



**Linnæus University**

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Bachelor Thesis in Musicology

# Who gets to play the electronic music?

*A gender equal perspective on Lost Beach club stage in Ecuador.*

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## **Abstract**

The purpose with this thesis was to, through a gender perspective, get an insight in equality between genders at the electronic music stage in Ecuador, with the renowned club *Lost Beach Club* as a sample for this study. The thesis is based on an observation study made in November 2016 at three different events, marketing materials and correspondence with a producer. The result was adopted through some different approaches of feministic theory and showed that on the electronic music stage at *Lost Beach Club* gender equality was not presented, and no consciousness about the subject existed. Men was more represented than women but they all got the same response and respect from the audience. The women was excluded unconsciously since they did not have the same opportunities to reach the big stages as men because of the masculine norms in the field.



<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>1</b>
1.1 Purpose and question at issue	2
1.2 Selection of field	3
1.3 Terms	4
1.4 Previous research	4
<b>2. Background</b>	<b>6</b>
2.1 Ecuador	6
2.2 Lost Beach Club	7
<b>3. Theory</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1 To do gender	8
3.2 The male as the norm	9
3.3 Postmodern feminism	10
<b>4. Method and material</b>	<b>10</b>
4.1 Material collection and selection	10
4.2 Course of action	12
4.3 Ethical aspects	13
4.4 Sources and source criticism	14
<b>5. Results</b>	<b>15</b>
5.1 Lost Beach festival	15
5.1.1 Observation	15
5.1.2 Documents, posters and flyers	16
5.2 Ladies night	17
5.2.1 Observation	17
5.2.2 Documents, posters and flyers	17
5.3 Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil	17
5.3.1 Observation	17
5.3.2 Documents, posters and flyers	18
5.4 Correspondence with Lost Beach Club Producer	19
<b>6. Analysis</b>	<b>19</b>
6.1 How many women and men are represented on the stage?	19
6.2 How is the relations between audience and artist seen through a gender perspective?	21
6.3 How is the marketing material for the the events designed seen through a gender perspective?	22
<b>7. Conclusion</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>8. Closing thoughts</b>	<b>26</b>



<b>8. References</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>Appendix</b>	<b>30</b>
Appendix 1: Lost Beach Festival	30
Appendix 2: Lost Beach Festival	30
Appendix 3: Ladies Night	31
Appendix 4: Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil	32
Appendix 5: Correspondence with Lost Beach Club producer.	33

# 1. Introduction

...Ecuador is home to some really good electronic music. With a recent uptick in on-the-ground booking agencies, avant-garde labels, event production companies, and clubs with high-tech sound systems, there's almost too many good up-and-coming producers to count —along with a loyal local audience ready to cheer on everyone involved in the perpetual zapateo, a key slice of Ecuadorian slang that means nothing else besides a damn good party.....From the mountainous capital of Quito to the crowded metropolis of Guayaquil, and from ghetto tech to ambient music inspired by the rolling green hills of the Andes, this is music bubbling up from the equator, so you know it's hot.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of the electronic music in Ecuador becomes visible in this quote from *THUMP*, the electronic music and culture channel from the global news channel *VICE*, from 2015. Both from a perceptive-, receptive- and a producing perspective Ecuador describes as a precursor and a country in the cutting edge of electronic music. Through the electronic music as the contemporary music, reachable and used by a broad mass of people, it is interesting to entry the area with a gender perspective. The constitution in Ecuador statutes that man and woman has the same equal rights and prohibit gender discrimination. It is enacted that all public authorities shall work towards gender equality, and according to the "Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs report", women right in the society in Ecuador is under reformation.<sup>2</sup> How that is shown in the electronic music field, is an overall purpose and content for this essay.

In Sweden, work towards an equal music stage is a current topic and as the World Economics Forums "Global Gender Gap Report" from 2015 says that Sweden is ranked as number four as a gender equal land and Ecuador places in on number 33 in the same ranking, it is interesting to se if the gender equality at the electronic music stage is mirrored by the ranking.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Thump. 2017

<sup>2</sup> The Swedish foreign office. 2012:2

<sup>3</sup> World economics forum. 2015:8

## 1.1 Purpose and question at issue

If you are a woman, you can address unconscious biases and implicit associations that can form an unintended and often an invisible barrier to equal opportunity.<sup>4</sup>

This quote is from the *United Nations* goal, where they indicate what each and other person can do for a more gender equal world and this specific quote is directed to women and how they can affect the development in gender equality. The fifth of the *United Nations* sustainable development goals is about achieving gender equality and empower all woman. One of the interim targets is about "Adopt and strengthen sound policies and enforceable legislation for the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at all levels" and this is my main approach for this Minor Field Study.<sup>5</sup>

From a musicology perspective the music stage becomes an interesting field because the stage is one of all the empowered *all levels*, as the quote says. The purpose with this study is to research the electro music stage from a gender equal perspective and the researched sample is the electronic music at the *Lost Beach Club* in Ecuador. The foundation of this research is the following questions.

How does the electronic music stage at *Lost Beach Club* look like through a gender equal perspective?

- How many women and men are represented on the stage?
- How is the relations between audience and artist seen through a gender perspective?
- How is the marketing material for the the events designed seen through a gender perspective?

*Lost Beach Club* is the sample for this study and there is a closer presentation of the club in the section *Background*. The focus is about to observe how many women and

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<sup>4</sup> UN. *Gender equality: Why it matters*. 2016

<sup>5</sup> UN. *Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all woman and girls*. 2016

men that are booked for the stage, and to get an insight in how much place each gender gets. It is a way to outline the possible unconscious barriers and to get an insight in a culture that includes a broad mass of people, at least in the culture of the youth since the electro music is mentioned as a popular genre in Ecuador.

In Sweden, the gender equality on the stage has been an important subject the last years. The organization *Jämställd festival* (eng. Equal festival) that works towards a more equal music stage has since 2012 given a yearly report of the statistics in the representation of women and men on the major festival stages in Sweden. The first year 79 percent of the performing artist were male and the last year, 2015, it lowered to 67 percent.<sup>6</sup> The active work towards a more equal stage in Swedish festivals becomes for me a factor to why the division between females and males are slightly more equalized today, since the first measurement. Even though the stage is not yet equal between the genders on the Swedish music festival stage the awareness concerning the subject probably has set a ball rolling. The statistics shows how awareness can lead, and affect the future development on the stage.

## 1.2 Selection of field

Why the study is set in Ecuador, is to get away from an Eurocentric perspective and to see how the statistics on the stage looks in a developing country. The knowledge about Ecuador is for me very limited and with the western world perspective it is easy to judge it as an unequal country. With my initial Swedish perspective and the idea about Sweden as an equal country, it is interesting to see if the condition at the Electronic music stage is mirrored by the fact that a land is deemed equal or not.

Through the organization *Sida* (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency) and their scholarship for a Minor Field Study gave the opportunity to study the subject in a country with a culture that is unknown for me. The purpose with the scholarship is to support a field study in a development country for eight to ten weeks. The field study should highlight a development issue related to some of the United

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<sup>6</sup>Jämställd festival. 2015.

Nations 17 sustainable development goals, and the study should be followed out in a development country.

As mentioned in the *Introduction* the electronic music is at the forefront, and in a review made by DJ Mag about the *Lost Beach Club* in Montanita, Ecuador, they say that Ecuador is where Ibiza was 20 years ago and where Brazil was ten years ago, in the development of electronic music. In this development the owner of *Lost Beach Club* is mentioned as an important part of the scene's growth in Ecuador.<sup>7</sup> Because of this fact, *Lost Beach Club* became my sample for this field study.

### 1.3 Terms

The main focus for this paper is the gender equal perspective on the electronic music stage and who is playing the music. The music as a genre is not going to be researched or analyzed but still the term *electronic music* is going to be used a lot. The term is used with the wide meaning of music played electronically to not exclude any possible sub genres. The limitation for my use of the term is that the artists use DJ equipment and play music created electronically.

The term *stage* is used for the physical stage but also for a more general expression that refers to the visual stage. To distinguish the terms with different meanings, the term is used initially as a general expression. However in the sections about the *Lost Beach Club*, the result and analysis the term refers to the specific, physical stage at the club or the events, from where the artist or DJ perform their music.

### 1.4 Previous research

The specific field including gender equality at the electronic music stage in Ecuador is probably a quite unexplored field, at least not yet noted for the western world, since literature is not able to find. As no research in this specific field in Ecuador is found, it is needed to divide the topic into different parts. The insight in the previous research needs to treat the subject both in a historical perspective of Ecuador as a country and

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<sup>7</sup> DJ Mag. 2016

where they stand today, but also a more international gender perspective in the specific music field.

In the book *¡Alerta! Reportage från ett Ecuador i förändring* (eng. *¡Alerta! Reports from Ecuador in change*), from 2008, the situation in Ecuador presents from a bottom-up approach by collage students from a course in global justice, who visited and lived in Ecuador for five month. The book is not science literature, but is still showing the background of Ecuador. It is one of few books that been written about Ecuador the last decade and with the close up perspective I believe it is the closest insight, as a western world citizen, I can get for a status report. The book is used for the background information in the section *Background*.

In Sweden, the gender inequality is an current topic and both gender researchers and organizations brings up the problem around gender inequality on stage. Anna Gavanoas is a doctor in social anthropology, associate professor in gender research, DJ and have also published articles and science about electronic music and the DJ-culture. In the book *Rundgång*, from 2009 she writes the article "You better be listening to my fucking music you bastard". It is about that women are not equal appreciated as men, regarding their musical ability, and does not get the same respect as male DJ:s. Instead, the women needs to use masculine attributes to be respected and accepted.<sup>8</sup> Anna Östström, who together with Anna Gavanoas has written about the DJ life in Stockholm, Sweden, is also committed to the gender discussion. In her article "We call it Swedish techno" she describes that the electronic music often is associated with the male. Women always has to prove their knowledge, because they are not generally expected to have as broad knowledge about technique as men does.<sup>9</sup> Those are Swedish examples noted, but it is also a more international questioning in the topic and both active artists, musicologists and gender researchers writes about this subject. For example Freida Abtan, a Canadian living in London, that works as a composer and teacher in music computing, writes in

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<sup>8</sup> Ganetz. 2009:254

<sup>9</sup> Östström. 2016

the article "Where Is She? Finding the Woman in Electronic Music Culture" about that males are more privileged in the electronic music social networks.<sup>10</sup>

## 2. Background

In this section the field of this study is going to be presented, to give an insight and an understanding of how the history and the present looks today. The historical background and its contexts is what provides the understanding of the situation for the country, women and men, and the present situation around equality between gender. The background will also treat a more close up perspective of the *Lost Beach Club*, who is the sample for the study.

### 2.1 Ecuador

Ecuador is a country affected by 300 years of colonization, 1822 was the year for their independence. 1978 Ecuador became a democracy, but the country was and are still threatened by corruption. Oil is the main export in Ecuador and the second biggest income is remittances.<sup>11</sup> The previously elected presidents was often set aside but the current president, Rafael Correa, is still the remaining leader, since 2007.<sup>12</sup> Since then, the government have made investments, particularly in education and health care, increased the financial support to vulnerable families and made it possible for more people to be covered by social security.<sup>13</sup>

Many of the schools are under Catholic foundation and even if sex education sometimes is included in the teaching it is not clear that contraceptive device is a part of it. The religion also affects the way to look at abortion, homosexuality and other roles of genders.<sup>14</sup> At the time the book *Alerta* was wrote in 2008, a new constitution was being drawn up and was submitted hopes for the country's inhabitants. The new input in the

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<sup>10</sup>Abtan. 2016:53

<sup>11</sup> Bengtsson. 2008:11-15

<sup>12</sup> Bengtsson. 2008:11 -15

<sup>13</sup> The Swedish foreign office. 2012:2

<sup>14</sup> Bengtsson. 2008:118-120

constitution was about non-discrimination between people, but mostly focused on the difference between ethnic groups, not between the genders.<sup>15</sup>

According to the "Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs report" from 2012, discrimination is still a reality even if the constitution states that man and woman has the same equal rights and prohibits gender discrimination. The constitution also says that all public authorities shall work towards gender equality and states that women's rights in the society is under reformation. More women carry a higher education but still there occurs discrimination and difference in the wage, for example. Domestic violence and sexual violence against women is a problem that rarely is punished by the legal system.<sup>16</sup> In Quito there is a feminist social venue called *Casa Feminista de Rosa* that work with different feminist targets and have a close cooperation with the HBT-movement, and the organization is completely voluntarily funded. The issues the organization are working actively with is about to legalize abortion, the right to the own their body and to forbid rape within marriage.<sup>17</sup>

## 2.2 Lost Beach Club

On the *Lost Beach Club* Facebook page, the club is describes as an electronic music club by the beach in the city of Montanita, that have been ranked by *DJ Mag* as one of the seven best beach clubs in the entire world. Every Saturday there is an international artists playing techno, house or progressive electronic music, and on Fridays and Mondays national artists enters on the stage in *The Cave*.<sup>18</sup> *The Cave* is one of the dance floors at *Lost Beach Club* that the owner decided to build when they got to close the place at four o'clock in the morning, because of the law that opposes to sound after four o'clock. With meter thick walls it served as a bunker who prevented the sound to leak out. Except from *The Cave* there are three more dance floors in the club.<sup>19</sup> All of the club has been built gradually as the money came in and because of the club and the

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<sup>15</sup> Bengtsson. 2008:94-96

<sup>16</sup> The Swedish foreign office. 2012:2

<sup>17</sup> Bengtsson. 2008:94-96

<sup>18</sup> Facebook. 2016

<sup>19</sup> DJ Mag. 2016

growing popularity, the city Montanita had become an attractive tourist destination. The city have become a holiday destination for both Ecuadorians and international travelers and *Lost Beach Club* is ranked as the 57th best electro clubs out of 100 in all of the world, in the year of 2015, by the journal *DJ Mag*.<sup>20</sup>

### 3. Theory

In this section, three parts of the gender theories will be brought up. Gender theories focus on analyzing through a gender perspective, treating for example power structures and structures around sex and gender. Initially, in this section, the concept about doing gender and the social structures around it, will be introduced. Hirdman's view on the male as the norm and the forms where women are existing as an inferior form of the man follows and the postmodern feminism and its way to question norms around created structures will end this section.

#### 3.1 To do gender

The Concept *to do gender* was invented by Candice West and Don Zimmerman and means that gender is something that is established through meetings between people, in both reproduction of behavior and in the changing of that behavior. We can not choose to not do gender, but the gender is formable through many aspects.<sup>21</sup> Hedeneus, Björk and Shumyar Gréen, editors of the book *Feministiskt tänkande och sociologi: teorier, begrepp och tillämpningar*. The book says that the term gender was launched by Robert Stoller, a psychoanalyst, in the 1960's. The concept was about to take away the focus of the biological sex, and instead focus on the feminine and masculine social constructions. In that way the use of the gender term also invited the possibility to see more than just two genders.<sup>22</sup> This part of the gender theory is included in this study to open up the judgement of the gender, but it also to see how the gender constructions compliance.

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<sup>20</sup> DJ Mag. 2016

<sup>21</sup> Hedenus et al. 2015:67

<sup>22</sup> Hedenus et al. 2015:64-65

### 3.2 The male as the norm

Yvonne Hirdman, professor in history, was the one who launched the term gender in Sweden and means that the society maintains a system where females and males are ascribed certain roles. Hirdman is explaining the hierarchy and the structure between gender through formulas and she means that there are three forms of how the hierarchy in gender is structured. The basic form in the formula is always the man which stands for the norm and the initial for a human.<sup>23</sup> The woman exists in three ways. The first perspective of the woman is the ground form for the two coming and is about how the woman is not a man. The woman is not visible, does not have an own form and is instead seen as *not a man*. It is about when the woman exists but not is seen or noticed.<sup>24</sup> As an extended form, from the first, Hirdman describes the comparative form who instead puts the woman in a position of an incomplete individual who does not reach the grades of the man and is just an inferior creation of him.<sup>25</sup> The third form, called the normative form is a total distinguishing between the gender. Instead of comparison, they are divided like different species. Hirdman means that probably this form is a development from the first form, where the woman is not visible, but instead takes a leap to a second gender model. The purpose by the separation between gender was to create more room for the women and get away from the comparison. Instead prescriptive rules for the women got determined.<sup>26</sup> These prescriptive rules has in the history been questioned in different ways and Hirdman mention it in a gender conflict context where women also could settle in to other careers and courses outside the norm. In some case as an utilization of labor matter but also the belief of a democratic point of view.<sup>27</sup> Even if the idea is that women also could become, for example successful, they are separates from being admitted in the same basis as men. Because they are women they are not only successful, instead they are successful *women*.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Hirdman. 2003:57

<sup>24</sup> Hirdman. 2003:27

<sup>25</sup> Hirdman. 2003:28

<sup>26</sup> Hirdman. 2003:35-36

<sup>27</sup> Hirdman. 2003:108

<sup>28</sup> Hirdman. 2003:114

### 3.3 Postmodern feminism

The postmodern feminism is about theories that questions all the structures and categories that is assumed. Instead of a reversed perspective, the interest lays in how identity is shaped around the given social concepts, for example what is happening when someone starts to call someone a woman. Judith Butler is an important philosopher in the topic and wants to take away the universal use of the categorizing and the norms they are joined with and see further than a two point perspective that puts opposites against each other. She means that it is important to question the norm around the concept *women* and not only analyze from a women perspective.<sup>29</sup> This is a part of where to question the use of the content or category of, for example, male and female before a title.

## 4. Method and material

### 4.1 Material collection and selection

The material, selected for this study, is observations on the club at three different events, posters and flyers from the events and contact with the event producer. The selection of *Lost Beach Club*, as the foundation in this study material, is pending much of what is written in the section *Background, Lost Beach Club*, and what is mentioned there. For example that it is a club visited by both national inhabitants and international visitors, and that the club plays an important part of the development of electronic music in Ecuador. *Lost Beach Club* is a good sample for this study because it is a club with several events with various themes, It is also located in different facilities and also in different cities, since they made a guest event in Guayaquil, Ecuador. In this way it would be an extensive field study without doing it sprawling, as it could be if the study carried out in several clubs. Three different events, produced by *Lost Beach Club* are the basis for the study. The first event was a four day festival, *Lost Beach festival*, that reaches over Thursday to Saturday and the observation, made on the Friday, became the sample and the basis for the perception for the festival. By focusing on one of the days, a more detailed insight in how the electronic music and the dance was built up, was

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<sup>29</sup> Hedenus et al. 2015:83-85

made. The day who was selected for the study was made because of the knowledge from the marketing of the festival, who said that both men and a women was playing that night. Instead of visiting the festival one more time the choice was to visit the Monday club, called *Ladies Night*. The name *Ladies Night* was the reason why the study of the Monday evening sounded interesting. The third study object, *Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil* by *Lost Beach Club*, was hold in the city Guayaquil, the city with most inhabitants in Ecuador. The event was free and it was interesting to see how *Lost Beach Club* was presenting themselves and the DJs in a different location.

Every weekend there is one or two events similar to the days of *Lost Beach festival* but instead limited to the evening and night. *Ladies Night* is a recurrent event which always take places in the weeks. Because of the recurrence of the event, they are representative for the club and this study. With a detour to *Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil* the perspective broadens and show how the club is represented outside their own facilities.

Except from the observation and visits at the club events, the printed material was something who was taken account of. Their Facebook page was upgraded actively with their marketing material and the same material was found around the club, at least one poster for every event and if there was several, one poster could be assumed to be the main one. The marketing material was a way to understand how they wanted to present the events and artists, and it gave an insight in what the club wanted to highlight for the potential guest.

Correspondence with the producer of the *Lost Beach Club* event was needed to understand the thoughts behind the booking of artists and how they were managed. The purpose with correspondence with the producer was to understand if there was a conscious about how the stage should be equal or not.

## 4.2 Course of action

This field study contains both an observations study, a collection of documents and a personal contact with producers behind the events. The observation, as a method to study actions in live time, is a way to translate the reality to manage to take a closer look and understand it<sup>30</sup>. The observation includes both systematic and unsystematic observation. What is meant with the systematic part of the observation is that the situations in the study is known and, in this case, about the statistic counting of male and female on the stage because, it is know there will be either females or males on stage.<sup>31</sup> Some questions was also written to have some kind of starting point and preparation before the study. The question carried along the observation was:

How does the room look?

How many of the artist are female/male?

Do the artist move in a special way?

Do the artist talk to the audience?

How does the audience receive the artist?

How does the audience move?

Are the audience directed against each other or agains the music stage?

How big is the audience?

How many in the audience is female/male?

The unsystematic part of the observation is about collecting material that I, as an observer, does not have previous knowledge about. Instead it is needed to register what is shown meanwhile the observation is made.<sup>32</sup> As a new guest to both the club and the culture there, the unsystematic observation broadened the approach and made it possible to register other actions in the club such as audience, behavior on the stage, behavior in the audience and how the DJ was received by the audience. The *Lost Beach Festival* became the most important event and the main event that could invite me into the electro music stage here in Ecuador. Therefore six hour was spent there, from when they opened until they closed. In the two other events half of the time was spend because

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<sup>30</sup> Patel & Davidsson. 1991:92

<sup>31</sup> Patel & Davidsson. 1991:93

<sup>32</sup> Patel & Davidsson. 1991:97

now an idea of how the evening should proceed was already established. In place at the various events different roles were taken, sometimes as an observer from the back and sometimes closer to participate in the dancing. Notes were made by paper and pen, but to hide the observation even more, notes were made in the phone when the observation was more included with the audience.

The document collection was made along the way, when it came closer to the date of the event. Most of the documents were printed and collected from the *Lost beach Club* Facebook page, but some of them were also posted on a wall outside *Lost Beach Club*.

The correspondence with the producers behind the *Lost Beach Club* event was made through Facebook. In the message to them an introduction about the study was made and the question, about how they decide which artists they book and which criteria they use for selecting them, was asked.

Assisted by my companion Disa Mattsson, the observation got an interrater reliability when we observe from two individual perspectives and, later on, discuss our different perceptions. Four eyes is always more than two and that was helpful in a situation when filming was forbidden and situations can not be repeated. With a pair of extra eyes, perceived experiences could be confirmed or corrected with a different opinion. As she also made a study in the contemporary arts field, also with a gender perspective, it was broadened the picture of gender equality of the contemporary culture in Ecuador.

### 4.3 Ethical aspects

The Stage that is research in this study is a public event where the information about performing artists is visible for everyone. My perspective is from a visitor's view and in that way I am not going to take part of information that is not visible for everyone in my observations. In my correspondence with the producer connected to the stage anonymity has been promised and identity details will not be omitted.

#### 4.4 Sources and source criticism

As *Lost Beach Club* is my study sample it would be a representing field because of the width of the various event, as mentioned in the section about material collection and selection. It would answer the question of how the gender equality looks like at the electronic music stage in Ecuador on the largest stages. Still it is not possible to generalize in every aspect, but at least give an insight in how the most popular areas look like. As a superior to smaller stages it could implement a trend. Problematic with this study is that *Lost Beach Club* have a lot of international artist and would probably not show how the national division between male and female look like.

Along with my study and the estimation of gender I had used my awareness of the possible that gender also can be non binary. A non binary gender could be problematic and harder to estimate. To judge what gender a person identifies him- or herself with becomes a part of the unsystematic observation and it is something that I, as a receiver, uses soft values to recognize. I did not perceive that this was a problem in this study, but I can not tell for sure. The stereotype norms is what has been the basic of my estimation. An estimation of who is female and male, both on the stage and in the audience, is made trough the stereotype norms that is build up in the society and inside of me. The judgment foundation lays in of how they dress, their appearance and, in the artists case, their names.

In Ecuador the language that is spoken is Spanish and that is outside my knowledge. In those cases, where translation has been needed, I took help through digital translation programs. The translation has only been needed for the document collection of the printed sources and have not required any deep analysis so even if gradations in the material not becomes visible it does not matter that much. In the contact though mail or Facebook, English was the used language and did not cause any difficulties.

## 5. Results

The question I brought with me through the observation, as I mentioned earlier in the section *Course and action*, will be repeated below and will be answered various, depending on how much the observation actually was showing. Also details outside the question, that I found interesting and that will add value, will be presented. All of this, together with the document collection will be presented, in separate sections for each event. The answered question from contacts in the field will be presented in an own section.

How does the room look?

How many of the artist are female/male?

Do the artist move in a special way?

Do the artist talk to the audience?

How does the audience receive the artist?

How does the audience move?

Are the audience directed against each other or against the stage?

How big is the audience?

How many in the audience is female/male?

### 5.1 *Lost Beach festival*

#### 5.1.1 **Observation**

The observation of the festival was made on a Friday, fourth of November, between 22.00 - 04.00. The entrance cost for me was fifteen dollars and to get a VIP ticket the cost was 30 dollars and that ticket would give you entrance to a special area behind the DJ, to view both the Artist and the audience without VIP tickets. Most parts of the club space was covered with a bamboo ceiling but the area with a fountain and graffiti walls was open all the way up to the stars. A large space with a concrete floor invited the audience to dance, but there were also areas where you could sit together, either in a wooden sofa or at the edge of the fountain. Behind the DJ was a VIP area slightly elevated above the regular dance floor. Between the VIP area and the regular dance floor was a bar placed to serve guest from booth areas.

The first DJ was a male and played between 22.00 - 01.00. By half a hour from when he began there was about 100 people in the club. After one more hour there was 200 and after another hour there was about 450 people inside. When the clock was 01.00, an other DJ took place on the stage. It was a female and she played till 04.00. Around 800 - 1000 people was inside the club by 02.00 but still there were place for more people. This calculation is confirmed by the correspondence with the producer of *Lost Beach Club* as the producer estimated the same number of people. An estimated 75 percent of the audience was males and the other 25 percent was females.

Most of the people was dancing against the stage, not to each others. They moved in sideways, most of the people in the same direction, almost like they were lines up. Both of the DJ's moved in the same way, also them in sideways from right to left, left to right but with smaller movements, while they adjusted the sounds on their sound table and held one hand on their headphones.

The audience shouted out sounds when the DJ created a climax in the music. The sounds seemed more enthusiastic later at night while the second DJ was playing. The only word, spoken from the DJ's, was a "thank you" after the last song for the night. And the audience cheered even more.

### **5.1.2 Documents, posters and flyers**

For the festival event in *Lost Beach Club* two posters was found. The first appendix shows one of the poster who presents the four main DJ's. One for each night at the festival. Two of them are females and two of them are males. Also special guest are announced on the poster. It is one female group and one male DJ. It is a picture of each of the announced DJ's.

In the second appendix the poster announce twelve more DJs than the four in the previous appendix. Those twelve DJs where divided between the four days but were not highlighted as the main DJ's. All of the twelve unhighlighted was men. There is also unnamed DJ's, and the poster says they going to play in the part of the club that is called the Cave.

## 5.2 Ladies night

### 5.2.1 Observation

The observation for *Ladies night* was made on a Monday, the seventh of November, between 22.00 - 01.00. The entrance was beside the regular entrance to *Lost Beach Club* and led to *the Cave*, the smaller dance floor at *Lost Beach Club* and the entrance was free for females and between five to ten dollars for males, depending on what time they entered. The Cave was formed like a box and had one bar and a stair that led to some kind of balconies where the visitors could overview the audience. No surfaces for seating did exist in *the Cave*. Two male DJ's was alternated between each other at the sound table while they were grooving to the music. By 23.00 there was 30 people in the audience and by 00.30 there was about 100 people. I estimated that about 75 percent of the audience was males and the remaining 25 percent was females. Also here the audience was dancing against the stage, in sideways. *The Cave* was not even half full and no shouting or sounds was made by the audience.

### 5.2.2 Documents, posters and flyers

The third appendix is a poster from the event *Ladies night* at *Lost Beach Club*. The poster is not presenting any names, time or cost for the event. There is an illustrated female on the poster, dressed in a raffia skirt and a bikini top and the name *Ladies night* is printed big on the poster. By the *Lost Beach Club* Facebook page the information about the time and cost for the event was printed and said that the *Ladies night* is free for women while the cost for men was five to ten dollars depending on what time they entered.

## 5.3 Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil

### 5.3.1 Observation

The observation for *Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil* was made between 17.30 - 21.30 the twelfth of November at *Concha Acustica* in the park *Samanes* in Guayaquil. *Samanes* is a big park with an outdoor stage. The event was

starting by 16.00 and was free for everybody. As I came by 17.30 there was already several thousand people in the audience and it continued to fill up with more people. On the stage the DJ's equipment and speakers was built up in the center, and around it some armchairs was placed, probably for the DJ's special selected people. Three females was standing, talking and dancing quite visible and exposing on the stage on the left side of the speakers and the DJ area. An other woman and several men was sitting in the armchair more far behind the DJ, talking.

Below the stage, the audience was standing both on, in front of and behind the permanent concrete benches all the way back, until there was not any benches left. Most of the audience was dancing sideways in the same direction against the stage. The people that did not dance, took instead a place in the grass behind the compact part of the audience. The estimation of the audience size and the division between females and males was to hard to accomplish because of the high amount of people.

The three DJ's that played at the event during my observation was males and played for approximately one hour each. Any of them did not do any grand gestures but was still grooving a little to their music while they adjusted the sounds.

A lot of sounds and shouting was made by the audience and was increasing while the music got into its climax. It increased even more when two males, dresses as spiderman and his rival entered the stage and both danced and made acrobatics.

### **5.3.2 Documents, posters and flyers**

The fourth appendix is a flyer from the *Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil* event. The text is telling what place and time the event is hold.

In the background of the flyer the *Couch Acustica* stage in the park *Samanes* is illustrated. The Facebook page for the event says that eight male DJ's are going to perform and that the event is free for everybody.

## 5.4 Correspondence with *Lost Beach Club* Producer

Correspondence with the producer of the *Lost beach Club* was made through the *Lost Beach Club* Facebook page. The correspondence showed that they do not have a criteria treating the gender aspect in their booking of the DJ's. Instead they point out the importance of an artist that is a well known music producer in Ecuador with talent. Talent are highlighted as more important than gender. The designer of the posters is a male in-house designer and their estimation of visitors at the club confirms my calculation. The correspondence with the producer is found in the appendix 5.

## 6. Analysis

Through this result of the collected material, through observations, posters, flyers and correspondence with the producer of the events, it starts to prove some similarities and also differences between the events. Following, the main question for this thesis will be presented, one section for each, were the similarities and differences from the three events will be merged.

### 6.1 How many women and men are represented on the stage?

Most obvious in the result, is that the stage do not contain the same amount of men and women. The men are more represented than the women and sometimes also the only gender represented on the stage. In this perspective it would be easy to argue that the stage is not equal and through Hirdman's model, argue that the male is the norm and the female is the invisible, subordinated something, that is *not a man*.<sup>33</sup> From this perspective, through *not being a man*, the stage does not give the space for a female artist. But in this case the female are visible, even if it is in more limited or less time. Hirdman's second perspective, about the female being a subordinated form of the man, would be more of the cause here.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Hirdman. 2003:57

<sup>34</sup> Hirdman. 2003:28

If it was not for the biological look and the name of the artists it would be a hard time sort the artists out, in different gender groups. In all of the three events the artists movement and their way to perform did not separate the gender, or even the individual artist that much. It was an appearance where gender was not the focus. It corresponds well with the clubs spoken criteria for the artist booking, as they expressly said, that they only make their selection on account of talent. The implication in the extension is that gender is not something that is taken into account. This proves for a stage free from gender discrimination and maybe it is in some way, but swallow it hook, line and sinker is not something I do.

The stage area and the DJ culture has its own norms of how to be and behave and by the overrepresented number of males on stage, there probably is a norm originally coming from them. In Abtan's article "Where Is She? Finding the Women in Electronic Music", she writes "It's true that women face a unique set of pressures as performers of electronic music. They must often choose between sexualizing themselves and being invisible in modern culture".<sup>35</sup> Even if sexualization is not shown on the stage in this study, at least not from the performing DJ's, the females falls into the norm, structured by men. This falls into an angel of Hirdmans second form of the relation between male and female where the female is seen as an incomplete individual and as an inferior creation of him. So to reach for the same level as the male on the stage, is to be like a male or to be something for the him.<sup>36</sup>

At the *Lost Beach Festival* event and the *Ladies Night* event the stage was only for the playing DJ. The *Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil* event was different. Of the people that sat or moved around on the stage, the most visible was the three women that stood on the left side of the DJ area, dancing with each other and against the audience. The three females was exposed and projected for the audience. As this was the *Lost Beach Party Experience*, probably it was something that they wanted

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<sup>35</sup> Abtan. 2016:54

<sup>36</sup> Hirdman. 2003:28

to be representative for the club, since it was what they choose to show for this guest event.

## 6.2 How is the relations between audience and artist seen through a gender perspective?

In the reception of the artist the audience did give an impression of treating the male and female artist in the same way. What separated the reception was how the audience was cheering the night at *Lost Beach Festival*, that only time I experienced a female on stage in this study. The shouting was stronger and more of what experienced as ecstatic. However, this is nothing that can be derived to the gender aspect. Instead the excitement and the appreciation from the audience probably is connected to the great name of the DJ.

Another aspect to take into consideration is the postmodern feminisms and its view of structures created by categorizing.<sup>37</sup> Even if the DJ is not mentioned as a female, the audience knows and acts unconsciously when they experience the DJ and place the DJ in a gender norm, after they have placed the person in the male or female category. It returns to the concept *to do gender* in how the audience ascribe the DJ a gender because of norms and social structures.<sup>38</sup> Suddenly the judgement is not based on the same expectations, instead they are made from a male or female category judging. In fields like this, including technology Freida Abtan express "...the boys were invited to make music before they had the necessary skills to be successful at it. The girls were only invited if they were someone's girlfriend or had pre-existing extensive technical knowledge"<sup>39</sup>. The girl or the women have completely different possibilities in this field and can, from a different angle, also get stuck in what Hirdman mentions as the gender conflict. To be a female, choosing a field with masculine dominance can make the female even more visible but by just being a *female* DJ, she is not going to be admitted in the same basis as men, instead she is praised to the skies because she is a woman.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Hedenus et al. 2015:83-85

<sup>38</sup> Hedenus et al. 2015:67

<sup>39</sup> Abtan. 2016:55

<sup>40</sup> Hedenus et al. 2015:83-85

### 6.3 How is the marketing material for the the events designed seen through a gender perspective?

The marketing material is what gives the first glimpse of what an event is going to be about. With this first experience the producers of the event can chose how they want to highlight and sell in their event.

The posters for the *Lost Beach Festival* was, without try to doing an art analysis, illustrated in a way that was experienced pass gender and without focus on gender. Both female and male artist where represented equal in the pictures of the main artist as the both genders got the same amount of space. What was changing that opinion was all the DJs that was represented under each main DJ (see appendix 2). As the highlighted main DJs was 50 percent women, the not highlighted DJ were only men. This result is what creates questions about why and how females does not have a place more than in the top of the DJ pyramid. As mentioned earlier, Freda Abtan was writing about that men are more privileged in social network of the electronic music. That it is what could be a big reason why females are not as visible as males in the DJ field. This track will return and be followed up in the conclusion.

In the third appendix from the *Ladies night* event a different angel was made. No names of the DJ's is visible, instead the event name *Ladies night* and an illustrated female, dressed in a raffia skirt and a bikini top is exposed over the poster. To actually understand the event you needed to read on their Facebook page. In this case the *Ladies night* was about the female audience since the event title was referring to the free entrance for women. In this case the women becomes marketing material and a way to lure the opposite sex. By letting the women go in for free, more men was going to attend the event so objectification of women becomes a fact. This contention also amplifies by the illustrated female on the poster. A female, illustrated on a poster, must of course not mean that it is unequal produced, but in this context the female is pictured by sitting and doing nothing, and that makes her more of an object than a participant. An opposite event, a guys night, does not exist at the club but as an assumption, probably females would not be welcome in an event like that. With the male as the

superior and the female as the inferior model of him, by Hirdman's models, the male as a norm is always invited, but the female is only invited when it is spoken.<sup>41</sup>

In the flyer from the *Lost Beach Party Experience - Edicion Especial Guayaquil* the most highlighted text was the title *Lost Beach Experience* and by that name it gives a clear explanation of what the event is about, a experience of *Lost Beach Club*. For an observational perspective the name of the event tells that this is a possibility for *Lost beach Club*, to show who they are and how they want to represent and highlight themselves. It was not said on the poster, but the list of eight male DJ's was printed on their Facebook page, and that was the experience and perception the audience got to take part of and that is what is going to be associated with *Lost Beach Club*.

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<sup>41</sup> Hirdman. 2003:57

## 7. Conclusion

If the case is, as this study shows, that the booking of artist are always bases on talent and great music skills the following is the studies conclusion. My assumption is that both male and females can be or become talented in the same grounds, and this is also the approach I expect all people to have today, even if Hirdman's gender models portrays the women as an inferior.<sup>42</sup> With that approach, there is only two different perspective to see why males are more dominant on the stage than females.

The first perspective is about that the Dj-culture is not inviting for women, as it is for men. Women do not have the same opportunities as men to get in touch with the field. As other researchers says, the technical world that is a part of the DJ-culture, are more accessible for men because technical skills is something that belongs to the males. It is what Freida Abtan writes in the article *Where Is She? Finding the Woman in Electronic Music Culture* as i mentions in *Previous Research*. Males are more privileged in the electronic music social networks.<sup>43</sup> The woman is instead seen as the incomplete individual, without the right knowledge and an inferior creation of the man. Just like Hirdman describes in on of her gender perspectives models, were the male is the original and the female is unable to reach for the same position, because of her imperfection.<sup>44</sup>

The other perspective of why the stage is more dominated by males is an extension of the first angel. What is shown in this study is that women exist on the electronic music stage, but not in the same extension as men. The study also shows that women gets the same respect as the men on stage. The big difference is in that the women, that is visible in this study, only plays in the main acts. In the other cases it is only men performing. The study shows that women is only visible in the field when they are "top-notch". Males can take place on the stage even if they are mediocre. This, without asserting that any artist at *Lost Beach Club* was mediocre in their performance. What is implied is that, as a DJ, even if you are not in the top, you can reach a big stage as a male, but not

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<sup>42</sup> Hirdman. 2003:57

<sup>43</sup> Abtan. 2016:53

<sup>44</sup> Hirdman. 2003: 28

as a female. The females are not privileged in the DJ-culture and by taking a part of a masculine culture you either need to act masculine or take the place you want to have by actively work through a specific social network. Through that effort probably only the very dedicated females will maintain in the field and also be the ones that can reach the top. The masculine gender structures is so incorporated in the DJ culture so the masculine structures compliance both from males and females. It almost becomes an exploitation of the masculine gender structures from women, ”to do gender”, to reach for the same positions as men. Suddenly it has no affinity with the sex of the DJ, instead it only about social structures and a way to choose gender. It becomes almost a development of Robert Stoller’s formation of the concept gender.<sup>45</sup> Instead of falling within certain social structures, it becomes a way to select the structures to choose a gender.

The way women where exposed in the marketing material for *Ladies Night*, the *Ladies Night* free entrance, and also that time three random women was dancing on stage for the *Lost Beach Experience* event, ascribes social structures that is about the male as the superior and the women female is ascribed a certain role, used for lure men to participate. The women falls in to this constructed norm of being an object or a trophy, only existing for men.

The stage is simply unequal because of the only welcome gender on stage is the male. Females need to become a male before they reach the stage. The stage will not be equal until all social structures is welcome and the possibility of choosing between them freely is established. Before the stage can be equal and be fully adopted as genderless the consciousness of gender need to be taken seriously. As the book *Feministiskt tänkande och sociologi: teorier, begrepp och tillämpningar* points out, the work toward gender equality is forced to treat different gender norms and structures, so the gender norms finally could be abolished.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>45</sup> Hedenus et al. 2015:64-65

<sup>46</sup> Hedenus et al. 2015:33-35

## 8. Closing thoughts

So who has the responsibility to make the electronic music stage equal? As the study shows it is not the producers fault that the stage is unequal, or is it? My opinion is that the problem is established at an earlier stage, but that don't mean that it is where the problem should be solved. If the producers of electro music event took more responsibility to book more female DJs, the demand and space would be bigger for women in the DJ networks. Problematic in this case is that most of all clubs are commercial and an intention of profits.

By booking by talent is of course the ultimate selection, but where we stand today, it is a to slow process. Actions need to be taken on all levels to accelerate the balance between the genders. Selecting by talent is a privilege that only could be made in a welfare- and balance between the genders, when we reached equality.

Still some parts of Ecuador is about fundamental rights for women and the field of the equality on the electronic music stage can experience as a long shot, but thats not my opinion. The electro music field is an important field for the youth in Ecuador and the perfect place to establish equality. By establish equality in this field, it will come from a grassroots perspective and the affirmative action will accustom a group of people that is young and that can affect the future.

As was mentioned in the *Introduction*, Sweden is a country that works towards a more equal stage and the consciousness in the subject is shown both in news, marketing and the measurement of statistics. This Consciousness does not exist in the same way in Ecuador and no work towards a more equal stage has been visible for me under my visit there. 29 is the number of ranking places that separates Sweden and Ecuador in the *Global Gender Gap report* from 2015 were Sweden is in the top four.<sup>47</sup> In some way this generalizing report mirrors the reality, but not completely. My perspective is that maybe Ecuador have a reason that they are not in the same level of consciousness as Sweden, but Sweden on the other hand should, as an occupant of place number four in

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<sup>47</sup> World economics forum. 2015:8

the ranking, be even more equal. The consciousness needs to be more widely-spread because equality is everyones responsibility.

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# Appendix

## Appendix 1: *Lost Beach Festival*



## Appendix 2: *Lost Beach Festival*



Appendix 3: *Ladies Night*



Appendix 4: *Lost Beach Party Experience - Edición Especial Guayaquil*



## Appendix 5: Correspondence with *Lost Beach Club* producer.

**Me:**

Hi! I'm a musicology student from Sweden and I have been in Montanita for a week now, to study the electro music stage in a gender equal perspective here. It's been a great time visiting your club and listening to the really good DJ's. I wish to ask you some questions for my work. Hope you have the time to answer them.

1. What a wonder is about how you choose when you're booking the DJ's. Is there any special criteria?

2. I also wonder who creates the poster and the material.

Hope you want to help me.  
Best Wishes Carolina

**Event producer:**

sure, they have to be well known producers with an audience in Ecuador.  
and who are good DJs of course  
we have an in-house designer and work with local print shops

**Me:**

Thanks! Do you have any policy about booking male or female DJ's? Your in-house designer, is it a man or a woman?

**Event producer:**

we are very happy to bring DJ's based on talent, not on gender, as you can see in our event lineups for the past years  
designer male

**Me:**

notices that! Thanks a lot for the answers. It was a really nice festival this weekend.

**Event producer:**

Glad you enjoyed! during high season there are easily twice as many people in the normal parties

**Me:**

okey! Do you have a number of how many people were visiting the club on the Friday at the festival?

**Event producer:**

its hard to tell for a specific festival day but it was over 1000

**Me:**

great! thanks!

