a beard [...]. I combine all these things to make it look very queer and it works for my audience (DJ, female, Vienna 2010).

Few of the DJs addressed age or youth as an important precondition for sexualized self-marketing strategies and the (scene-specific) classifications according to sexuality and ethnicity. One Turkish DJ interviewed in London brought up whiteness in terms of “blondness” as a factor framing the ways in which she has been gendered as a DJ – being blond and considered “pretty”. However, we did not find a complete resistance to femininity among our interviewees. Thus the strategies of female DJs partly correspond to the analysis of alternative femininities suggested by Holland (2004): The women DJs’ strategies oscillate between ideals of femininity and alternatives to existing norms.

In the final part of this article, we want to address female networking strategies and the challenges associated with them.

Female Networking Strategies

The overwhelming majority of our research participants report that the existing female networks, such as Female Pressure (Austria), Shejay (UK), Sister Sthlm (SWE), Pink Noises (USA) and Rubina DJane (Switzerland), to name a few, are effective in introducing female role models, sharing technical knowledge, increasing invitations to DJ performances,

receiving feedback on DJ sets, producing tracks and so on. However, even though they embodied feminist goals, some of these networks took measures to distance themselves from feminism in order to maximize their appeal in a male-dominated industry (Farrugia 2012). Female DJ networks are confronted with the problem of possibly reinforcing hierarchal gender differences and, as a result, the binary structure of male/female social network segregation as well as the self-promotion and self-presentation in terms of masculinity and femininity is not altered (see Gildemeister and Wetterer 1995). The female DJs develop two main strategies for escaping this dilemma and the attendant accusation of receiving invitations to performances not because of DJ skills, but for being a woman and, moreover, forging networks with other women. The first strategy could be described as “programmatically politics”, which suggests increasing the visibility of female DJs and producers by inviting them to appearances without directly addressing the advancement of women or feminism; the second strategy refers to a “feminist-queer politics” where “queer” is understood as a strategic term for alliance-building with cultural producers who identify themselves as transgender or refuse membership or approval seeking according to the criteria and gatekeepers in the heteronormative and male-dominated scenes (Reitsamer 2011b).

However, while female networks seek to advance the careers of their members by developing such strategies, they are often regarded as a “threat” to male-dominated DJ networks. In their recent book, Gavanas and Öström (2016) illustrate such reactions towards the network Sister Stockholm, whose members, upon receiving positive media attention, were demeaned by male colleagues on internet forums, questioned as to having any DJ skills at all, and accused of hating men or being “cranky bitches” with nothing to contribute musically and/or technically. Simultaneously, the network as a whole was accused of cheating by capitalizing on the media’s interest in feminist politics, having sexual relations with promoters or taking advantage of looks and sexiness for getting attention and appearances at club nights and music festivals. A male DJ summarizes these views of female colleagues as such:

A friend told me that in '95, women had to work a lot harder, ten times harder, than their male colleagues in order to get ahead, get major DJ bookings and get accepted by DJ colleagues. But today, my friend said, a female DJ can be less than half as good as a male DJ but still gets more attention and gigs simply because she’s a woman. Many male colleagues of mine agree with this observation but none of them would say it publicly in the media, because they would get crucified (DJ, male, Stockholm 2015).

Such accusations and rumours are gendered as though it is women’s success that is devalued in these ways by male peers. (see Scharff 2015 for similar experiences of female musicians in classical music). Nevertheless, in the 2010s, Stockholm’s electronic dance

music scenes have seen some highly visible and economically successful queer-feminist networks such as Gruppe 13 and Femtastic, and female DJs have experienced an increase in appearances at club nights and music festivals. These positive changes might be traced back to the fact that male club promoters and festival organisers have become aware of gender inequalities, exclusion and segregation as a result of the queer-feminist politics of female DJ collectives.

Conclusion

In this article, we explored some of the gendered dynamics in (trans-)local electronic dance music scenes in Western cities in the context of neoliberal working conditions, competitive individualism and post-feminism. While male and female DJs alike highlight the negative effects of neoliberal changes in electronic dance music scenes, our analysis has pointed out in particular the contradiction and dilemmas experienced by women DJs regarding technology, sex and gender, as well as sexual identity, self-promotion and self-representation. As in other musical worlds, in order to advance one's own career, female DJs seem to embody the values of entrepreneurialism and employ diverse strategies for both networking and self-promotion. Moreover, they also challenge the socially constructed associations of technological competence with masculinity, since technological mastery is – next to self-promotional strategies – to be an essential precondition for becoming a successful DJ. Our analysis has also shown how networks such as Female Pressure, Sister Stockholm or Pink Noises offer various advantages for female DJs and how the protest and pressure of such networks can achieve at least some positive changes towards equal opportunities in (trans-)local electronic dance music scenes. However, female DJs, musicians and music producers still remain marginalized in these male-dominated scenes and, as a result, have to find ways not only to survive in the neoliberal and digital era, but also to struggle meaningfully against gender inequalities, exclusion and segregation.

Endnotes

1 This book is written in a journalistic style for a popular audience but may nevertheless provide preliminary findings for future research.

2 For a more detailed discussion of this issue see Reitsamer 2011a.

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