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**The Feminine Label, the Masculine Voice: Baddiecore and the Racialized Gender Construction of Genre in Digital Metal Communities**

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**ABSTRACT**

On 18 August 2023, "Baddiecore" emerged as a fan-coined label described as "metalcore with enough pop music crossover and sex appeal that normie hot people like it," according to a viral X post by Craig Reynolds. Although bands like Sleep Token, Bad Omens, and Spiritbox were initially associated with the term, "Baddie" itself is rooted in Black American digital and feminist culture. This creates a tension when the genre is visually and sonically dominated by white male artists. This study examines how Baddiecore reflects the gendered construction of genre in digital metal communities, using the framework of postfeminist sensibility. Employing content analysis, the study draws 108 public posts on X between August 2023 and December 2024, using keywords like "Baddiecore" and associated band names. Findings show that Baddiecore was initially met with contestation due to its feminized tone but later gained acceptance, particularly among women fans engaging through merchandise and aesthetic participation. However, genre ownership remains centered around white male artists, with only two solo women and one female-fronted band visibly linked to the term. Ultimately, Baddiecore reveals how genre can operate as a site of aestheticized neoliberal femininity, shaped yet remains a space historically dominated by white, male voices.

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## INTRODUCTION

On 18 August 2023, Stray from the Path's drummer, Craig Reynolds, wrote on X (formerly Twitter) a new genre label, namely "Baddiecore", as "metalcore with enough pop music crossover and sex appeal that normie hot people like it" (Reynolds, 2023b). Metalcore is a subgenre that fuses elements of melodic death metal, hardcore, and crossover thrash (Hillier, 2020) and is considered among commercial metal styles (Weinstein, 2015). Although metal has been theorized as masculine or even hypermasculine as it has built on the existing gendering of rock music (Hill, 2023), Baddiecore marks a shift in aesthetic framing. Reynolds categorizes bands, such as Sleep Token, Bad Omens, Spiritbox, Architects, Motionless in White, Holding Absence, and Dayseeker, as Baddiecore bands as they are having metalcore's sonical intensity with "dulcet tones and demure yet dramatic demeanor of strands of R&B and hip-hop which was previously referred to as 'bedroom' music" with the "aesthetic that is thought of as hypersexualized (aka 'thirsty'))" (Sobande, 2025). These artists are frequently celebrated for their sleek

visuals and emotional intensity. Baddiecore draws its name from the term "baddie", a derivative of "bad bitch", usually associated with Black American cultural expression and referring to Black women who are seen as self-possessed and unapologetically confident (Sobande, 2025). The irony, then, is that this term, originating in a space of racialized self-assertion, is now applied to a scene overwhelmingly fronted by white, male artists.

While Baddiecore appears to subvert traditional metal masculinity through emotional openness, visual softness, and fan desire, it ultimately reasserts hegemonic gender norms. As Connell (1987) (in Windsor, 2015) argues, hegemonic masculinity defines itself through the desire for and possession of the feminine other, as a form of dominance that incorporates femininity only on its own terms.

In this framework, the feminine label is not celebrated autonomously but stylized to serve masculine visibility. In Baddiecore, male performers adopt elements such as vulnerability, beauty, softness, yet the genre remains tethered to white masculinity.

Feminized aesthetics are circulated, consumed, and aestheticized, but not by or for actual women or queer subjects. The “softness” exists not as liberation, but as a rebranding of dominance.

The fans of these bands responded with thirst X posts, TikTok videos, memes, and fan edits celebrating the *softboy* appeal of masked singers and brooding frontmen. In Reddit, fans leaned into this framing, with one user labeling a Reddit sub-thread of Sleep Token, “r/SleepToken” as “f---ing thirsty that it actually describes it really f---ing well” (Trapp, 2023). Another added,

as a middle-aged woman who's a huge fan of both Sleep Token and Bad Omens, I also want to be offended. But we are a thirsty bunch, and I don't even care. (Trapp, 2023)

These responses underscore how Baddiecore is less a fixed genre and more a fan-driven aesthetic discourse; one deeply entangled with gendered desire, emotional intimacy, and visual curation. Sobande (2025) argues that genre labels like “Baddiecore” reflect aspects of the racial, gendered, and sexual politics of metal. While they often embrace the aesthetic of “baddie”, which is originally rooted in Black feminist digital culture, it is often deployed in

ways that erase the term's Black feminist roots and sideline actual women artists.

The rise of Baddiecore reflects a postfeminist aesthetic regime. Gill (in Evans, 2023) found that postfeminist sensibility in media and consumer culture is characterized by several elements:

locating freedom, choice, and empowerment in forms of reassuringly feminine consumption; femininity as a bodily property, so that successful femininity is read on the body; a retraditionalisation through a return of biological essentialism; heightened forms of surveillance and discipline, for example where women's magazines zoomed in and highlighted women's body parts for others to look and judge; a shift from sexual objectification to sexual subjectification; and, a focus on the makeover format. (Evans, 2023, p.2)

Thus, this article does not seek to evaluate the bands themselves, but rather the discursive construction of Baddiecore as a genre: how online fan cultures project, aestheticize, and negotiate gendered meaning through stylized softness, and ironic empowerment.

This article presents how Baddiecore, a fan-coined genre label within contemporary metalcore culture, reflects the gendered construction of genre in digital metal communities. By analyzing fan-generated content on X, it explores how a feminine-coded label is constructed, celebrated, and contested in online discourse. This article then contributes to critical discussions on gendered aesthetics, post-feminist sensibility, and the politics of visibility within digital music fandoms.

## METHODOLOGY

This article is achieved through qualitative content analysis to examine how fans construct gendered aesthetics and articulate desire through the discourse of Baddiecore. Rather than relying on interviews or participant observation, this method centers on content analysis, which allows the researcher to trace how meanings emerge across a broad set of digital texts and practices.

Content analysis is defined as an objective, systematic, and quantitative approach to the measurement of media content and is concerned with the identification of broad empirical trends across a range of texts (Hodkinson, 2017).

Data collection will be conducted as follows:

### Quantifying

Content analysis emphasizes objectivity; thus, it needs to quantify the frequency with which phenomena occur. This involves prior identification of types of content, counting of their number of occurrences across a sample of texts (Hodkinson, 2017). This study draws data from public posts on X where the genre label first emerged, and it continues to serve as a central platform for circulating and negotiating its meaning through posts, memes, replies, and fan-to-fan dialogue. While platforms such as TikTok also engage with Baddiecore discussion, this research privileges X due to its discursive richness, accessibility, and relevance to the initial formation of the genre. This choice allows for a deeper focus on language, affect, and performativity within a dynamic textual space.

To address this, a manual search strategy was implemented for the period spanning 18 August 2023 to December 2024, using X's advanced search function. Posts containing relevant keywords, such as "Baddiecore" and the names of bands originally referenced in Craig Reynolds's post (Sleep Token, Bad Omens, and

Spiritbox) were identified and archived in a Google spreadsheet document. Screenshots were also retained to preserve post context and formatting.

### **Categorizing and Coding**

Categories must be mutually exclusive and not overlap with one another, so they should cover the full range of possibilities (Wimmer & Dominick in Hodkinson, 2017). This study employs three primary categories, such as "negative", "positive", and "neutral" stances toward Baddiecore. These categories are used to identify how fans emotionally and critically engage with the genre and its associated aesthetics.

### **Populating**

To ensure that the sample accurately represents the broader population of content that a study is trying to conclude about, careful sampling parameters are established (Hodkinson, 2017). Thus, parameters are used to avoid sample bias and to be representative (Hodkinson, 2017). Parameters that are used to avoid sample bias and enhance representativeness are:

### *Timeline*

The sample was limited to content produced between 18 August 2023 to December 2024, reflecting key moments in the emergence and evolution of Baddiecore as a contested genre label within online metal discourse. The starting point, 18 August 2023, marks the initial coining of the term by Craig Reynolds on X. The discourse significantly escalated in December 2023, following the Nik Nocturnal Awards, where there is "Baddiecore Song of the Year" nomination.

In February 2024, the label re-entered public discourse through SiriusXM's "Octane's Baddiecore Mixtape," which sparked fan reactions. These key events are making it a productive window to examine how the term was received, aestheticized, and contested in fan discourse.

### *Keyword and phrases*

Search terms included "Baddiecore" and the names of bands originally referenced in Craig Reynolds's post, such as Sleep Token, Bad Omens, and Spiritbox.

### *Language*

Only English-language posts were included in the sample. English was selected due to its

dominance in global fan discourse around Western metalcore bands. Additionally, most of the referenced artists are English-speaking, and the originating post by Craig Reynolds was in English, establishing a precedent for the genre's digital vocabulary.

In addition to social media data, secondary sources such as online news and blog articles are included to contextualize the discourse within broader music journalism and subcultural commentary.

No direct interaction with users was conducted, and all materials analyzed were publicly accessible. The study does not seek to generalize about all metalcore fandoms, but rather to illuminate the gendered discourse practices within a specific digital moment. The data was then analyzed using Rosalind Gill's postfeminist sensibility.

## DISCUSSION

### Naming the Genre

Table 1. Summary of Baddiecore Discourse on X (August–December 2023)

No	Stance	Count
1	Positive	19
2	Neutral	20
3	Negative	13

(N = 60 manually collected posts)

Table 1 illustrates that a total of 60 posts were

collected between August and December 2023. The majority of posts expressed a neutral stance toward the term Baddiecore, often asking for clarification or participating in the broader discourse. A notable portion of the tweets were positive, expressing support or excitement about the genre. These figures provide a foundation for understanding the dynamics explored in this section.

Baddiecore first emerged on 18 August 2023, when Craig Reynolds, drummer of American metalcore band, Stray from the Path, coined the term in an X post describing "metalcore with enough pop music crossover and sex appeal that normie hot people like it". This post sparked immediate discussion surrounding the definition of Baddiecore and which bands could be considered part of it. Early mentions in the discourse included Dayseeker and Motionless in White.

The conversation then subsided until November 2023, when Spiritbox was nominated for the 66<sup>th</sup> Grammy Awards under Best Metal Performance, alongside Disturbed, Ghost, Metallica, and Slipknot. This nomination marked a moment of visibility for a soft-sounding, female-fronted band in a genre historically dominated "by and

for young, working-class, white men" (Coggins, 2023).

In December 2023, Baddiecore's discussion re-emerged. On 14 December 2024, Reynolds posted a photo of the "Bada Bing!" strip club sign, a fictional strip club from the HBO series about the mob, *The Sopranos* (Moser, 2023), with the caption "friday #baddiecore" (Reynolds, 2023a) as illustrated in Figure 2. This post marked a masculine reclaiming of a feminized label, using a hypermasculine pop culture reference, a fictional strip club associated with organized crime and traditional male dominance, to frame the genre.



Figure 2. Craig Reynolds' X about "Bada Bing!" strip club  
Source: X.com/reynlord

On 17 December 2023, Sabian Lynch, guitarist of Australian metalcore band Alpha Wolf, wrote "Baddiecore noun Heavy music with grooves you can fuck to" (Lynch, 2023). Responses to this tweet further attempted to define the genre. One user clarified, "I've seen this misinterpreted often as heavy core music with hot, attractive

members" (BEAUTYY, 2023). Another user provocatively asked, referring to Alpha Wolf, "Does your band fall under baddie core or is it just shit like spiritbox and sleep token" (metalcore shawty, 2023). This illustrates how masculine voices attempted to reclaim and redefine a feminized label, often by reducing it to aestheticized desire. Even some women in the space also dismissed female-fronted bands, reinforcing internalized genre policing.

On 19 December 2023, Jeremy DePoyster, a singer and guitar player of American metalcore band, The Devil Wears Prada, wrote "Yeah... they're calling it Baddiecore, and I want in at 69,000 shares" (Depoyster, 2023) accompanied by a meme of Patrick Bateman, the hypermasculine protagonist *American Psycho*, wearing sunglasses and talking on the phone.

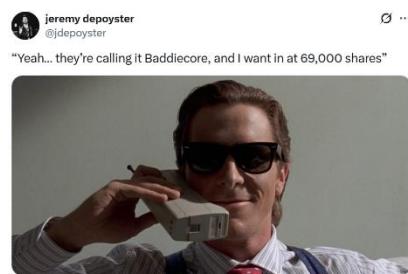


Figure 3. Jeremy DePoyster's X meme about Baddiecore  
Source: X.com/jdepoyer

This post can be read as a sarcasm directed at the music industry, possibly mocking the

commercial pressure to conform to Baddiecore's marketable aesthetic. One user responded, "Baddiecore AKA daddy issue core AKA horny core AKA mid-bandcore" (Honest Hater VT, 2023), underscoring how the label was still being contested and ridiculed. Many users continued to contest the legitimacy of the genre, labeling it as "horny" and "cringe".

The term 'Baddiecore' is not formally defined by musical characteristics, but rather shaped by the bands that fans repeatedly associate with it. While Reynolds initially linked the term to Sleep Token, Bad Omens, and Spiritbox, early fan discourse identified different dominant associations: bands like Alpha Wolf, Sleep Token, Holding Absence, and Spiritbox appeared more frequently. It suggests that Baddiecore's meaning is not fixed by its coiner but is continually reshaped through collective fan discourse. These bands become shorthand through which Baddiecore is imagined, aestheticized, and contested; shaped less by sound than by the more by the affective, aesthetic, and gendered resonances fans attach to them.

### **Claiming Baddiecore: Gendered Ownership and Aesthetic Power**

Starting in December 2023, Baddiecore began to slip from irony into identity. While many initial reactions had been sarcastic or resistant, some bands started referencing the label seriously.

Following Sabian Lynch's suggestive definition of Baddiecore, other metalcore bands began reclaiming the term. The Australian metalcore band Thornhill joined the discourse by tweeting "we're baddiecore as fuck" (Thornhill, 2023). On the same day, Lucas Woodland, vocalist of Welsh metalcore band Holding Absence, posted on X, "Okay, Holding Absence Baddiecore arc is in motion. I'm about to do some sit-ups" (Lu, 2023). Here, genre ownership becomes performance: ironic, aestheticized, and rooted in a soft masculinity that embraces visibility, humor, and curated self-image. Fans replied Woodland's tweet with memes, saying "slutty era", and labeling the fandom "horny".

Craig Reynolds also amplified the genre's embrace. In response to Lynch's X post, he replied saying "preach brother" (Reynolds, 2023c) and promoted his Baddiecore merch featuring the "Bada Bing!" strip club logo that he had

previously shared. This time, the original Bada Bing! logo was visually reworked as "Baddie Core!", mimicking the original font and layout (see Figure 4).

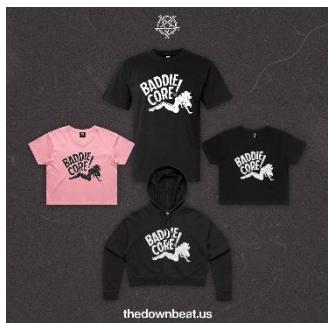


Figure 4. Craig Reynolds' Baddiecore merch.  
Source: X.com/reynlord

On the official website of Reynolds' podcast and merchandise line, Downbeat, the product description for the Baddiecore t-shirt reads: "Hot People Music", "Metallic Glitter Print", "Cropped fit", "Vessel? More like Vajazzle", as shown in Figure 5.



Figure 5. Screenshot of Baddiecore shirt description from Downbeat website  
Source: us.thedownbeat

Most Baddiecore tees are cropped and glitter-printed, suggesting a feminized

silhouette. However, these descriptions do more than sell a product, they signify how Baddiecore has become marketable, wearable, and ironic-yet-real. Through humor, body-targeted design and aesthetic signaling, the genre shifts from digital meme to embodied identity.

Yet this ironic marketing reveals deeper tensions around gender and genre ownership, particularly in the line "Vessel? More like Vajazzle". While referencing Vessel, the masked frontman of English metalcore band Sleep Token, it also references Vajazzle, the act of decorating a woman's pubic area (Oxford Languages, n.d.), as a punchline. The feminized body becomes both joke and brand, crafted and distributed by a man. Once again, feminine aesthetics are stylized, sexualized, and sold not by women, but through male-controlled platforms.

This dynamic reflects a broader pattern in Baddiecore discourse: women are central to the genre's aesthetic narrative, but largely peripheral to its authorship. Even as glitter, softness, and sensuality enter metal's visual language, these elements are often mediated and repackaged by men. Femininity becomes a commodity, not a voice.

Nevertheless, some women reclaimed the term through consumption. One user posted a screenshot of her Baddiecore shirt purchase with the caption, "Ordered the black one  #baddiecore" (Liz, 2023). The nail polish emoji symbolizes participation in the genre's feminized aesthetic. Another fan posted a photo of herself wearing the shirt, writing "baddiecore supremacy @reynlord" and tagging Craig Reynolds directly (Penny, 2024).

Increasingly, women are also using the keyword Baddiecore in posts featuring selfies with merch from bands, like Bad Omens and Sleep Token. These actions reflect a postfeminist sensibility, where consumption is framed as empowerment, which Gill (in Evans, 2023) describes as "locating freedom, choice, and empowerment in forms of reassuringly feminine consumption".

McRobbie (2009 in (Evans, 2023) expands this critique through the concept of 'doubled articulation', where feminist discourses are simultaneously drawn on and refuted. In this framework, feminist demands, such as equal pay, are acknowledged, but it was redirected through appropriately feminine acts of consumption (e.g buying shoes),

leaving women with limited language to critique structural inequality. This redirection, McRobbie argues, often results in internalized frustration, which manifests as self-discipline or emotional distress (in Evans, 2023).

In the context of Baddiecore, such acts of consumption may appear empowering, but they also risk neutralizing the term's original feminist and racial significance, reducing it to aesthetic capital within a genre still largely dominated by white male creators.

In 2024, bands further solidified their association with Baddiecore. Thornhill posted, "obsession is the baddiecore anthem of 2024 slay" (Thornhill, 2024), referencing their song *Obsession*. Holding Absence's Lucas Woodland later affirmed, "I'm a baddiecore truther btw" (Lu, 2024). These artist declarations further legitimized the genre, shifting its status from internet joke to subcultural identity.

As artists and fans increasingly embraced Baddiecore, X users began to use the term with aesthetic pride and cultural capital. One user wrote, "I've never seen a hot person complain about the Baddiecore joke, just saying" (Flower emoji user, 2023).

Though many users do not identify their gender or race, the discourse around Baddiecore is heavily shaped by assumptions about attractiveness, aesthetic fluency, and postfeminist performance.

It aligns with Gill's description of postfeminist culture, where "successful femininity is read on the body" (Gill in Evans, 2023) and visibility becomes a site of empowerment and exclusion. As Sobande (2025) critiques, Baddiecore increasingly invokes beauty standards, drawing on aesthetics developed by Black women and trans women of color while rarely crediting them.

In this way, Baddiecore becomes more than a musical label. It becomes a cultural position, earned through irony, confidence, and visual appeal, rather than sonic innovation.

Table 2. Summary of Baddiecore Discourse on X (January–December 2024)

No	Stance	Count
1	Positive	30
2	Neutral	12
3	Negative	6

(N = 48 manually collected posts)

Table 2 shows 48 X posts collected in 2024, and positive stances significantly increased compared to 2023. This rise coincides with more

metalheads claiming the label, women posting selfies under the "Baddiecore" keyword, and greater visibility of feminized fan aesthetics. These shifts suggest that the community is increasingly accepting Baddiecore, both as a cultural reference and as a participatory identity.

### **Selective Visibility and Racialized Absence in Baddiecore**

Despite the growing positive stance toward the term Baddiecore, the absence of female artists, especially black women, remains a recurring pattern.

On 19 December 2023, Nik Nocturnal, an American metal music YouTuber and Streamer, announced the winners of the Nik Nocturnal Awards 2023. The awards included a category titled "BaddieCore Song of The Year", which was awarded to Sleep Token for their track, "Rain" (Nik Nocturnal, 2023). While this institutional recognition gave the term Baddiecore further visibility and legitimacy, it also sparked criticism.

One user quote-retweeting the announcement wrote "'baddiecore' white people and the consequences of borrowing AAVE speech like i swear to god" (kale, 2023). This user

pointed out that how the genre name borrows from African American Vernacular English (AAVE), a dialect rooted in Black American speech culture, while excluding Black cultural agents. This X post echoes Sobande's (2025) critique that "Baddie", originally grounded in Black feminist online culture, is co-opted in ways that erase its cultural specificity and marginalize the very voices from which it emerged.

Moreover, as shown in Figure 6, most of the Nik Nocturnal Awards winners were bands composed of white male members. No Black women were among the recipients. Spiritbox, the only female-fronted band featured, also consists of white members. This reveals a persistent racial and gendered exclusivity.



Figure 6. Nik Nocturnal Awards 2023  
 Winners  
 Source: [x.com/NikNocturnal](https://x.com/NikNocturnal)

As previously discussed in the second section of the Discussion, Lucas Woodland of

Holding Absence posted about the band's "Baddiecore arc" in December 2023. In response, one user created a striking fan edit of Holding Absence's "The Noble Art of Self Destruction" (2023) album artwork. The edit added bold makeup, plumped lips, and long acrylic nails captioned "The baddie in the marble" (Heroine, 2023), as shown in Figure 7.



Figure 7. Fan edit of Holding Absence's "The Noble Art of Self Destruction" album cover, replying to Lucas Woodland's post  
 Source: [x.com/delicatexnature](https://x.com/delicatexnature)

While the original X post marked Holding Absence's humorous embrace of the term, the fan reply transforms the discourse by visually anchoring Baddiecore back into the aesthetic traditions rooted in Black and trans women's beauty culture. This edit directly references the "Baddie aesthetic" in the beauty practices shaped by Black women and trans women, particularly in digital and queer cultural spaces and characterized by beauty practices such as "lacefront wigs, highly

contoured cheekbones, heavily lined lips" (Rowe, 2021). This aesthetic is not merely stylistic, as Bryan (2025) notes, it involves routine acts of maintenance, wigs, acrylic nails, lash extensions, eyebrow tinting, waxing, and hair care, performed by many Black women to navigate societal expectations of beauty.

This fan-edited image operates as a moment of cultural redirection, centering the very identities so often excluded from the genre's mainstream narrative.

On 14 February 2024, Octane, SiriusXM's radio channel that plays rock music, releases Valentine's Day playlist titled "Baddiecore Mixtape". This playlist featured artists such as Bad Omens, Spiritbox, Sleep Token, Dayseeker, Bring Me the Horizon, Architects, Holding Absence, and more (see Figure 8).



Figure 8. The artist list in Octane's "Baddiecore Mixtape"  
Source: [x.com/SiriusXMOctane](https://x.com/SiriusXMOctane)

Only three women artists appeared: Poppy, Amira Elfeky, and female-fronted band, Spiritbox, none of whom are black. Among them, only Amira Elfeky identifies as a person of color. In an interview, she notes being raised on her Egyptian father's Arabic music and her mother's classic rock (Wilkes, 2025). Her inclusion shows that POC (Person of Color) women exist in metalcore, but are rarely centered in genre-defining conversations, even when the genre borrows from racialized aesthetics.

This selection also drew immediate backlash. While the playlist aimed to represent the genre, it also featured bands like Falling in Reverse and Crown the Empire, whose members and frontman have faced public allegations of abuse and misogynistic behavior.

One fan quote-retweeted the announcement, writing: "Falling in reverse, crown the empire and atilla are NOT baddiecore btw. baddiecore is for people who respect everyone and definitely not for transphobes, misogynists and abusers. thank you." (Simon, 2024). Another wrote, "Interesting list you put on here. Putting multiple artists that have been known to be extremely hateful to women and minority groups to a term

heavily associated with women in the scene..." (Liv, 2024).

Ronnie Radke, frontman of *Falling in Reverse*, has been publicly accused of domestic violence and sexual assault (Fitzpatrick, 2024). Meanwhile, Crown the Empire's guitarist Brandon Hoover faced domestic abuse allegations in 2023 (Childers, 2023). These fan critiques represent not gossip, but a moral boundary-making process within the fandom. Fans are not just imagining what Baddiecore looks or sounds like, but also who it should and should not include.

A close reading of fan discourse from August 2023 to December 2024 found that 12 bands are associated with the term as illustrated in **Table 3**.

Table 3. Bands Mentioned Associated to Baddiecore (Aug 2023-Dec 2024)

No	Bands Mentioned	Counts	
		Aug- Dec 2023	Jan- Dec 2024
1	Bad Omens	2	9
2	Sleep Token	6	9
3	Spiritbox	5	4
4	Holding Absence	6	5
5	Motionless in White	2	0
6	Architects	3	0
7	Dayseeker	2	0
8	Poppy	0	1
9	Thornhill	1	3
10	Bring Me the Horizon	2	3
11	Alpha Wolf	1	1
12	Knocked Loose	2	0

This data confirms that the bands most frequently mentioned are Sleep Token, Bad Omens, and Spiritbox, showing how genre meaning is constructed collectively.

While women performers like Spiritbox, Poppy, and Amira Elfeky are present in the discourse, Black women remain absent. Even when women of color are included, their presence is tokenized, and whiteness still dominates. Although there are numerous POC and Black women in metalcore, including female-fronted bands, they remain largely excluded from the Baddiecore conversation.

Despite the genre's name, Baddiecore, drawing from cultural expressions rooted in Black feminist and digital aesthetics, Baddiecore remains dominated by white men, both in discourse and representation. What began as a playful, feminized label has become a site where hegemonic masculinity reasserts control over genre, visibility, and legitimacy.

## CONCLUSION

Baddiecore first emerged as a site of contestation, a feminized label circulating in digital metalcore communities. Yet, it was soon claimed by women through acts of

aestheticized consumption. It reflects what Gill (in Evans, 2023) defines as postfeminist sensibility, where freedom and empowerment are in acts of feminine consumption. Such gestures are deeply entangled with neo-liberal logic, which frames ideal subjects as autonomous, self-managing individuals who express agency through consumption rather than collective resistance (Evans, 2023). In this context, Baddiecore becomes more than a genre, it becomes a neoliberal subjectivity: desirable, curated, emotionally available, and always marketable. However, as scholars have argued, the postfeminist subject is assumed to be white, cisgender, middle-class, and able to convert femininity into social and economic capital (Evans, 2023). This framing erases how structural inequalities, especially those around race, gender, and authorship, are repackaged as personal choice and aesthetic freedom. Within Baddiecore, it becomes evident when aesthetics rooted in Black and trans beauty culture are detached from their origins and commodified as branding. Ultimately, Baddiecore reveals how genre can operate as a site of aestheticized neoliberal femininity, shaped through humor, image, and consumption—yet still tethered to hegemonic structures. Despite its

feminized name and aesthetic, Baddiecore remains rooted in a sonic space historically dominated by white, male voices, reaffirming the gendered power hierarchies of metalcore.

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