# FINDING SELF IN SOUND: MUSIC IN THE PROCESS OF IDENTITY FORMATION

By

Thomas J. Monahan IV., B.S.
The State University of New York at Fredonia

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Communication
to the Office of Graduate and Extended Studies of
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

May 8, 2020

## SIGNATURE/APPROVAL PAGE

The signed approval page for this thesis was intentionally removed from the online copy by an authorized administrator at Kemp Library.

The final approved signature page for this thesis is on file with the Office of Graduate and Extended Studies. Please contact Theses@esu.edu with any questions.

# ABSTRACT

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication to the Office of Graduate and Extended Studies of East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

Student's Name: Thomas Monahan

Title: Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation

Date of Graduation: May, 8 2020

Thesis Chair: Cem Zeytinoglu, Ph.D.

Thesis Member: Robert McKenzie, Ph.D.

Thesis Member: Paul Lippert, Ph.D.

## Abstract

This thesis explores the ways in which music influences the process of identity formation. This topic is significant for academic research because it helps to provide further detail to the ways in which individuals use external resources to compose identity and ultimately understand themselves. For many individuals, music can provide guidance through life, by joining individuals together into social groups based around aesthetic tastes: from which values, attitudes, and worldviews can then develop. To gain perspective on this process, data was collected from eight participants by means of qualitative interview, and assessed using grounded theory: where information was gathered, compared, and coded before producing an interpretation. The results of data show that music informs identity by affirming self-image, and promoting confidence, which in turn allows individuals to pursue identity goals. Implications from this study suggest that the active processes of self-evaluation and identity work should be investigated further by academics.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

# CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

## 1. Statement of Problem

For much of its life as a subject of study, the medium of music has mostly been regarded by academics as a cultural artifact designed mostly for aesthetic and entertainment purposes (Baily, 2006). While this observation is correct, it overlooks much of what music has to offer as a medium used for persuasion, enculturation, and identity formation (Baily, 2006). Music, as a medium, is not new to the communication discipline and has received a fair amount of attention by scholars in the past. However, only a handful of studies have attempted to understand how (or why) people view themselves *through* music (DeNora, 2000). More specifically, the individual uses of music to inform the process of identity formation have only been investigated in detail by a relatively small number of authors in recent years (DeNora, 1999; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Martin, 2006; Volgsten, 2006). For this reason, further research into the identity-forming effects of music seems warranted.

## 2. Research Question

Scholars have long recognized the significance of music to cultural practices and the processes of human ritual (Dissanayake, 2006). At present, there is a wealth of academic literature written about the music's social functions in the processes of in-grouping and articulating collective values (Brown, & Volgsten, 2006). The significance of such research cannot be understated, however, it can be criticized for painting an incomplete picture, by leaving out much of what music means to individual conceptions of self-identity, or what it means to view oneself as an in-group member. With this, the question can be formulated as follows:

**RQ:** How are individual people using music to inform the process of identity formation?

## 3. Significance of Study

In the modern (post-modern) landscape of the internet age—and more specifically in the diverse, industrialized, democracy that is the United States— the topic of identity has become increasingly more important in recent years. As Martin (2006) writes, "Given the erosion of traditional institutions and the continuing dehumanization of work, it is increasingly only in their so-called leisure time that young people have the chance to establish their sense of identity and exercise their creative symbolic activities." Such activities, continues Martin (2006), help individuals to "make sense of their social worlds and their place[s] within it… in a world of increasing insecurities" where "establishing and maintain[ing] a distinct sense of self, an identity that, though constantly evolving, provides both psychological security and a sense of belonging

to a wider community." To that point, establishing a personal identity is useful for individuals by giving them confidence to act both as private agents and as citizens operating within a democracy of disparate value systems, and often contradictory information.

For many, asserting identity is accomplished by articulating experiences symbolically, through selections of cultural products such as music, TV shows, and clothing (Martin, 2006). In choosing an identity there is both a sense of commitment and sacrifice: much like taking one road over another. In this sense, selecting external symbols of identity both associates someone with a particular culture and affirms their own beliefs and attitudes about themselves in the present moment: as DeNora (1999) notes, identity is believed to be an ongoing process that evolves with individuals over time; so for an individual to stake a claim to an identity, they are essentially declaring themselves in the present to open up a pathway for relationships to develop in the future (Crafts, 1993; Firth, 1996).

With the importance of identity in mind, the topic of *music in identity* becomes significant for its potentials to increase self-awareness and conceptions of self within a larger social context (Hargreaves, North, & Tarrant, 2002). For many, this may serve as a therapeutic tool for coping, or resolving issues of isolation and identity crisis; while for others, music can be viewed as a functional tool used to gain knowledge, socialize, and distinguish oneself from others in larger social group (Sloboda, & Van Goethem, 2011).

In the past, music has largely been overlooked by scholars of communication for its potential as a medium to create meaning, not just convey it, and act as a symbol of both group and self-identity (Baily, 2006). With the exception of some studies, which have only just emerged in recent years, music has mostly been written off as an artifact of culture—one that is

assumed to be severed from the audiences it reaches—making it able to be studied in isolation (Hargreaves et al., 2002). The purpose of this study will be to investigate the reasons why individuals use music a source for informing about identity, and also how individuals come to view themselves after using music to inform about self.

To clarify, the objective of this study is not analyze the any specific messages found in music, nor is it an attempt to encourage a greater appreciation of music as a style of art; rather, the objective of this study is to determine why individuals turn to music as a tool for understanding who they are. More precisely, what this study intends to do is discover why individual people are viewing their selective listening habits and *musical identities* as important features of themselves, and how they relate to others. In short, this study seeks to learn how music might influence self-conception (i.e. self-identity).

## 4. Disciplinary Background of Study

As some may note, the discipline of communication has long faced its own issues with asserting its identity within the social sciences. Scholars and students alike will likely agree that most outside of the field have a hard time discerning the subject from other disciplines like psychology, anthropology, or linguistics. With this, it seems only relevant to bring the topic of identity formation full circle, so that those within the discipline can examine what it means to be within it from the inside: much like an auto-ethnographic study.

Music, in particular, is arguably an ideal artifact for reflection upon several issues concerning identity: What does it mean to be a part of something? What does it mean to be

unique? How does one articulate themselves with accuracy and with confidence? Or— to paraphrase Martin Buber— how can one become found in their experience and lost in it at the same time? (Buber, 2014). These are questions that can only be asked from personal experience as it is lived in everyday life. For this reason, taking an ethnographic approach to understanding the connection between music and identity is likely the best way to provide a clear picture of the process in real time.

In the past, ethnomusicology has been the approach that numerous researchers have taken to learn how music is actively used to communicate the experience of identity in process (Brown, 2006). Authors such as Simon Firth (1996), Susanne Crafts (1993), Alan Merriam (1960), and Tia DeNora (2000) have attempted to highlight various perspectives on music as it is viewed from different cultures: by gathering information through interviews, observations, and active participation in activities with local people. Through this approach— of gathering knowledge through literature analysis, and micro-ethnographic research—the intersections among music, communication, and identity can be explored more fully, and situated within the academic frameworks of the communication studies.

For the purposes of this study in particular, the focus will be on how individual people use music to construct themselves and interpret their experiences of the world in meaningful ways. Clearly, people share different views on music—just as they may hold differing views about the world—it is for this reason that this study will be approached using a *grounded theory* of analysis: so as not to try and force all of the findings into the framework of a single hegemonic perspective. Grounded theory is a popular methodology used in ethnographic studies, and it has often been cited for the rigor (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017). In short, it is a systematic

method of categorizing similarities found throughout research, generating ideas about them, and then refining concepts, so as to produce a theory about the information found in the data (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017).

### 4.1 What is Grounded Theory?

When conducting research using grounded theory, the following few stages are traditionally undertaken in the process: first, data is collected (in the case of this study, it will be collected by means of qualitative interview); second, relevant concepts are selected from the initial data set, and labeled as *concept codes*; throughout the entirety of the process, data is continuously compared to existing research found throughout the literature, and refined into *concept categories* (first into initial categories in the *intermediate stage* of coding, and then again into categories in the *advanced stage* of coding); lastly, the refined codes will be used to propose either a theory or observation about the subject of analysis (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017).

In short, grounded theory is a lesser-formalized way of gathering information. According to *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research* (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017), a grounded theory is made by collecting data, through various means, and codifying whatever themes or ideas happen to repeat themselves. The relevant information that is collected is gathered and separated into groups of concept categories. From there, either an observation or a theory can be proposed about the data. This then can be considered an inductive approach to performing research, and thus will necessitate an inductive way of discussing the findings.

### 4.2 Additional Methods of Data Gathering

Since the focus of this study in particular is concerned with the perspectives that individual people have about music and their social worlds, individual people will be asked for their perspectives to bring diversity and authenticity to the forthcoming thesis, research, and discussion. To accomplish this objective, willing participants will be asked to discuss their perspectives and relationships to music in a qualitative interview with the paper's author. Ideally, this will provide details about the impacts of music on identity formation and shed light on the ways that music can rhetorically impact someone's life.

### 4.3 Defining Key Terms

In grounded theory, in-person (ethnographic) observations and qualitative interviews are used as the primary methods of collecting data (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017). However, to support observations, and build a theoretical background, any information gathered through qualitative efforts must be both compared and analyzed against existing research on the subject: written by accredited sources; this is believed to stimulate ideas for potential hypothesis, and additionally provide a basis for initial codes and concept categories.

In the case of the present study, the following key definitions are among some of the most prevalent ideas and relevant themes which appear throughout much of the existing literature: written by psychologists, and ethnomusicologists about the topic of music and identity formation. These definitions will become more relevant in the methodology, and discussion chapters of this study: as they will be used, later on, in the process of coding.

- *Emotion.* According to Sonoma.edu (2009), emotion is an "affective state of consciousness, often accompanied by physiological changes, to be distinguished from cognitive and volitional (willing and intending) states of consciousness" (para 1).

- *Expression.* According to Standford.edu (2016), expression is "a form of communication between one 'speaker' and a community of speakers…it impresses upon someone…the existence of something existing in the logical world…an attitude, emotion, or idea."

- *Genre.* According to Foss (2016), genre is defined as "a distinct group, type, class, or category of artifacts that share important characteristics that differentiate it from other groups" (p 412). In the case of this thesis, genre will be used specifically to refer to different categories of music.

- *Affect*. As defined in the glossary provided by washington.edu (2007), affect is "an immediately expressed and observed emotion"; furthermore, "a feeling state becomes an affect when it is observable, for example, as overall demeanor or tone and modulation of voice."

- *Mood.* According to the book *Mood: The frame of mind* by Willaim Morris (2012), "moods are typically less intense affective states and are thought to be involved in the

instigation of self-regulatory processes…moods act quite literally as the frame of mind"; Morris also notes that "when not in focal attention, mood is the formless backdrop against which we experience events…influencing what we remember in the past, perceive in the present, and expect in the future" (Morris, 2012, p 6)

- *Self-identity.* According to the definition provided by Hargreaves et al. (2002), self-identity is "the overall view that we have of ourselves…in which different self-concepts are integrated." Additionally, they write, "self-identity consists of self-image…self-esteem" and the "images of the ideal self" (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p 7).

- *Self-image.* According to Hargreaves et at. (2002), "self-image includes aspects of personality style, appearance, and the social roles that we play"; additionally, they note that "our basis of self-image is built up from past experiences and what we would like to do with our ideal self-image" (Hargreaves, et al., 2002, p 8).

- *Self-esteem.* As noted by Hargreaves et al. (2002) self-esteem is the evaluative component of the self, and has both cognitive and emotional aspects" (p 8). In short, it is "how worthy we think, and feel we are" (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p8).

- *Ideal Self.* According to Hargreaves et at. (2002), the ideal self can be conceptualized as "the self we would like to become" or simply "what we would like to do with our behavior" (p 8).

- *Agency*. According to Standford. Edu (2020), agency can be defined as "the capacity of a being to act intentionally." In this view, "a being has the capacity to exercise agency just in case it has the capacity to act intentionally, and the exercise of agency consists in the performance of intentional actions."

- *Individual.* As defined by *Stanford.edu* (2009), "an *individual* represents a single unit in a homogenous set, interchangeable with any other member of the set, whereas a *person* is characterized by his uniqueness and irreplaceability," and adding that "every human person is first an individual."

- *Taste Group.* According to Ollivier and Fridmen (2020), "taste refers both to feelings of pleasure one experiences when confronted with beautiful objects and intrinsic standards of beauty embodied in those objects." To that point, a taste group can then be conceptualized as a group of people "that share similar values and aesthetic standards" (Fridmen, & Ollivier, 2020).

## 5. Summary of Chapters

In *Chapter One*, the social and psychological significance of asserting one's identity was touched upon briefly, and the idea that music can have both therapeutic and symbolic properties was also introduced. Concepts from the first chapter will be expanded upon further in the *Chapter Two* of this paper— where the most prominent theories of *musical identities* and music as communication will be summarized—in the form of a literature review section. After that, *Chapter Three* will provide an overview of the methodology of this study, which included gathering information from participants through qualitative interview, mining for data, and coding responses; *Chapter Three* will also discuss how the central research question was divided into sub-questions, and the necessity of narrowing the study's scope of focus. The processes of analyzing participant responses will then be discussed in *Chapter Four*, where a grounded theory will be proposed. Lastly, *Chapter Five* of this paper will formulate a conclusion for the central research question and discuss the implications of this study.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. Introduction to Literature Review Section

In this chapter, some of the most cited theories of music and identity formation will be discussed. Additionally, the topic of musical identities will also be introduced, and explained for its relevance in the process of identity formation, overall. As the preceding theories and authors will eventually come to clarify, music is used to connect and distinguish individuals within cultures, thus making it a topic of sociological concern. Specifically, music is viewed by sociologists as a device used for enculturation, ritual, in-grouping, and transferring knowledge (Brown, & Volgsten, 2006). Many of these activities are processed primarily at a cognitive level, but can also be experienced as physiological, emotional, events (Juslin, 2013). Given that an individual's self-concept, and presentation self to others, is shaped through the (cognitive, social, and emotional) domains of identity, they will be touched upon briefly in the literature, alongside philosophical considerations of why particular circumstantial combinations are so influential to people during moments of crisis, experienced throughout the various stages of development

(Hargreaves et al., 2002). The literature discussed in this chapter will be used to help generate further questions that can be used to support the grounded theory.

## 2. Theories of Self and Identity

To scholars of communication, the source of a rhetorical message is considered highly important to an audience's interpretation of its meaning (Foss, 2016). The "ethos," reputation or credibility of a message sender, is widely viewed by receivers as a way to confirm the validity, ethics, and intentions of either a persuasive claim or actor (Anderson et al. 2004). For this reason, the matter of social selves and self-identities becomes relevant to the discipline of communication: for the development of a self, identity, or persona is essentially related to the social process of symbolic exchange, and communicative effectiveness overall (Anderson et al. 2004).

As William James once noted (as cited in Hargreaves et al., 2002, p 7), "the self is the most puzzling puzzle with which psychology has to deal." At present, the fields of psychology, sociology, and philosophy have produced a great deal of literature attempting to unravel the concept of self and identity formation (Volgsten, 2006). Some of the most respected authors on the subject agree that the concept of a self-identity is actually an ongoing process, which develops over the course of an individual person's lifetime. Among those authors include psychologists such as Erikson (1968), and Marcia (1966)— and sociologists such as Henri Tajfel (1978), and George Herbert Mead. Their theories will be described briefly so as to build context for discussions of later theories positing identity formation through music, and the development of musical identities (Hargreaves et al, 2002).

## 2.1 Developmental Psychology

The concept of identity formation is believed to be an ongoing process; thus, making it a concern for developmental psychology (Hargreaves et al., 2002). Some of the most respected theories of the self and identity formation were proposed by pioneering adolescent-learning specialists: two of the most important being the French psychologist, James Marcia (1966), and Erik Erikson (1968). Despite some minor differences in their proposed stages of identity development, both theorists thought that the self existed in a perpetual state of crisis, which would motivate the need for assurance, exploration, evaluation, reinvention, and interpretation (Hargreaves et al. 2002).

In Erikson's version of the identity formation process, individuals must confront and resolve different developmental crises that arise at certain points during their lifetime; this must be done in order to progress to later stages in the identity process (Hargreaves et al. 2002). Erikson also believed that this process consisted of several essential stages of development: starting from infancy, where individuals must first learn to trust in others and become aware of their own bodies—followed by a period of adolescence, where individuals attempt to an answer the question "who am I?" and also search for love—and eventually ending in either a state of despair or detached concern for others, towards the end of life (Hargreaves et al. 2002).

Adding onto Erikson's stages of development is Marcia's theory of identity formation, which contends that individual identities are primarily formed through a series of consciously made choices about political, occupational, sexual, and religious preference; consequently, placing emphasis on an extended period of exploration, testing, and eventual commitment to an

idea of self (Hargreaves et al., 2002). In Marcia's theory, an individual can be conceived of as existing in one of four conditional states: "diffusion," which is the absence of commitment to a particular identity; "foreclosure," where the individual accepts traditional roles and values prescribed by the parents; "moratorium," a state where the individual explores different identities and delays commitment; and "achievement," a status following the resolution of an identity crisis (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

### 2.2 Concepts of Self-Identity in Social Psychology

Adding to the views of developmental psychologists, many theorists of sociology posit that the self can only develop as a result of social interactions. One popular explanation for the development of self is provided in Henri Tajfel's social identity theory. As the theory goes (as cited in Hogg, 2016, p 4), individuals (with independent conceptions of identity) will categorize themselves and other people into social groups based upon perceived similarities. The group that the individual identifies with becomes known to them as the "in-group," and the groups that are viewed to be dissimilar become labeled as "out-groups" (Hogg, 2016). Individuals will then compare their personalities and idiosyncrasies to other members of their in-group and conceive of a personalized sense of identity.

According to Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves (2002), what is arguably most significant about Tajfel's theory is that it identifies the generalized treatment of non-similar (non in-group) group members. As they observed in a case study, seemingly arbitrary qualities like music taste are enough to induce social categorizing. In their report, Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves (2002) note in a study where 124 British adolescents were asked to evaluate the personalities of fictional

students, based only on their tastes in music, the majority of evaluators ascribed those whose tastes were associated with genres such as pop and rap with more positive descriptions than those who liked other styles (such as classical, folk, or country) (Hargreaves, North, & Tarrant, 2002, p 140).

A second widely respected theory of identity formation, used by sociologists, is the behaviorists' notion of symbolic internationalism, posed by George Herbert Mead. In this view, humans create symbolic worlds through their speech and constitute their understandings of reality through communicative exchanges and interactions (Hamlin, 2001). In this perspective, human perceptions are largely filtered by language labels, culturally understood meanings, and social constructions: making interactions with both perceptual and environment phenomena share a type of subject-to-concept object type of relationship. Moreover, this view also contends that the internal dialogue shared between the subjective observer "I" and the objective, physical body, "me" is symbolically constituted as well (Hamlin, 2001).

Arguably, writes Hargreaves et al. (2002), what is most important about symbolic internationalism is the distinction that is makes between the personal and social aspects of the self: conceived of as the "I" and the "me." Additionally, a second significant feature of this theory is the necessity for socially observed concept-objects to negotiate the production of meaning for individuals (Hamlin, 2001). In other words, the requirement for there to be outside (objective) objects to influence the internal self means that the self can only exist and develop the "me" by repurposing objects in its environment into symbols to reflect the "I": the immediate notion of personal identity that is felt at a given time.

### 2.3 Conceptualizing Musical Identities

In the past, music was used primarily for socializing activities: designed to promote bonding, transfer knowledge, and to create and record the legacy of either a particular tribe or figure (Kamien, 2007; Merriam, 1960). For much of history, the songs of a particular tribe or clan were known only to the members of the group that made it: up until the beginning of the 20th century, following the invention of the radio, and the development of mass society (Kamien, 2007). As technology and globalization helped advanced the diffusion of cultures, the ideas of traditional tribal communities had all but vanished from the civilized world— leaving the individual to selectively identify songs that can help to create his own social formations and assemble a personalized sense of self-identity: this construction of self through selective musical preferences is what can be known as a *musical identity* (Hargreaves et al. 2002).

To the minds of theorists, musical identities can be conceptualized as the degree to which individuals use music to define themselves and guide their decisions about behavior (Hargreaves et al., 2002). Other factors such as time and circumstances can also play a significant hand in influencing these decisions. The influences of music are believed to be limited to a certain extent: namely the extent to which an individual seeks to engage and allow music to regulate their moods and decisions. In general, it is believed that music can have influence over people to varying degrees— marked along a continuum of engagement running from low to high—such influences can either be transitory in nature, or profound, depending on the occasion and the person listening (Hargreaves et al., 2002). Those that tend to engage highly with music are more likely to view it in relation to their overall core conception of self.

Those who seek out music often tend to do so for a reason: to fulfill a purpose. With this, music can be said to serve a particular function for those who attempt to listen and play. As Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves (2002) note, "the functions of music fall into three broad categories... the cognitive, the emotional, and the social" (p 5). As such, literature from all three categories will be reviewed to order to build context for a discussion of music and identity formation.

## 3. Cognitive Theories of Music

Identity, in essence, can be described as a formative process. As circumstances change, people will adapt, and their identities will change to suit the new conditions of their environments. Such adaptations can only be described as evolutionary in nature and developmental overall; however, more appropriately, it could be said that life is a process of learning. Such is the focus of cognitive theories of music, which examine topics such as memory, attention, creativity, and "musical learning." As DeNora (1999) notes, "Music provides respondents with a scaffolding for self-constitution" (p 31): a process that is performed mostly through associations, which, many psychologists believe, begin to take place not long after birth (Brown, 2006; Hargreaves et al, 2002; Volgsten, 2006).

As Hargreaves et al. (2002) note, "The central subject matter of the developmental psychology of music is the description and explanation of concerns of the patterns of age-related changes that occur across the life span in various aspects of musical behavior." Remarkably, scholars on the subject have determined that early communication shared between mothers and infants is interpreted primarily as a musical experience by the child, due to its lack of linguistic

knowledge. As Volgsten (2006) explains, infants initially learn to associate togetherness with parents through *affect attunement*. Volgsten elaborates:

> In affect attunement, more or less, unconscious communicative behavior depends on the amodal similarities between the infant's behavior and the parent's…the parent attunes to the child's activities, not by imitation, but by performing an analogous action that retains the amodal properties of the original action. The attuning activity of the parent shares with the child's activity the underlying affective contour. Both are similar to the respective agents with regard to the amodal qualities of shape, rhythm, and intensity. (p 24)

From this, it can be recognized that some of the earliest cognitive developments and associations are established by children through musical learning and play. Additionally, it should be noted that the meanings babies learn to associate with various affective qualities (such as intensity, or rhythm) during early childhood are mutually constructed through social interactions with parents.

As Volgsten (2006) explains it, once socially constructed meanings become established, interactions between parents and children become purposeful and "develop into a narrative-like structure of before and after"; additionally, he adds that, at this stage, children learn to become

aware of their own autonomy and subjective movements— and also develop feelings of intentionality, desire, and motivation (Volgsten, 2006). This, then, can be regarded as the foundation for the forming of musical self-identities: for identities can only be established through learning one's own position in relation to a social other (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p 6).

### 3.1 Music and Cognitive Associations

As one might argue, the process of learning can otherwise be interpreted as the process of association: for only through exposure can individuals acquire information about something and associate it with either a function or feeling. With this, complex cognitive associations (such as the recreation of a scene from memory) can be accessed heuristically through the use of sign-signifier or symbol as a type of mnemonic device. As cognitive theorists would contend, mental landmarks are a common method used to travel through memory, and develop a sense of continuity for personal narratives of self (Corrigall et al., 2013). Cognitive theorists working specifically with music note that this is largely the case exemplified by feelings of nostalgia, when one hears a song associated with either their childhood or past. (DeNora, 1999; George et al., 2007).

In an article describing the persuasive nature of commercial-jingle music, North and Hargreaves (2006) explain that "the mind is comprised of densely interconnected cognitive units, such that a specific piece of music can activate superordinate knowledge structures" (p 105). From this, there logic can be easily understood when one thinks of their favorite music, which, in turn, might be associated with the artist that produced it, as well as their style, genre, instrument, etc. The same can effectively be said of memories: once music becomes associated with either an

image or sensational feeling, it will be remembered—especially if repetition is involved; think of the movie *Jaws* and the characters iconic two note theme song—how the music always plays when he enters the scene, and at no other time (Spielberg, 1975).

Once reason for music's peculiar ability to evoke memories from people, North and Hargreaves (2004) argue, is that it possesses the potential to arouse. Studies from neuroscience have shown that music produces the chemical dopamine in the brain, which is largely responsible for sensations of pleasure and exhilaration (Berridge, & Kringelbach, 2013; Koelsch, 2010). Adding to this, Daniel Berlyne (as cited in Hargreaves, & North, 2006, p105) notes that "the stimulus variables that mediate arousal fall into three categories": *ecological*, *psychophysical*, and *collative*.

To elaborate: ecological variables are associations between stimuli and biological events; psychophysical variables are intrinsic physical properties that can be identified in a stimulus, such as in the case of a songs volume or tempo; and lastly, collative variables are the degree of novelty or familiarity found in an experience. To this point, North and Hargreaves (2006) state that "all three classes of variable identified by Berlyne can have a direct influence on activity in the human nervous system" (p 105); to that they add that "Whenever a piece of music varies in terms of tempo, volume, complexity, or familiarity, for example, it influences the degree of arousal in the listener's automatic nervous system" (North, & Hargreaves, 2006, 105). As such, arousal can be noted as having direct influence over attentiveness, liking, and retaining moments of high arousal in memory: which would explain why music can be associated with certain memories, and emotions can be evoked from listening to a song.

### 3.2 Music and Semantic Memory

Over the course of the past decade, some of the most prominent cognitive theories of music have attempted to explain some of the more complex cognitive structures involved in the identity formation: such as political views, religious beliefs, and ideological standpoints. Mostly, theorists have attempted to use linguistic theories to explain certain positions on issues, and assert that these are related to semantic memory (Brown, 2006; Juslin, & Luakka, 2003; Volgsten, 2006). In this line of thinking, music is believed to play a hand in knowledge activation—both of episodic memories, as North and Hargreaves (2006) already mentioned, and of declarative memories which recall more descriptive information: such as facts, ideas, or concepts.

Naturally, the first assumption of linguists is that music is related to language. As Juslin and Timmers (2004) note, music can essentially be conceived of linguistically because of its inherent feel of having a grammar and syntax. Moreover, all forms of vocalization essentially share the qualities of possessing a contour, amplitude, and intensity—as well as other dimensions such as pitch, rhythm, and duration (Juslin, & Luakka, 2003). Theorists taking this approach to identity formation generally think that music is accompanied by verbal discourse, discussing its qualities and aesthetics: this is then assumed to cause divisions of opinion and create "taste groups," and even subcultures in extreme cases (Feld, & Fox, 1994; Martin, 2006; Volgsten, 2006). Such discourses, of course, are learned over time through exposure, and are believed to be be accessed heuristically and strengthened with repetition (Juslin, & Timmers, 2010; Volgsten, 2006).

In his essay, *Between Ideology and Identity*, Volgsten (2006) makes a particularly persuasive case for combining the early-developmental theories of mother-child communication with later linguistic theories about musical discourse. He claims that by viewing these two theories together, scholars should be able to identify the basic formative processes that influence the creation of musical identities; Volgsten (2006) articulates this point in the following passage:

> Music discourses that the listener has already internalized, or comes to internalize, as part of his or her world view. These verbal discourses transform musical sound making from a merely social phenomenon into an ideological one in that they sanction certain kinds of actions at the expense of others. (p 75).

In this way, Volgsten adds to the argument proposed by Daniel Berlyne, and cited by North and Hargreaves (2006): that music activates knowledge stored in memory. More specifically, what is significant about Volgsten's assertion is that he claims that music precipitates memories about the particular verbal discourses which surround it— which, as other authors will show, can be greatly beneficial for advertisers and certain cultural ideologies. Although, in general, as Volgsten notes, "Any or all of a discourse's content may become part of the musical experience," and furthermore, "any discourse related to music…prescribes a way of hearing that music, and musical culture is a way or set of ways of doing this" (Volgsten 2006, 87).

## 4. Cultural Considerations

As scholars of anthropology will note, music is an artifact that is situated in culture (Dissanayake, 2006; Merriam, 1960; Nettl, 2010). To a certain extent, music can also be regarded as a reproduction of culture— since it is created by people within it. In this way, musical identities can primarily be conceived of as identities that are first formed in cultures— and are thus subject to all of the interworking forces that operate within them. In this section, the social and societal aspects that can influence the formation of musical identities will be discussed. As such, this section will be divided into three parts, and address three central topics: music as ritual, music and the culture industry, and music as both a socializer and divider.

### 4.1 Music as Ritual

In the literature of ethnomusicologists, one of the most frequently repeated themes in the discipline is the idea that music is primarily designed to serve a social function (Firth, 1999; Craft, 1993; Merriam, 1960; Nettl, 2010). Sociologists and critical scholars both agree with this basic premise— and likewise assert the socializing and enculturating dimensions of music are among its most important functions (Brown, 2006; Martin, 2006). Adding to the views of cultural theorists, Dissanayake (2006) takes the premise of music as a socializing activity one step further, by contending that music is actually an evolutionary adaption used to fulfill the biological need for ritual communication: a process she claims is integral to both the physical and psychological development of groups and individual persons.

As Dissanayake (2006) notes, a ritual can be understood as the formalization of ordinary behaviors through the processes of selection, exaggeration, and emphasis (p 36). Typically, this

type of action is performed to imbue a certain behavioral gesture with social significance, for the purposes of gaining attention and communicating intent (Dissanayake, 2006, 48). As such, music is believed to be associated with ritual because it is can be regarded as an exaggerated action—emphasizing elements of pitch, volume, and rhythmic timing—performed to signify the importance of a particular event or occasion (Dissanayake, 2006, 49).

In her essay titled *Ritual and Ritualization*, Dissanayake (2006) explains that the ritual activities performed by both human beings and animals are similar as they are primarily conducted for the same reasons. She elaborates this point by noting that "ritualized behaviors in animals, which have evolved because they contribute to individual survival and inclusive fitness, occur in biologically important contexts," and adds that "human rituals occur in similar if not always identical circumstances" (Dissanayake, 2006, p 43). In both cases, she argues, ritual behaviors occur for one of several given reasons: facilitating courtship, channeling aggressions, relieving anxiety, displaying resources, maintaining social identity, or promoting in-group bonding and cooperation (Dissanayake, 2006, p 44).

For much of human history, music was ritually performed during ceremonies— such as weddings, funerals, or solar eclipses— and was a collaborative activity carried out by the entirety of the social group or tribe (Nettl, 2010, p 34). Participation in such activities was typically a way to affirm collective unity and to solidify one's membership status with the social group. As Dissanayake (2006) notes, "All rituals serve to maintain the well-being of the society and its individuals, because they join individuals together for a common cause" (p 49). Martin (2006) adds on to this point, by noting that ritual group activity is still performed in subcultures and taste groups to this day.

In his essay titled *Music, Identity, and Social Control*, Martin (2006) gives detail to the process of formalized group ritual by describing how they are undertaken by subcultures in modern day. He writes, in an example, that "the symphony concert is indeed a ritual…it is a celebration, undertaken not fully aware, of the shared mythology and values of a certain group within a deeply fragmented society" (Martin, 2006, p 58). Adding to this point, he also cites Thorton's (1995) study of "club cultures," noting that "young people's attendance—carefully dressed—at 'alternative' club venues is an important means by which they assert their independence from mainstream culture…thus acquiring 'subcultural' capital" (Martin, 2006, p 58).

However, above all its other functions, Dissanayake (2006) claims, music and ceremonial rituals are most important for their abilities to psychologically influence emotions. As she notes, music and ritual contain a certain emotional trajectory, where formalized behaviors become expectancies, or "anticipatory tensions," which can only be resolved through a finalized gesture, signaling an end to the intensified period, and causing "release" (Dissanayake, 2006, p 41). In this way, she notes, "Music in ceremonial rituals can be considered as a deliberate cultural formalization, repetition, exaggeration, and elaboration of evolved sensitivities to vocal-gestural features that in their evolutionary origins conveyed emotional messages between the mothers and infants" (Dissanayake, 2006, p 43; Volgsten, 2006).

Interestingly, as Dissanayake (2006) notes, mother-infant interaction itself can be conceived of as a biologically ritualized behavior, "where visual, vocal, and kinetic expressions…are simplified, stereotyped, repeated, and exaggerated in order to temporally coordinate and emotionally unite the mother-infant pair" (p 37). As Volgsten (2006) would note,

such rituals can be recognized as a form of "affect attunement": a state characterized by the "analogous translation from perception of another person's behavior into feelings through the transmutation from perceptions of timing, intensity and shape" (p 79). In this way, then, music as a ritual is performed to structure emotions, so that individuals and groups can appropriately "go through the motions of feeling" as they progress through life (Dissanayake, 2006, p 37).

### 4.2 Music and the Culture Industry

In the views of many ethnomusicologists, music can rightfully be considered *as* culture. In this perspective, which was initially posed by the anthropologist and theorist, Alan Merriam (1960), "What musicians do *is* society" (p 1): since the production of music promotes cohesion, dampens inter-group conflicts, and provides both groups and individuals with symbols of identity and self (DeNora, 1999; Nettl, 2010). For this reason, the social control and production of a culture's music can be considered as an important means for regulating the general discourse and ethos of a given society (Interestingly, the word "ethos" was also used by the ancient Greeks to refer to the powers of music to influence the public's emotions, behaviors, and morals) (Cloonan et al., 2006, 240).

Since music is important for groups— and thus also important for both cultures and societies— its production is often highly regulated by the values, priorities, and conventional aesthetic standards of a given community or culture (Brown, 2006; Volgsten, 2006; Cloonan et al., 2006). As a result, culture becomes highly influential in shaping the aesthetic preferences and responses of those within social groups. The effects of this on society, in general, are substantial, considering the associative frames and verbal discourses that can

become activated from semantic memory upon hearing music— making it particularly useful for delivering propagandistic messages (Juslin, & Timmers, 2010; Volgsten, 2006).

The social control music was of a particular interest to the critical scholar, Theodor Adorno (2002), who contended that the purpose of what he referred to as "the culture industry," the producers of media (such as popular magazines, movies, and music), was to distract the public from their overall economic conditions and promote passiveness. As he viewed it, the industries of mass (capitalistic) society only produce simplistic, formulaic, commodities marketed as culture for the sake of promoting consumption and dominant, colonial, ideologies (Adorno, & Horkheimer, 2002). To him, standardized products such as "pop music" were largely used to promote conformity, and manipulate the public into obeying the status quo, thus affirming the values and normative patterns of mass society (Martin, 2006).

Additionally, in an extended version of Adorno's theory, cited from the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, and described by Peter Martin (2006), the culture industry also offers the masses an "illusion of choice," by allowing them to select from a fixed number of products regulated by a limited number of suppliers (p 60). In this way, cultural products can be viewed as more-or-less interchangeable, giving the consumer a feeling of "pseudo-individualism" based on spending patterns (Martin, 2006, p 71). Adorno blames this false sense of autonomy on the culture industry's "manipulation of tastes," which make apparent the consumer's objective circumstances set in reality, thus appealing to each person in a unique and individualized way (Adorno, & Horkheimer, 2002; Martin, 2006, p 61).

In his proposed pragmatic theory of musical communication, Brown (2006) suggests that that Adorno's notions of manipulation by the cultural industry should be kept in mind when

considering the persuasive nature of music to promote in-grouping. As Brown (2006) sees it, large-scale democratic societies are essentially stratified societies, based around hierarchy, where political control over economic resources is largely a matter of popular support for certain legislature. In his view, music is primarily used to manipulate individuals into forming identities based around social categories (such as age, race, ethnicity, gender, class, and sexual orientation); he contends that this is done so as to create interest groups that can be used to influence decisions over public policy (Brown, 2006, p 12).

To Brown (2006), just as with Horkheimer and Adorno (2002), the dynamic of in-grouping and the enculturation— propagated through music, and promoted by political agents and the culture industry, for ideological reasons— is used to promote conflict and social division. In essence, this is achieved by controlling the products of culture: such as music and the visual arts, exploiting both the artists and consumers in the process. For this reason, he asserts, the musical sender (not the artist who makes the music, but the controller of the means of audio production and circulation), should be taken into consideration when assessing the sociological forces that are involved in the formation of identity and sense of self (Brown, 2006).

### 4.3 Music as Socializer and Divider

As the ethnomusicologist, Simon Firth, once wrote (as cited in Hargreaves, North, & Tarrant, 2002, p 13) "The ways in which humans view themselves in relation to their culturally defined roles is at the heart of our identities in music." Martin (2006) adds on to this statement, by noting that human identities are always bound to the contexts in which they are situated: meaning individuals must define their identities in relation to the norms of their parent culture. In

this sense, then, musical identities should not be conceptualized as forming in isolation away from their social contexts—but rather, should be conceived of as identities that are set in and against the popular music of the culture in which they are found (Hargreaves, et al., 2002).

To this point, Hargreaves, et al. (2002) offer up the following thoughts on the relationship shared between context, culture, and identity formation in their book, titled *Musical Identities*:

> Children's development of musical identities, which have their origins in biological predispositions towards musicality, are shaped by the individual groups and social institutions that they encounter in their everyday lives. These form an integral part of those identities rather than merely providing the framework or context within which they develop, and this perspective enables us to explain identities in music and music in identities. (p 7)

In general, culture can arguably be regarded as perhaps the greatest influencer on ideas such as self-conception and appraisal— and individual identity formation— by playing a major role in defining where an individual may feel as though they might belong. Additionally, the opportunities afforded through certain situational circumstances, and the overall treatment of self by others will also come to impact one's own sense of identity and self performance.

As Crafts (1999) notes, some dimensions of character such as an individual's racial, spiritual, or gender identity will likely come to influence their core conception of self as they relate to others, and thus come to define how they view their place within society and culture.

For this reason, music that can unite and describe the experiences of one fragment of society may not be able to equally do the same for others; as feminist ethno-music scholars, such as Ellen Koskoff, have observed: “Many societies similarly divide musical activity into two spheres that are consistent with other symbolic dualisms,” designating specific music for men and women (p 9).

In his description of Tajfel’s theory of social categorization, Hogg (2016) explains that cultures are defined both by their practices and their boundaries. The ethnomusicologist, Bruno Nettl (2010), also echoed this point, when he noted that “the uniqueness of musical style and incompatibility with the music of neighbors is an important feature of music as a marker of a group’s identity” (p 50). By this logic, then, the act of identity formation is essentially also an act of exclusion, where an individual agrees to take on the values, attitudes, and standards observed by a particular social group. Strachan (2006) identifies this as a discursive way of enculturating individuals into a particular viewpoint: providing them with a distinctive frame of references and knowledge through which they can view the world.

Firth (1996) expresses this point nicely in a quote from his article titled *Music and Identity*, written in *Questions of Culture*, where he suggests that “Music constructs our sense of identity through the direct experiences it offers to the body, time and sociability, experiences which enable us to place ourselves in imaginative cultural narratives” (p 109). No place is this more evident, argues Brown (2006), than in the deeply fragmented postmodern society of subcultures found in the United States (for the overall sake of convenience and saving space, the terms “subculture” and “taste group” will heretofore be used interchangeably to refer to people that share a common affinity for certain genres of music).

In societies with diverse heterogeneous populations, separations of persons based on musical tastes can be conceptualized as people associating themselves with the images and lifestyles depicted by certain genres of music: these are often referred to as "taste groups," which are essentially subcultures found within greater cultural categories such as race, gender, or ethnicity (Brown, 2006). As Binder (1993) notes, every musical genre can essentially be associated with a certain type of stereotypical listener: such as the stoner reggae fan, the high-brow jazz listener, and the tattooed punk. Studies have indicated that even school-age children (ranging from 12 to 14 years of age) tend to associate the same stereotypical images of the aforementioned social categories with particular genre styles (Hargreaves, North, & Tarrant, 2002, p 139).

One explanation for "musical stereotyping," explains Hargreaves, North, and Tarrant (2002), might lie in Kelly's (1950) "meta-information model": where people are believed to form character judgments based on trait information. Other theorists also contend that such conclusions could be the results of cognitive associations made through previous interactions or from exposure through media such as television or film (Strachan, 2006; Tagg, 2006). In general, however, most people are aware of the social associations that come with certain styles of music (Binder, 1993).

As Firth notes (as cited in Martin, 2006, p 63),

> The issue is not how a particular piece of music reflects the people, but how it produces them, how it creates and constructs an experience—a

> musical experience, an aesthetic experience—that we can only make sense of by taking on both a subjective and a collective identity. (p 63)

In this way, individuals associated with taste groups take on a collectively shared identity with a particular subculture (such as "bass chasers," or Bruce Springsteen fans) which is primarily structured around music preference. Unlike the traditional view of subcultures, where groups are envisioned as effective neotribes with formal boundaries, recent sociological scholarship has adopted a looser view of subcultural taste groups, which are now believed to be defined by active participation and fluid boundaries (Martin, 2006; Thorton, 1995).

What should be considered most important, stresses Martin (2006), is that the socializing effects of music are embedded in everyday interactions experienced by people. As such, the traditional sender-receiver model of communication is inadequate to account for the effects of music as an influencer on identity: for music alone cannot be considered enough to have a significant influence on identity; instead, it must be considered as an *active negotiation* taking place in relation to the social contexts which surround it: as "participation in sets of activities organized around music can create or reinforce a sense of being a particular kind of person, of belonging to a particular group" (Martin, 2006, p 59). Thus, interactions are more likely to shape an individual's views, ideas, and lifestyle choices rather than any ideological messages that might be found in music.

Given the personalized nature of individual music choice, and the social significance that becomes associated with those choices by other people, music can be regarded as serving a dual function: both as a badge of social (cultural) identity and as an individualized symbol of self and

personal remembrance (DeNora, 1999; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Martin 2006). With this, the use of music to create and distinguish boundaries between social groups can be understood to be an effect of its properties as a symbol used to identify personality traits. Hence, the divisions caused by music are more closely related to the stereotyping of certain attitudes and beliefs associated with certain styles of music. Similarly, the connections that an individual forms with others through acts of circumstance and discrimination (both from the other and himself) are more influential on his choices of lifestyle and music listening than anything else. In this way, musical selection, personalization, and comparison can thus be considered as a form of social mitosis: marking boundaries of division between in-groups, out-groups, and values laden in aesthetic preferences.

## 5. Music and Emotion

From the findings collected from various research studies, scholars have noted that one of the most frequently cited uses for music by listeners is to establish feelings of control and personal agency. Researchers such as Tia DeNora (1999) and Susanne Crafts (1993) have recognized this to be the case for many women and adolescents: who have described utilizing music to claim space, evoke emotions, and assert identity. With this, music can undoubtedly be used to satisfy a variety of personal objectives and fulfil psychological needs. This section will discuss the following ways in which music can be used to accomplish various objectives related to emotional needs and personal enhancement by focusing on the following three topics: music as function of agency, music as release from tension, and the individual use of music to regulate moods.

### 5.1 Music as a Function of Agency

In contrast to the views of "post-subculture" theorists— who (like Adorno) believe that the products of mass society are essentially interchangeable commodities of a single globalized consumer culture—theorists such as Martin (2006), and DeNora (1999) contend that "people do make use of musical and stylistic resources appropriated from the global culture industries…to create symbolic worlds" (Martin, 2006, p 71). In this sense, the process of selecting, reselecting, and highlighting can be used by individual people, both young and old, to spin "biographical threads of self-remembrance" (DeNora, 1999, p 32) in a process of ongoing identity work; thus, constituting an individual's private symbolic lexicon.

In a study consisting of more than 50 interpersonal interviews with women from various corners of society, ranging from villagers in the English countryside to inhabitants of the London metropolitan area, DeNora (1999) discovered that music was primarily used to shape emotions and create significance in different situations. Additionally, music was viewed by subjects as having "transformative properties": being able to make people feel inspired, renewed, and powerful upon listening (DeNora,1999, p 36). Such processes, argues Juslin and Laukka (2003), could be related to the expressive auditory properties of music.

As linguistic theorists note, music may be successful as a therapeutic device because it functions similar to discursive (verbal) communication: specifically, because both (music, and verbal communication) share in distinctive affective qualities (such as volume, intensity, pitch, rhythm, and duration), qualities that are also expressed during verbal communication. In this view, music can essentially serve as a substitute for verbal discourse—effectively allowing individual to speak, indirectly, without adding conceptual content (outside of song lyrics) (Juslin,

& Laukka, 2003). Some, interested in the therapeutic properties of music, even speculate that this form of communicating can produce a type of cathartic release from tension, by expressing oneself in a way that allows the innermost thoughts to be known (Nagata, & Tanamura, 2006)

Other linguistic theorists contend that music is experienced as a psychological phenomenon—an otherwise "outside" objective presence—encountered by the subjective observer, "I" (Volgsten, 2006). In this way, just as an infant discovers that the mother is beyond its control, and interprets its experience purely in the sense of opposites (as self verses other), before gradually learning to open itself up to trusting, so too is music first encountered as a stranger whose relationship must be negotiated with the listener.

As Volgsten (2006) notes, "The listener becomes a 'friend' (or 'enemy') with the music" (p 76); only once they have conceptually labeled the experience, as either good or bad, can the listener open themselves up to allowing the music to effect their emotions. In this sense, then, the audience can enact agency by choosing to either accept or reject their encounter with a particular type of music or song, and additionally integrate it into their own personal narrative and lexicon by conceptualizing the experience as significant or meaningful.

Once a song of music score has become associated with a particular meaning and added to an individual person's private lexicon, it effectively becomes a symbol of their character and identity (Binder, 1993; DeNora, 1999). As such, the acoustic auditory presence of music can also be used to enact agency by acting as a means for claiming territory. DeNora (1999) emphasizes this feature of music as a "physical sonic medium": writing, "The fact that it is non-verbal, non-depictive medium and that it is a physical presence whose vibrations can be felt all enhance its ability to work at non-cognitive or subconscious levels" (p 49). In this way, when somebody

takes over the music or speakers at a party, they are essentially claiming the room for themselves (Brown, 2006).

### 5.2 Music as Tension and Release

In many philosophical discussions concerning the aesthetic and emotional qualities of music, many authors and scholars have similarly observed that music has the tendency to feel like a process of intensification and release (Langer, 1953; Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001). Most notably, music has been compared to the sensational, biological, feeling of expectancy violation and restoration, which can be felt at an emotional level, accompanying an invested degree of ego-involvement. Dissanayake (2006) explains that this phenomenon can easily be interpreted as an extension of the early infant-mother ritual relationship: where repeated actions are given social and emotional significance, and deviation is perceived as a disturbance or assault on the child's overall prosperity.

More specifically, the build up of emotional tensions can be regarded as a disruption in the emotional trajectory of the child (or general audience member); this has to do with maintaining equilibrium, biologically. To elaborate, Morris (2012) gives detail to the process of emotional fluctuations: explaining that emotions can best be understood as heightened states of arousal in affective moods— which are "involved in the instigation of self-regulatory processes" (p 15). Regulation occurs when an ordinary state of consciousness encounters a novel stimulus, such as a noise heard off in the distance: provoking a state of anticipation (a biological freeze response), which resolves once the brain decides how to register the disturbance (i.e. safe or

harmful—friend or foe?). In many cases, minor disturbances can be resolved relatively easily; whereas, exaggerated events may be perceived as a minor crisis: causing a prolonged period of anticipation.

As studies in the field of stress research have shown, the freeze response is one of eight biological responses that can occur as a result of handling potential threats (McGonical, 2015). Two of the better known responses that are associated with this type of regulatory behavior include the defensive fight and flight reactions that are used to preserve the body. As scholars note, the freeze response comes prior to any of the more extreme responses, such as running away for fighting: this is because organisms are more likely to avoid exerting energy if possible, and will attempt to make themselves invisible before taking dramatic action (Cervellin, & Lippi, 2011). To create the illusion of invisibility, creatures will typically lower their breathing by constricting the flow of oxygen-rich blood throughout the body, and tensing up the muscles so as to minimize bleeding in the event of an attack. Extended periods of this activity can result in both mental and physical exhaustion, which, in turn, effects mood and emotions (McGonical, 2015).

In sum, then, the repetitive rhythmic patterns and expected affective contours (of pitch duration, order, and intensity) found in music produce an initial anticipative reaction in the listener, which disturbs his biological state of equilibrium and arouses defenses; the preparatory state of anticipation can best be conceived of as a period of minor crisis, causing tension and necessitating release (Dissanayake, 2006). The first instances where tension and release are experienced are in the ritual interactions shared in the infant-mother relationship, where the movements and affective contours of the parent are perceived by the child as being musical, because of the infants lack of verbal-linguistic knowledge (Volgsten, 2006). When the pattern is

broken, and the infant's expectations are violated, the infant becomes disturbed and thus produces defensive behaviors which persist until a return to equilibrium is established in the form of a safe, consistent, pattern (Dissanayake, 2006; Storr, 1989). Music can be considered an extension of this mother-infant ritual because it is re-produces the initial feelings of safety, togetherness, and assurance once felt in the interactions of the mother-infant pair (Hargreaves et al., 2002).

### 5.3 Affect Regulation Theories

According to the findings of Van Goethem and Sloboda (2011), "music overall is a successful regulation device" which "helps through affect regulation strategies like distraction, introspection, and active coping" (p 210). In their research, a group of 23 female and 21 male students were asked to record their own experiences, listening to music, in a diary over the course of a three-week period. In their results, they discovered that music was primarily used to accompany other activities (such as cleaning, studying, and exercising) (Slobod, & Van Goethem, 2011, p 222). In this way, music can be understood as being primarily used by individuals for a specific purpose: to aesthetically regulate the mood felt during an occasion.

One explanation for music's role as a regulator is provided by Stefan Koelsch (2010); he claims that the reason is neurological in origin, and related to the reward and motivation portion of the brain: the *nucleus accumbens* (or NAc) (Koelsch, 2010). In his words, the NAc is mainly used for "invigorating, and perhaps even selecting and directing, behavior in response to stimuli with incentive value, as well as in motivating and rewarding such behavior" (Koelsch, 2010, p 131). Stated differently, the NAc is responsible for both selecting and motivating behaviors, and

rewarding activities; other authors also note that this is the area of the brain that becomes stimulated during Pavlovian-response training, which is exemplified most in cases of impulsivity and drug addiction (Berridge, & Kringelbach, 2013, p 295).

Studies on music and affect have determined that "people consciously and unconsciously use music to change, create, maintain or enhance their emotions and moods (affect) on a daily basis for their personal benefit" (Slobod, & Van Goethem, 2011, p 222). Music is also interpreted as a stimulant by the same portion of the brain that selects, motivates, and rewards behavior: thus promoting activities that might have otherwise been inhibited by more defensive, stress-inducing, responses (such as anxiety or fear)— and releasing tensions (Berridge, & Kringelbach, 2013; Cervellin, & Lippi, 2011; Koelsch, 2010). The compulsion to dance, for example, is a case where acting upon an impulse is rewarded by the brain for following through with an action that releases tension (Koelsch, 2010). With this, music can be understood as a motivator that removes inhibitions, making listeners more open to acknowledge certain impulses and attune to their experience of engagement with an activity.

## 6. Philosophical Considerations

As a temporal art form, music has always been a particular subject of fascination for aesthetic philosophers (Langer, 1981; Zuckerkandl, 1973). Its nature as communicative medium, able to directly express the heart of feeling—and the "soul" of emotional movement— has made it the focus of countless philosophical musings, dating even further back than before the times of Confucius, Plato, and Pythagoras (Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001). This section will address some of the most cited contemporary theories of music presented during the last two centuries. In sum,

the topics of for this section will include the following three theories: music as an "illusion of life," the making of "aesthetic setting" (matching mood with occasion), and music as a dynamic symbol.

### 6.1 Music as Aesthetic Symbol: The "Illusion of Life" Perspective

One of the first people to ever make a serious academic investigation into the communicative properties of music was the philosopher Susanne Langer (Baily, 2006). Langer (1953) is often credited as the person who introduced music to the field of rhetorical studies, as an artifact worthy of analysis; she also proposed a hypothesis about the symbolic significance of music as an expressive medium—which eventually came to influence her theories of aesthetic symbols, and the "illusion of life" (Baily, 2006, p 3).

To Langer (1981), all creative processes share a common origin in biology. In her view, all organisms seek to avoid pain and maintain equilibrium as an ideal state; if the ideal is compromised, the organism will experience a feeling of tension which it will seek to purge: this then prompts a desire for a release from tension through catharsis, which is achieved through the process of abstraction and symbolic representation (Baily, 2006; Langer, 1981). As she explains (as cited in Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001, p 379), "The great office of music is to…give us an insight into what may truly be called the 'life of feeling,'…and this it does by the same principle that organizes physical existence into a biological design-rhythm… the setting up of new tensions by the resolutions of former ones."

Langer's notion of tensions caused by emotional imbalances contends that release can only be achieved through the production of a symbolic act (Langer, 1953; Storr, 1989). Music

and art are just two examples of what Langer considered to be "aesthetic," or "non-discursive" symbols: which operate differently than the discursive symbols found in either linguistics or mathematics, where "separate words are assigned to separately conceived items in a one-to-one correlation" (Langer, 1953, p. 30). Unlike their discursive counterparts, aesthetic symbols have the liberty to be fluid— like emotions— and "express the forms of vital experience which language is peculiarly unfit to convey (Langer, 1953, p. 32). Langer (1953) also proposed that the abstractness of aesthetic symbols created what she called an "illusion of life": where a particular mood or image is intensified by an artist in order to express their experience in *virtual time* (Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001, p 398).

Langer's emphasis on the actual experiences of music listeners and performers made a compelling case for the potentials of music to rhetorically shape identity—by creating an experience of virtual time where emotions can be abstracted, exercised, and ultimately released through acts of aesthetic-symbolism—and would eventually come to serve as the framework for later theories about communication through the medium of music (Baily, 2006; Langer, 1953). Two of the greatest proponents of Langer's "illusion of life" concept are the contemporary 21st-century authors, Sellnow and Sellnow (2001): who agreed with the premise of virtual time, and further suggested bringing focus to the entire lyrical and instrumental composition of the music when analyzing songs.

To Sellnow and Sellnow (2001), "lyrical content and musical score work together rhetorically to create congruent or incongruent messages for audiences" (Baily, 2006, p 9). Such messages, they claim, can foster cultural identity, advocate social change, serve as a pedagogical tool, or even, in certain cases, "function effectively as an authentic voice for women as a

marginalized group" (Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001, p 396). In overview, their theory proposes that songs symbolize different outlooks on life (with perspectives being either comic, positive and triumphant, or tragic, negative and fatalistic); musical scores emphasize the emotional tone of a concept or period of time, which is elaborated by the artist through their lyrics, and highlighted as either a point of release or tension when the score and lyrical content converge to sound either congruent, or incongruent; the combination of tones and lyrics together make up a virtual experience for the listener, by symbolically portraying a particular perspective through an illusion of life (Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001, p 389).

To elaborate, when the content of lyrics and the emotion of musical tones are congruent, they produce overt messages about specific concepts— which may be embraced by some audiences (who identify with the particular narrative or message) and rejected by others; specifically, those who identify with the particular narrative or message conveyed in a song are more likely to find the song appealing; whereas, some may only be drawn to certain elements of a song such as the melody, beat, or lyrics (Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001). In contrast, scores and lyrics that are incongruent transform the original symbolic meaning of a song by emphasizing certain points of tension; the authors note that this may be done by the artist for a number of reasons: such as to "couch a potentially defense-arousing message in ambiguity," broaden the appeal of a song to a wider audience, or to stylistically convey an impression of conflict in the virtual narrative (Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001, p 411).

In the illusion of life perspective—proposed by Langer, and developed by Sellnow and Sellnow— rhetorical scholars (and music critics) are offered an approach to interpret music as a medium of communication: one where senders can convey perspectives through non-discursive

symbols, emotional states can be amplified, tensions can be released, and listeners can learn how to cope with the tragic realities of life by virtually sharing in the experiences of the artist-musician- sender (Langer, 1953; Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001). Most significantly, however, in terms of building a case for identity formation, is the need for similarity between the emotional tone (or *virtual narrative*) of the music and the immediate mood of the listener; from this, it becomes apparent that the listener seeks to find some level of identification with an emotional quality in a song: whether it be an upbeat drum tempo, melodic bass line, or the energy projected from a singer; the state must exist prior to the music in order for a feeling of likeness to be felt by the audience.

### 6.2 Mood and Occasion: The Aesthetic Setting

This was the case proposed by Robert Root (1986): "Occasion is the response element most determined by the immediacy of the experience"— thus "what seems appropriate and exciting in a live concert setting may be dissonant and heavy-handed on a recording listened to privately." Root elaborates further on this point in his widely cited article from the *Journal of Pop Culture*, *A Listener's Guide to the Rhetoric of Popular Music* (Root, 1986). In his article, Root explains that the rhetorical function of music operates through a three-fold triad, which considers music to be situated within the elements of composition, performance, and response (Root, 1986).

In summary, a composition can broadly be conceived of as the relationship shared between the arrangement, lyrics, and melody of a piece of music; a performance is the distance (in time and space) between the speaker, act, and audience; and lastly, the response is the

reaction of an audience to the music, which is influenced by the context of the occasion, the audience's judgments, and their own personal tastes (Root, 1986).

In Root's perspective, the principle of identification comes into play, once again, for music listeners (Root, 1986). So he notes (as cited from Baily, 2006, p 5): "The taste variable involves an intuitive response determined by the individual's (audiences) background and experience." In other words, the audience already knows about their own emotional condition, and the equivalent music that would be appropriate for that occasion and their mood. With this, it can be understood that factors such as audience, occasion, and performance all play a hand in shaping the aesthetic appeal and reception of certain types of music: meaning that both context and individual history act as constraints on the rhetorical potentialities of messages sent through songs and musical scores.

### 6.3 Music as a Dynamic Symbol

In many philosophical inquiries of music, the topic has been explored through the lenses of aesthetics, ethics, metaphysics, and epistemology (Zuckerkandl, 1973). In one such case, the philosopher Victor Zuckerkandl (1973) has taken his own approach to developing an ontology of music, by categorizing it as a type of immaterial, yet still objectively real, force, which he calls a "dynamic symbol." To his mind, music acts much like a mythology: where indemonstrable elements in nature (such as time and motion) are represented in the non-physical properties of tones found in music; making tones a type of non-visual symbol used to signify a force.

Interestingly, Zuckerkandl (1973) explains that, in music, the movements of time and space can be recognized in the progressions of sound in time: with space being the point from

which tones originate, and time being perceptible through the linear motions of melody and rhythmic cadence (p 77). Additionally, Zuckerkandl (1973) contends that music reveals the unity of space and time in Being, by disclosing the dynamic and immaterial nature of phenomena through the perceptions of the ear: which encounters actions, made apparent through physical events, such as striking a key on a piano, as moving "*through* bodies but not *upon* bodies" (Zuckerkandl, 1973, p 182); unlike the perceptions of the eye, which do not disclose the depth of space, but merely the otherness of a juxtaposed object.

Zuckerkandl (1973) attempts to bring clarity to this point in the following passage from *Sound and Symbol*:

> Far from taking us out of space—as common opinion holds—music discloses space which, instead of consolidating the boundaries between within and without, obliterates them; space which does not stand out over against me but with which I can be one; which permits encounter to be experienced as communication, not as distance; which I must apprehend not as universal place but as universal force. (p 393)

In this sense, then, drawing on Heidegger's definition of space— as "that whence something encounters me"— Zuckerkandl (1973), agues that music reveals space as a participatory experience of dynamic interacting forces: where "there is only the one *from*… the one dimension of auditory space…an experience of space streaming towards the hearer from all

sides…" (Zuckerkandl, 1973, p 291); in other words, making the listener more aware of their experience in the external world, where sounds of music are encountered. More specifically, music can be viewed as bringing the subjective "I," isolated in a symbolically distinct *world* from the object (you, it, or thou), together with its phenomenal experience in *earth* (a term used by Heidegger in his essay, *The Origin of the Work of Art*: "earth" simply refers to the background from which objects can appear to a consciousness) (Anderson et al., 2004; Harman, 2011).

## 7. Summary of Chapter Two

In this Chapter, some of the most widely cited theories concerning the influences of music on identity were mentioned, and the domains that comprise identity (including the cognitive, social, and emotional domains) were specified as the cites which inform personal, subjective, development. Additionally, some philosophical considerations about the nature of aesthetics were also provided; these will be used to guide further research and the development of grounded theory.

In the next section of this study, *Chapter Three*, the methods used to collect research data will be outlined, and a new set of more refined research questions will be posed for consideration; these will become relevant when information is collected from participants by means of qualitative interview. The next chapter of this study will also address the initial plans, and alterations that were made to the design of this research project following the federal declaration of a national state of emergency and the outbreak of a global pandemic. Alterations

to the design of this study will be discussed in the ethical proceedings portion of the methodology section of this paper.

# CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

## 1. Summary of Literature Review

In the previous two chapters of this study, the importance of forming identities was established, and the concept of musical identities was introduced. To summarize briefly, *musical identities* can be defined as a personal assertion of a particular representation of self through music Hargreaves et al. (2002) cite the famed ethnomusicologist Nicholas Cook when they frame this point as follows: "In today's world, deciding what music to listen to is a significant part of deciding and announcing to people not just who you 'want to be'…but who you *are*" (p 6). With this idea in mind, the cross-disciplinary literature on the topic contends that such identities are ultimately the product of three things: personal agency (selective mood regulation), cognitive associations, and social interaction (DeNora, 1999; Firth,1996; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Martin, 2006).

Additionally, philosophies of music have sought to explain why the temporal art form known as music is particularly suited to serve as an aesthetic symbol of self (Langer, 1981;

Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001; Zuckerkandl, 1973). Authors in this line of inquiry have largely confirmed the statements made by sociologists: music is used primarily for the purpose of identification, both with others and with one's own personal experience (Sellnow, & Sellnow, 2001). Theorists who have approached musical identities from this angle have also made credible the historical, narrative-forming perspectives of psychologists: who argue that conceptions of self are negotiated, often linguistically, between the "I" and its environment— where it will encounter tensions, caused by broken affect contours, and seek release from crises that arise throughout various stages of development (Juslin, & Timmers, 2010; Langer, 1981; Volgsten, 2006; Zuckerkandl, 1973).

### 2. Expanding The Central Research Question

From the existing body of literature, discussing the ways in which music influences identity, the topics of social, emotional, and cognitive motivation can be distinguished as the first major themes to emerge as recurring concepts found throughout the research (Brown, 2006; Dissanayake, 2006; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Martin, 2006). As Juslin (2013) explains, music is intended to serve a practical function for listeners by attending to the three aforementioned domains: the cognitive, emotional, and social needs of humans; in general, these can be conceptualized as the sites where identity is directly experienced by individuals, and the three areas of life which are also capable of being influenced by music.

Music is primarily believed by theorists to be a mechanism used to promote social cooperation; additionally, music is used to distinguish membership status in distinct social in-groups, and similarly fulfill certain psychological needs for belonging (Brown, 2006; Martin,

2006; Nettl, 2010). Music is also viewed as a tool for social learning, mood regulation, and expressing emotions (Solboda, & Van Goethem, 2011; Volgsten, 2006). As a product of culture, music is used to teach about the values, beliefs, and attitudes shared by particular social groups within society; many cognitive theorists contend that the underlying reasons for attempting to learn through music are to meet with social and emotional needs that might arise in the future (Brown, 2006; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Miller, 2000).

With knowledge of the functional uses of music, the focus of the central research question can now be narrowed into sub-questions that address the necessary domains involved in the process of identity formation (the cognitive, social, and emotional domains). According to Glaser and Strauss (2017), developing sub-questions can assist in addressing central research questions that are broad in scope. This step is necessary for the development of grounded theory, as it allows the researcher to approach the central research question from multiple angles, and gather knowledge of processes through concepts found in data. For this reason, the following sub-questions, derived from the central research question, will be explored using grounded theory:

**RQ:** How are individual people using music inform the process of identity formation?

**Q1:** What social needs are people attempting to satisfy using music?

a. Also, how does music help them to satisfy these needs?

**Q2:** Additionally, how are individuals viewing music in relation to their current sense of self-identity?

a. Is music being used as a way to vicariously explore alternate identities?
b. Is it used to affirm or justify personal decisions, beliefs, or lifestyle choices?
c. Or, are people viewing music as some type of moral authority, used to teach them about certain virtuous qualities that might make them better people in the eyes of their current culture?

**Q3:** What psychological needs are individuals attempting to satisfy using music?

a. And, why do certain individuals feel that these needs are being satisfied by turning to music?
b. What function is music playing in the lives of individual people (namely, in this case, music lovers)?
c. How does music help to inform the decision-making process?

Answers to these questions will be worked though in the analysis section in *Chapter Four*. Briefly, it should be mentioned that not all of the newly posed research questions may be answered by the end of this study. However, each question will be considered as a topic of interest that will be explored in interview sessions.

This section, *Chapter Three*, will describe how the concept design of this study was created and also why this particular design was selected to conduct research. This analysis will be approached using grounded theory, and seek to gain insight using qualitative interviews as sources for collecting information. These procedures will be discussed in greater detail over the

course of the next few pages of this chapter. The design of this study will be described in the pages below.

### 3. Concept Design

The following section will seek to expand upon the newly proposed sub-questions, formed form the central research question: in attempts to systematically hone in on the answer to the central research question (posed as "RQ" in the section above). Given that the focus of this study is concerned with the ways individuals view themselves through music, an in-depth, qualitative, approach to research would be more appropriate than collecting a larger sum of less-refined information. For this reason, the research methodology of this study will be inductive in nature and will follow an interpretivist philosophy, throughout.

The design of this study will seek to refine the answers provided by individuals so as to locate similarities that occur within their stories. Information will be gathered from individuals through qualitative interview and observation: in order to provide greater context for responses. Answers will then be explored in a line-by-line content analysis of transcripts produced from interviews, which will be recorded initially as hard-copy notes, taken during interview session, and revisited via audio recording later on in the research process. In sum, this paper will be using a grounded theory methodology to collect information for a proposal, which will be framed using the most prevalent concepts that emerge from the coded interviews, and supported by the accompanying literature. Afterwards, the collected data will be used to support an observational hypothesis.

### 3.1 A Case for Using Grounded Theory

For the following few reasons, grounded theory will be distinguished as a particularly useful method for gathering the types of qualitative information required for the purposes of this study. Primarily, grounded theory is useful for refining information. Unlike other forms of quantitative analysis, or more observationally descriptive methods such as phenomenology, grounded theory allows researchers to revisit information collected directly from original sources and assess individual interpretations of events and concepts (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017). Grounded theory also allows for data to be adjusted throughout the process of collection, giving researchers room to develop new ideas without having to fit them into existing theoretical frameworks (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017). Additionally, grounded theory allows researchers to gain knowledge about the situated contexts in which social phenomenon occur, which can help to identify similarities underlying differing social and cultural conditions (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017). This method will be applied to a diverse sample set of individuals with different backgrounds to consequently determine commonalities from their stories as to why people gravitate towards music to fulfill certain needs.

In the case of this research study, the phenomenon of humans selectively collecting, highlighting, and discriminating between certain songs and styles of music can be considered as a curious pattern of behavior: one that may not be described easily using an established formal theory. For this reason, a generative rhetorical criticism approach will be used in addition to grounded theory. As questions arise, and data begins to reveal itself through observation and detailed note taking, the answers to how and why individual people use music to influence perceptions of themselves will gradually become clearer towards the end of the research study.

### 3.2 Participants: Who are They and Why Were They Chosen?

Participants for this study were selected for their clear enthusiasm and in-depth knowledge of particular musical genres. These participants were collected through a convenience sampling method and then interviewed. Most of the participants have either worked with the principal researcher directly, either on music or academic-related projects in the past, or have been found through suggestions made by reliable sources. Out of all of the participants— eight in total—four identified as either practicing performing artists or musicians, who are active in either a local or regional music scene. As for the other four participants, one self identified as a former-practicing musician, two admitted to having no experiences playing instruments or performing, and one self identified as an inactive musician (who currently plays an instrument but does not participate in any kind of organized musical activity).

The perspectives that are represented though these interviews are intended to account for a variety of musical tastes and personal lifestyles, as well as demonstrate the ways that diverse peoples, found in different circumstances, from different walks of life, can all be exposed to and impacted, personally, by music. The interview group consisted of both male and female participants, with five participants being male (four of European descent, and one of African descent), and three participants being female (one of European descent, and two of Hispanic descent).

Information about participants' ethnic backgrounds will be considered relevant for this study solely because it is an influential factor which shapes individual ideas about identity, worldview, culture, and aesthetics; ethnicity will thus be considered as a starting point for identity formation, and eventual worldview construction. This information will be used to

provide context about how participants view their identities in relation to others: including those of the similar, and of different, ethnic backgrounds.

Some limitations of this study include an oversampling bias of people of European descent, and of male participants. Some areas of improvement for future research studies may include a larger sampling group with a more diverse population, and wider geographic area of selection for choosing possible interview participants. Additional limitations may also include a bias favoring a college-educated perspective (as six of the interview participants claim having bachelor's-level education), and a bias favoring the perspective of musicians, artists, and performers. Further recommendations for future studies include a research sample comprised of people with less formal training and in-depth knowledge of music.

### 3.3 Ethical Proceedings

All research proceedings were followed in accordance with the standards proposed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of East Stroudsburg University. Any data collected from research participants through qualitative observational interviews was gathered with the consent of the person being interviewed; these participants were made fully aware of the nature of the research study, and were made fully aware of all proceedings prior to agreeing to meet. No coercive or deceptive tactics were used to gather data in this study; all participants were willing to abide by the proposals made by the principal interviewer in the premier email (attached in appendix B).

Fortunately, no serious issues occurred that held direct implications towards this study. Society as a whole was greatly affected by the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 (nicknamed

"novel coronavirus") for a time, prior to the official approval for this study from the IRB committee of East Stroudsburg. Major implications that occurred from this outbreak— which prompted a national state of emergency on March 13, 2020, and caused many state-funded universities (like East Stroudsburg) to suspend activities on campuses for an extended time— resulted in a delay in IRB approval, forcing the principal researcher to reschedule with all interview participants.

Following the state of emergency declaration, all U.S citizens were advised by both state and federal agencies to avoid making direct contact with people, and maintain a minimum social distance of six feet from others whenever possible; by this time, IRB approval had been granted to the primary researcher via email. After seeking out additional approval from both the IRB and the thesis committee review board, the principal researcher was granted permission to conduct interviews with participants using video-conference technology (specifically, Skype, Zoom, and Facebook-video messenger). All interviews were then conducted in a video conference setting.

### 3.4 Background Information about Interview Population

To protect the identities of participants, each interviewee will be given a pseudonym name to accompany their provided information. Other information pertaining to participants, such as stage names, artist labels, band (or group) names, and specified geographic locations will also be withheld so as to ensure the participants' rights to privacy and overall safety. Only necessary information is included in the following introductory background summaries of participants, and will merely be used as a frame for context for developing essential concepts later on.

- *Participant One*; alias name: “Scott”; current age: 27; ethnic background: Euro-American; musical genre of interest: “Hardcore Heavy Metal”
    - Favorite Song: “Schism” by Tool
    - Instrument/ artist status: Sings vocals, currently, for a heavy metal band
    - Age of first discovering genre: 14 years of age
    - Method of initial exposure: “Family…older cousins introduced”
    - Stated reasons for listening: “It helps me to articulate core self when words can’t describe feelings…metal has this sort of emotional energy…it lifts me out of the monotony of everyday existence…it gives me this type of emotional, cathartic, release from my anxieties…it makes me feel alive.”

- *Participant Two*; alias name: “Rosie”; current age 30; ethnic background: Hispanic American; musical genre of interest: “Bachata (Spanish Dance) Music”
    - Favorite song: “La Vie en Rose” by Edith Piaf
    - Instrument/artist status: Does not play an instrument or perform
    - Age of first discovering genre: 14 years of age
    - Method of initial exposure: “Family…family parties”
    - Stated reasons for listening: “I like the structure of it…the rhythm and beat…and how its simple enough to have fun with.”

- *Participant Three*; alias name: “Jack”; current age 24; ethnic background: Euro-American; musical genre of interest: “Progressive Rock”
    - Favorite song: “My Wave” by Soundgarden
    - Instrument/ artist status: Currently plays drums for three different bands of varying genres
    - Age of first discovering genre: 16 years of age
    - Method of initial exposure: “Friends from high school”
    - Stated reasons for listening: “It feels empowering…motivational…helps me enhance my mood and envision success…it also helps me make decisions.”

- *Participant Four*; alias name: “Mia”; current age 57; ethnic background: Euro-American; musical genre of interest: “Country Music”
    - Favorite song: “Stay with Me” by Sam Smith
    - Instrument/ artist status: Played guitar and sang for a folk band in the 1980’s
    - Age of first discovering genre: 9 years of age
    - Method of initial exposure: “Parents…mother, specifically”
    - Stated reasons for listening: “It makes me feel empowered…emotional… relate to issues…it makes me feel good and brings myself in experience...music helps me to find meaning.”

- *Participant Five*; alias name: “Seymour”; current age 21; ethnic background: Euro-American; musical genre of interest: “Jam Band Music”

- Favorite song: “Franklin’s Tower” by The Grateful Dead
- Instrument/ artist status: Currently practices keyboard-piano and plays music casually with friends
- Age of first discovering genre: 19 years of age
- Method of initial exposure: “Dad…friends in college”
- Stated reasons for listening: “It relaxes me, helps me zone out, and just lets me forget my problems, overall…it helps me to just keep going when I’m stressed, and really lets me just be in the now.”

- *Participant Six*; alias name: “Levi”; current age 24; ethnic background: Euro-American; musical genre of interest: “Deep House/ EDM (Electronic Dance Music)”
  - Favorite song: “Throw it All Away” by Madnap & Smile
  - Instrument/ artist status: Does not play an instrument or perform
  - Age of first discovering genre: 17 years of age
  - Method of initial exposure: “Older brother brought it back from college”
  - Stated reasons for listening: “I like how its conceptual…I mainly use music as an enhancer…it gives me energy…gives me confidence…music makes me want to go out and chase that feeling.”

- *Participant Seven*; alias name: “Ashley”; current age 23; ethnic background: Hispanic American; musical genre of interest: “Pop Punk”
  - Favorite song: “Fine, Great” by Modern Baseball

- Instrument/ artist status: Played bass guitar for a touring band in college, but does not perform currently
- Age of first discovering genre: 16 years of age
- Method of initial exposure: “High school friends”
- Stated reasons for listening: “It feels authentic…relatable and expressive…it helps me enhance my moods.”

- *Participant Eight*; alias name: “Mike”; current age 24; ethnic background: African American; musical genre of interest: “Hip-hop/ Rap”
  - Favorite song: “Fire Squad” by J Cole
  - Instrument/ artist status: Digitally mixes and produces music. Currently, makes electronic beats, and raps on YouTube/Soundcloud. Does not perform live.
  - Age of first discovering genre: 13 years of age
  - Method of initial exposure: “Older brother”
  - Stated reasons for listening: “It feels relatable…gives me good vibes…helps me to feel motivated and get me into the right mindset to go do things.”

**4. Limitations of Study**

As with all qualitative approaches to research, the methods used to gather and interpret the data found in this study were prone to certain limitations. This may have resulted in an unintentional skew of the information that was presented in the research findings. In sum, the limitations of this study can be traced back to the methodologies that were chosen, the sample of

participants that were interviewed, and the oversights, biases, and limitations of the principal researcher and interviewer.

The first limitation to be mentioned was the scope of the central research question. Should future researchers choose to pursue the same line of inquiry as this study, they would do well to narrow the scope of their central research question. Additionally, the methods that were used for sampling in this study may have introduced a significant amount of bias into the research findings: as most of the interview participants were Euro-American, college educated, male musicians with personal ties to the principal researcher and interviewer. To reduce the risk of bias in future projects of this nature, researchers would likely find less-biased information by collecting from a larger, more diverse, and less familiar sample group.

A second limitation to mention was the amount of time spent gathering research. Future studies would also do well to plan in advance for extended data gathering and analysis. Additionally, the scope and depth of discussion of the research findings would improve under better time conditions.

A third limitation to mention are the inherent limitations that come from using grounded theory. In short, grounded theory is best suited to providing interpretations of information. The concepts and categories found through research are initially influenced by the perceptions of the principal researcher, which may result in biased interpretations of findings, and trouble establishing validity and reliability for certain claims.

## 5. Summary of Chapter Three

In this chapter, the first concepts from the literature were identified, new questions were posed, and the merits of both grounded theory and rhetorical criticism were discussed. Additionally, the design of this study was also discussed in this chapter, as well as the methods used for sampling, and the backgrounds of the various interview participants.

The next section of this paper, *Chapter Four*, will discuss the process of comparison and analysis of the research data. Specifically, it will include the initial listing of codes from participant interview transcripts, the grouping of codes into concept categories, and a discussion and analysis of the information; this will be done to establish a basis for the rhetorical criticism which will take place in *Chapter Five*; the propose of which will be to propose a particular frame for viewing the presented data.

# CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

## 1. Introduction to Analysis Section

In this section, grounded theory will be used to identify and refine the most prevalent themes and concepts found throughout the participants' interview responses. Once initial concepts are picked out, they will be clustered together into categories, where they will again be coded for even more refined concepts, which will also be placed into categories. All concepts (and themes) that emerge throughout the process of coding will be analyzed in comparison to the existing literature written about the effects of music on identity formation, found in *Chapter Two*. After the intermediate stage of coding is completed, and the more abstract concepts are placed into secondary categories, the missing information linking the intermediate concepts will be filled in by means of theoretical speculation in the advanced stage of coding. The goal of speculating in the advanced (third) stage of coding will be done with the intention of integrating the intermediate concepts together into a cohesive storyline and used to support the proposal of a theory grounded in data.

**2. Initial Coding**

After reviewing the information collected by the interview participants, which described their personal histories, outlooks, experiences, and interpretations of how they view music in relation to themselves, the transcripts (summarized above, and also captured in audio) were subject to a line-by-line content analysis: where relevant concepts were identified, picked out, and placed into categories. In the initial reading, the most prevalent words that appeared throughout the participant's answers included some of the following:

1. Family/ friends
2. Motivation/Empowerment
3. Setting the mood (matching moods with music)
4. Mood enhancer/ regulator/ energy giver
5. Emotional expression/ articulation
6. Evoking memories/ sentiments/ nostalgia
7. Inspiration
8. Reflection
9. Authenticity
10. Diversity/ open mindedness/ seeing other perspectives
11. Relatable lyrics (identifying with music artist/performer)
12. Self improvement/ development
13. Confidence
14. Past relationships (i.e. romantic)

15. Being noticed/ recognized (acknowledgement)

The topics presented above can be considered the initial concepts that emerged upon first inspection of the participants' interview transcripts. Many of these concepts (such as initial exposure through family, and attempting to match mood with music) were discussed explicitly and in-depth during discussions, and thus seemed to be the most relevant. The numerical order in which each concept is presented is intended to show the rate of frequency in which each concept appeared throughout the interviews.

## 3. Intermediate Coding: Comparative Analysis

Across discussions, shared with interview participants, the frequency and application of a participant's word choice varied both by context and by individual usage. Given the individualized nature of each person's responses, the answers provided by participants needed to be deconstructed in order to identify the underlying concepts that each participant was addressing using their own language. To do this, the concepts which appeared most often (listed above) during interviews were assessed in the contexts in which they appeared, and compared to the language used by other participants in response to the same question; this was done in order to triangulate concepts underlying language.

### 3.1 Emotional Motivation

In the example of participant one— the heavy metal listener, code named Scott— the interviewee explained that he primarily turns to his favorite music during instances of boredom, or when experiencing lethargy. When asked what he was looking for in music (as in, what does

he seek to accomplish by listening to music), he gave his reasoning in the form of the following response: "I'm mainly looking for energy to feel emotion that can lift me out of the monotony of everyday existence…I listen to music to feel like I'm alive": a closer look at this answer would reveal that the most essential words being used in this sentence are *energy* and *alive*. In this sense, the participant is looking for some kind of aid or stimulant that can rouse him into what is being described as a type of action—*feeling*, the primary verb of the sentence. The second half of his statement makes evident this point: feeling emotions are being equated to *being* alive, and life is also being equated to movement.

In a similar case, the progressive rock listener (code named Jack) also explained that his reason for listening to music was "because it feels empowering…and…helps me enhance my mood and get motivated, especially during rough times." Empowerment, one of the key words in this sentence, was also the reason given by the country listener (Mia) for seeking out her favorite songs: Mia, herself, also explained that she viewed "empowerment and movement as one in the same." Interestingly, Levi, the fan of electronic-dance music, also shared the view that empowerment and movement are one in the same; as he explained in his statement: "I mainly use music as an enhancer…it gives me energy…gives me confidence…music makes me want to go out and chase that feeling." From this, the concepts of energy, motivation, empowerment, and mood enhancement/regulation can all be viewed as synonymous terms being used to express the same idea: namely, that music is used to inspire action, emotion, and life as opposed to lethargy and boredom. With this, then, the first category can thus be conceived of simply as *empowerment.*

### 3.2 Social Connections and Memory

A second group of terms that should be explored are those that relate to one's social connections. One of the most noticeable topics that could be identified from participant responses was the subject of family; all eight of the different interview participants mentioned being initially exposed to music by a family member, although, the music mentioned did not always account for the particular genre each person listed as their preferred music of interest. What did emerge as a trend running through discussions, however, was the theme of listening to certain music associated with the past for the purpose of evoking feelings of nostalgia.

When asked what specifically each participant experienced during their nostalgic moments, answers tended to vary among persons; however, the most common answers were related to the topics of family, friends, relationships, and places. As studies on memory activation suggest, the phenomenon of nostalgia is a mechanism used to cope with feelings of isolation, by eliciting memories of close social relations for the purpose of improving mood; thus, feelings of nostalgia can be identified as an attempt to find support by recalling memories of connection found in past relationships (Barrett et al, 2010; Eich et al, 2007). In this case, then, interpersonal relationships and places, which would more appropriately be considered as events in time, can all be placed under a unifying category of *connections*.

### 3.3 Identification for the Sake of Self Improvement

Another interesting relationship that appeared as a theme throughout the interviews was the idea of relating to, or identifying with particular musical artists. This topic was discussed in depth by several interview participants, most notably, in the cases of the country, rap, and pop

punk listeners: Mia, Mike, and Ashley. In one perspective, Mike, the rap listener, explained why he feels the need to connect to musical artists: "I like him [J Cole] because he just feels relatable…I like how he talks about the struggles…things like getting older, trying to find ways to make money, trying to learn how to talk to girls…everything he says just feels really genuine…it hits me at a really deep personal level."

Adding to his statement, Mike also noted that "J Cole just seems like a regular guy who's good at articulating his perspectives on life through rap…I think he serves as a more positive role model for children in the black community…To me, he stands as a reminder to stay focused and keep working towards your dreams." From this, it can be gathered that Mike's need to connect with his favorite artist is done to maintain a positive influence in his life; more specifically, Mike admitted that he views J Cole as a positive role model: one who has experienced similar struggles to him and has overcome them. In this way, though not stated overtly, Mike has shared that he sees his favorite musical artist as an inspirational figure. Inspiration was also one of the recurring themes which appeared throughout participant interviews.

In one view, the country listener Mia gave her perspective on the importance of finding inspiration through music; in her wording, "I find inspiration from relatable song lyrics. They show me that I can be strong and persist through whatever challenges life throws at me." From this, it can be noted that the idea of motivation is also recognizable in this sentence. In this way, it seems that the reason for identifying the self with artists is done for the purpose of finding inspiration (or empowerment) from a relatable figure who has experienced similar challenges to the listener and managed to overcome them. What can be gained from this is knowledge that listeners seek to find relatable artists to identify with for social learning purposes (a cognitive

function of music); this can also be recognized in the statement made by the pop punk listener, Ashley, who shared in her perspective that "I like punk because it feels like the artists are really being true to themselves and their values…I really like the DIY aspect of it…it's like anybody can learn how to do it." In this case, then, the concept of *knowledge gathering* can be added as an additional category code.

### 3.4 Comparative Analysis: Expression, Articulation, and Authenticity

After determining that knowledge gathering is one of the reasons people turn towards music to influence their identities, the question that immediately must follow is "exactly, what are people attempting to learn from music and musical artists?" One answer that seemed to be a common response given by musicians was the idea of self improvement; specifically, self improvement in terms of one's own social and musical capabilities.

The theme of participants studying musical artists was one that appeared most prominently in responses given by those that identified themselves as either musicians or performers (six out of eight participants). However, non-musicians did also admit to seeking out other perspectives through narratives in music; one participant (Rosie, a non-musician) even explained that she enjoys analyzing non-English song lyrics because she is "fascinated by the similarities that people have past language" and also wants "to be more open minded." Similarly, Levi (another non-musician) explained that listening to diverse music "is about expanding reality, and what reality might possibly be."

As for the participants who identified as musicians and admitted to following certain artists closely, their responses showed that they only followed certain artists whom they admired

and wanted to learn from their approaches to making music. Scott (the heavy metal listener) expressed this point when he admitted that he wanted to "embody Mike Patton while performing," and similarly Jack (the progressive-rock listener) shared that he "always [tries] to play like John Bonham or Stewart Copland while drumming."

In both the statements provided by the participants that identified as musicians, and those who identified as non-musicians, the theme of knowledge gathering could be recognized from their initial responses. Additionally, in all cases, the reason for gathering knowledge was to improve some aspect of self-identity: so as to appear worldly, open minded, skilled, or articulate in communication. From this, the theme of knowledge gathering (or diversifying knowledge) can be understood as being done for the sake of "self improvement," by expanding the catalog of responses that an individual might potentially use to express themselves (Dissanayake, 2006; Martin, 2006).

Additionally, related to the concepts of expression is *authenticity*. This concept was addressed either directly or indirectly by all eight of the interview participants. In Scott's view, expression is a means of achieving authenticity, but can only be enacted at certain times, such as during live performances. In his words, "I see the stage as a platform that lets me go to almost id levels of authenticity." Similarly, the jam band listener, Seymour, also distinguished between what he referred to as "at-home music," and "social music": to quote him, "I mainly like to listen to what I consider 'my music' when I'm at home, and know that I don't have to worry about being social…it helps me get free from stress…I mostly like it when I'm trying not to be rooted in my ego." In a third example, the pop punk listener, Ashley, also admitted to viewing

authenticity as a virtuous quality; in her words: “I like punk because it feels like the artists are really being true to themselves and their values.”

In the descriptions given by interview participants, the concepts of authenticity and confidence were often linked together. Additionally, authenticity was described as a rare and infrequent style of style of behavior, which could only be accessed around select groups of people. In Jack’s description of authenticity, he claimed that “I act most authentic when I’m around people I know and who know me, like my friends.” Other descriptions of authenticity seemed to suggest that it was the objective of the self-improvement process; hence, Mike’s statement of striving towards his dream of being a “genuine person…who’s good at articulating his perspectives through rap,” and Ashley’s comments about how “anybody can learn how to do it…the DIY aspect of…being true to [oneself] and [one’s] values.” Given that authenticity emerged as a recurring theme across interviews, and is also an important concept in the philosophies of existentialism and aesthetics, it will be listed in relation to expression and be placed under the category of *expression.*

### 3.5 Summary of Categories

From the initial 15 themes that appeared most often throughout participant interviews, the following four core categories have been identified as the concepts being referred to by the interview participants: note, the *titles of the following categories were developed as codes by the principle researcher*. The first category, *connections,* can be conceptualized as feelings of support, stability, safety, and protection. The second category, *empowerment*, can be thought of as one of the functional effects of music; primarily, it helps to regulate moods and emotions. The

third category, *knowledge gathering*, is another functional use for music; in this process, individuals seek to find relatable sources that can provide them with strategies to overcome crises. Lastly, the fourth category, *expression* can be interpreted as the method of communication someone uses to convey an idea, attitude, or emotion.

**4. Intermediate Categories**

With the newly refined labels now made available, the information that was initially coded from participant interviews can be re-envisioned as sub-concepts existing within thematic categories. This information can be conceptualized in the following way:

1. Connections
    a. Friends
    b. Family
    c. Past romantic relationships
2. Expression
    a. Acknowledgement (Being noticed/ recognized)
    b. Authenticity
3. Knowledge gathering
    a. Seeking diversity/ other perspectives/ inspiration
    b. Identifying with musical artists
4. Empowerment
    a. Enhancing/ regulating moods

i. Matching moods with music

ii. Evoking memories/ nostalgia

Now that the most relevant concepts have been identified from the participants' responses and organized into thematic categories, an attempt to bring the information together into a unified theory can be made. According to Strauss and Glaser (2017), the final stage of coding in grounded theory is the advanced stage, where seemingly isolated concepts and categories are synthesized into a coherent whole in a process known as "theoretical coding." In this phase of research, the authors recommend using the "storyline technique": a procedure that "builds a story that connects the categories and produces a discursive set of theoretical propositions": note, "*This tends to work if one reads them not for detail but rather for general sense*." (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017, p 148). Ideally, this will be able to fill in the gaps that might exist between the various points of data.

**5. Advanced Coding: Weaving a Story Grounded in Data**

Individuals who enjoy music seem to exist along a continuum, with those who express having the the deepest appreciation for it often learning how to play some sort of musical instrument themselves. When asked why they were initially drawn to start playing music, the responses shared by interview participants included statements such as "it served as an outlet for me to express myself" or "I wanted to be heard." In both of these statements, as well as in others, the theme of wanting acknowledgement seemed to be a primary reason for learning how to play an instrument.

When asked at what age most musicians started playing, the average response given was 14. According to Erikson's psychosocial stages of identity development, individuals at this time will be transitioning between stages—competence and fidelity— and thus will be seeking to prove to others that they are capable of learning skills and filling roles in relation to social groups (Hargreaves, North, Tarrant, 2002). For many, this time of life may be one of dramatic changes and seemingly important decisions. Children at this age may feel a sense of powerlessness, or lack of control in their abilities to predict the outcomes of their decisions for the future. This uncertainty may result in feelings of insecurity, low confidence, or even inferiority (as children will also be comparing themselves to others who have already selected careers for the future) (Hargreaves, North, Tarrant, 2002). Additionally, at this stage, adolescents are also likely to be dealing with insecurities related to body image, sex roles, and interpersonal skills: thus reducing their feelings of control and security even further (Marcia, 1966).

It is at this stage, during adolescence, that social groups will begin to have more of an influence on an individual's decisions, as they will likely require the assurance of others opinions to feel secure (Hargreaves, North, Tarrant, 2002). Here, music may enter the scene initially as a socializer: bringing certain people together into in-groups, and also filtering out others into out-groups. The circumstances in which music becomes introduced to the children may vary; although, most participants stated during interviews that they were originally exposed to music by older relatives: specifically, older siblings, friends, or cousins.

Most participants made it a point to mention that parents were often the first to expose them to music in general, but secondary sources—typically from outside the home—

(such as friends, cousins, or older siblings) introduced them to specific styles, bands, artists, genres, and subcultures. In this way, music becomes an important way for individuals to gather knowledge of other lifestyles outside of their homes, and diversif*y* their perspectives in ways that allow them explore their potential social options: also, by this time, social groups will already begin to become associated with certain genres of music, a phenomenon which Tagg (2006) argues is related to music's semiotic properties, which allow it to act as an auditory symbol connoting different group identities.

For adolescents, the significance of identifying distinctions through music is largely related to with the patterns of behavior that are either observed or stereotypically expected from members of certain groups: for instance, a study conducted by Hargreaves, North, and Tarrant (2002), revealed that 14- and 15-year-old British children tend to identify genres such as rap and pop music with extraversion and social prestige, and genres such as jazz, classical, and heavy metal with "people who do not have many friends." Interestingly, one of the participants (Seymour, a college-age musician) also described how he preferred listening to jam band music while in private, but would "listen to different music to regulate [his] mood" so that he could "get in the mindset of being more social."

In this case, then, music initially serves as a way for individuals to gain both acknowledgement from peers and acceptance into different social groups, by identifying themselves as members of a particular in-group, and distinguishing themselves from others designated as out-groups. In this way, the first social function of music is to act as a badge of someone's symbolic "identity in music": a social category defined by knowledge of a particular in-group culture (Firth, 1996; Hargreaves et al., 2002).

As for its second social function, music can also act as a social filter to narrow broader social categories (e.g. emos, hipsters, punks, etc.). Specifically, in the cases of those who identify themselves as "musicians," participants noted that music was able to provide a common set of activities designed around the interests of individual in-group members, which inevitably allowed them to form bonds, find friends, and make connections that lasted them both through and beyond high school. Additionally, by establishing more intimate connections with similar-minded people, adolescent individuals may begin to feel secure and somewhat in control of their immediate situations, giving them confidence.

However, as Seymour noted, individuals also exist outside of social groups. As individuals pass through school, and eventually into adult life, their identities will expand and become more flexible as they adapt to interacting with different people, and switching between styles of self projection. In this case, some versions of self may seem more or less authentic than other versions. To that point, one participant made this comment: "I'm probably the most authentic when I'm with my friends." In this way, following the establishment of an individuals "identity in music," an identity primarily shared with friends and in-group members (outside of the household), music will begin to serve more as a coping mechanism and taking on an expressive function.

Initially, the coping function of music may be used expressively to gain acknowledgement from parents: specifically, for the child's newly formed competencies and identity as an in-group member, worthy of control over personal decisions and movements. In this way, adolescent individuals (who now feel more authentic around their in-group of friends, rather than their families) will use music to signify group differences and mark territorial

boundaries with parents. Additionally, individuals may use music to speak on their behalf, and articulate different moods and emotions that they themselves might not be able to put into words, or might be too afraid to say out loud. Music can also be used to stimulate escapist fantasies, and recreate feelings of lost security, connection, and acceptance by evoking nostalgia, a psychological defense mechanism used to prevent feelings of loneliness (Barrett et al, 2010; George et al., 2007).

For some people, the experience of listening to music in private may eventually become preferable to listening to music in groups. Of the participants who were interviewed, six out of eight admitted to enjoying music more while in private rather than with others. As it was explained by one participant, "Some songs you really have to listen to in order to appreciate them, and it's just easier to do that when you're alone rather than when you're with people." A second explanation for preferring to listen to music privately might be because privacy allows the listener to become more vulnerable, and thus authentic with the reactions and responses to certain songs: this much was described to be the case for musical artists who prefer to write their songs in private; as explained by one participant, "Some songs you share with people, but others you just to keep for yourself."

For many, the expressive function of music begins to take on new meaning for the private listener, past its original boundary-marking function. As Volgsten (2006) notes, "The listener becomes a 'friend' (or 'enemy') with the music" (p 76): due to the verbal discourses which become associated with different genres and songs (Juslin, & Laukka, 2003). Primarily, towards the latter end of adolescence, the regular ritual activities of music listening (and practicing) may now stand in for the security once afforded by in-group members. In this way, music can fill in

for the absence of social connections when none are made available. Additionally, it is likely that individuals at this stage will begin actively searching for new music to listen to on their own: this music will likely be different from the music of the in-group, and will also be analyzed closely for personally relevant messages.

In DeNora's view, "the ostensibly private matter of individual musical use is part and parcel of the cultural constitution of subjectivity"; this subjectivity—reflected in an individual's selective patterns of listening, returning, and highlighting certain songs and music—is what Hargreaves et al. (2002) refer to as *music in identity* (DeNora, 1999). As DeNora (1999) argues, this concept of music in identity can accurately be conceived of as a reflection of an individual's self-identity; in her words, "musical practice serves to index the ways in which music consumption may provide a means for self-interpretation, for the articulation of self-image and for the adaptation of various emotional states associated with the self in social life" (DeNora, 1999, p 32). In other words, privately playing and listening to music is a form of self-reflection: one that can bring about feelings of control, security, empowerment, and knowledge about self-identity.

In later years of adolescence (between the ages of 17 and 19), individuals have established a temporary sense of security in their conditions and have entered into a period of moratorium (Marcia, 1966). The routine interactions of the adolescents' daily lives have allowed them time to postpone thinking about the future, and has given them a sense of controlled predictability over their situations: allowing them freedom to explore, be creative, and engage in self-improvement practices (such as learning skills, or developing fitness). At this time, individuals may also identify with a role model (or hero) who embodies the imagined

characteristics and style of the ideal self: such a figure will, in turn, become influential in shaping the individual's attitudes, values, and behavior—and will also be important to the decision making process during times of identity crisis.

For many, the hero may come in the form of great storyteller, artist, songwriter, or musician: individuals will most likely select heroes who are relatable or are viewed as being similar to themselves in some way. As Sellnow and Sellnow (2001) note, individuals will form identifications with songs that are considered relevant to their own experiences, by drawing from events in their own lives' to fill in for missing visual elements in songs. Those that identify closely with artists may seek to gather knowledge from them by studying their perspectives, strategies, and attitudes, which are expressed by the artist thought the narratives in their songs. Knowledge gathering may be performed because listeners seek to learn from the musical artists, so that they might develop new attitudes or strategies for overcoming their own personal crises through adaptive coping.

As Heidegger (as cited by Harman, 2011, p 76) notes, "I should not adopt every aspect of my hero's life, but adopt his or her possibilities while projecting or translating them into my own experiences." In this way, a person's hero may serve as a type of authority figure with expert power, whose life and teachings offer conventional wisdom for those who are faced with having to make their own decisions about lifestyles and identities. For individuals passing between different life stages, such as adolescents transitioning into young adulthood, the hero can serve as an empowering figure (and moral authority), whose ethos allows them to bestow permission onto individuals so that they might feel secure in performing certain actions, or committing to impulses and decisions.

In the cases of many musicians, the sense of empowerment experienced through music may make them wish to inspire others to feel confident in themselves and adopt the artist's attitudes or perspectives. Initially, this may be what motivates musical artists to begin performing for live crowds or recording music. In the statements shared by interview participants, some explained that their motivations for performing were done to inspire audience members to share in the artist's mood or perspective, and to empower audiences; however, an alternate explanation for artists performing may also be that they make music to gain acknowledgement or feel in control of themselves and others.

In later stages of life, following the adolescent stage, individuals can be expected to face many different types of crises. Individuals are expected to be alone during this period—in the stage Erikson refers to as "intimacy vs. isolation"—where they will be considered as bachelors, in search of meaningful long-term connections with romantic partners: connection can also be expected to be dependent on the degree of authentic self sharing (i.e. intimacy) experienced in relationships. According to Hargreaves et al. (2002), Erikson posited that the search for connection is one that will take place between the ages of 18 and 40. Individuals transitioning through this stage are likely to be evaluating their identities constantly, and may rely on familiar strategies for coping (such as turning to music).

In the statements collected from the eight interview participants (seven of whom are between the ages of 18 and 40), reasons for listening to music varied from wanting motivation and empowerment to seeking inspiration and diverse perspectives. Furthermore, all eight of the interviewed participants described seeking music on occasions where strong emotions were prominent. Some of the most popular uses for music, listed by participants, included responses

such as “regulating emotions” and “enhancing moods,” while others provided answers such a “to be in the now,” or “to give me confidence.” In all of the answers provided by participants, music was described as fulfilling a function for listeners, often in the context of attempting to control an outcome (such as using music to help empower others) or fill a need for psychological security and social connection.

In short, the strategies that people use to cope with unfulfilled needs and adapt to evaluated weakness eventually become part of their social selves and self-identities. Music is one coping mechanism that individuals may use to gain acknowledgement, join groups, and feel secure by remembering past connections. Music also allows individuals to explore, find role models, feel empowered, and evaluate themselves in certain ways based on in-group attitudes and values. Moreover, music provides individuals with an outlet in which they can come to understand themselves through reflection, and develop certain pathways of identity that can help to shape them throughout life.

## 6. Conclusions from Advanced Coding: Developing Grounded Theory

As Glaser and Strauss (2017) suggest, when attempting to find connections between categories and concepts, it helps to ask “What is the main issue or problem with which these people seem to be grappling?” (p 148). From the suggestions found throughout much of the literature on musical identities, the purposeful selection of music by individuals is performed for purely functional reasons (Barett et al, 2010; Juslin, 2013; Sloboda, & Van Goethem, 2011) Stated Differently, music is used to serve a particular purpose for the listener when it is selected. Because of this, it can be recognized that music is used to satisfy certain needs which originate

from the domains of identity: the social, emotional, and, cognitive domains (Hargreaves, North, & Tarrant, 2002). In this way, music in relation to identity formation can be understood as a type of coping mechanism used to help individuals adapt to unfulfilled (social, emotional, and cognitive) needs and perceived weaknesses in identity presentation.

More specifically, the conclusion that music is used to help individuals cope (i.e. adapt to crises caused by unfulfilled needs) can be refined, by specifying that individuals cope to resolve crises arising from evaluations of self-identity (Hargreaves, North, & Tarrant, 2002; Marcia, 1966). To elaborate, in Erikson's stages of development, individuals are believed to experience periods of crisis throughout their lives while attempting to develop identities (Hargreaves, North, & Tarrant, 2002). James Marcia (1966) added onto Erikson's theory, by proposing a period of exploration, where individuals evaluate available options before committing to a stable identity; additionally, while exploring, uncommitted individuals are presumed to be in an ongoing state of existential crisis, which resolves upon selecting an identity category (Marcia, 1966). From this, it can be proposed that music is used to gather knowledge which informs the development of an individual's self-identity— which, in turn, effects the process of decision making, self-evaluation and the outward expression of identity. Thus, the conclusion that listening to music is employed as a coping strategy used to inform decision making can be proposed with the support of developmental theory.

Furthermore, since music is intended to serve a practical function, and thus be used to attend to the needs of individuals, the categories labeled in the intermediate coding section can be identified as reflecting personal needs, and individual uses for music (i.e. strategies used for

coping with unmet needs). Specifically, the first and second categories (connections, and expression) can now be understood as relating to deeper needs for *security* and for *control*— needs which motivate adaptation and self-identity development. As for the third and fourth categories (empowerment, and knowledge gathering), they can be recognized as adaptive coping strategies used for attaining identity goals— goals which include the fulfillment of the needs listed in the first two categories.

With the inferred connections between concepts and categories now developed through story, a third re-envisioning of the original data can now be made to adjust to new relationships: note, many of the concepts discussed in the storyline section may overlap; what is important is to recognize is that all participant responses present the underlying concepts of needs (for control and security) and strategies for adapting perceptions and behaviors (i.e. coping) to resolve certain crises affecting personal conceptions of identity and self-concept. Hence, a third recasting of the data can be depicted as follows:

1. Needs
    a. Security (In decisions about behavior/ self-identity)
        i. Connections
            1. Friends
            2. Family
            3. Past romantic relationships
    b. Control (Confidence in behavior/ security in predictions about outcomes)
        i. Acknowledgement (Being recognized/ accepted)

ii. Authenticity

2. Coping Strategies
    a. Knowledge gathering (Diversifying knowledge about responses to crisis)
        i. Seeking to learn from / identify with artist's/ role model's attitudes or behaviors
        ii. Self-improvement (seeking new strategies for expression)
        iii. Inspiration (adapting attitudes/ behavior)
    b. Empowerment (affirming attitudes/ gaining security)
        i. Enhancing/ regulating moods
            1. Matching moods with music (seeking security to act)
            2. (Authentic) Expression
            3. Evoking memories/ nostalgia
            4. Helping Others (giving security/ control)

### 6.1 Clarifying Concepts: Control, Security, and Crisis

To clarify, the concept labeled as *control* can be interpreted as the need to feel confident in the outcome; at its most basic level, control can appear as confidence in one's abilities to perform bodily movements and express intentions or ideas. In the answers provided by the eight interview participants, the concept of control appeared most often when participants described using music to control their emotions. Many participants described using music to either "enhance" or "regulate" their emotions, with some also sharing that they like to use music to "shape" their emotions and "gain energy." Other mentions of control were made in explicit

statements, such as the one shared by Jack (the progressive rock listener), who described feeling "in control" while playing drums, or Scott (the heavy metal singer) who noted that "It's such a satisfying feeling, being able to control your voice."

Likewise, the concept labeled as *security* can be considered as preceding the need for control. In short, security can be regarded as the need for emotional stability (McGonical, 2015; Storr, 1989). In other words, security can be interpreted as the need to feel safe from harm and free from threat, which may sometimes include threats to reputation and perceptions about self-identity (Marcia, 1966; McGonical, 2015; Storr, 1989). For many, the need for security can come in the form of validation from trusted sources or other in-group members, so as to affirm both attitudes and perceptions about social reality and the self (Anderson et al., 2004; Hamlin, 2001; Marcia, 1966).

As symbolic interactionists posit, social connections can stabilize (i.e. secure) self conceptions, by serving as reference points for identity that both guide behavior and help to define social reality: thus providing the individual with a sense of psychological security (Hamlin, 2001). From this, it can be understood that connections are essential to developing feelings of safety, order, and belonging— as well as emotional stability and self-identity. In this way, then, social connections are capable of granting psychological security to individuals by assuring them that their actions will be supported by others. To that end, the concept of security can thus be identified as the underlying reason for seeking social connections, and losing security can also be regarded as the primary cause of crisis.

Furthermore, the concept of crisis can also best be thought of as the disturbance of an individual's biological equilibrium (i.e. their feelings of safety and security) (Dissanayake, 2006;

McGonical, 2015). At times when biological requirements are met, and an individual feels safe with those around him, the patterns of daily life will develop into an *emotional trajectory*, marked by the continuous fulfillment of expectations (Dissanayake, 2006; Volgsten, 2006). By contrast, when a pattern of expectancy becomes disrupted, or the security of the individual's connections or supply lines is perceived to be under threat, his *emotional trajectory* will become imbalanced, causing his body to go into a defensive state of crisis (known as "fight or flight"); thus, necessitating an adaptation through coping (i.e. behavioral adjustment) so that the body can remove the stress and return to a secure state of equilibrium (McGonical, 2015; Storr, 1989).

In this way, then, the concept of crisis can otherwise be interpreted as the perception of a threat with no resolved strategy for adaptation—a need without a solution—or, in the case of an identity crisis, a question posed without an answer ("Who am I?"). As McGonical (2015) notes, coping can take many forms, and may include strategies such as seeking connection, gathering knowledge, behavioral adaptation, or attempting emotional management: all of which are strategies that can be identified in the functional uses for music.

### 6.2 Proposing a Theory Grounded in Data

In summary of the information collected through the course of this study, by interview and by comparative research on the existing body of literature, the following theoretical interpretation about music's role in the process identity formation can be made with the support of evidence grounded in data.

As findings from the research show, people have a need to feel secure in their self-identities so that they feel confident in their abilities to make decisions (DeNora, 1999;

Hargreaves et al., 2002; Marcia, 1966). More specifically, people have a need to minimize risk while making decisions that could impact their self-identities or eventual futures: hence, the period of inhibition, experienced as existential angst or crisis (where the mind is overwhelmed with possibilities), which occurs prior to making decisions that might appear to be important, such as answering the question of "Who am I"? (Harman, 2011; Marcia, 1966).

Decision making can be regarded as essential to the overall process of identity formation for it can have both short- and long-term impacts on an individual's self-esteem and self-image, and also their feelings of security and control (DeNora, 1999; Harman, 2011). In many cases, people will experience inhibitions prior to making decisions which can impact feelings of control or self-esteem; in cases of important life decisions, Erikson noted that avoiding decision making altogether can leave individuals in a state of "moratorium," an extended identity crisis where individuals will feel insecure and have low self-esteem (Hargreaves et al., 2002; McGonical, 2015; Marcia, 1966; Storr, 1989).

As Hargreaves et al. (2002) note, in a summary Tajfel's social identity theory, "Individuals have a fundamental motivation to develop and maintain high levels of self-esteem…this is established by identifying with groups of people who have positive image" (p 9); furthermore, to their point, "For adolescents striving to increase their self-esteem, identifying with particular genres of music which they rate highly and distancing themselves from less-valued genres allows them to establish favorable social and personal identities" (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p 9). In this way, affiliating with particular music genres during adolescence may be one way for individuals to decide upon initial social identities and establish positive self-images— images that can consequently raise their self-esteem.

Furthermore, making a decision to act upon desired impulses will be interpreted by the actor as an "authentic" decision, while inhibiting oneself will either have no impact or a negative impact on self-esteem: depending on the degree of emotional interest invested into the decision (Brown, 2006; Harman, 2011). For this reason, individuals who are attempting to resolve a crisis in decision making, which could potentially have impacts on their self-esteem, will attempt to cope by collecting information (i.e. knowledge gathering) from trusted sources so as to confirm their decisions: this may include assurances from friends, family, or other loved ones—however, in the absence of close personal sources (i.e. connections), individuals may also seek confirmation from other sources found in their environments, such as background music (Brown, 2006; Hargreaves, & North, 2006).

Moreover, after receiving confirmation to act upon an authentic desire (the original intuitive impulse), individuals will experience feelings of empowerment as they have been granted security to take control over their decisions and act authentically. In this sense, empowerment can be interpreted as a coping strategy used to motivate individuals to act upon authentic desires: thus creating the aesthetic image of the self in motion towards the ideal self (the self who is always secure and in control) (Langer, 1981; Storr, 1989; Zuckerkandl, 1973).

In this way, individuals will experience threats to self-esteem and seek to cope through different mediums. Individual reasons for seeking to cope may vary, but the need to cope will always be in response to a stressor, typically related to social pressures (described in Erikson's model of development: i.e. competency vs. inferiority, identity vs. role confusion, intimacy vs. isolation). As DeNora (1999) notes, "the perceived 'need' for regulation described by our participants emerges with reference to the exigencies and situational 'demands' made upon them

in and through their interactions with others" (p 49). For this reason, the virtual medium of music may provide an ideal space for individuals to fantasize, escape, reflect, vent aggressions, or perform other types of self-identity "maintenance" activities that can help to reflexively prepare them to make decisions that shape who they are and how they inevitably come to see themselves.

As DeNora (1999) writes, "When respondents are choosing music as part of this care of self, they are engaging in self-conscious articulation work, thinking ahead about the music that will 'work' for the purpose at hand" (p 48). From their experiences shared with music, both in social situations and in private, individuals may come to imbue certain pieces of music with symbolic meaning. As cognitive theorists note, music is capable of inducing psychological arousal, which can support the creation of memories (Brown, 2006; Volgsten, 2006). Furthermore, as Hargraves, & North (2006) have noted, music may act both as a mnemonic and metonymy, capable of activating subordinate categories of knowledge associated with certain pieces of music. Put differently, music is particularly suited to forming cognitive associations and acting as a type of auditory symbol which can retrieve memories (particularly, those imbued with emotional significance).

In this case, as DeNora (1999) notes, music "serves also as putting actors in touch with their capabilities, reminding them of their accomplished identities which in turn fuels the on-going projection of identity from past to future." In this sense, the act of coping through knowledge gathering can also empower individuals by reminding them of past experiences and decisions; this is what DeNora (1999) refers to when she contends that individuals "weave autobiographical narratives of self" through music; as she explains, "Music can be used as a

device for the reflexive process of remembering/constructing who one is, a technology for spinning the apparently 'continuous' tale of who one 'is" (DeNora, 1999, p 45).

To that end, music can be regarded as a coping mechanism used to assist in the process of decision making and identity forming. Specifically, music provides individuals with feelings of both security and control: by comforting them through memories, providing a means for social interaction, acting as an initial material for self-image construction, and empowering individuals by removing inhibitions that might prevent them from acting upon authentic motivations. Additionally, as Martin (2006) writes, music can provide individuals a with "structured pathway" through life "giving them, as it were, one road to live by with all the detailed expectations about behavior, content, rituals, values, and social relationships that this implies." Stated differently, musical pathways provide individuals with criteria through which they can come to evaluate themselves and make decisions that develop their identities for the future.

### 7. Summary of Chapter Four

In *Chapter Four*, information that was collected from eight interview participants was analyzed for recurring concepts**,** which were then labeled as initial concept codes. The initial concept codes were then compared to one another in an intermediate coding section, where more refined concepts were then developed and placed into categories. Following the development of categories, the concepts were then weaved into a story that sought to develop advanced codes from theoretical relationships that existed between both concept codes and categories. Using the advanced codes that were developed through the theoretical relationships in the story, the findings of the research were used to compose a theoretical observation: positing that music

informs self-identity which, in turn, influences decision making and the projection of social identity to others.

In the next chapter, *Chapter Five*, an overview of the research from this study will be provided, and a statement about the contributions of this study will made. Additionally, conclusions from research will be summarized, and the sub-questions that were formed in *Chapter Three* will be answered along with the central research question. Lastly, recommendations for future research will also be proposed, along with the implications and limitations of the research from this study.

# CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

## 1. Overview of Study

The objective of this research was to discover the ways in which individuals use music to inform the process of identity formation. Scholars of communication have long been interested in investigating the rhetorical, sociocultural, and semiotic functions of music (Brown, 2006; Binder, 1993; Koskoff, 1987; Nettl, 2010). However, relatively few studies have addressed the uses of music to form and articulate self-identity (Crafts, 1993; DeNora, 1999; Firth, 1996; Hargreaves et al., 2002). For this reason, further research into the connection between identity and music seemed warranted.

Additionally, given the personalized nature of the research topic, the study called for a qualitative approach with a flexible methodology; hence, the topic was explored using a

grounded theory methodology, where data was collected from eight participants (all of whom possessed an in-depth knowledge of music) by means of qualitative interview and audio recording. Following the initial data collection, the responses provided by participants were then coded, placed into categories, and weaved into a narrative using supporting evidence found from relevant literature. These measures were taken in order to address the central research question of the study:

**RQ:** How are individual people using music to inform the process of identity formation?

## 2. Answering Sub-Questions from Research

The central research question was posed in order to guide the course of the investigation. However, given nature of grounded theory, the development of sub-questions was necessary in order to gain perspective on the topic, by approaching it from multiple angles (Glaser, & Strauss, 2017). After a thorough review of the literature addressing the topics of music and self-psychology, it became apparent that individuals *use* music for functional reasons related to needs inherent to the social, emotional, and cognitive domains of identity. For this reason, several sub-questions were developed with respect to those domains. The answers to those questions can be viewed as follows:

**Q1:** What social needs are people attempting to satisfy using music?

a. Also, how does music help them to satisfy these needs?

After comparing the responses provided by the eight research participants with the proposals made by authors in the literature, the results determine that individuals are attempting to satisfy needs for security, community, and connection within social groups (Martin, 2006; Nettl, 2010). Music allows individuals to satisfy these needs by providing an activity and atmosphere that can relieve social tensions and promote bonding (Dissanayake, 2006). Music also provides a means for acknowledging similarities between individuals, by connoting shared attitudes and values through aesthetics (Fridman, & Ollivier, 2020; Volgsten, 2006). Music can then satisfy the needs for security by providing a means in which individuals can connect with others who share similar aesthetic tastes and form in-groups based around the values and attitudes that are expressed in the aesthetics of a particular genre style (Martin, 2006).

**Q2:** Additionally, how are individuals viewing music in relation to their current sense of self-identity?

a. Is music being used as a way to vicariously explore alternate identities?
b. Is it used to affirm or justify personal decisions, beliefs, or lifestyle choices?
c. Or, are people viewing music as some type of moral authority, used to teach them about certain virtuous qualities that might make them better people in the eyes of their current culture?

In the responses shared by the interview participants, all eight individuals explained that music that is felt to be relatable to current life situations is overall most preferable for listening. These findings agree with information provided in the literature. According to Brown (2006),

"Music would seem to work through a peripheral route of persuasion, operating more as a *reinforcer* than a direct message"; in other words, "music directly reinforces beliefs of central importance" but also "in the case of lightly felt beliefs…where people's attitudes are swayable, music may serve more as an instrument of attitude change" (Brown, 2006, p 23). In this way, music is used to confirm existing beliefs that are already strongly felt, and may also influence decision making for lightly felt issues. To that end, music may not act as a moral authority per se, but may serve as a reminder of existing in-group values and beliefs.

As this relates to self-identity, it can be regarded that individuals who are performing evaluations for self-esteem will do so by collecting information that either confirms or negates their perceptions of social value. According to Hargreaves et al. (2002), who cite Henry Tajfel's social identity theory, individuals will form evaluations of self-esteem by comparing themselves to others within society, including both out-groups and in-groups, who set the standards that individuals use appraise self-image. In this way, music may be used by individuals to confirm evaluations that are made while appraising self-esteem.

Additionally, as noted by McGonical (2015), individuals will often turn to fantasy as a form of defensive coping when met with unsatisfactory conditions. In this case, the experience of virtually escaping through music (and into the security of nostalgia, or the control of sexual, aggressive, or grandiose fantasy) may also be used by individuals to cope with negative self-evaluations and restore self-esteem (Barrett et al, 2010; DeNora, 1999). However, the exact reasons and contents of fantasy cannot be known fully.

**Q3:** What psychological needs are individuals attempting to satisfy using music?

a. And, why do certain individuals feel that these needs are being satisfied by turning to music?
b. What function is music playing in the lives of individual people (namely, in this case, music lovers)?
c. How does music help to inform the decision-making process?

After assessing the statements made by research participants through the process of comparative analysis, the findings of advanced coding determined that individuals have psychological needs for security and control. In this context, these concepts can be considered as being related to evaluations of self-esteem (i.e. secure in self-image and confident in identity).

Across interviews, participants tended to describe music as being either a "reflection" or an "extension" of their immediately-felt emotional conditions: one participant even went as far as to say that "music is my being…it rules me"; while another musician also described that practicing music is "a way of life." According to DeNora (1999), the activity of music listening (and playing) can take on a symbolic significance for individuals: recovering memories of themselves from the past, while shaping (and empowering) their identities moving into the future. Over time, she argues, these activities can create a stable self-image that exists in relation to private music consumption (DeNora, 1999).

With this sense of stability in self-image, afforded from music listening (and playing), individuals may feel empowered and confident because of their reinforced reminders of past accomplishments, which for musicians might include memories such as learning how to play an instrument; as one participant shared "I'm probably the most confident in myself when I'm

playing the drums": similar stories of confidence inspired through music were also shared by other participants, who made statements like "music helped me to become extraverted," and "music gives me confidence." In this way, by using music as a reminder of personal capabilities and past achievements, people who frequently listen to music may feel more confident in deciding to act upon authentic ambitions and desires: thus expressing themselves in a way that makes them feel in control (and more like the ideal self).

### 3. Answering The Central Research Question

**RQ:** How are individual people using music to inform the process of identity formation?

Through research, it was discovered that identity is a dynamic process which is experienced both cognitively and emotionally (as self-identity), and expressed socially through decisions about behaviors, which communicate identity to others (DeNora, 1999; Hargreaves et al., 2002; Martin, 2006). Music informs this process by influencing self-identity— which, in turn, influences decisions about behavior—and the consequent expression of identity to others.

Through the use of grounded theory, which was discussed at the end of the analysis presented in *Chapter Four*, a theory was formed that posited that individuals have an inherent need for control (i.e. confidence in outcomes) and security (i.e. feelings of safety from threat), and use knowledge gathering strategies as a form of adaptive coping to relieve stress and empower decision making during times of crisis (Brown, 2006; McGonical, 2015). Additionally, music was identified as a coping mechanism used for resolving crises, by removing inhibitions

that prevent individuals from making decisions that might affect future evaluations of self-identity (Koelsch, 2010). Moreover, it was also noted that music is used both to inform and affirm self-image by precipitating memories of past experiences and social connections, which secure self-image, and empower individuals to take control over their decisions and act authentically (DeNora, 1999; Hargreaves, McDonald, & Miell, 2002). In sum, this theory proposes that music is used to inform identity formation by enlightening individuals to their own authentic identity goals, and additionally giving them the confidence to act on those goals.

### 4. Implications from Study

By exploring the ways that individuals use music to understand themselves and form identities, this study contributes to the growing body of research being conducted on identity formation. What is unique about the contribution of this study, specifically, is that it attempts to shed light on the active evaluations of self that are being made throughout the process identity formation, and the strategies that are used to regulate those evaluations. Through evaluations of the self, individuals make inferences about their own self-identities and capabilities, which in turn translates into their decision making and the way that they express their identities to others. In this way, implications from this study could assist future researchers in developing further understandings of how environmental factors such as exposure to music contribute the overall process of identity formation.

## 5. Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Limiting factors of this study included time constraints, lack of diversity in the participant population, and oversights that may have occurred due to grounded theory and biases of the principle researcher. As mentioned in *Chapter Three*, grounded theory is a useful method for providing interpretations of data, but is prone to internal bias.

A recommendation for future researchers would be to gather strong evidence of the existence of categories before making claims, by finding external sources that can prove validity. Other recommendations for research would be to narrow the scope of study by focusing on just one part of the identity forming process, and also to use a larger participant population to collect data.

## 6. Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation

The central research question of this study sought to answer how music informs the process of identity formation. Through the use of qualitative interview, literature analysis, and grounded theory, a theoretical conclusion was eventually drawn, positing that music informs individuals about their authentic motivations and identity goals, and also influences them to act upon those goals. One theme which emerged through research (and was eventually developed into the proposed concept of *control*) was that individuals find that they gain confidence from music, and that that confidence also translates into other areas of their lives, outside of playing and listening to music. With this, further investigation into the connections between music and identity formation are encouraged. The ways in which music and identity intertwine has still yet

to be fully understood by researchers (DeNora, 1999; Hargreaves et al., 2002). This thesis was an attempt to bring research closer to understanding.

## REFERENCES


Adorno, T., & Horkheimer, M. (2002). *Dialectic of Enlightenment*. Stanford University Press.

Anderson, R., Baxter, L. A., & Cissna, K. N. (2004). *Dialogue: Theorizing difference in communication studies.* (pp. 57-74). Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Bailey, A. (2006) The rhetoric of music: A theoretical synthesis. *Rocky Mountain Communication Review*, 3 (1) 1-12.

Barrett, F. S., Grimm, K. J., Janata, P., Robins, R. W., Sedikides, C., & Wildschut, T., (2010). Music-evoked nostalgia: Affect, memory, and personality. *Emotion*, 10(3), 390.

Bengtsson, J. O., & Williams, T. D., (2018, May 11). Personalism. Retrieved from https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism/

Berridge K., & Kringelback M (2013) Neuroscience of Affect: brain mechanisms of pleasure and displeasure. *Current Opinion in Neurobiology*. 23 (3): 294-303

Binder, A. (1993), Constructing Racial Rhetoric: Media depictions of harm in heavy metal and rap music. *American Sociological Review*, 753-767.

Brown, S (2006) "How does music work?": Toward a pragmatic of musical communication. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds). *Music and manipulation: On the social uses and social control of music.* (pp 1-31). Berghahn Books.

Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (2006) Is Mozart's Music Good?. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds) *Music and manipulation: on the social uses and social control of music.* (pp 365-368). Berghahn Books.

Buber, M. (2014). *Between Man and Man*. Place of publication not identified: Martino Fine Books.

Cervellin, G., & Lippi, G (2011). From Music-beat to Heart-beat: a journey in the complex interactions between music, brain and heart. *European Journal of Internal Medicine*, 22(4), 371-374

Cloonan, M., Korpe, M., & Reitov. O. (2006) Music Censorship from Plato to the Present. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds) *Music and manipulation: on the social uses and social control of music*. (pp 239-260). Berghahn Books.

Colver, M. C., & El-Alayli, A. (2016). Getting aesthetic chills from music: The connection between openness to experience and frisson. *Psychology of Music*, 44(3), 413-427.

Craft, S. D. (1993). *My music: Explorations of music in daily life*. Wesleyan University Press.

DeNora, T. (1999). Music as a technology of the self. *Poetics*, 27(1), 31-56

DeNora, T. (2000). *Music in everyday life*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Dissanayake, E. (2006) Ritual and Ritualization. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds). *Music and manipulation: On the social uses and social control of music.* (pp 31-51). Berghahn Books.

Eich, E., Ng, J.T., Macaulay, D. P. A D., Percy, A. D., & Grebneca, I. (2007). Combining music with thought to change mood. *Handbook of Emotion Elicitation and Assessment*, (p 124-136).

Feld, S., & Fox, A (1994). Music and Language. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 23, (25-53).

Fridman, V., & Ollivier, M. (2020). *Taste/Taste Culture*. Retrieved from http://educ.jmu.edu/~brysonbp/symbound/papers2001/Olivier.html

Frith, S. (1996). Music and Identity. In: S. Hall & P. du Gay(Eds.). *Questions of Cultural Studies* (pp.108-117). London: Sage.

Foss, S. K. (2016). *Rhetorical criticism: exploration and practice* (3rd ed.) Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc.

George, D., Stickle, K., Rachid, F., & Wopnford, A. (2007). The Association Between Types of Music Enjoyed and Cognitive, Behavioral, and Personality Factors of Those who Listen. *Psychomusicology: A Journal of Research in Music Cognition*, 19(2), 32.

Glossary (2007) - University of Washington. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://depts.washington.edu/psyclerk/glossary.html

Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (2017). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: strategies for qualitative research*. Oxon, London: Routledge.

Hamlin, J. (2001). Mind, Self, and Society. Retrieved from https://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/jhamlin/4111/Blumer/George Herbert Mead - Mind, Self, and Society.htm

Hargreaves, D. J., MacDonald, R. A., & Miell, D. (2002). What are musical identities, and why are they important. In Hargreaves, D. J., MacDonald, R. A., & Miell, D. (Eds). *Musical Identities* (pp 1-20).

Hargreaves, D. J., & North, A. C. (2006). Music in Business Environments. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds) *Music and manipulation: On the social uses and social control of music.* (pp 103-121). Berghahn Books.

Hargreaves, D. J., North, A. C., & Tarrant (2002). Youth identity and music. In Hargreaves, D. J., MacDonald, R. A., & Miell, D. (Eds). *Musical Identities* (pp 134-150).

Harman, G. (2011). *Heidegger explained: from phenomenon to thing* (Vol. 4). Chicago, IL: Open Court, 109-126.

Hogg, M. A. (2016). *Social identity theory. In understanding peace and conflict through social identity theory* (pp. 3-17). Springer, Cham.

Jelas, Z. M., Majid, R. A., & Piragasam, G. A. (2013). Music appreciation and self-actualization of gifted students. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 90, 124-132.

Juslin P. N. (2013). What does music express? Basic emotions and beyond. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4, 596. https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2013.00596

Juslin, P. N., & Laukka, P. (2003). Communication of emotions in vocal expression and music performance: Different channels, same code?. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(5), 770

Juslin, P. N., & Timmers, R. (2010). Expression and communication of emotion in music performance. *Handbook of music and emotion: Theory, research, applications*, Oxford University Press453-489.

Kamien, R. (2007). *Music: an appreciation* (7th ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Koelsch, S. (2010). Towards a neural basis of music-evoked emotions. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 14(3), 131-137.

Koskoff, E. (1987). *Women and Music in Cross-cultural Perspective* (Vol. 79). University of Illinois Press. (p 9-15).

Speilberg, S (1975) Jaws. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9QTSyLwd4w

Langer, S. (1953). *Feeling and form*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Langer, S. K. (1981). *Problems of art*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

Marcia, J. E., (1966). "Development and validation of egoidentity status". *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 3 (5): 551–558

Martin, P. J. (2006). Music, identity, and social control. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds) *Music and manipulation: On the social uses and social control of music.* (pp 57-73). Berghahn Books.

McCrae, R. R. (2007). Aesthetic chills as a universal marker of openness to experience. *Motivation and Emotion*, 31(1), 5-11.

McGonical, K. (2015). *The upside of stress: Why stress is good for you, and how to get good at it*.

Merriam, A. (1960). "Ethnomusicology: A discussion and definition of the field." *Ethnomusicology* 4(3): 107-114.

Miller, G. F. (2000). Evolution of human music through sexual selection. In N. L. Wallin, B. Merker, & S. Brown (Eds.), *The origins of music*, MIT Press, (pp. 329-360).

Mills, G., & Vella, E. J., (2017). Personality, uses of music, and music preference: The influence of openness to experience and extraversion. *Psychology of Music*, 45(3), 338-354.

Morris, W. N. (2012). *Mood: The frame of mind*. Springer Science & Business Media.

Nagata, K., & Tanamura, M., (2006) Psychophysiological assessment of a therapeutic concert. In *International Congress Series* (Vol. 128). Elsevier. p. 101-106.

Nettl, B. (2010). *The study of ethnomusicology: Thirty-one issues and concepts*. University of Illinois Press. (pp 34-60).

Philosophy 101: *Critical Thinking List of Emotions*. (2009). Retrieved from http://web.sonoma.edu/users/s/swijtink/teaching/philosophy_101/paper1/listemotions.htm

Root, R. L. (1986). A Listeners guide to the rhetoric of popular music. *The Journal of Popular Culture*, 20(1), 15–26. doi: 10.1111/j.0022-3840.1986.2001_15.x

Schlosser, M. (2019, October 28). *Agency*. Retrieved from https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/agency/

Sellnow, D., & Sellnow. T., (2001). The "illusion of life" rhetorical perspective: An integrated approach to the study of music as communication. *Critical Studies in Media Communication*, 18(4), 395. https://doi/1080/0739318128090

Sloboda, J., & Van Goethem, A. (2011). The functions of music for affect regulation. *Musicae Scientiae*, 15(2), 208-228.

Storr., A. (1989). *Freud*. Past Masters. (Vol. 8). New York/ Oxford, 1-89

Strachan., R. (2006) Music video and genre: structure, context, and commerce. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds). *Music and manipulation: On the social uses and social control of music.* (pp 189-204). Berghahn Books.

Tagg, P. (2006) Music, moving images, semiotics, and the democratic right to know. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds) *Music and manipulation: On the social uses and social control of music.* (pp 163-187). Berghahn Books.

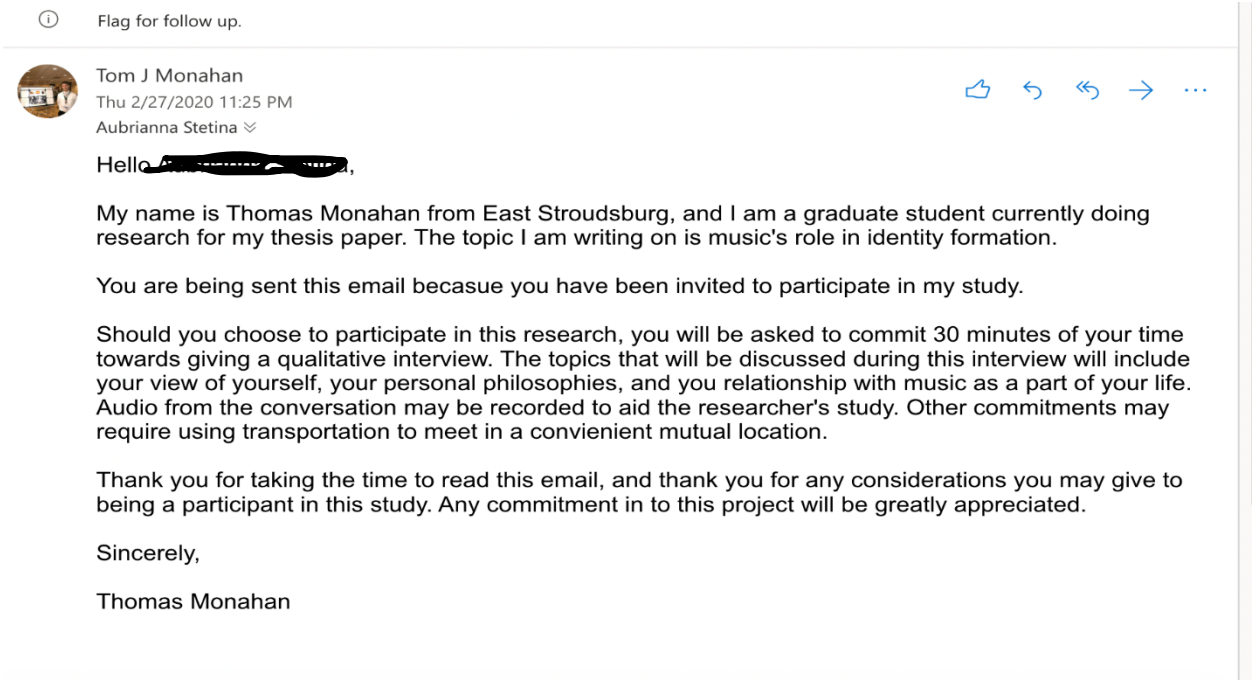
Taruskin, & Weiss., "Music in the western world: A history in documents" (1984) p.1

Thorton, S. (1995). *Club culture: music, media, and subcultural capital*. Cambridge: Polity.

Volgsten, U. (2006). Between ideology and identity: media, discourse, and affect in the musical experience. In Brown, S., & Volgsten, U. (Eds). *Music and manipulation: On the social uses and social control of music.* (pp 86-97). Berghahn Books.

Zuckerkandl, V. (1973). *Sound and symbol: music and the external world*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

# Appendix A: Recruitment Email



Flag for follow up.

Tom J Monahan
Thu 2/27/2020 11:25 PM
Aubrianna Stetina

Hello [redacted],

My name is Thomas Monahan from East Stroudsburg, and I am a graduate student currently doing research for my thesis paper. The topic I am writing on is music's role in identity formation.

You are being sent this email becasue you have been invited to participate in my study.

Should you choose to participate in this research, you will be asked to commit 30 minutes of your time towards giving a qualitative interview. The topics that will be discussed during this interview will include your view of yourself, your personal philosophies, and you relationship with music as a part of your life. Audio from the conversation may be recorded to aid the researcher's study. Other commitments may require using transportation to meet in a convienient mutual location.

Thank you for taking the time to read this email, and thank you for any considerations you may give to being a participant in this study. Any commitment in to this project will be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Thomas Monahan

# Appendix B: Consent Forms

# East Stroudsburg University
# Department of Communication

**INFORMED CONSENT**
**Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation**

**NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

**You are invited to participate in a research study** to learn about the influences of music on the identity development process. The study is being conducted by Thomas Monahan, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Cem Zeytinoglu in the East Stroudsburg University Department of Communication. You were selected as a possible participant because you are have clearly shown interest in music and you are 19 or older.

**If you decide to participate in this research study**, you will be asked to discuss the role that music has played in your life by means of qualitative interview. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty minutes.

**There will be no risks to participants in this study.** Audio from interviews may be recorded for review by the researcher. All audio information will be deleted once the full study has been finalized.

**The only cost required of participants at least thirty minutes of their time.**

**Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential.**

**If you change your mind about participating**, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with ESU, the Department of Communication or the principal investigator, Thomas Monahan.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the East Stroudsburg University Institutional Review Board by phone (570)-422-3336 or e-mail at sdavis@po-box.esu.edu.

**Participants Initials**  **Page 1 of 2**

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHERE OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Participant Signature Date** | Investigator obtaining consent Date |
| | 3/26/2020 |
| _____ | _____ |
| Printed Name | Printed Name |
| | Thomas Monahan |
| | _____ |
| | Co-Investigator Date |
| | _____ |
| | Printed Name |

# East Stroudsburg University
# Department of Communication

**INFORMED CONSENT**
**Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation**

**NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

**You are invited to participate in a research study** to learn about the influences of music on the identity development process. The study is being conducted by Thomas Monahan, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Cem Zeytinoglu in the East Stroudsburg University Department of Communication. You were selected as a possible participant because you are have clearly shown interest in music and you are 19 or older.

**If you decide to participate in this research study**, you will be asked to discuss the role that music has played in your life by means of qualitative interview. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty minutes.

**There will be no risks to participants in this study.** Audio from interviews may be recorded for review by the researcher. All audio information will be deleted once the full study has been finalized.

**The only cost required of participants at least thirty minutes of their time.**

**Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential.**

**If you change your mind about participating**, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with ESU, the Department of Communication or the principal investigator, Thomas Monahan.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the East Stroudsburg University Institutional Review Board by phone (570)-422-3336 or e-mail at sdavis@po-box.esu.edu.

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHERE OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

Lisa Truffi

_____3/19/2020 _____Thomas Monahan_____3/19/2020
**Participant Signature** **Date** Investigator obtaining consent Date

___Lisa Truffi_____ _____Thomas Monahan_
Printed Name Printed Name

_____
Co-Investigator Date

_____
Printed Name

# East Stroudsburg University
# Department of Communication

**INFORMED CONSENT**
**Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation**

**NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

**You are invited to participate in a research study** to learn about the influences of music on the identity development process. The study is being conducted by Thomas Monahan, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Cem Zeytinoglu in the East Stroudsburg University Department of Communication. You were selected as a possible participant because you are have clearly shown interest in music and you are 19 or older.

**If you decide to participate in this research study**, you will be asked to discuss the role that music has played in your life by means of qualitative interview. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty minutes.

**There will be no risks to participants in this study.** Audio from interviews may be recorded for review by the researcher. All audio information will be deleted once the full study has been finalized.

**The only cost required of participants at least thirty minutes of their time.**

**Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential.**

**If you change your mind about participating**, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with ESU, the Department of Communication or the principal investigator, Thomas Monahan.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the East Stroudsburg University Institutional Review Board by phone (570)-422-3336 or e-mail at sdavis@po-box.esu.edu.

SW

**Participants Initials _____** 

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHERE OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

Scott M. Woodean
_____3/25/2020 _____Thomas Monahan_____3/25/2020
**Participant Signature** **Date** Investigator obtaining consent Date

_____Scott Woodean _____Thomas Monahan_
Printed Name Printed Name

_____
Co-Investigator Date

_____
Printed Name

# East Stroudsburg University
# Department of Communication

**INFORMED CONSENT**
**Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation**

**NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

**You are invited to participate in a research study** to learn about the influences of music on the identity development process. The study is being conducted by Thomas Monahan, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Cem Zeytinoglu in the East Stroudsburg University Department of Communication. You were selected as a possible participant because you are have clearly shown interest in music and you are 19 or older.

**If you decide to participate in this research study**, you will be asked to discuss the role that music has played in your life by means of qualitative interview. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty minutes.

**There will be no risks to participants in this study.** Audio from interviews may be recorded for review by the researcher. All audio information will be deleted once the full study has been finalized.

**The only cost required of participants at least thirty minutes of their time.**

**Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential.**

**If you change your mind about participating**, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with ESU, the Department of Communication or the principal investigator, Thomas Monahan.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the East Stroudsburg University Institutional Review Board by phone (570)-422-3336 or e-mail at sdavis@po-box.esu.edu.

**Participants Initials** _____ 

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHERE OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

_____8/19/2020 _____8/19-2020

**Participant Signature** **Date** Investigator obtaining consent Date

_Kimberly Luciano_____ _____Thomas Monahan_____
Printed Name Printed Name

_____
Co-Investigator Date

_____

# East Stroudsburg University
# Department of Communication

**INFORMED CONSENT**
**Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation**

**NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

**You are invited to participate in a research study** to learn about the influences of music on the identity development process. The study is being conducted by Thomas Monahan, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Cem Zeytinoglu in the East Stroudsburg University Department of Communication. You were selected as a possible participant because you are have clearly shown interest in music and you are 19 or older.

**If you decide to participate in this research study**, you will be asked to discuss the role that music has played in your life by means of qualitative interview. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty minutes.

**There will be no risks to participants in this study.** Audio from interviews may be recorded for review by the researcher. All audio information will be deleted once the full study has been finalized.

**The only cost required of participants at least thirty minutes of their time.**

**Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential.**

**If you change your mind about participating**, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with ESU, the Department of Communication or the principal investigator, Thomas Monahan.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the East Stroudsburg University Institutional Review Board by phone (570)-422-3336 or e-mail at sdavis@po-box.esu.edu.

B.R

**Participants Initials _____** 

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHERE OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

3/19/2020 Thomas Monahan

_____3/22/2020 _____3/22/2020

**Participant Signature** **Date** Investigator obtaining consent Date

___Brenda Rosas_____ _____Thomas Monahan___

Printed Name Printed Name

_____

Co-Investigator Date

_____

Printed Name

# East Stroudsburg University
# Department of Communication

**INFORMED CONSENT**
**Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation**

**NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

**You are invited to participate in a research study** to learn about the influences of music on the identity development process. The study is being conducted by Thomas Monahan, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Cem Zeytinoglu in the East Stroudsburg University Department of Communication. You were selected as a possible participant because you are have clearly shown interest in music and you are 19 or older.

**If you decide to participate in this research study**, you will be asked to discuss the role that music has played in your life by means of qualitative interview. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty minutes.

**There will be no risks to participants in this study.** Audio from interviews may be recorded for review by the researcher. All audio information will be deleted once the full study has been finalized.

**The only cost required of participants at least thirty minutes of their time.**

**Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential.**

**If you change your mind about participating**, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with ESU, the Department of Communication or the principal investigator, Thomas Monahan.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the East Stroudsburg University Institutional Review Board by phone (570)-422-3336 or e-mail at sdavis@po-box.esu.edu.

JM

**Participants Initials _____** **Page 1 of 2**

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHERE OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

Jackson Meyerhof Thomas Monahan

_____3/22/2020 _____3/22/2020

**Participant Signature** **Date** Investigator obtaining consent Date

___Jackson Meyerhof_____ _____Thomas Monahan___

Printed Name Printed Name

_____

Co-Investigator Date

_____

Printed Name

# East Stroudsburg University
# Department of Communication

**INFORMED CONSENT**
**Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation**

**NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

**You are invited to participate in a research study** to learn about the influences of music on the identity development process. The study is being conducted by Thomas Monahan, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Cem Zeytinoglu in the East Stroudsburg University Department of Communication. You were selected as a possible participant because you are have clearly shown interest in music and you are 19 or older.

**If you decide to participate in this research study**, you will be asked to discuss the role that music has played in your life by means of qualitative interview. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty minutes.

**There will be no risks to participants in this study.** Audio from interviews may be recorded for review by the researcher. All audio information will be deleted once the full study has been finalized.

**The only cost required of participants at least thirty minutes of their time.**

**Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential.**

**If you change your mind about participating**, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with ESU, the Department of Communication or the principal investigator, Thomas Monahan.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the East Stroudsburg University Institutional Review Board by phone (570)-422-3336 or e-mail at sdavis@po-box.esu.edu.

**Participants Initials** AG 

**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHERE OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**

Alan Garcia 3/21/2020 Thomas Monahan 3/21/2020

**Participant Signature** **Date** Investigator obtaining consent Date

___Alan Garcia_____ _____Thomas Monahan___

Printed Name Printed Name

_____

Co-Investigator Date

_____

Printed Name

# East Stroudsburg University
# Department of Communication

**INFORMED CONSENT**
**Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation**

**NOTE: DO NOT SIGN THIS DOCUMENT UNLESS AN IRB APPROVAL STAMP WITH CURRENT DATES HAS BEEN APPLIED TO THIS DOCUMENT.)**

**You are invited to participate in a research study** to learn about the influences of music on the identity development process. The study is being conducted by Thomas Monahan, a graduate student working under the direction of Dr. Cem Zeytinoglu in the East Stroudsburg University Department of Communication. You were selected as a possible participant because you are have clearly shown interest in music and you are 19 or older.

**If you decide to participate in this research study**, you will be asked to discuss the role that music has played in your life by means of qualitative interview. Your total time commitment will be approximately thirty minutes.

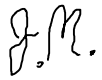
**There will be no risks to participants in this study.** Audio from interviews may be recorded for review by the researcher. All audio information will be deleted once the full study has been finalized.

**The only cost required of participants at least thirty minutes of their time.**

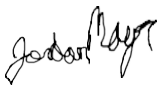
**Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential.**

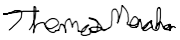
**If you change your mind about participating**, you can withdraw at any time during the study. Your participation is completely voluntary. If you choose to withdraw, your data can be withdrawn as long as it is identifiable. Your decision about whether or not to participate or to stop participating will not jeopardize your future relations with ESU, the Department of Communication or the principal investigator, Thomas Monahan.

**If you have questions about your rights as a research participant**, you may contact the East Stroudsburg University Institutional Review Board by phone (570)-422-3336 or e-mail at sdavis@po-box.esu.edu.



**HAVING READ THE INFORMATION PROVIDED, YOU MUST DECIDE WHETHERE OR NOT YOU WISH TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE INDICATES YOUR WILLINGNESS TO PARTICIPATE.**





_____3/21/2020 _____3/21/2020

**Participant Signature** **Date** Investigator obtaining consent Date

___Jodan Mayer_____ _____Thomas Monahan___

Printed Name Printed Name

_____

Co-Investigator Date

_____

Printed Name

# Appendix C: Interview Questions

### Interview Questions General

- What is your favorite music genre?
- How did you first encounter this type of music?
- Can you describe why you like this type of music?
- What qualities draw you to it (ex: beats, lyrics, emotions)?
- What does music do for you in general (ex: socializing, learning, coping, motivation)?
- Do you like this type of music during every occasion? Or, do you only find yourself listening to different styles at different times?
- Do you associate certain music with things you've encountered?
- When do you find yourself listening to music? Can you describe what makes you want to listen at those times, or in those situations?
- When did you first begin to actively seek out music to listen to on your own?
- Would you say that your tastes have changed over the years? If so, can you recall what made you start expanding?
- Would you say that you were influenced by music? If so, how so?
- Do you think that music has ever influenced your behavior (like have you ever been compelled to dance)?
- What are you looking for when you listen to a song?
- Do you have any favorite songs? What do those songs mean to you?

- Do you try to look up explanations to songs, or do you like to make up your own meanings?
- Why do you keep returning to these (your favorite) songs?
- Do you get specific feelings from specific songs?
- Do you have any favorite artists? Or, do you follow any artists closely?
- Have these people influenced you at all? If so, how so?
- What is it that you value about these artists in particular?
- Has music shaped any of your views about the world (any of your attitudes, values, beliefs, philosophies, mantras)? In what way?
- Was this an attitude, belief, or value that you were felt strongly about before?
- Do you think that other people would be able to guess that your personality judging by your music tastes? Why?
- Do you think that you'd be able to tell somebody's personality if you knew somebody's music tastes?
- Can you describe your personality for me?
- What is your favorite song right now?
- Do you think that it reflects your personality?

**Questions about identity**

- Would you say that you are confident in your current self image (your identity as you are right now)?

- Have you always felt confident in your image?
- If no, what changed to make you confident in your self right now?
- How do you think someone else would describe you?
- Do you usually try to act the same when you around different people? Or, do you change how you act depending on the situation?
- How do you usually tend to act around people you don't know?
- What part of your identity do you think distinguishes you from your peers?
- Do you count yourself as part of any kind of community or subculture?
- If so, do you find that others in your community share the same tastes in music?
- Are there people that you feel most comfortable being around?
- If yes, why do you feel more comfortable around them than others?
- Would you say you act like the same person when you're not around these people?
- Do you have anything that stresses you out?
- What calms you down when your stressed?
- If you would want to be remembered for one thing, what would it be?

**Interview Questions Artist specific**

- What made you want to start playing your instrument/ performing?
- When did you start practicing your craft?
- How often would you say that you practice?
- What motivates you to practice now?

- Have you always had the same motivations?
- If no, then, what changed? Was it an event that changed you, or a gradual change over time?
- Do you find this change reflected in your approach to making music? Can you describe how it changed?
- If music was important to you growing up, why do you think that is?
- What do you normally try to accomplish when you make music? Are you trying to convey an idea, express an emotion, or just release some tension?
- Describe your style to me.

# Appendix D: IRB Documentation

EAST STROUDSBURG UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD for RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS

**RESEARCH PROTOCOL REVIEW FORM**

For information or help contact Dr. Shala Davis: Koehler Field House, East Stroudsburg University
**Phone: 570-422-3336** **e-mail: sdavis@esu.edu**

1. **PROPOSED START DATE of STUDY:** 2/28/2020 **IRB number:** _____
   **PROPOSED REVIEW CATEGORY(Check one):** ☐ **Full Board** ☐ **Expedited** ☒ **Exempt**
2. **PROJECT TITLE:** Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation

| 3. Thomas Monahan | | Communication | 845-239-6671 | tmonahan@live.esu.edu |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR** | **TITLE** | **DEPT** | **PHONE** | **ESU E-MAIL** |

| 495 Guymard Turnpike, Middletown NY 10940 | | tommonahan12@gmail.com |
|---|---|---|
| **MAILING ADDRESS** | **FAX** | **ALTERNATE E-MAIL** |

4. **SOURCE OF FUNDING SUPPORT:** ☐ **Not Applicable** ☐ **Internal** ☐ **External Agency:** Not Applicable ☐ **Pending** ☐ **Received**
5. **LIST ANY CONTRACTORS, SUB-CONTRACTORS, OTHER ENTITIES OR IRBs ASSOCIATED WITH THIS PROJECT:**
6. **GENERAL RESEARCH PROJECT CHARACTERISTICS**

**6A. Mandatory CITI Training**

**Names of key personnel who have completed CITI tutorial:**
Thomas Monahan

**Note**: Prior to submission to IRB, non-campus personnel must seek approval from Chief Academic Officer.

Letter from Provost's Office dated _____

Attach to Research Application.

**6B. Research Methodology**

**Please check all descriptors that best apply to the research methodology.**

Data Source(s): ☒ New Data ☐ Existing Data

Will data be recorded so that participants can be directly or indirectly identified?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Data collection will involve the use of:

- ☐ Educational Tests (cognitive diagnostic, aptitude, etc.)
- ☐ Surveys/Questionnaires
- ☐ Internet/electronic
- ☒ Audio/Video/Photos
- ☒ Interview/Observation
- ☐ Physical/Physiological Measures or Specimens
- ☐ Private records or files
- ☐

**6C. Participant Information**

**Please check all descriptors that apply to the participant population.**
☒ Males ☒ Females ☒ ESU students

**Vulnerable Populations**
☐ Pregnant Women/Fetuses ☐ Children and/or Adolescents (under age 19 in AL)
☐ Prisoners

**Persons with:**
☐ Economic Disadvantages ☐ Physical Disabilities
☐ Educational Disadvantages ☐ Intellectual Disabilities

**Do you plan to compensate your participants?** ☐ Yes ☒ No

**6D. Risks to Participants**

**Please identify all risks that participants might encounter in this research.**

- ☐ Breach of Confidentiality
- ☐ Deception
- ☐ Psychological
- ☒ None
- ☐

Coercion
- ☐ Physical
- ☐ Social
- ☐ Other _____
- ☐ _____

*Note that if the investigator is using or accessing confidential or identifiable data, breach of confidentiality is always a risk.

**FOR IRB OFFICE USE ONLY**

**DATE RECEIVED:** _____ **BY** _____ **PROTOCOL #** _____
**DATE OF IRB REVIEW:** _____ **BY** _____ **APPROVAL**
**CATEGORY:** _____
**DATE OF IRB APPROVAL:** _____ **BY** _____ **INTERVAL FOR CONTINUING REVIEW:** _____
**COMMENTS:** _____

**7. PROJECT ASSURANCES**

**PROJECT TITLE:** Finding Self in Sound: Music in the Process of Identity Formation

## A. PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR'S ASSURANCES

1. I certify that all information provided in this application is complete and correct.
2. I understand that, as Principal Investigator, I have ultimate responsibility for the conduct of this study, the ethical performance of the project, the protection of the rights and welfare of human subjects, and strict adherence to any stipulations imposed by the East Stroudsburg University IRB.
3. I certify that all individuals involved with the conduct of this project are qualified to carry out their specified roles and responsibilities and are in compliance with East Stroudsburg University policies regarding the collection and analysis of the research data.
4. I agree to comply with all East Stroudsburg policies and procedures, as well as with all applicable federal, state, and local laws regarding the protection of human subjects, including, but not limited to the following:
    a. Conducting the project by qualified personnel according to the approved protocol
    b. Implementing no changes in the approved protocol or consent form without prior approval from the IRB
    c. Obtaining the legally effective informed consent from each participant or their legally responsible representative prior to their participation in this project using only the currently approved, stamped consent form
    d. Promptly reporting significant adverse events and/or effects to the IRB in writing within 5 working days of the occurrence.
5. If I will be unavailable to direct this research personally, I will arrange for a co-investigator to assume direct responsibility in my absence. This person has been named as co-investigator in this application, or I will advise the IRB, by letter, in advance of such arrangements.
6. I agree to conduct this study only during the period approved by East Stroudsburg University IRB.
7. I will prepare and submit a renewal request and supply all supporting documents to the IRB before the approval period has expired if it is necessary to continue the research project beyond the time period approved by the East Stroudsburg University IRB.
8. I will prepare and submit a final report upon completion of this research project.

**My signature indicates that I have read, understand and agree to conduct this research project in accordance with the assurances listed above.**

| Thomas Monahan | Thomas Monahan | 2/25/2020 |
|---|---|---|
| **Printed name of Principal Investigator** | **Principal Investigator's Signature** | **Date** |

## B. FACULTY ADVISOR/SPONSOR'S ASSURANCES

1. By my signature as faculty advisor/sponsor on this research application, I certify that the student or guest investigator is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct this particular study in accord with the approved protocol.
2. I certify that the project will be performed by qualified personnel according to the approved protocol using conventional or experimental methodology.
3. I agree to meet with the investigator on a regular basis to monitor study progress.
4. Should problems arise during the course of the study, I agree to be available, personally, to supervise the investigator in solving them.
5. I assure that the investigator will promptly report significant adverse events and/or effects to the IRB in writing within 5 working days of the occurrence.
6. If I will be unavailable, I will arrange for an alternate faculty sponsor to assume responsibility during my absence, and I will advise the IRB by letter of such arrangements. If the investigator is unable to fulfill requirements for submission of renewals, modifications or the final report, I will assume that responsibility.
7. I have read the protocol submitted for this project of content, clarity, and methodology.

| Cem Zeytinoglu | Cem Zeytinoglu | 2/28/2020 |
|---|---|---|
| **Printed name of Faculty Advisor/Sponsor** | **Signature** | **Date** |

## C. DEPARTMENT HEAD'S ASSURANCE

By my signature as department head, I certify that I will cooperate with the administration in the application and enforcement of all East Stroudsburg University policies and procedures, as well as all applicable federal, state treatment [illegible] the protection and ethical of human participants by researchers in my department.



| Robert McKenzie | Robert McKenzie | 2/28/2020 |
|---|---|---|
| **Printed name of Department Head** | **Signature** | **Date** |

CITI PROGRAM

Completion Date 12-Nov-2019
Expiration Date 11-Nov-2022
Record ID 34119164

This is to certify that:

**Thomas Monahan**

Has completed the following CITI Program course:

**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher** (Curriculum Group)
**Social & Behavioral Research - Basic/Refresher** (Course Learner Group)
**1 - Basic Course** (Stage)

Under requirements set by:

**East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania**

CITI
Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative

Verify at www.citiprogram.org/verify/?w8b485019-8c72-4f4e-abcf-80d42a085558-34119164

---

SD

Shala Davis <SDavis@po-box.esu.edu>
Tue 3/17/2020 9:56 PM
**To:** Tom J Monahan

Sent approval on campus mail on Friday..

Sent from my iPhone

...

Tom J Monahan
Tue 3/17/2020 9:00 PM
**To:** Shala Davis

IRB FORM FINAL VERSION_3_...
867 KB

Hey Dr. Davis,

I hope that you are doing well and staying healthy. In light of the recent events that have been taking place, I wanted to message you and ask about the status of my IRB application.

I realize that ESU suspended all on-campus activity for the rest of the semester, and because of this I was wondering if it would be acceptable for me to submit a digital copy of the application form to you for approval. The physical application I submitted is currently on file at the campus: I handed it to your secretary the day before spring break.