

How To Thrive As An Artist Manager

by

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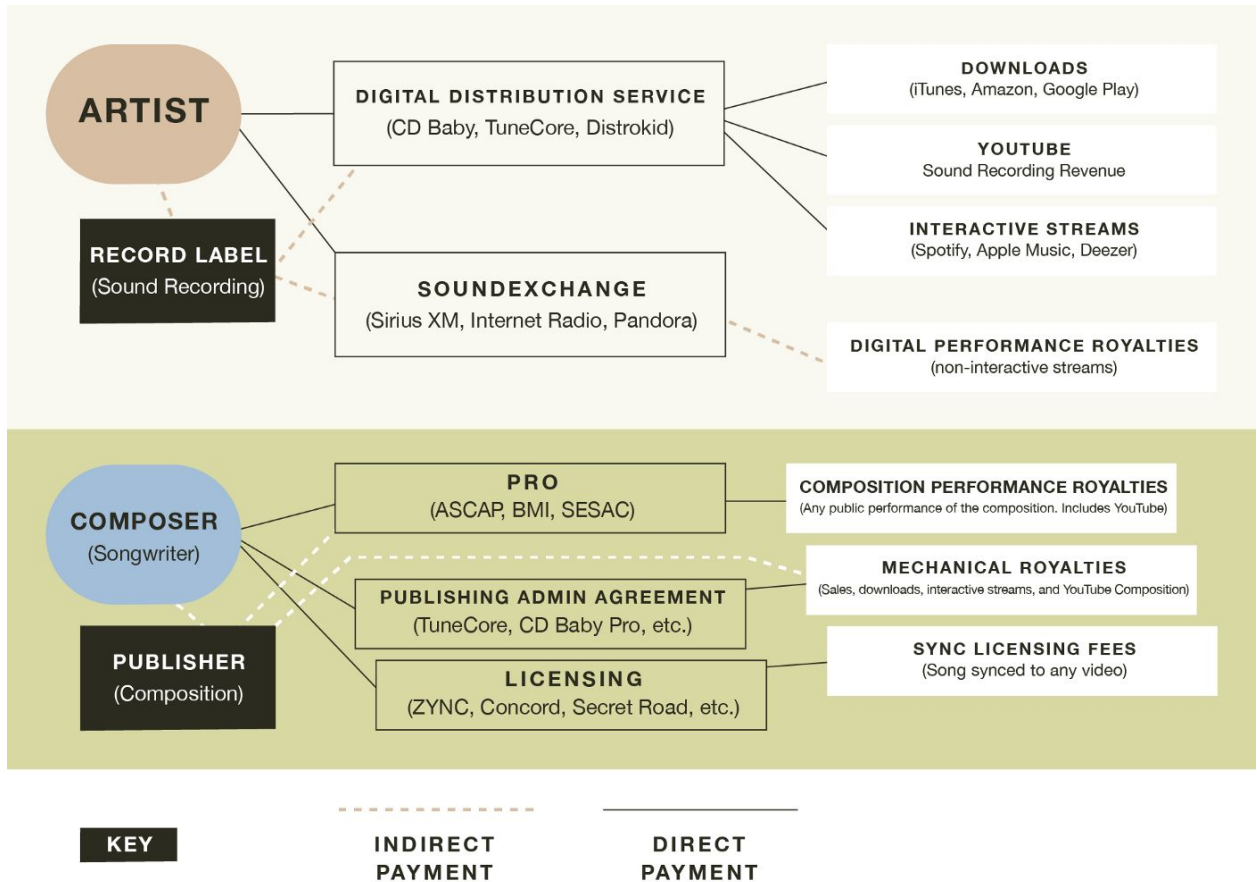
Abstract

The needs of artists are rapidly growing and in-our-ears like no other time in history. Through technological advances like Facebook, Instagram, Apple Music, Spotify, etc., music is spreading like wildfire. The emphasis on the personal connection between the artist and the manager is what drives the success for big-top artists. Delving into what a music manager is and how the relationship came about can further insight on the journey of managing an artist. In order to do so, there will be mention of notable music managers to understand the traits and skills that make the artist thrive. The freedom with which an artist can trust and rely on their manager influences the creative process and the path that the artist goes. Managers that instill the best practices for their artists are credited for their success in the music industry.

Payment For The Artist

First, how and how much artists are paid in the music industry is awfully convoluted which contributes to the imperative role of a manager. “A stat from a (much disputed) Citigroup report claims that artists only received around 12 percent of the 43 billion dollars the music industry generated in 2017 (and most of that came from touring)... Plus, ... the United States, North Korea, and Iran are the only countries that don’t pay artists royalties on terrestrial radio,” (Piercey). Not only is the music industry worth billions where artists don't receive their fair share, but also the artists in the United States aren’t paid fairly on a worldwide spectrum. When artists are paid from performances or a recording, there are passive collection agencies responsible for tracking down the money owed. Dutifully noted, some recordings have an immense amount of contributors. “Whoever publishes or distributes the song (like the label or the artist) is responsible for paying out the contributors the specific amounts they are owed,”

(Piercey). The Music Modernization Act was signed into law in October 2018. “The bill revamps Section 115 of the U.S. Copyright Act and aims to bring copyright law up to speed for the streaming era,” (Deahl).

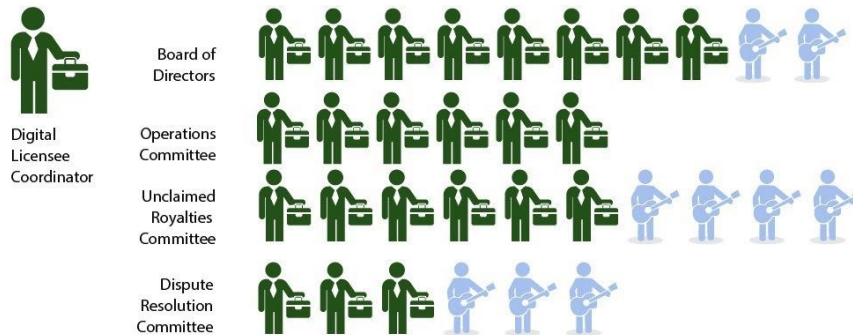


Technology

As previously mentioned, the technological advances through social media platforms, means managers also need to be technologists. The Music Modernization Act was passed to help songwriters and artists receive their royalties through Apple Music, Spotify, and other streaming services. It also creates a blanket license which wasn't obtainable before. Now, you can license the whole collection of your music.

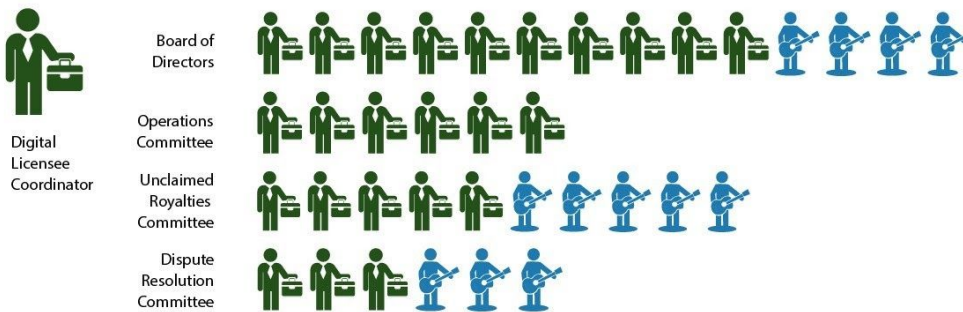
THE MUSIC MODERNIZATION ACT ROYALTY COLLECTIVE STRUCTURE

(ORIGINAL MAKE UP OF ROYALTY COLLECTIVE)



THE MUSIC MODERNIZATION ACT ROYALTY COLLECTIVE STRUCTURE

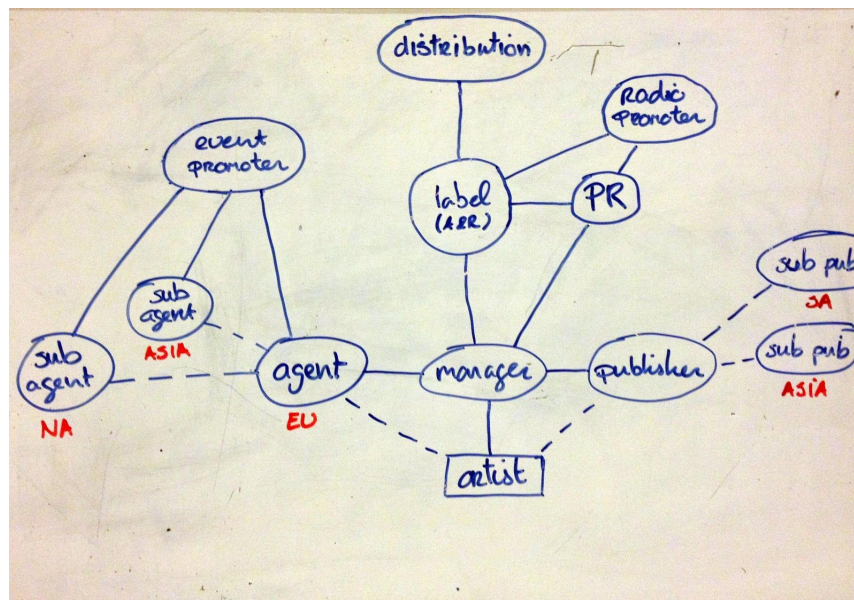
(NEWLY-NEGOTIATED PROPOSED MAKE UP OF ROYALTY COLLECTIVE)



Since streaming services are on the rise, managers have a bigger responsibility. “A modern music manager not only has to pay attention to the constantly changing landscape of music regulation and distribution (a full time job) but they also need a strong technology arm — one that can help them track and analyze data, streamline processes for payment, and automatically divide up earnings for their clients and their co-writers,” (Piercey). Today, there is no universal system that can report a song’s mark on distribution. Until then, a manager is vital for an artist to earn their royalties.

The Defined Role Of A Manager

As with anything, understanding the role and what the job entails helps further the interconnectedness between the artist and manager. It's a creative process to define the role of an artist manager. How does one define the dedication and relatability that is vital to fulfill the role of an artist manager. How does one define the dedication and relatability that is vital to fulfill the role of an artist manager? In *Understanding the Music Industry: Artist Managers and Booking Agents – what they do and why you need them*, Budi Voogt explores and informs the imperativeness of being knowledgeable about the form of the industry. “What does an artist manager do? An artist manager’s job is multifaceted and broad in scope. In essence, their primary duty is this – to create opportunities. It’s their task to devise and execute a strategy. To facilitate the artist to excel artistically, in some cases even streamlining their personal lives,” (Voogt). As a result, having a stand-out personality is purposeful for the manager. Due to streaming, the U.S. has seen a rapid increase in overall revenue. More people, and more artists, are expressing themselves across a multitude of platforms. With music contributing so much to society, we need the right people to open doors for the artist.



“Example of the team that we have built around one of our own artists,” (Voogt).

For this purpose, the rise of raw talent prescribed the upbringing of unions and organizations. “The birth of Association of Talent Agents (ATA) (originally known as Artists Manager Guild) is tied substantially to the proliferation of talent unions and guilds that formed after the Supreme Court upheld the Wagner Act also known as the National Labor Relations Act (1935). The main purpose of the labor legislation was to establish the legal right of workers to organize or join labor unions and to bargain collectively with their employers. In 1937, a group of forward-thinking representatives banded together to protect talent agents’ ability to represent artist clients by maintaining creative and economic success for the agent/client partnership,” (ATA). Talent agents provide artists with the platform they need to perform, while managers must fully immerse themselves into the world of where the artist can excel. Therefore, talent agents and talent managers relationships with an artist can share a media presence/impact comparable to the artist themselves. Artists want to be able to relate to their manager.

Relatableness To Artists

To illustrate, art can enable people who are, or were at one point, disenfranchised, to not only become famous from their art, but do it in a way that allows them to stay completely original to themselves. Music artists are idolized for this exact reason; because they are human, they have imperfections, and they often speak in ways that are reflective of their backgrounds and the places they lived. Listeners can relate to the experiences of the artist, not because they come from the same background, but because the artist is a storyteller, creating a character that can be empathized with. This advocates for intellectual fanbases to appreciate the positive influences some artists are bestowing.

Quality Traits Managers Must Possess

Granted that, music managers need to possess quality traits in order to be the best. Reed Flesher wrote an article for “Thrive TRM, the talent relationship management (TRM) platform built to drive network development and collaboration, streamline workflow and produce consistently better hiring decisions,” (Linkedin). Flesher got to “The Bottom Line... Commonalities among top talent managers include: a strong commitment to relationship building, an emphasis on listening and learning, a positive, problem-solving attitude, and a willingness to use all available technological tools to aid in the recruitment process,” (HR, Recruiting, Thrive TRM). There is something special about artist-manager relationships since now big-top names are less reliant on a manager for success. A manager should be involved with an artist because of a belief in their music. Indeed, a successful artist manager should want to gain respect in the industry as much as the artist wants to. Although, that is not always the case. It is important to note the prevalence of competition in becoming a top talent major today. What makes a manager the best, outdoing all others?

Famous Artist Managers

For example, earlier this year Travis Scott left Three Six Zero Management and is now being managed by Irving Azoff and the rapper’s longtime associate David Stromberg. Travis Scott is an American rapper, singer, songwriter and record producer who has recently produced his first Hot 100 number one single, "Sicko Mode". Being that, what drew this top artist to Irving Azoff as his new manager? In The New York Times 2004 article *The Man in the Middle*, “Bob Lefsetz, a music industry commentator who writes a widely read blog, [The Lefsetz Letter](#)” established Irving Azoff as, “the best artist representative that has ever existed in the modern era

of music,” (Cacciola). Since it is claimed that Azoff is known by everyone in Los Angeles, he must possess qualities that outshine all other managers. The dedication and passion came from an early age just as if he was an artist himself. His love for music pushed himself and his artists to succeed. Azoff is able to convince not only himself but others, that he is the best. “Azoff, a self-made impresario who began booking rock concerts as a high school student in Illinois, has consistently been one of the music industry’s biggest power brokers ... In the 1980s, he turned around a moribund MCA Records, and more recently he served as the executive chairman of Live Nation Entertainment, the concert giant that includes Ticketmaster,” (Cacciola).

It is important to note the author, Scott Cacciola, witnessed Irving Azoff read over 75 emails and make phone calls to five friends. “And while Azoff described the morning phone calls to his closest confidants as more social than business in nature, he did acknowledge that there was a purpose to his making them,” (Cacciola). As previously mentioned, maintaining and building relationships is a top priority in being a manager. Azoff exemplifies this through his persistence. In society today, if you're not consistent in communicating with the people that support you, you will lose that connection and any possible opportunity with them. He is admirable in the way he lets the artist depend on him. Talented artists like Travis Scott, can reach out to Azoff, knowing that he will provide them with the platforms they need.

Equally important, David Stromberg has been a long-time associate of Travis, managing him since 2012 to present day. It wasn't surprising to learn that not only does Travis have a right-hand, but that Stromberg has guided him for so long. For the creative process to thrive and reach full potential, you need a team of people in order to fulfill the artists’ aspirations. Interestingly enough, the interconnectedness between Stromberg and Scott beams off paper,

making the reader aware of the environment set for Travis. There weren't any conducted interviews with Stromberg, but Rolling Stone provided some of Stromberg's words on Scott touring with Kendrick Lamar. "The energy's been a little strange show-to-show on this tour," Stromberg says. "I mean, Travis brings the energy, but there's been seating at every show. He wants to get his fans onstage and get them to stage-dive – but there's chairs." He theorizes that "it's a numbers thing – I think you can sell more tickets when you do seats than when you do general admission." Scott says, "I can't speak to that," but confirms that he prefers the unmanaged vibe of a big, chair-free pit, where crowds can more readily cut loose: "Pfffft," he says. "I'm never doing a tour with seats again." "Travis' fans are a little younger," Stromberg continues," (Weiner). Stromberg levels the crowd difference between the two artists, Scott and Lamar.

Not only does Stromberg appreciate what Travis envisions for himself and his fan base, but he interprets the reasoning for seats in Lamar's tour. Kendrick Lamar's fans are older so they are more likely to want to sit, unlike the ragers from Scott's fans. Stromberg is educated in the industry, knowing that seats are more profitable than a general admission crowd, while Travis acknowledges he has no clue. With the brain power from both Stromberg and Scott combined, the projects and opportunities are endless. Although, Travis Scott's fans are aware from his lyricism about the alcohol and drug problems he faces. "Travis Scott bursts into his dressing room ... radiating the rich aroma of good weed. He makes for a catering table lined with... – for good measure – two bottles of Don Julio 1942 tequila" (Weiner). Some might say that a dad with a newborn baby shouldn't be acting as such. To what extent, does a manager impose on the artists' actions and choices? Or, for that matter, the manager could be partaking in poor

decision-making alongside the artist. Surprisingly, Scott doesn't have many issues with following through with his jobs, but that's not to say that he won't in the future.

Artists' Struggles With Substance Use And Addiction

Moreover, some artists will latch on to alcohol and drugs, resulting in a set-back of satisfaction with their fanbase. Amy Winehouse, for example, was incapable of performing due to drugs and crowds grew upset. Tragically, the drugs ultimately ended her career with death. Nick Shymansky met Amy when she was 16, and worked as her manager from 1999 to 2006, before things went south. An artist friend of Shymansky had first introduced high school dropout Amy to him. "Looking back on it, I was 19, working in the music industry but I didn't really know anything. I called her and pretended I was this big manager who could make things happen... and obviously she thought I was a wanker... and I realised humour was the backup plan, and that's how we connected," (Bromwich). Despite Amy finding Shymansky corny, they started and grew their relationship through humor, which jump-started her career. Shymansky described their relationship: "It was my job to get her from A to B. If I booked in a session and didn't literally get her out of bed, in the car, drop her off, pick her up, sit in on the session, it just didn't happen. There were two motivations: one, you had to make it fun. Two, there had to be a strong musical pull," (Bromwich). From this, it is clear talent managers can't always be your friend, and sometimes need to act like a parent.

Quickly, we see the involvement Shymansky contributed when dealing with the late-night calls that she was passed out on a toilet, the denial that she had a problem, and the stress in trying to get her to rehab once she admitted to having a problem. People on drugs and alcohol don't like being around those that are sober because it makes them feel bad about

themselves. Winehouse came out with her hit single, “Rehab”, which was a mockery towards Shymansky and just like that, he wasn’t her manager anymore. Five years later, she passed away. Nick Shymansky was devastated by her death, but had no control in the matter once she got a new manager. This reiterates the significance of artists having a trustworthy manager by their side that wants what’s best for them.

Not to mention,

“I have experienced first-hand a manager engaging and enabling poor decision-making and not doing their job. In the summer of 2017, I got to hang out with American rapper, singer and songwriter, Trippie Redd. At the time, Trippie was up and coming on the music app, Soundcloud, which is an app known for having underground artists heard. A few months later in December, Trippie released a track featuring Travis Scott, which confirmed his name going viral. In the summer of 2017, Trippie’s persona through social media and his addictions included drinking codeine and smoking weed. At the time, I admired his manager, Milo Stokes. At first, I just thought Milo was another friend of Trippie, as he indulged in smoking blunts and drinking lean, making them all zombie-like.

Regardless, Milo was well-spoken and respectable. Milo sat down with me and after telling him I’m studying as an Arts Management major, he became passionate. He informed me about his experience with being responsible for the development of content and campaign management for Boomphones, a producer for audio products. Milo has worked along Trippie Redd from the start and is still a co-manager of his now.

Understandingly, Milo lets Trippie do what he wants. Trippie didn't make it out to the event that a venue promoted for and fans at the event in Brooklyn were obviously distressed.

A year later, Trippie Redd released his album *Life's a Trip* on August 10, 2018 and debuted at number four on the Billboard 200 Album Chart. Recently, Trippie announced his quits on Travis Scott's Astroworld Tour over stage setup taking too long, cutting into his stage time. Scott agreed on the matter, yet, although I wasn't surprised, I felt it was completely unprofessional. Thankfully, I got to watch Trippie's performance before he opted out, but other cities were disappointed. I can't help but to grow frustrated that Trippie's management team let this happen," (Dacosta).

More recently, popular among the youth, rap artist Jarad Anthony Higgins, known professionally as Juice Wrld, died on December 8, 2019 of an opioid overdose. "His song 'Lucid Dreams' has been played on the music streaming platform Spotify over one billion times," (Wikipedia). As soon as the news came out, it was sickeningly obvious that his seizure must've involved drug abuse. How much can we blame his colleagues and team? It's alarming that the common theme of the "27 club" throughout music is a harsh reality. "The 27 Club includes popular musicians, artists, actors, and athletes who have died at age 27, often as a result of drug and alcohol abuse," (Wikipedia). These artists faced with mental health challenges and addiction are practically predicting their death through their music.

To enumerate, "on his song 'Brand Name' from the album *GO:OD AM*, Mac Miller says: 'To everyone who sell me drugs, don't mix it with that bullshit, I'm hoping not to join the 27 club.' Miller died on September 7, 2018, at the age of 26 and his autopsy revealed that the cause

of death was an accidental overdose of fentanyl coupled with cocaine and alcohol,” (Wikipedia). “Juice WRLD referenced the club on his song "Legends" where he says ‘What's the 27 club? We ain't making it past 21.’ The song was dedicated to rappers XXXTentacion, who was murdered at 20, and Lil Peep, who died from an overdose at 21. Juice WLRD died at the age of 21 from an accidental overdose, (Wikipedia). What will it take for production teams to help the artist who is facing these issues? Juice Wrld’s mom started an organization, “Live Free 999”, which targets the youth in underhanded communities. Juice Wrld’s production team and record label supported it. Although it is positive, it seems too little, too late for the lost soul of Juice Wrld. Some artists tend to be fogged by fame and fortune. Artists need to have a manager who is suitable in bringing them back down to earth.

Efficiency In The Music Industry

In other words, Guy Morrow, “addresses the following research question: How can artists and artist managers design artist-led organizations that operate effectively and efficiently in a world in which attention is increasingly scarce? The argument is made that agile artist co-management practices are becoming ever more useful due to the plunging costs of experimentation in the increasingly globalized music industries.” Must be remembered, Morrow reasons how attention is becoming scarce. This supports the tactic of relationship-building and how sacred it is in the music industry. The social media platforms previously mentioned contribute to this digital age where lack of attention is prominent. Today’s digital age plays a huge role in artists being discovered. “Artist managers and other intermediaries have become more reactive to hard evidence that an artist’s work is receiving audience attention, instead of

investing time and money in what they assume (often, according to their own tastes and preferences) will receive attention from audiences,” (Morrow).

The career development of an artist has changed. The people immensely impact who becomes famous rather than the industry. The adaptability of the roles such as artists managers and artist & repertoire (A&R) are crucial. Guy Morrow is a lecturer in Arts and Cultural Management at the University of Melbourne, Australia. He has worked extensively as an artist manager in the international music industries. Through his journal, Morrow identifies two key principles to agile management, “the close monitoring of customer feedback” and “self-organization.”

The close monitoring of customer feedback “is informed not by assumptions about what customers will want, but by what they actually need or what they have demonstrated they will pay attention to, and subsequently (it is hoped) purchase” (Morrow). The industry used to go out on a limb hoping audiences would like the artists presented, what the industry chose to for-show, but now, it is the industry’s job to cater to the audiences’ wants and needs. This advocates for a more humane approach. Instead of acquiring someone's specific taste, the industry is forced to consider what the people want. It's very political.

The second key principle according to Morrow is self-organization which is “relevant to artist co-management across different international territories because the music value chain is complex and it changes from country to country, with the type of music, the profile of the artist (well-known, emergent, medium), and whether the music is live or recorded.” Someone may be experienced and educated in their own country about the music industry. Although, becoming the best manager possible includes being knowledgeable about the artists’ influence across the

globe. Considering this day of age, artists are commended when they can sell-out their headlined, nation-wide tours. Moreover, Morrow cites, “Medinilla (2012) notes: ‘In their search for hyper-productivity, agile pioneers from Nonaka, Takeuchi to Poppendieck, Sutherland, or Beck found that teams reaching this kind of state were absolutely not micromanaged or told what to do and how to do it. Instead, these teams had a goal and a purpose, and they collaborated to find the best ways to reach that goal.’” This proves communication and understanding can lead to success. Indeed, there is a pattern that an artist and a manager need to be on the same page. Although it is not always the case, the relationship between an artist and a manager should be genuine on both ends. So, how involved do managers need to be?

Females In The Music Industry

In pop-singer Rihanna’s case, maybe her manager needs to ensure she has a trustworthy accountant. “Gournis and Berdon, who'd been managing Rih's finances since her young start, also netted 22 percent of the revenue from her Last Girl on Earth tour from commission charges, without alerting her to the fact that it was hemorrhaging money, while Rih only received 6 percent” (Tharpe). Rihanna’s “Bitch Better Have My Money” 151 million viewed music video displays Rihanna’s creative direction on the matter. In the video, Rihanna kidnaps a woman who is deemed to be the wife of the accountant. The majority of the video is focused on Rihanna’s torment of the wife.

In the end, the viewers are shown to believe she killed the accountant after he is finally shown tied up in a chair at his house and after she lays in his backyard in a chest full of money and blood smeared all over her body. “The most common response: By treating the kidnapping of a woman as a badass, comical activity, Rihanna feeds the idea of females as objects to be used

and abused for material gain and an audience's enjoyment," (Kornhaber, The Atlantic).

Kornhaber justifies Rihanna's response, "when Rihanna, a woman, takes revenge on a man by snatching his woman, it's not so much a flipping of the script as a total rewriting of it. We live in a world where women are victims? Fine, Rihanna says; it's in that world that she's got to get her money back...Rihanna was ripped off by a caucasian financier who was supposed to help her; she's not the first person of color in that position, and she's probably not the first to fantasize about doing something drastic about it. Why wouldn't she make art about it?"

Rihanna's video was a credible success. Kornhaber makes a good point in the skewed criticism behind Rihanna's message. Although the accountant's wife has a lot more screen time, there is a deeper message. It emphasizes and symbolizes the way the accountant used Rihanna through her financial gain. The accountant referred to as "The Bitch" in the video, had to deal with the consequences of taking advantage of the powerful female artist, Rihanna. As an artist, Rihanna chose to express her emotions of being screwed over and there is nothing wrong with that. There is understandably debate among feminists; one side stating it is not very feminist to torture women and the other side admiring her laying naked in the end with the blood and money covering her. "Her past as a victim of domestic violence has brought her fans among young women who see a successful survivor. She certainly has the power to provoke – and she is using it," (McVeigh & Helmore).

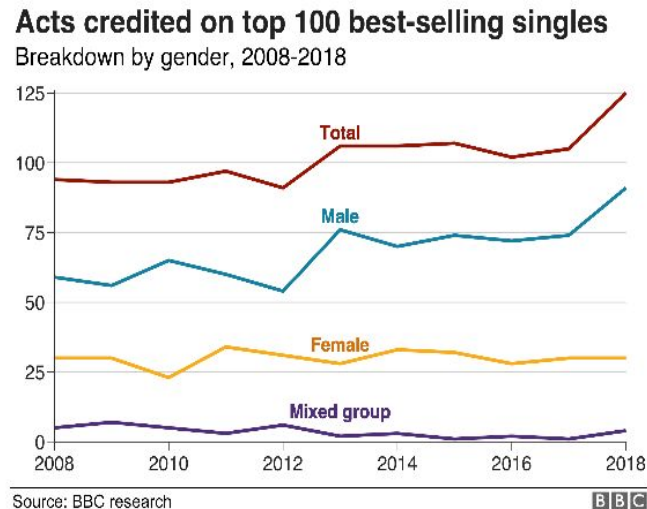
For this reason, to what extent should female artists coincide with feminism? Should they be held to a certain responsibility? These are questions that should be addressed between a female artist and their manager. "Women makeup half of the annual festival-going crowd, but women performers still only represented 19% of festival line-ups last year(2018)," (Frank). With

our country's political leadership changing within the last four years, sexually objectifying and degrading women has become increasingly prevalent within our society. If our own president portrays negative associations for women, it impacts the environment within our country. Again, the music industry is political and an artist can have a great impact on society, giving a voice of reason.

On the negative side, there are female artists who are criticized for not using their stardom to fulfill this instilled idea on how women should act and represent themselves. They are appealing to the male gaze. For example, American rapper Megan Thee Stallion tackles double standard criticism for her sexually charged lyrics. “‘Being a girl too—they criticize you harder than they criticize men,’ she told *The Fader*,” (Song). On the positive side, Megan Thee Stallion is praised for wanting to go as hard as the guys in the rap game and is seen as an empowering, sexual woman.

Kathy Iandoli, music journalist and author of the forthcoming book *God Save The Queens: The Essential History of Women in Hip-Hop*, speaks about the women performing at the Rolling Loud 2019 New York lineup: “They’re pretty far down on the flyer. It’s a little strange how there are some women who are scattered throughout the very extensive signature Rolling Loud lineup but there aren’t any headliners and considering the fact that so many women in hip hop came from New York and this is the first time that New York will be experiencing Rolling Loud...Now that hip hop has replaced rock as the dominant genre obviously there’s a little more space and a lot more money for that level of exposure but I think what women are doing now is really just leaving the shadow of male mentors and really standing on their own in a way that

will allow for a greater exposure and not being tethered to someone else and we're seeing that a lot now especially with artists like Megan Thee Stallion," (WNYC News).



As can be seen, the gender gap has in fact grown. It is the “gatekeepers” responsibility to resolve this issue just like all other industries including the news, the film industry, the dance industry, etc. With the right people in these positions who call the shots, society can become more knowledgeable and enlightened by the talents of women. Sarah Stennett, who runs First Access Entertainment, speaks on the issue: “To underestimate the challenge that these women have to make music would be a disservice to them, because they walk into rooms to make records with men. Everything that happens in a boardroom - 'You're crazy, you're on your period' - happens in a creative space, too,” (Youngs). These struggles as a woman in the industry are real and need to be resolved.

NYC-based DJ Valissa Yoe gives some insight on daily life as an independent female artist in the industry. DJ Valissa Yoe obtains 23.9K on Instagram and manages herself. She plays at all the upscale clubs in New York including Soho House, Le Bain, Rose Bar at Gramercy Park

Hotel, and lots more. “I would say that some issues that come across are me being called a diva in scenarios where I think a man would be taken more seriously. I have to like command respect instead of it just being given to me. I think as an assertive woman who believes in themselves people do get intimidated,” (Yoe). Although Valissa has found success and advantages in being a female DJ in NYC, she still has experienced setbacks for being a female. The growth of females in the industry should be a new coming of age. With more females in roles like an artist manager, this can become a reality.

Recommendations and Conclusions

The relationship of an artist manager is the most personal in the industry. The role of an artist manager can be regarded as the “day-to-day manager.” They overlook many of the decisions an artist would have to. Managers are the person to talk to. Being able to stand out and create your own ambiance is imperative. You want to be engaging and sociable. An artist needs to be able to fully trust their manager. Although a manager may be enthralled by fame and fortune, it is humane to want what’s best for the artists and to stray them away from harmful creative tactics like drugs and alcohol. The artist already possesses all their creative abilities in their brain. The most respected managers should be considered the ones who will always have their artists’ back.

All in all, what’s important for talent managers to remember is that they are responsible and influential in the path the artist goes. Before going into the music industry, talent managers must know that their relationship with their artist will grow intimate over time. Top talent managers will be involved and supportive with the artists’ creative process but will also be analytical of the outside world. “For artists to receive and appreciate feedback from a manager,

it's necessary to establish trust but also to have respect for each others' authority on certain subjects. I can be critical about certain things to my artists, because they respect my opinions on those matters," (Voogt). For the artist to maintain a relationship with their manager, the manager needs to be able to put their foot down, and the artist needs to be able to take it. A balanced and appreciated relationship between the talent manager and artist will illuminate a bed of roses.

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Appendix

“Q: What advice would you give to young women who want to succeed in the music industry?”

A: Success in anything is all about dedicating your time and persistence and losing your ego to allow you to be a hundred percent present and clear with what your goals are. I say lead with your passion and you'll have success with it if you just put in the work and my other thing is you need a team. Your network is really important and also your relationships if you flourish them.

Q: After all this success, what do you struggle with now?

A: Success is all relative and you have to make sure you're successful as a whole person and your career is not gonna define your success. I think making sure every aspect of your life: your mental health, your physical health, family, friends. Your relationships. Financing. The love you give yourself. Making sure you have a clear vision of what success in life really is and not to put it all in career because at the end of the day you will not be fulfilled fully. Yeah I think good balance of work and play and rest and you know. Did I send you those things from Michelle Obama? It's about planning your joy. That success is not all about work. Making sure you have time to recoup in between the hustling so you can be mentally present and healthy to show up for your job. So I really wish I spent more time on that in my early 20s but I think that a big part that I could have worked harder for was maintaining relationships I started in the beginning like keeping them strong. So I don't have to keep looking for people to work with. Value your relationships early in the game. Keep them strong throughout your career.

Q: What was it about your mentality that changed when you were working as a jello shot girl? The shift you went through as you rose through the ranks?

A: Working as a jello shot girl gave me my independence. The finances to move out on my own in the city. When I moved to the city that was when I first started making traction in relationships that took me to career success. I think you need to fully immerse yourself in your work. I really do think you need to live in the city where your work is strongest to be successful. So the financial freedom gives me a lot of time to build my career without having to take a full time position somewhere else which would deter me from my goals. And I also met a lot of ppl in nightlife that helped me in other aspects of my life. That all started with my jello shot business. I learned how to sell, how to communicate with all different types of people, how to be accountable and dependable from having employees to the clients. It taught me that I don't want a business partner per say and I wanted to work on my own. I didn't have a good experience with a business partner and I realized I wanted to be an entrepreneur and work for myself.

Q: How did you get where you are today, and who/what helped you along the way?

A: I was birthed by two artistic entrepreneurs. My mom had both the left and right side of the brain working, business and artistic. So from birth I already wanted to be an entrepreneur and I wanted to be creative. Going to college expanded my horizons. Moving to NY made me realize I can take control of my life, that hard work and dedication can pay off. Well, my mom encouraged me to do whatever I wanted to do in life so that was a big factor for me being comfortable. My art teachers encouraged me. Got into FIT and did not get in right away and had to wait a semester. When times are rough, when times are good, always know more work and

passion you put into your work there's just no denying success. The first girl I met in college helped me start my fashion styling career and many photographer friends who believed in me eventually started hiring me with my persistence. So yeah I think it's really about having a whole collective of ppl that believe in each other that can bring bigger success to your business. I think it was a lot of trial and error so learning on the job, pushing through challenges even if I was scared or uncertain. I think with google and youtube there's more resources than we ever had to help us expand our mind and craft. So I would attribute my family, friends, and work relationships to my career success and my birth given talents.

Q: Women now hold more payroll jobs than men (which excludes people who work on farms or in households or are self-employed). Have you personally seen an increase in female representation in the music industry?

A: ... When I was DJing at the cool spots around town, it was very male driven and it felt like it was a boys club. They were all buddy-buddy with each other and it was difficult to get in and if you were to get in it was because a guy likes you romantically. I felt like there were a lot of opportunities I did not have because I was a woman. Because I kept pushing through, I found my lane. The queer house music and dancing began to embrace me so I really love the music in the scene and all the creativity and the love i would feel from the scene. And I realize that if I was gonna make it quickly and do something I love then I should go with the people that embrace me. I've had a loyal fanbase ever since but I had to push through some of the rejection I was originally getting and find my lane that worked for me but now that I established myself in the industry it becomes easier. Now there are a lot more female DJs. I think we're getting a lot

more event gigs than the men are. As far as music, producers and artists that are touring are underpaid and not represented as much. Look at the top DJ lists, there's barely any women on it. ONLY 8 WOMEN djmag.com/top100djs. I feel like if anything there's a problem with female djs in that world. In my world I think I have the upper hand cause visually they want a woman but also I find that I'm losing gigs to black, hispanic, trans, gay men, plus size women. I think they want something a little inclusive so as a white woman in my 30s I think I'm losing out on them trying to be inclusive with gender and race.

Q: Since you are representing females in the music industry, what does that mean to you?

A: Representing women in my DJ industry makes me want to work harder on breaking the stereotype on the DJ being booked on her looks, boobs, sex appeal. And really focusing on being a top notch DJ on my selections, reading the room with my music style. I want to be considered an equal but I know there's still work to do so I feel I need to prove myself more and it's important to uplift other female DJs. Any time I can, I book my other female DJs and help promote each other. I think you're way more powerful in numbers and that's very true to women.

Q: How difficult is it working with men? Is there a difference with men and women?

I'd say that it really depends on the individual, my work experience is not always based on gender but I have come into scenarios where I've been mistreated by men and toxic masculinity has gotten in the way of me maintaining relationships. I have had to deal with men not hiring me because they were interested in me romantically and I didn't reciprocate the feelings.

Q: How hard is it?

A: I would say that some issues that come across are me being called a diva in scenarios where I think a man would be taken more seriously. I have to like command respect instead of it just being given to me. I think as an assertive woman who believes in themselves people do get intimidated. It can be discouraging for me when people are upset by me wanting the things I want because I know I deserve them and I don't understand why there's a question of getting things done the way I want them. It's frustrating but I know for women I need to push through it and lose my ego and stick to my guns on all my opinions and I'm very interested in working with more women to support each other.

Q: What are the barriers?

A: I think you can be your own barrier as to how successful or not successful you are. I think your own insecurities can set you back if you let them. I think as a creative we are very sensitive and we have to take time to take care of our mind and body so we can be strong and be able to know that we need to push through those moments to get to the other side. So let fear subside. The other side is usually bigger and better things for you. I think that you are your own barrier,” (Yoe).