WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE MUSICAL?

AN EXAMINATION OF MUSICAL SELF-PERCEPTION

Karen Alissa Hauge

University of Delaware

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by

Karen Alissa Hauge

Approved:_____
Suzanne L. Burton, Ph.D.
Professor in charge of the thesis on behalf of the Advisory Committee

Approved:_____
Russell Murray, Ph.D.
Committee member from the Department of Music

Approved:_____
Leslie Reidel, M.FA.
Committee member from the Board of Senior Thesis Readers

Approved:_____
Alan Fox, Ph.D.
Director, University Honors Program

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

ABSTRACT

Music is a basic human instinct. We are all musical beings, uniquely created to be musical and engage musically with the world. Yet, there are some people who do not feel that they are *musical*, believing instead that *musicality* is a quality that some people have and others don't. This common idea is contrary to the theory of musical potential proposed by Gordon (2001), which holds that all people are born with musical potential, a quality he calls music aptitude. But if all people are born with potential to be musical, why is it that some people embrace their musicality while others refuse to acknowledge it? The purpose of this research was to develop an understanding of why some people consider themselves to be musical while others do not, and where the colloquial definition of *musical* comes from. The present study was conducted in two phases: Phase One entailed an online survey that was distributed to 840 participants; Phase Two entailed interviews with ten survey participants who were selected based upon their diverse responses to the survey questions. Prevailing themes from both phases of the study indicated that to be considered musical, a person must be musically engaged, with the most salient ways of musical engagement being listening to music, playing an instrument, or singing. Findings also suggested that for almost all people, whether they believe they are musical or not, music is an important part of everyday life.

Chapter One

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Music is a basic human instinct, a human activity universally engaged with, experienced, and loved on a daily basis. In recent years overwhelming evidence has shown a biological and evolutionary basis for music in human history; not only is the human brain equipped to process and experience music (Levitin, 2006) but, early humans might have used music to prolong the life of the human species (Dissanayake, 2008). Yet, the world of music—making it, engaging with it, and enjoying it—has become inaccessible to the everyday person. An emphasis on training, talent, and performance in the past century has caused society to exalt the professional musician, consequently implying that the amateur musician or untrained enthusiast is less than the musical ideal (Regelski, 2007). As a result, one must question whether people have become uneasy to define themselves as being musical because they feel they do not meet these high social standards.

Introduction

Understanding the role that music plays in the formation of a person's identity and those factors that contribute to or conflict with a person's willingness to identify himself as *musical* or *non-musical* has been a directive of music

education in recent years (Green, 2002; Regelski, 2007). The speculation among music education researchers is that a variety of social and cultural influences affect the way people view not only their musicality but also the musicality of others. In this view, a person's musicality is as much a socially formed identity as it is a personal one, creating many obstacles to the universal idea that everyone is musical. The first step in overcoming the notion that some people are not musical is to point out misconceptions and misunderstandings and explain the ways in which music plays a role in the lives of all humans: A growing body of literature speaks to that very task.

The fundamental misconception about musicality is that humans are musically unequal, that some people are born with musical talent and others are not. Welch (2005) demonstrates that all people exhibit musical behaviors throughout their lives, whether they acknowledge these behaviors as being legitimately musical or not. Babies listen to their mother's voice *in utero* and likely share their mother's responses to musical experiences, developing bias or preference toward particular types of music as a result of their mother's preference. After birth, the sing-song "baby-talk" employed by parents to capture the attention of their infant and teach basic language is exaggeratedly musical (Dissanayake, 2008). This sing-song language, as well as an environment filled with music (e.g., parents' singing or playing music) directly impacts whether a child will engage with music. A child who is sung to often and is encouraged to engage in musical activities throughout childhood will be more likely to engage in music later in life due to an increased sense of comfort with musical engagement

(Gordon, 2001). On the other hand, a child who is not consistently surrounded by music will be more likely to shy away from musical engagement due to a lack of confidence. Welch (2005) emphasizes that people's misconception about musicality might often be tied to this very phenomenon: People feel that being musical means being *good at music*, and that people who are untalented or not musically proficient do not meet the standard required to be *musical*. However, a lack of musical proficiency is tied to a lack of musical engagement during early childhood, not to lack of ability. According to Welch, all people are musical, regardless of ability measured on any scale. Noted scholars Bowman (2004) and Gordon (2001) share Welch's view.

An important factor in a person's perception of his own musicality is his participation in and success with musical activities (Bernard, 2005; Davidson and Borthwick, 2002; Pitts, 2002). This, more than an understanding or a general appreciation of music, is an important way for a person to demonstrate that he is musical in the physical world. However, it is no longer enough to be able to simply make music in a public forum; the social requirement for talent in creating music severely limits and diminishes the musical contributions of many people (Regelski, 2007).

Professional vs. Amateur Musicianship

Regelski (2007) discusses the development of the *professional musician* identity (since the eighteenth century) as separate from the *amateur musician* identity. He considers the implications of music education practices that encourage students to aspire to the oft unreachable executive musical skills of an

elite few rather than to create and play music for the love of doing it. The traditional association of classical music, repetitive practicing, and singular dedication with professional musicianship is not only a daunting identity for a student to tackle, it can alienate those who initially were inspired to play music because it was something they loved or admired, not because they wanted to fit into such rigid performance standards (Regelski, 2007).

Regelski defines an amateur as someone who initially admires, and then becomes a devotee or a particular skill or practice. He discusses the ways in which amateuring is often discouraged: (a) through lessons that demand repetition of exercises rather than actual music that simultaneously demands the mastery of skills necessary to play those exercises; (b) by the limited view of *worthwhile* music being classical music that the student cannot connect with or be inspired by; and (c) in the singular quest for perfection rather than the enjoyment of music. He proposes that all music teaching should encourage *good time*, time that the student considers well spent, and is satisfied with. When a student reaches the point where he is uninspired by his own music-making, teachers must provide examples of higher amateur performance that they student can reasonably aspire to. A good amateur learning experience includes participation in solo and small ensemble music and explores many different kinds of music; it will ideally result in the student's musical independence from his teacher, and the continuation of his *amateuring* for as long as music brings joy to his life.

Lack of Definition

A review of the literature has revealed the lack of a definition of the word *musical*; the only consensus that can be found among researchers is that *musical* encompasses many behaviors and characteristics that vary from person to person. According to Jaffurs (2004), any effort to define *musical* reflects the opinions of the writer and the research they have consulted while simultaneously and unintentionally excluding any other opinions held by any other given person. Defining *musical* creates a standard that a person is forced to compare himself with. From Jaffurs' article one may surmise that musicality is easier and more useful to understand as a perception rather than a definition: how a person judges his own musicality is more important than how he may be judged by others.

Development of Musicality

Music Learning Theory

The development of musicality may best be described by Gordon's (2001) music learning theory, which posits that all people are born with musical potential, a trait he calls music aptitude. This aptitude develops from pre-birth to about age nine, with the process of musical development compared to the process of language acquisition. Children learn to speak because they listen to their parents talking to them and absorb the sounds they hear. In musical acculturation, babies listen to the music around them and absorb the sounds they hear. The next stage of both language acquisition and music learning is babble, when babies experiment with their voices to create sounds. In language acquisition, the sounds

resemble spoken words; in music learning, the sounds resemble tonal or rhythmic sounds that babies have heard in the acculturation stage.

Babies learn to imitate the sounds around them in the next stage. In language acquisition babies repeat words their parents say without any understanding of what they are saying; similarly, babies repeat tonal or rhythmic fragments, without musical understanding. In both cases, children are only repeating what they hear without creating their own sentences of music. The final stage of language acquisition is conversation, in which children use the words they have imitated to form their own sentences. In music learning theory, this is comparable to tonal and rhythmic improvisation; children engage in musical dialogue, using the musical sounds they have heard and imitated (Burton, in press).

According to Gordon, not all children progress through these stages of music learning the same way they progress through the stages of language acquisition because not all children are surrounded by music they way they are surrounded by language during the critical period of aptitude development. Unfortunately, for most children, the first consistent musical experiences that they have are in grade school. According to Gordon's model, students in this situation are behind the musically-developmental curve. Those children who are sung and rhythmically chanted to throughout the first nine years of their lives will become musically fluent just as they become fluent in language.

The farther and faster children progress through the stages of early music learning the higher their music aptitude will be. As Gordon's research

demonstrates (2001), people with lower music aptitude often have difficulty completing simple musical tasks like moving in a coordinated way to music, feeling the beat, or matching pitch. The by-product of this is that people with higher music aptitude are more likely to become proficient in music, which may positively influence their feeling of musicality, while the reverse is true for people with low music aptitude: they are less likely to become proficient in music, which may negatively influence their feeling of musicality.

Effect of Family Scripts

The process of musical development is affected most directly by parents and family during the critical period of developmental music aptitude. Davidson and Borthwick (2002) focused their research on the way families function as social units and how family scripts, or roles assigned to each member, affect the support of musical activity. To this end, they observed a family of two young boys and their musician parents for eighteen months and interviewed the family members every two months. They investigated the effect of family scripts, birth order, and parenting style on a child's perception of his own musicality. Davidson and Borthwick found that that a parent's opinion of their child's musicality has a strong influence on how the child views himself as a musical or non-musical person. This study lends credence to Gordon's theory (2001) that everyone is born with musical potential, but that different ways of nurturing that potential yields very different results.

Musical Identities

A person's musicality can be developed to different levels of ability depending on the way it is nurtured throughout early childhood. The extent to which musicality is developed affects the extent to which a person feels musical, which in turn affects the integration of music into one's identity (Pitts, 2002). The authors of the essay compilation Musical Identities (2002) reflect on the different ways that music can be incorporated into a person's identity, distinguishing between *identities in music*, in which a person has a formal musical identity, like being a professional musician, and *music in identities*, where music plays a part in the formation of non-musical roles.

In his critique of this volume, Gracyk (2004) describes his unease with the treatment of these terms; the discussion of *identities in music* invariably leads to an emphasis on the dichotomy between musicians and non-musicians, a distinction that not only diminishes the contributions of so-called *non-musicians* but that also necessarily excludes *non-musicians* from having *identities in music*. The last point is particularly troubling because, even in these essays, musical identity is continually linked with the ability to play an instrument, a limit that would exclude many people many people from having an *identity in music.*

The label of *music in identities* speaks to a more global and inclusive definition of musicality. This term refers to the role of music in forming a person's identity, which Gracyk suggests is an infinitely more approachable perspective to consider. This perspective suggests that music plays a vital role in the formation of a person's identity, whether or not he chooses to pursue a career

in music or even the study or practice of music. Music can inspire memories of the past simply because a song is tied to the memory of an event or period of a person's life. Adolescents, in particular, use music as a means of expression and self-description; the kind of music one listens to defines a person, or is defined by the group of friends one has, and gives one a represent himself to strangers. Gracyk cites the social constructionist theory of identity formation (Gracyk, 2004), suggesting that adolescents try out multiple *selves* in their search for an identity. Even the simple act of listening to music provides a mental challenge for adolescents to overcome, which in turn strengthens their self-confidence. Bowman stated in the foreword to a collection of reviews of Musical Identities:

> Music's role in constructing, negotiating, and maintaining identity (whether individual or collective) is deeper and more urgent that other human engagements- or at any rate is markedly different. Music and identity are, one might say, joined at the hip.
>
> (Bowman, 2003, p. 2)

Gracyk's (2004) review suggests that too much emphasis has been placed on trained musicianship as a requirement for musical identity, and that many people might experience *music in identities* but are not apt to label themselves as *musical* because they are not trained musicians. As musicality develops, a child who is encouraged to explore musical behaviors is more likely to judge his musical activity as a valid sign of his musical identity (Gracyk, 2004).

Roberts' (2004) review of Musical Identities critiques the perspective achieved by a psychological approach to musical identity formation. He points out what he sees to be a fundamental flaw in the book's background, the face that none of his research or the research of other music identity scholars had been

referenced at any point in the book. To this end, he makes clear the book's failure to discuss a standard acknowledged fact in sociology, which is that, *musician identity is constructed and maintained through constant social interaction*. Roberts also comments on the traditional relationship between the music researcher and his subject: unlike many other sociological research disciplines, the music researcher often has a particular interest in the subject of music because he is a musical person or musician. This situation is unique to the field of music research and can potentially mar the results when the goal is objective research. Conversely, Roberts suggests that the idea of a book being about music identity from the perspective of an uninvolved, unbiased psychologist prevents insight and understanding.

Lee (2004) reviews Musical Identities as a doctoral student who is studying musicians and their identities as they make the transition into being music teachers. Her article is structured in the form of a conversation with anonymous music teachers about the book Musical Identities. Lee's research subjects discuss their identities as singular with many parts, as opposed to how identity is presented in the book: as compartmentalized into several different identities. Other flaws of the book, as cited by Lee, are the constraining nature of the categories *identities in music* and *music in identities*, which leave out elements that Lee says must be addressed, which Lee never directly discusses. Lee reminds the reader that the cover of the book, which features a young man with spiked hair playing guitar, seems to imply that being musical is for the young, male popular musician.

Lee and one teacher, Dayton, agree that a strength of the book is its assertion that identity is a socially constructed and negotiated phenomenon. Participating in musical ensembles with other students is especially important to a student who is developing a sense of musical identity. However, students who identify themselves primarily as performers often feel that they lose the sense of *performer identity* when they become music teachers. Dayton believes that only students who are musically talented will have their identities shaped by music because some people are just not musically inclined. Lee chooses not to comment on this remark, perhaps because this sentiment rather contradicts current thought in music education, which is strongly influenced by Gordon's music learning theory (2001).

Popular Music-Making

The association of trained musicianship with musical identity (Gracyk, 2004) as well as the intimidating image of the professional musician (Regelski, 2007) leads to the exclusion of many people from feeling as if they are musical. People's musical misconceptions discount another world of music-making that is widespread across generations and cultures: popular or informal music-making. Being a member of a popular music group, like a rock band, usually entails non-traditional music learning that does not include formal notation or music reading, and is often excluded from traditional music education (Davis, 2005). The efficacy of informal music-making, however, may lie in its ability to appeal to and include many more people in musical engagement.

Formal vs. Informal Training

One of the key differences between popular music-making from traditional is the lack of emphasis on formal training, especially the ability to read and traditionally notate music (Regelski, 2007). Green (2002) investigated the process of informal music learning in the setting of "Anglo-American guitar-based pop and rock" (2002, p. 9) groups. Her study involved intensive interviews with fourteen British popular musicians between the ages of 15 and 50. Green found that the beginning of informal music learning takes place in childhood from enculturation, ("…immersion in the everyday music and musical practices of one's social context" (2002, p. 22) to experimentation, sometimes with the guidance of a teacher but more often in the context of a band of their peers. Interviewees said that they learned primarily through the mastery of song covers and secondarily by improvising or creating their own music. These musicians often did not use or read traditional notation, and if they did they relied more on listening to and copying recordings than on written music. Green's research provides crucial evidence for the argument that informal music making is just as legitimate as the music that is made in the classroom or in a classical concert hall.

Rock As School

Webb (2007) reviewed two films, the fictional *School of Rock* and the documentary *Rock School*, the latter about the institution founded by Paul Green upon with *School of Rock* is loosely based. Webb discusses Lucy Green's principles of popular music-making: (a) learning music that students choose, like,

and identify with; learning by listening and copying recordings; (b) learning with friends; (c) personal often haphazard learning without structured guidance; and (d) the integration of listening, performing, improvising and composing. He compares the methods of informal music learning employed in each film, highlighting the main difference between the philosophies of *music-as-process* and *music-as-object*. In *Rock School*, students listen to classic rock in order to learn to mimic the virtuosity and dexterity of the masters, with the hope that imitation of existing artists will lead to the students' own musical creations: music as process. In *School of Rock*, students also study the classics, but more as a vehicle for learning specific songs to master and perform: music as object. In each case, the real School of Rock Music founder Paul Green and fictional teacher Dewey Finn work to help kids find a mode of expression that they can identify with, since they claim that music is so often a vehicle for identity discovery. Both films emphasize the need for the popular music-making that is often excluded from schools and bring light to the idea that music educators need to teach to all of their students' interest in order to engage them more fully in music-making.

Collaborative Learning

Davis (2005) interviewed and observed an adolescent rock band that composed its own music collaboratively. She found that the band's peer-directed learning was born of a desire to get outside the structure of the traditional, teacher-directed music classroom, a setting where they claimed to feel alienated from making the music they wanted because the structure of the school band program was too rigid. Comments from band members indicated that they felt that

music played in important role in their lives as means of expressing their true emotions and as a vehicle to describe who they were as individuals. Davis' research once again demonstrates the link between music and the formation of identity.

Summary

Popular music-making appeals to the existing musical tastes of students and allows them to imitate and experiment with the music that they admire. The collaborative, peer-directed nature of popular music-making lends itself primarily to extra-curricular music-making (Davis, 2005). However, the influence of an expert teacher, even in a non-school environment, has been shown to be helpful in informally educating young popular musicians (Green, 2002).

In The Classroom: Musicality From a Teacher's Perspective

A teacher's perception of his students' musicality depends on the way he perceives his students engaging with music in the context of a given curriculum; it also depends on how he defines musicality, for himself and for others. Georgii-Hemming (2006) interviewed five Swedish music teachers about their perspectives on music teaching and learning. The participants were teachers in a program called "Artistic Activities," where the curriculum guidelines are less specific and the goals of the music program are for students to have fun, explore culture, and interact with each other. The focus of the program is pop and rock music, and music was used as a form of individual exploration or a way to communicate with other people. The participants also taught that music is a way

of learning to explore and experiment, a concept of music-making that even professional musicians are sometimes intimidated by. In comparison to informal compositional processes (Davis, 2005; Green, 2002), these teachers directed their students' popular music making. This process of teacher-directed popular music making and composition is an example of the conflict between traditional music learning practices and informal learning practices. Despite the fact that the students were creating and performing their own music, they deferred, even in a small way, to the knowledge and expertise of the teacher, where in true informal music learning students would defer to their own knowledge and experience or that of their peers.

What Music Isn't

Philosopher, Berleant (2009) embarks on an exploration of the common perception of what music is and seeks to define "what music isn't" in order to suggest a set of more useful teaching tools. He first debunks two definitions of music: that music is a means of communication, and that music is a way of expressing emotion. He ties his argument to an explanation of music as experience, suggesting that though people find personal meaning in music or feel emotions when experiencing music, this does not qualify music as meaning or emotion in itself. He maintains that music is sound, and what listeners derive from it is purely personal and ought not to be projected onto others. In this way, he aligns himself neoclassical composers like Stravinsky, who believed that music had no meaning, connotation, or expression except itself. Berleant goes on to offer a way to teach music that does not rely on the constructs of music as

meaning or emotion. This method is listening-based with an emphasis on theoretical concepts: students are instructed to recognize musical concepts like rhythm and meter, dynamics, pitch, harmony, structure, and imitation, through listening, guided by what he calls a "talented instructor" (Berleant, 2009, p. 60). He then describes his "process of appreciation," a method of evaluating the musical environment that people are simultaneously part of as "participants in musical experience" (Berleant, 2009, p. 63).

Musician-Teacher Identity

Bernard (2005) investigated a phenomenon she calls *musician-teacher identity*, a social role characterized by the reported loss of performer identity when musicians secure jobs in schools, regardless of their continued participation in extracurricular music-making. In an effort to broaden the self-perception of music teacher as musicians, she interviewed six music teachers and focused her article around a single case study. From the qualitative interview data she collected, Bernard developed a framework for understanding what she calls *musician-teacher identity*, or the elusive coexistence of two identities, those of performer and educator, which are often in conflict with each other. Bernard's analytical framework was comprised of professional discourse about music making, teachers' characterizations of music making, and the personal relevance of their musical experiences. Bernard drew major conclusions from the interviews: (a) that those in the field of music teacher education should acknowledge their students' many ways to understand who they are and what they do; (b) that music teacher educators should encourage their students to continue to

value their music-making rather than show preference for their vocations as teachers; and (c) that music teacher educators should validate the personal musical experiences of their students.

In a critical review of Bernard's article, Roberts (2007) questions Bernard's framework for musician-teacher identity. He first questions Bernard's comments on identity construction, such as her idea that identity is simultaneously constructed of layers on three levels- individual, social, and cultural. Roberts says that a person's identity is constructed from many different roles, and the role that is most appropriate at the moment is the one that rises to the surface, which is further confirmed by the social situation the person is in. He suggests that music teachers work to achieve and maintain two identities, one as teacher and one as performer, and strive to keep them in balance with each other as they rise to importance at different times. Roberts' suggestions contrasts Bernard's claim that music teachers develop their musician identity and as they become teachers, they constantly work to overwhelm their teacher identity with their musician identity.

Bouij (2007) provides his own reflections on Bernard's article, and his comments are far less scathing than Roberts'. He, like Roberts, criticizes Bernard's discussion of identity formation as processual and taking place on three levels, and disapproves of her treatment of the musician-teacher identity as a static role. Unlike Roberts, Bouij focuses more on a critique of her research methods, saying that her results are skewed because of her small sample and that she only included music teachers who have already received their education. He concludes by saying that music teacher education programs should seek to

produce teachers who can succeed in their professional lives, lives that may include performance as well as teaching.

Bernard's response (2007) to the criticism of her article is at times confusing, as she seems to talk her way around many of the points she should counter. She points out the negative connotations of the language used by both Roberts and Bouij in describing the musician/teacher identity problem; they used words like *conflict* and *war* to describe the relationship between these two identities. She then defends herself of the subject of her literature review, from which she drew the conclusion that music teacher education students are often treated like musicians that are molded into teachers instead of producing one cohesive identity. She does so by quoting Bouij among others, and then continues to show appreciation for Roberts' and Bouij's insights on the development of music teacher education students. Bernard also defends her methodology, explaining that her article was written while her research was still in progress, so her results should not be taken as the final outcome of her project. She claims that the examples provided in her study were merely included as an illustration of her framework.

Summary

The inclusion of non-traditional teaching strategies in a music classroom encourages students to engage with music differently, whether as composers, musical analysts, or simply appreciators. Non-traditional approaches also help to create a more student-centered learning environment, in which the students have control over their musical engagement while the teacher is there to provide expert

assistance when requested (Berleant, 2009; Georgii-Hemming, 2006). The idea of *musician-teacher* identity, for which a teacher must balance two different identity impulses (Bernard, 2005), could help to promote such non-traditional classrooms, by allowing teachers to occasionally shed to *teacher* identity in favor of student-directed music learning.

In The Classroom: Musicality From a Student's Perspective

Students' musical experiences in and out of school impact how they view themselves as *musical* or *non-musical* beings. Pitts (2002) researched the ways that musical participation affects the identities of music students who are either heading to college or are already in college. To this end, she developed a questionnaire and then interviewed 20 students (eleven high school seniors and nine college freshmen) about their experiences of music at school or university and about becoming a musician. According to the students interviewed by Pitts, musicians are friendly, eccentric, and dedicated people; they also tend to be more single minded than many of their peers in other disciplines. The majority of students responded that truly being a musician requires a commitment to performing, but answers ranged from this to the statement that musicianship only requires having an enjoyment of music. Most students said that they felt the most like musicians when they were involved in music at school. These responses indicate that even music students do not consider themselves to be musicians unless they are dedicated performers. The implication of Pitts' findings is that it might be more difficult for people who are not formal musicians to identify themselves as musicians or even musical.

Music In and Out of School

Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall, and Tarrant (2003) conducted a study in 21 English primary and secondary schools in order to examine the contrasts between music in school and music outside school. Lamont's research was conducted to further elucidate the drop-off in music participation observed in secondary schools. The study was conducted in two phases, Phase 1 being a questionnaire and interviews, and Phase 2 being a round of focus-group interviews. The researchers discovered two trends: (a) students in secondary schools often felt that school music at the secondary level was a highly specialized subject, one that they did not have the required skill for, despite their enjoyment of music as an escape or method of expression, and (b) the older the students are, the more music they listen to outside of school, and the more likely they are to engage in informal music learning. Overall, this study further illustrates that school music often does not teach what students want to learn or what they feel they are capable of mastering. The research of Lamont et al. is further proof that music education practices must become more inclusive of students' varied interests in music, especially outside of the classroom.

Music and Human Needs Theory

Bates (2009) was inspired to examine music education practices from the perspective of human needs theory by his own discouraging experience as a K-12 music teacher. For many years he tried to control his band classroom by taking students aside to help them understand that their misbehavior in class was getting

in the way of meeting their needs. Bates found this to be ineffective for many reasons, and investigated other human needs theories in order to alter his teaching practices. In his article he reviewed seven human needs theories and found that common to all of them was the idea that attention to basic human needs is essential for those people in the position of affecting others' wellbeing, as teachers do. Bates' work and that of other researchers, music educators, and sociologists acknowledge music as an important tool for satisfying human needs.

Bates describes his needs framework as having three points: (a) the important of sustainability (that needs satisfaction must be an on-going process); (b) that music is a satisfier as opposed to a basic need; and (c) that need-satisfying practices should ideally be synergic (satisfying multiple needs at one). Bates goes on to suggest the division of needs into three categories, (a) autonomy, (b) relatedness, and (c) competence, and justifies music as a needs satisfier through each of these categories. He mentions that after cutting his concert band program, and beginning programs such as guitar class and jazz band, students were able to direct more of the decision-making in their ensembles; as a results, students' seemed to enjoy their in-school music experiences more. This change to his music curriculum did come at the cost of the opinion of the formal music education world, particularly since the concert band is a highly valued traditional part of music education.

The question inspired by Bates' work comes from the divide between the desire to meet the needs of students and the desire to satisfy the demands of institutions like the school or the professional music education world. Should

music educators encourage the musical growth of their students through innovations like the ones employed by Bates, even if it is at the expense of the respect of the greater music education world, and perhaps the school administrators who expect more of a traditional result from their music program? Bates brings to light the conflict that seems to be unacknowledged by other researchers of informal music practices: the difficulty in striking a balance between giving students the opportunity to have the music education they can best learn from while also having a successful and respected music program.

Why Study Music?

Hodges' article, Why Study Music? (2005) provides justification for a strong music education programs through the theory of multiple intelligences as supported by research in cognitive neuroscience. He references Gardner's (1993) theory of multiple intelligences, which holds that humans have eight different intelligences: linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, and naturalist. This theory, compounded with growing evidence of neural connections that support these intelligences in the human brain, stands in contrast to the traditional curricula of schools, which encourage linguistic and mathematical skills almost to exclusion of others. Given Gardner's theory and the neurological evidence that is growing to support it, Hodges lists many reasons why music is essential not only to education but also to the human condition, namely the discovery of feelings and aesthetic experiences, an experience of healing, and intuition about our own thoughts, knowledge, and identity, to name a few. Hodges asserts that music experience is unlike any other

kind of experience in that it "…provides unique and invaluable insights into the human condition," (2005, p. 112) as listed above, and therefore cannot be excluded from educational systems.

Summary

Music education has traditionally focused on performance (Bates, 2009), formal learning practices (Green, 2002), and teacher- as opposed to student-directed learning (Georgii-Hemming, 2006). However, students gravitate toward autonomy, and succeed when they are given the independence to control what kind of musical engagement they are required to produce (Bates, 2009; Georgii-Hemming, 2006). If students were allowed to provide input into the type of music education they received in school, music education practices would require alterations in order to satisfy the unique musical needs of students (Lamont et al., 2003).

Research Purpose and Questions

The importance of music in the formation of identity, as well as the existence of an inherent human musicality, is demonstrated by a growing body of literature. Yet, despite this evidence many people still feel that they are not musical beings. Not enough research has been conducted in order to ascertain the specific reasons why people believe that they are not musical. An understanding of these reasons could help music educators develop better ways to encourage the development of musicality in all students. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to examine the role that music plays in the lives of people, and how this has a

bearing on their feeling of musicality or non-musicality. The research questions are:

1. What do people believe it means to be musical?
2. Why do some people consider themselves to be musical while others do not?
3. What influences a person's self-perception of being musical?

The current study was developed to investigate the above research questions. The format of the study was based on literature reviewed and those similar studies that also explored issues of musicality. By conducting a study that aligns with existing musicality research, the researcher hopes to add to the body of literature that considers music in everyday life and the way people consider themselves as musical beings.

Chapter Two

REVIEW OF RELATED RESEARCH

Music identity has recently become an area of interest to researchers, and much of the related research referenced in this study was conducted in the past twenty years. Therefore, there were only a limited number of studies after which the present study could be modeled. Many of the following studies share common intent to better understand the phenomenon of music identity, but depart from each other where population and data-collection techniques are concerned. The review of research that follows presents studies that were referenced during the design and conduction of the present study.

The world of popular music is one that pervades modern society. Most grocery stores, gyms, banks, and so forth have a radio station piped in for their customers and employees to listen to all day long. Video games that allow players to "perform" in a rock band are at an all-time high for popularity, and schools of rock music have popped up with increasing frequency all across the United States. Yet, the world of popular music is under-represented in most American music education curricula because popular music is customarily an informally learned practice, one which takes place outside of school (Green, 2002). Most music curricula favor formal music learning goals like reading music, playing classical orchestral and band instruments, and learning the rules of music theory and ear

training. This emphasis on formal music learning goals can be the result of any of a number of things: (a) a teacher may want to adhere to traditional standards of music education, like performance through classic ensembles (Bates, 2009); (b) a school administration my want to appeal to a parental audience and adult taxpayers; or (c) a teacher might lack the skill set to teach popular music. However, popular music touches the lives of so many people that it cannot be ignored as a genre for study in music education, especially since young people have such a connection to the music they choose to listen to outside of school (Lamont et al., 2003). Special attention in music education research, on the areas of popular music training and informal music learning as methods for popular music training, shows the efficacy of informal/popular music training to the development of musicianship and a sense of music identity.

Informal Music Learning

According to Green (2002), informal music learning is characterized by a student, or peer-directed approach rather than the teacher-directed method found in formal teaching practices. A strong emphasis is placed on listening to music, often recordings, and purposefully copying those recordings to develop skills and technique. Musicians learn collaboratively, by playing in pairs or groups and by sharing the knowledge they have acquired through their own learning, whether from a teacher or another peer learning experience. They work together to reproduce the music they are enculturated in, usually in the context of a band playing covers of recorded songs. The importance of listening and experimentation stands in contrast to the standards of formal music education,

which emphasizes the reading and writing of traditional notation to achieve a standard performance established by the written music or rules of theory and harmony.

The disjunction between formal music education practices and informal is the subject of Green's book *How Popular Musicians Learn: A Way Ahead for Music Education* (2002). In her study, Green explored and exposed the informal music learning process of 14 British popular musicians, aged 15 to 50, through in-depth interviews. In this pivotal research study Green was able to draw conclusions about informal music practices in the context of these musicians' musical experiences. Green also collected the perspectives of classroom music teachers and the recollections of the musicians' classroom music experiences. The recurring theme of self-esteem and self-concept was brought forth by the musicians in relationship to their experience of playing music, suggesting that their successful experiences playing music enhanced their consideration of themselves as musicians.

Based on these interviews, Green drew conclusions on the relative efficacy of the practices of formal and informal music instruction. In her study, the participants agreed that the beginning of an interest in music began with what Green calls *enculturation*, or "the acquisition of musical skills and knowledge by immersion in the everyday music and musical practices of one's social context" (Green, 2002, p. 22). The participants discussed growing up surrounded by a certain kind of music or style of music-making. This particular style is what the participants became accustomed and attracted to. Through this initial exposure to

music, the musicians felt that their interest in popular music was piqued, since popular music is more easily accessible in our world than classical music. The subjects explained how they personally experienced music-making in and out of the classroom: They described in-school music as being very structured, with a focus on building technique to perform music that they found difficult to relate to, which caused them to be less motivated to continue with music classes. Whereas, outside of school they were motivated by an interest in reproducing the popular music they enjoyed listening to, and consequently found the necessary skill and technique-building to be more enjoyable than in the case of the school music that they did not connect with. All participants agreed that the combination of playing music that they enjoyed while also working with peers in pairs or small groups was the situation that helped them learn to play popular music because it allowed them to watch, imitate, and experiment in an environment that was comfortable and enjoyable. Some participants expressed that they felt alienated by the music they were forced to learn about, and consequently did not acquire the requisite skills to continue with music in higher grade levels.

Participants in Green's study indicated that it was not just the type of music they learned but also the way in which they learned it that greatly affected their motivation, success, and enjoyment with playing popular music. From her research, Green drew a conclusion that is almost shocking: that, for students of primary and secondary school age, informal music learning does not work in modern British music classrooms, where classroom teachers teach music as part of the total curriculum. Even if it is true that more teachers are making an effort to

include popular music in their music curricula, they continue to use conventional teaching activities like singing, reading music, and learning about music history, rather than employing the self-teaching and group learning methods that are characteristic of informal music learning. If there is a teacher directing the activities of the students, regardless of whether they are learning music that is popular or classical, it is formal, teacher-oriented learning as opposed to the peer-directed learning characteristic of informal music learning. Informal music learning requires teachers to become passive facilitators, which goes against the grain of most accepted teaching styles; this method contradicts the way these teachers have largely been trained as well.

Another problem arises in the disjunction between assessment styles of the two instructional types: Schools often require that progression be shown, and the easiest way to do that is through testing; however, informal music learning is not conducive to testing because peer-directed learning necessarily produces varied results. While a teacher might be able to assess musical progress over time, the aim of informal learning is to be intrinsically motivated and unpressured by the need to meet a standard. This is contrary to the British system of assessing Key Stages of music learning (Welch & Adams, 2003).

Implications of Informal Music Learning

Keeping in mind that a completely informal teaching method might not be conducive to school music, Green (2002) proposes that aspects of the informal learning that are employed by popular musicians could be useful in improving classical music tuition both inside and outside school. She references Bennett

(1980) in suggesting that the reason classical music is less approachable than popular music is because classical music is considered *culture* while popular music is *natural* in that it is effortlessly available. "People are not usually encultured into classical music with anything like the same intensity as they are into popular music, and this includes children who are taking classical instrumental lessons" (Green, 2002, p. 187). In present-day music education there exists a huge disparity between the informal learning of popular music, which is largely dependent on listening and imitation on a personal level, and the formal learning of classical music, which traditionally requires students to follow the instructions of a teacher to learn music that they never listen to independently. Green suggests that classical instrumental teaching would be more successful if students listened to recordings of the pieces they were trying to learn, a practice that is fundamental to informal music learning but this technique has been frowned upon in traditional music teaching practice.

Green's interviews revealed that her participants' musical experiences contributed to their self-concepts and self-esteem. For example, the type of band the participant was a member of influenced how he thought of himself as a musician. Session musicians tended to think of their musical activities as more of a job because this practice entails playing what they are told to play by the artist they are working for. On the other hand, cover band and originals band members had very different self-concepts, considering their work to be less of a job than an artistic endeavor. The age and experiences of the participants also contributed to their differing self-concepts: the older participants responded that as they got

older their dreams of fame and fortune faded away, but that they continued to be motivated by the desire to increase their skill as well as their passion for playing music.

Participants felt that their musical activities not only raised their self-esteem because they were able to achieve their intrinsic goals, but also because they felt these activities improved the esteem their partners in music-making had for them. Feelings of passion, love, and excitement were expressed by all participants when they spoke about their experiences of playing music, which in turn motivated them to continued playing and practicing. The musicians were motivated to play by their enjoyment of playing, feeling *completely fulfilled* by their music-making. Green's research demonstrates, then, that music not only contributes to the building of an identity for these musicians, but that it also helps them maintain and strengthen their identity throughout their lives.

Discussion

The value of Green's research to the present study is vast, both because of her research model, and the amount of information she was able to collect through her interviews. Green's book forms the foundation for most if not all current research on popular music-making and informal music learning, and as such has been an indispensable part of the development of the present study's research goal: to determine how persons develop a sense of their own musicality. In addition, Green's model of using an in-depth interview influenced the decision to include interviews as Phase Two of this study, as the researcher was inspired by the large amount of information Green was able to collect in conducting her

interviews. Green's work supports the importance of music in negotiating identity, especially the partaking in and consumption of popular music, a long under-represented area of music research.

Collaborative Learning

The aspect of informal music learning examined by Davis (2005) is the phenomenon of collaborative learning, especially in the context of composition. To this end, Davis observed the rehearsals of a three-member student-led rock band over a period of four months, concluding with a focus group interview of all the band members, comprised of one high school senior and two college freshman who shared similar musical tastes for alternative rock. In her observations of the band, Davis found that their initial decision to play and write music together came from their mutual musical interests: they were enculturated in similar styles of music and gravitated toward each other for collaboration. This sharing of musical preferences also helped when it came time to compose new music because the band members could more easily understand the musical ideas that were being considered.

Davis found that the composition process began with a riff, or a short musical phrase as was suggested by one member, whether it was a vocal, guitar, or bass line, etc. The other members learned the riff by ear and then the band would begin experimenting with it, making suggestions by playing alternatives or by providing options for accompaniment on other instruments. When one member wanted to have another member play something, he often used musical *vocables* to explain himself rather than using notation, which was obsolete because of the

members' shared musical taste and their ability to interpret each others' musical direction. In Davis' study, the informal music learning steps suggested by Green (2002) are all present: listening, copying, and experimenting.

Davis collected narrative data from her discussions with band members and extracted themes from this data that spoke to the importance of music in creating and negotiating identity. Band members expressed that the music they listened to throughout their lives was a reflection of the experiences they were having, and that music would always trigger memories of those times of their lives. Music was also a powerful tool that served to mirror their moods or to change them. The most important aspect of music was its link to expression of emotion: playing music with another person was a way to exchange emotions without words. For these musicians, the process of creating music was actually more important than the resulting music because it was an outlet for emotional expression that they could not achieve any other way.

Discussion

The efficacy of informal music learning lies in its ability to appeal to the existing musical tastes of students who feel excluded by the structures of school music curricula. Using musical vocables rather than notation to communicate ideas allows people of all musical backgrounds to participate equally in the process of creation. The sharing of a common musical ideal also helps the process of composition, as band members have a point of reference that they are equally knowledgeable of and can base their musical ideas on previously understood music. The collaborative nature of informal music learning helps musicians to

develop a sense of autonomy from the traditional music classroom as well as a sense of community with their band members.

Davis' study was useful in the design of the current study because of its two-pronged approach. The first phase, entailing the extensive observation of the rock band, allowed Davis to collect data that was later used to create the questions for the interview phase, which would further illuminate Davis' research goal of determining their collaborative musical process. In the second phase, Davis conducted interviews as a way to elaborate on her observations made in the first phase. The ability to focus on specific questions inspired by initial data was the reason that the present study was modeled with two phases, the first being a general survey and the second being semi-structured interviews. Green's (2002) ability to elicit thoughtful and insightful responses through the use of one-on-one interviews informed the development of the second phase of the current study: semi-structured interviews with participants

Music In Childhood

Because the current study focuses on illuminating how musicality develops throughout a person's life, the researcher consulted studies that examined young children's musical lives. The focus of Davidson and Borthwick's (2002) research was the effect of family dynamics on the development of musicality. The researchers' detailed case study was conducted on a family of two parents and their two young sons, all of whom played musical instruments. Over the course of eighteen months data were collected every two weeks as the researchers visited and observed the family, and every two months semi-

structured interviews were conducted with each family member. In their literature review, Davidson and Borthwick discuss the effects of different parenting styles on children's achievement and motivation, concluding that the ideal situation for a child to develop intrinsic motivation is with an *authoritative parenting style*, which involves making demands of a child to be responsible and fulfill their own goals, while encouraging autonomy and creativity. This stands in contrast to a *neglectful parenting style*, where parents provide no motivation or encouragement for their child's endeavors, and to an *authoritarian parenting style*, in which parents strictly control their child's life and activities, which can lead to the child resenting the activities their parents force them to do. Davidson and Borthwick also discuss the phenomenon of birth order as it affects a child's self-esteem and their parents' expectations of them.

The case study was comprised of a British family whose parents were both musicians; the mother was a violinist and taught her two sons to play violin from a young age. The older son, James, showed an aptitude for playing from the very beginning, and as a result became the focus of his mother's musical attention. James was expected to practice every day and was constantly reinforced in the idea that he was a musical boy, while the younger son, Daniel, who was not as proficient at the violin, was not expected to practice as often or excel to the same level as his brother. In his interviews James expressed a great amount of pride in his musical ability because he identified that ability as being like his mother's and he was proud that so many people thought that he resembled her in that way. However, he expressed frustration that he was expected to practice so much more

than his younger brother, while Daniel was allowed to practice much less before being allowed to play or watch television.

Meanwhile, Daniel expressed frustration that his brother was so clearly favored as the musical son, but seemed to accept that this was simply the way things were, that he was born to be the less musical brother. Like James, Daniel was anxious to identify himself with his mother, but because James was dubbed the musical son, Daniel chose to point out the physical similarities between himself and his mother, showing a desperate attempt to associate himself with his mother the way James was. Daniel also latched onto an identity as a visual artist, giving himself a role to fill in his family that was unoccupied by any other member. Daniel's visual artist identity was further encouraged by a connection to his grandmother, who had also been an artist, providing Daniel with a much-needed bond to his family.

A startling change to these family dynamics occurred when James switched to a higher- level school after the first twelve months of observation. Suddenly the older brother had more homework than ever, had less time to practice, and was much less available to his parents' attention. As a result of this change, Daniel became the object of increased musical attention and was encouraged by his parents to practice more than ever before. This encouragement led to an increase of Daniel's enjoyment of music; he became intrinsically motivated to practice, even leaning on James, who he had once resented for being the favored child, for help with his violin. Daniel thus came to feel like a legitimately musical person, which allowed him to feel tied to the other members

of his family in a way that he wasn't before. The changing dynamics in this family contributed to the development of a sense of musicality for both of the children through the musical and social interactions of its members.

Discussion

Davidson and Borthwick's study demonstrates the impact that family scripts can have on a person's identity, whether in a positive or a negative way. Their results show that children will tend to act in the manner that their parents treat them: the child who is labeled "the musical one" will embrace that identity and practice; the child that is not labeled as such will be less likely to try to usurp his sibling's role, and instead search for an identity that he can claim as his own. If scripts are reassigned for any reason, children will once again respond to the cues they receive from their parents.

Davidson and Borthwick observed this family and collected narrative data from observations and interviews with the parents and young boys. Themes were extracted that spoke to the role of parents in influencing their children's feeling of musicality or non-musicality. Once again, the two-pronged approach of this study, entailing observation followed by interviewing, allowed for the elaboration of observational data. The benefit of conducting interviews at intervals rather than at the conclusion of the observational period was that the researchers could show the change in family members' perceptions and opinions over time. The model chosen for the current study does not include this longitudinal measure, mostly for the ease of conduction, but also because the nature of the study was an

exploration of a broader population sample than Davidson and Borthwick's case study.

An important area of music learning that must be examined are the musical activities that take place in school, since this environment provides a much more formalized experience of music than the popular music-making discussed by Green and Davis, or the experience of music in the home as discussed by Davidson and Borthwick. Because the present study seeks to better understand what influences a person's sense of his own musicality, it is important to examine the dynamics of the music classroom from the teacher's perspective as well as the student's in order to understand how music in school influences the formation and negotiation of a musical identity.

Musician as Teacher

Bernard (2005) interviewed six elementary general music teachers through extensive interviews in order to determine how their *musician* identity changed or interacted with their *teacher* identity as they secured jobs teaching music in schools. She developed the term *musician-teacher* to refer to those individuals in order to overcome what she sees as the dominant problem with music teacher education practices: when a musician enters a teacher training program or when they get a job teaching music, their identity as a performer decays to make way for their new identity as a teacher. Bernard gathered different perspectives from the teachers about the way their identities as musicians and teachers interacted: some tried to find a balance between the two identities in order to provide

satisfaction for both halves of the *musician-teacher* paradox; and some teachers compartmentalized their teaching and music-making from each other.

For the purposes of the article under review, Bernard focuses on aspects of one interview subject, Lorraine, a music teacher and pianist. Lorraine had always aspired to be a concert pianist but when she failed to win first place for the first time, she began to consider being a music teacher instead, a clear indicator of the unfortunate concept that music educators are failed music performers. In her interviews, Lorraine discussed many of her musical experiences using a narrative style in which she depicts herself as being confronted with a problem that she must overcome. This structure of overcoming musical difficulty is one that directly influenced her teaching style: Lorraine presents her students with musical "problems" that they spend the class period figuring out and mastering for themselves. Throughout her discussions with Lorraine, Bernard was able to show how a particular musician's personal experiences of her musicality affects the way she teaches music. Bernard concludes that music teacher education programs must be revised in order to co-nurture future teachers' identities as performers and teachers in order that their performer identities might make them better teachers.

Discussion

Bernard's model for her study was similar to Green's in that she conducted several in-depth interviews with a select group of people, musician-teachers. Similarly, this study employed an interview process for the second phase of data collection, with semi-structured interviews entailed Phase Two. However, the current study differs from Bernard's and Green's in terms of the population

sample involved. As opposed to Bernard and Green, who sampled a very small group of musicians or music teachers, the population sample for the interview phase (Phase Two) of this study was selected from a large pool of participants that completed Phase One of the study, an online survey. The delimitation inherent in this approach to participant selection lies in the lack of control over the population: while Bernard and Green were able to control a highly select group of participants, the population of the current study was largely random, with a high potential for skew that depended upon how the survey was circulated. However, the aim of the current study is to uncover universalities in thought about musicality across a wide range of people, so a small, specialized interview population would not have been appropriate.

Music In and Out of School

Lamont et. al (2003) conducted a study of British music programs in order to "…provide an up-to-date and representative view of pupils' experiences of music, and of school head teachers' and teachers' views of the music in terms of its success, perceived specific and general benefits, and challenges faced" (Lamont et al., 2003, p. 231). To this end they constructed a two-phased data collection model. The first phase had two parts, a questionnaire comprised of open- and closed-ended questions for 1,479 pupils aged 8 to 14, and semi-structured interviews with 42 teachers to discuss the objectives and achievements of their music programs as well as details of the provision of music in the schools. Data from Phase One was analyzed and themes were extracted that informed the development of Phase Two, which entailed interviews with focus groups of about

20 students each, with 134 students in total, to follow up on the investigation; students in these groups were selected based on their answers to the questionnaire.

Teachers' responses indicated that they felt music was a very important aspect of their schools' environments, because of the opportunity it provided for social growth among the students and because of music's unique ability to include all kinds of students and help them build their confidence and self-esteem. They also cited the influence of music programs in linking the schools to their local communities, infusing schools with vitality and activity.

Pupils responded to questions about their musical experiences both in and out of school. As far as their music in school, they responded most positively about playing instruments, creating music, and having the chance to meet and work with professional musicians. They disliked having to learn facts about music and musicians. Older students especially felt that music was a welcome distraction from the monotony of other academic subjects; however, few pupils wanted to go on to higher levels of music in school, saying that they were not skilled enough or interested enough to pursue further study.

When asked about their experiences of music outside of school, pupils responded that they enjoyed listening to music. The students' expression of enjoyment as well as their frequency of musical activity increased with the students' ages. The pupils said that they enjoyed listening to music because it allowed them to change or complement their own emotions. Eighty percent of the questionnaire respondents had an instrument in their home, though they did not all play these instruments. Thirty percent of total questionnaire respondents were

learning to play an instrument outside of school, and many pupils who did not play instruments expressed an interest in learning one, with strong tendencies toward learning keyboard and guitar. This final point lends further credence to Green's (2002) argument for the importance of informal music learning practices.

The study's results led to the researchers' conclusion that music education should aim to include as many students as possible in music programs in order to enhance the experiences and encourage the abilities of all students. The method selected by Lamont and her colleagues also provided the greatest influence on the design of the present study: Lamont et al.'s two-phased method included a round of surveys that was followed up by in-depth interviews with a select group of participants, which is the model selected for this research project. Also similar to Lamont's study, the population sample of this study was much broader and included a variety of ages. The methods of population sampling and data collection employed in this study were important to the design of the current study because they provided a large amount of data in the first phase, then, this data were illuminated in the second phase with very specific interview questions. In this way Lamont's study was able to focus specifically on the research goals of determining the importance to young people of music in school and outside of school.

Pitts (2002) conducted a study of 20 British music students, eleven at the "A-level" (senior in high school) and nine at the first year undergraduate level. The purpose of her study was "to explore the contribution that musical participation makes to the lives and identities of a particular group of people"

(2001, p. 7). Each participant was given a questionnaire, which was followed by an interview in which the researcher discussed the questionnaire responses with the participants. The responses from the questionnaire were analyzed for overarching themes about the students' feelings of musicality or musicianship, and these themes guided the development of the questions asked in the interviews.

The results indicated that students at the A-level felt that continuing with music to the undergraduate level was conditional upon their relative successes or failures: if they experienced success at the A-level they felt confident enough in their abilities as musicians to go on to a higher level of music education. However, students who chose not to pursue further music education cited a fear of failure, or lack of requisite musical skill for their decision. These feelings were compounded with the students' beliefs that being a musician necessarily involved being a performer rather than an academic musician. Similarly, undergraduate students were frustrated by the presence of academic music classes at the university level, which diminished the amount of time they could spend playing, the activity they had long associated with being a musician.

Pitts' inquiry into what it means to be a musician revealed some surprising answers about the apparent conditionality of musician identity. Some students responded that being a musician meant being a professional musician, one who made a living solely by performing. Some students even went so far to say that music teachers are not really musicians. Some respondents linked a certain level of ability with musicianship, while others cited simple participation as justification for musicianship. All of the respondents felt that their constant

participation in music at school made them feel more like musicians, which meant that non-practicing or non-performing musicians are classified to be lesser musicians.

Pitts' conclusion from this study involves the implications for music outside of the school environment: The common social idea that the only place to learn to become a musician is in a school or institution necessarily means that there is no place outside of a school that one can become a musician. This assumption discounts the contributions and achievements of self-taught and popular musicians, whose music learning most often takes place outside of school. The attention she draws to this issue reflects the arguments proposed by Green (2002) that the value of informal music learning practices must not be overlooked.

Like the other studies discussed in this chapter, Pitts' study is comprised of two phases, and similar to Lamont (2003), the first phase involved a questionnaire which was followed by a more specific interview for the second phase. The present study follows the same model as Pitts' study, with Phase One entailing an online survey and Phase Two, interviews with a small group of selected survey participants; the development of Phase Two survey questions will, as in the studies by Pitts (2002) and Lamont et al. (2003), depend on the themes extracted from Phase One data. The difference between the studies discussed in this chapter and the current study lies primarily in the population size and sample: Whereas Pitts, Green, and Bernard focused on musicians, young music students,

or music teachers, the current study includes a large sample group for Phase One, with participants of all ages and walks of life.

Discussion

The studies discussed above followed similar models of data collection and each contributed to the development of the model for this study. Consulting each of the above studies led to the conclusion that the appropriate method of data collection for this project was a two-phased model, one that allowed for the collection of general data about music in everyday life, followed by interviews to collect more specific information. This method allowed for the collection of statistical data as well as qualitative responses for further illumination of the research questions.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

Relatively little research has been conducted on the unique relationship between a person's identity formation and their perception of personal musicality. However, the link between music and personal identity is universal, crossing boundaries of geography, age, and gender (Gracyk, 2004; Jaffurs, 2004; Welch, 2005). Given these findings and the growing influence of early childhood music research (Gordon, 2002), the frequency with which people describe themselves as *non-musical* is intriguing especially considering the fact that most people are involved in music in some way, whether it is through the active playing of an instrument or the passive action of listening. Research that develops a clear understanding of the origins of musical self-perception would help to inform and improve the system and practice of music education in America.

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this research was to investigate the ways that *musicality* or *musical* is defined. Research has shown that any given person's definition of the word *musical* is complex, very personal, and dependent on a variety of unique factors (Jaffurs, 2004); given this knowledge, the goal of this research was to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the many colloquial definitions of

musical. An analysis of trends in these definitions would contribute to the body of literature on musical development and its effect on music education practices. In addition to the investigation of definitions of *musical*, this study sought to understand why some people consider themselves to be *musical* while others consider themselves to be *non-musical*, and what influences this self-perception of musicality or non-musicality. The following questions were explored:

1. What do people believe it means to be musical?
2. Why do some people consider themselves to be musical while others do not?
3. What influences a person's self-perception of being musical?

Theoretical Lens

A three-pronged theoretical lens allowed for an approach to the study design that kept the following principles in mind: (a) that all people are inherently musical regardless of their ability; (b) that musicality is both actively and unconsciously incorporated into identity formation; and (c) that alternatives to traditional music making and learning must be considered.

Musical Development

A growing school of thought in music education is the idea that all people are born with musical potential, a trait that is inherent in all people, not just reserved for an elite few. Gordon (2001) calls this potential music aptitude, which develops from pre-birth to age nine. During this developmental period children who are surrounded by music will become musically fluent in a similar way that

they become fluent in language: by passing through stages of acculturation, imitation, experimentation, and creativity. A person who successfully progresses through all these stages during the first nine years of their life will have higher music aptitude than a person who does not. People with higher music aptitude are more likely to become proficient in music because they possess an increased sense of confidence in their abilities. However, people who do not progress through these stages are often those who have trouble completing simple musical tasks like keeping beat or matching pitch. As a result, these people feel less musically competent and may be less willing to participate in musical activities (Davidson and Borthwick, 2002; Gordon, 2001).

The idea of an inherent human musical potential is supported by neurobiological research (Levitin, 2006; Sacks, 2007). The human brain responds involuntarily to rhythm and tone, which has been demonstrated by numerous scientific studies. The brain basis for music, as it has come to be called, is also very closely linked to cultural aspects of music; people are conditioned to anticipate the music of their world. For example, much of Western popular music is written in major tonality and duple meter, which conditions Westerners to prefer major-duple music; this preference has to do with the connections made in the brain.

The study of ethology, or the scientific study of animal and human character and behavior, also supports the idea of inherent musicality from an evolutionary perspective. The research of Dissanayake (2008) suggests that music was more than a cultural byproduct; for our ancestors, music was a behavior

closely related to survival. Dissanayake proposes that music was a key factor in the biological success of the human species, playing a larger role in attraction than researchers have considered. This research also suggests that music played an important role in mother-child bonding, which therefore ensured the survival of the species.

Social Constructionist Theory

Music educator and sociologist Brian Roberts (2006) provides an explanation of identity formation from the perspective of social constructionist theory. According to this theory, a person's identity is composed of social roles in a combination unique to their own needs. In this model, a person *tries on* different social roles in order to equip himself to handle the turns and changes of his life, acquiring different roles for different life situations. This model is best conceptualized as a series of rotating layers of social roles, where the role pertinent to the life situation at hand rises to the surface when it is needed. The social constructionist model suggests that identity is conditional, dependent on particular situations; when a certain situation arises more frequently, the social role needed to address it will rise to the surface and will be regularly incorporated into that person's sense of self.

Applied to musicality, this perspective suggests that a person who does not feel musical feels this way because he either rarely uses the *musical* role in his daily life or because he does not feel confident enough in his abilities to assert that role. The research of Pitts (2002) and Bernard (2005) suggests that even music students and teachers feel that their own musicality is affected by factors

such as their regular involvement in musical activities. In light of these findings, it is understandable that people who are not formally involved in music in any way would come to doubt their own musicality.

Formal vs. Informal Music Learning Practices

With the dawn of the Enlightenment in the 18th century came an increased emphasis on specialization, and by the end of the 19th century, the activities of the lay musician were disdained in comparison to those of specialists. According to Regelski (2007), the competitive need to be talented and properly trained has survived into modern Western practice and intimidates amateur music makers from participating in what he calls *amateuring*. He defines this practice as the making of music simply for the enjoyment of it. However, amateuring has become endangered by the importance placed on perfecting the craft of music making as opposed to simply valuing enjoyment and participation. Fewer people feel that their music-making is valid in comparison to the contributions of professional musicians, and less value is placed on music learning practices that take place outside a traditional classroom setting. But, research has shown the merit of informal music learning, and that the structure of a popular music group (e.g., a rock band), fosters collaborative music learning and the composition process, especially in adolescent students (Davis, 2005; Green, 2002; Webb, 2007).

Green's analysis of informal music learning practices shows that the process begins with enculturation and continues with experimentation on an instrument, sometimes with guidance from a teacher but often from peer-directed

instruction. Musicians who learn this way usually do not read traditional notation. Rather, they learn by listening to and imitating pieces they want to learn (Green, 2002). Most American music education curricula do not include popular music-making practices. Curricula that emphasize formal music training without including popular music risk alienating students from participating in school music. Limited opportunities for music-making and enjoyment give students fewer opportunities to feel musical, possibly affecting their perception of their own musicality.

Summary

The methodology of this study was approached through a three-pronged theoretical lens in order to provide focus and tie its purpose to larger constructs. A theoretical lens serves to focus the goals of research in order to address a particular perspective (Creswell, 2009). Musicality was examined from the perspective of musical development, social identity formation, and through a comparison of formal and informal music learning practices.

Rationale for the Design

Gordon's (2001) research on music aptitude and music development provided the main impetus for this study. His work with children in both observational and experimental practices has informed and reformed the music education world as well as providing the basis for music educator training programs. However, Gordon seeks to understand what is actively happening in children's musical lives as well as to nurture their musicality through targeted

teaching methods. The present study is focused on evaluating the *effects* of the musical nurturing Gordon has detailed and suggested in his music learning theory.

Equally valuable to the design of this study were the research of Green (2002) and Pitts (2002). Green's use of interviews in her study of popular music making resulted in a highly insightful look into the methods of music learning that take place outside the classroom. She conducted lengthy interviews with fourteen British popular musicians and the data that she collected generated invaluable analysis that both supports the efficacy of alternative music learning styles and provides a unique look at how popular musicians view musicality.

Pitts' study of the contributions of musical activity to the identities of pre-college and university students used a survey-interview process, which is the model most closely followed in the current study. Twenty music students were selected to complete a questionnaire that asked for their perspectives on what makes a musician and on the importance of music in their lives. This model proved highly effective as it allowed the survey data collected to inform the design of the interview questions. However, where Pitts chose a population of twenty music students, this study expanded its search outside of the music world.

Both qualitative and quantitative approaches were considered for the conduction of this research, but a mixed-methods study was chosen to allow the collection of quantitative data as well as qualitative data, allowing for the illumination of quantitative data through qualitative responses (Creswell, 2009). A two-phase model was chosen in conducting this study, with Phase One being a

widely circulated survey and Phase Two being a small number of follow-up interviews.

Phase One: Survey Design

Survey Design

An online survey design was chosen in order to maximize both the number of responses and the distance that the survey would travel over the internet. The online survey software Qualtrics (2010) was used to create a twenty-question survey, a number of questions chosen in order to keep the survey short and more approachable for respondents, thereby encouraging a high number of responses.

The survey questions were composed such that each question correlated back to one of the three original research questions (see Appendix A). Fifteen questions were chosen for the final draft of the survey and additional questions were included at the end of the survey to ascertain demographic information about the respondent, for a final total of 20 questions. A consent question was included to preface the survey such that when the participant clicked on the link to take the survey, they were taken to a page that explained the terms of the survey and, by advancing to the first question of the survey, participants acknowledged these terms and gave their consent to participate in the study. The final survey, as well as approval for the use of human subjects in the present study was approved by the Office of the Vice Provost for Research (see Appendix B).

Two of the questions were of particular interest in this study: *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* and *Do you consider yourself to be a musician?* Research revealed that social constructs of the identities *musical* and *musician*

could cause people to consider the terms either as separate and potentially unrelated traits or as identical and synonymous. Posing these questions separately ascertained whether people consider *musicality* to be synonymous with *musicianship* or if they felt that one could exist without the other. The wording of these questions was particularly important; at first *Are you musical?* was considered, but the researcher decided that this question might cause a participant to apply to himself a more limited colloquial definition of the word *musical* and therefore the question would only elicit responses in which people would justify themselves against a social norm of musicality. The phrase *Do you consider* on the other hand, asks a participant to identify with a personal definition of *musical* and compare himself to that definition. Granted, this personal definition might be influenced by the same common social definition that the researcher tried to avoid, but the researcher felt that this wording would facilitate people to respond in a more individual way.

The efficacy of a mixed-methods approach is that it allows respondents to elaborate on their quantitative responses with short answers, which can be seen, for example, in the first two questions: *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* supported by *Why or why not?* This format allowed participants to explain their reasoning for the choice they made in response to the quantitative question. The order of the questions was also given special consideration during the survey design. There was some concern that participants, while in the process of taking the survey, might be inclined to revisit earlier questions and revise their answers based on the answers they supplied for later questions. This was a particular

concern regarding the similarity between the questions *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* and *Do you consider yourself to be a musician?* While the distinction between these two terms is clear to the researcher, it was possible that a respondent might view these two terms as synonyms. In order to circumvent this potential problem, the survey was created in such a way that participants would not be able to advance past any question without answering it and would not be able to revert back to a question and change their previous answer. This method ensured that the responses collected represented the participants' first reactions to each question, which the researcher felt to be the best way to elicit honest responses.

Content and Construct Validity

The survey questions underwent several revisions during their design. The researcher brainstormed a pool of questions based on the three original research questions; these were compiled into a draft in paper form. This version of the survey was vetted several times in order to test the survey's effectiveness. First, the survey was distributed in paper form to a representative population of participants. Content validity was addressed through participant feedback, which helped inform the revision of the survey questions so that they would be more clear and concise. Construct validity was addressed through the review of the sample surveys and answers provided by participants in the vetting process, which informed the ordering of the questions.

Survey Dissemination

The original plan for survey dissemination was to initiate an email campaign by sending the survey to all of the researcher's contacts and requesting that each person who received the survey invitation then send it on to all of his contacts as well. This method of dissemination is similar to the idea of viral marketing, an online process that requires very little effort and expense for the researcher, which has the potential to directly reach an extremely high number of people. David Meerman Scott, who calls this method of marketing *word-of-mouse*, cites a particular instance of viral marketing in which a focus group of seven people was successfully used to send information to 350 million people in total (Scott, 2008).

This method is supported by a study conducted by Campbell, Connell, and Beegle (2007), who analyzed responses to a writing prompt posted in a music magazine. A high majority of the participants who submitted responses were females aged 14 to 16, a demographic which reflected that magazine's readership. Campbell et al.'s findings are no less salient because of the population skew which was likely caused by the method she chose to use in enlisting participants.

A viral email campaign would encourage the survey's travel to many people across the globe. Some success was achieved through this method, especially because of the cooperation of the Undergraduate Research Program in sending the survey to all of the Summer Scholars. However, it was determined that more responses needed to be collected, and different measures were taken to acquire responses.

The online social networking tool Facebook contains a feature that allows a user to create groups that unite people with a common cause or purpose. This feature on Facebook was used to create a group that informed people about the survey and invited them to participate. The researcher's Facebook friends were invited to take the survey and were then asked to invite all of their friends to do the same in order to increase the number of responses. The initial invitation went out to over six hundred people; this effort proved to be extremely successful. This method in combination with the viral email campaign led to collection of 840 responses.

Population

A sample representative of the nation's population was considered for the target audience of Phase One. However, consideration of similar studies led to the decision that such measures were unnecessary. For example, Pitts' (2002) and Green's (2002) studies specifically targeted 20 or fewer British musicians, and Bernard's (2005) research involved interviews with just six music teachers. However, because one of the aims of the study was to understand why people consider themselves to be *non-musical*, the researcher decided that the reach of the study would extend to a population not limited to music students and teachers. The only standardization imposed on the population for this study was the age of participants; participants were of college age or older in order to satisfy the survey's request for major or profession of each survey respondent.

Delimitations

Potential delimitations are inherent in this study simply because of how the population sample was determined. The original reasoning behind a *viral* email campaign was to reach many people with different professions and of varying ages. The inclusion of Facebook in the recruitment process leads to a logical assumption that a majority of respondents from this means of contact would be young adults.

Another delimitation of the population sample lies in the area of major or profession. Because the study relied on the researcher's personal contacts to be the initial transmitters of the survey, one may assume that a majority of these people are what could be classified as *music contacts*: acquaintances made during some musical activity, because they are fellow musicians or music enthusiasts. They were likely to be people who would consider themselves to be musical based on the most common colloquial definitions of that word. The researcher also expected that musical enthusiasts who were unrelated to the researcher would respond in a similar way, while those people who did not consider themselves musical would be more likely to ignore the invitation without contributing a response. The result of such a targeted audience would be an extremely unequal sample with heavy weight on the side of *musical* responses. All of this was taken into consideration while analyzing survey data.

Phase One: Data Analysis

Phase One involved the distribution of a survey that asked respondents to discuss their musical experiences and the role that music plays in their everyday lives. The survey was used to elucidate the following research questions:

1. What do people believe it means to be *musical*?
2. Why do some people consider themselves to be *musical* while others consider themselves to be *non-musical*?
3. What influences a person's self-perception of being *musical*?

Procedure

HyperRESEARCH

The survey employed both quantitative and qualitative data collection. Qualtrics survey software automatically tabulates all quantitative responses and represents them in the form of percents, so no additional software was required to compile and analyze the quantitative data. Qualtrics also automatically compiles all short answer responses, which can then be opened as text files so all responses can be viewed for analysis. Of the twenty questions that comprised the survey, five of the questions were short answer responses. These responses required the use of a qualitative analysis program separate from Qualtrics in order to track trends in the short answer responses. To this end, HyperRESEARCH (2010) was the program chosen to code the qualitative data contained in these five questions. HyperRESEARCH allows the researcher to open text documents (in this case, the short answer responses from one survey question) and create codes to organize

and categorize the information. Each code is associated with a particular piece of information, and that code is assigned each time that piece of information appears in the document. One participant response could contain as many as ten different codes. For example, in the question *Why or why not?* following the question *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* codes included *Plays an instrument*, *Sings*, and *Talented,* for example. These codes represent reasons why people consider themselves to be musical.

Response-Specific Qualitative Analysis

The nature of Qualtrics is such that filters can be placed on the survey response data in order to view responses to certain questions. The same filters can be applied within individual questions in order to separate responses from a particular question based on how previous questions were answered. For instance, the question *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* was followed by the short-answer *Why or why not?* The short-answer responses were filtered into two different categories: (a) those who answered the question in the positive (*Yes,* or *I consider myself to be musical*) and, (b) those answered in the negative (*No* or *I do not consider myself to be musical*). The positive and negative responses to this question were analyzed separately in HyperRESEARCH, which allowed for the analysis of responses that described the same answer and therefore shared similar trends and codes. This process was also executed for the *Why or why not* that followed the question *Do you consider yourself to be a musician?,* separating responses of those people who felt that they were musicians from those who felt that they were not musicians. The same procedure was followed for the questions

pertaining to age and profession or major, in order to illuminate demographic information about people who described themselves as musical or not musical. These data were analyzed from the following perspectives: ages of those who consider themselves to be musical; ages of those who do not consider themselves to be musical; professions of those who consider themselves to be musical; and professions of those who do not consider themselves to be musical. The final qualitative response question was *What do you feel is the importance of music in everyday life?* These responses were analyzed collectively. There were a total of nine categories of qualitative data.

Phase Two: Interview Design

Population

The researcher identified interview participants based on their willingness to participate in the interview. Participants were given the option of leaving their contact information at the end of the survey if they were willing to be contacted for an interview. After compiling this initial list, the researcher selected participants based on their responses to the following questions:

1. Do you consider yourself to be musical?
2. Do you consider yourself to be a musician?
3. Do you enjoy listening to music?
4. Do you play a musical instrument?

Novel trends in respondents' answers were identified, and participants whose responses represented a variety of perspectives on their own musicality were

chosen to participate (see Appendix C for interview subject selection rubric). The categories used for selection were:

(Subject describes as…)

1. "I am musical, I am a musician"
2. "I am musical, I am not a musician"
3. "I am not musical, I enjoy listening to music"
4. "I am not musical, I am not a musician, I play a musical instrument"

Question Design

The semi-structured interview protocol was designed using a procedure similar to the one used to create the survey questions, by creating a pool of questions that referred to the original research questions. A list of final interview questions is included in Appendix D.

Interview Conduction

The researcher contacted ten interview subjects via email to inform them of their selection for the interview portion of the research project (see Appendix E). Interview subjects then contacted the researcher to schedule a ten- to fifteen-minute interview. Interviews were conducted either in person or over the phone, and each interview was prefaced with a verbal consent statement (see Appendix F). Interview subjects' identities were protected through the use of assigned case numbers to replace their names. Interviews were audio-recorded onto an iPod for transcription. The interview questions and protocol for Phase Two were approved by the University of Delaware IRB (see Appendix G).

Phase Two: Data Analysis

Transcripts of the interviews were prepared by the researcher using a program called HyperTRANSCRIBE (2010), which allowed the researcher to slow down the recording of an audio file and transcribe the interview manually. The interviews were analyzed by the researcher in two ways, the first being a narrative analysis of each interview, in which the researcher reflected on the overall ideas communicated by the interviewee and their unique perspective on the issues discussed. The second way the interviews were analyzed was by using HyperRESEARCH (2010), the qualitative analysis program used to analyze the Phase One survey data. The interviews were separated into five categories, one for each of the interview questions, allowing for the lateral comparison of all interviewees' responses to the same question. The two methods of analysis allowed for the interviews to be analyzed individually and in comparison to each other as well.

Using HyperRESEARCH as the primary tool for analyzing data from Phase One and Phase Two allowed for the constant comparison of data within each phase as well as between the two phases. In this way, the researcher was able to notice trends within the data from Phase One and connect them to trends in Phase Two, effectively allowing the researcher to use information from the interviews to illuminate the results from the survey.

Chapter Four

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to obtain a better understanding of what people believe it means to be musical based on their perception of their own musicality. The study was conducted in two phases over the course of four months. Phase One entailed the distribution of a survey called Music In Everyday Life to 840 participants. The population was 35.6% male and 62.7% female (1.4% of participants declined to answer this question). Sixty-three percent of participants were between the ages of 17 and 24, and 30% of the participants identified themselves as being music professionals or music majors. The survey was composed of both quantitative and qualitative questions designed to ascertain participants' feelings about the role of music in their lives, both past and present. Phase Two entailed the selection of survey participants to participate in semi-structured interviews in order to illuminate any trends that prevailed in Phase One data. This chapter comprises the analyses and results of the data collected in Phase One and Phase Two. Through this study, the researcher endeavored to answer the following research questions:

1. What do people believe it means to be musical?
2. Why do some people consider themselves to be musical while others do not?
3. What influences a person's self-perception of being musical?

Phase One: Survey

Phase One addressed the three research questions of the present study through the Music In Everyday Life questionnaire (see Appendix B). The survey was researcher-designed using Qualtrics (2010), an online survey development program that collects, records, retrieves, and filters survey responses. The three research questions guided the development of the survey and the subsequent analyses of data. The researcher grouped the results according to the research questions. Participant responses, from the open-ended questions, were filtered, and imported into HyperRESEARCH (2010) for content analysis. A total of 840 survey responses were collected before the online questionnaire was deactivated. Each time responses were entered into HyperRESEARCH, they were scanned for trends, and codes were created based on the trends that emerged.

Research Question One

To address the first research question, *What do people believe it means to be musical?* the following survey questions were posed to participants (see Table 1):

Table 1: Research Question One and related survey questions

What do people believe it means to be musical?
1.1.Do you consider yourself to be musical? Why or why not?
1.2.How many times a day do you listen to music?
1.3.Under what circumstances do you listen to music?
1.4.Do you enjoy listening to music?
1.5.What is the importance of music in everyday life?

Question 1.1: *Do you consider yourself to be musical?*

For Question 1.1, *Do you consider yourself to be musical?*, participants were provided with the option responses of *Yes* or *No* and were given an opportunity to expand upon their answers in an open-ended response field. As seen in Figure 1, 83% of respondents believed themselves to be musical, whereas 18% did not.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		693	82.5%
2	No		147	17.5%
	Total		840	100%

Figure 1: *Do you consider yourself to be musical?*

***Do you consider yourself to be musical?: Yes* Responses**

The researcher used HyperRESEARCH to analyze data from the short-answer responses to Survey Question 1.1. The most overwhelming trends emerged as analysis progressed, and codes were designed based on the trends that were immediately noticeable during analysis. Table 2 shows the responses of those people who answered *Yes* to Survey Question 1.1. Participant responses revealed an emphasis on the importance of demonstrating musical ability. The

code, *Plays an instrument,* received approximately 20.24% of the total code assignments. The code *Sings* was the second most frequent response, with 11.2% of total code assignments. The fourth code, *Performs or creates music*, was assigned to responses in which participants claimed that they perform, create, make, or play music without making a specific claim to playing a particular instrument or singing a certain vocal part. Even the third most cited code, *Listens to music,* is a demonstrable musical activity: one that can be viewed by others and thus be judged as legitimate musical participation. These four codes accounted for 50.8% of the total codes, showing the importance that is placed on demonstrable musical activity, attributing to the feeling of being musical. The fifth most noteworthy code, *Enjoys or loves music*, represented 7.7% of the total codes.

Table 2: *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* (*Yes* responses)

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. Plays Instrument	380	20.24
2. Sings	210	11.2
3. Listens to music	204	10.8
4. Performs or creates music	160	8.5
5. Enjoys or loves music	145	7.7
6. Studies music	103	5.5
7. Part of everyday life	78	4.15
8. Involved in music	56	3
9. Other	55	3
10. Move to music-miscellaneous	46	2.45
11. Sense of pitch	44	2.34
12. Raised with music	41	2.2
13. Music teacher	37	2
14. Sense of rhythm	37	2
15. Reads music	36	2
16. Interesting	35	1.8
17. Composer	30	1.6
18. Audiates	29	1.5
19. Mood or emotion	29	1.5
20. Knowledge of music studies	27	1.4
21. Talented	25	1.3
22. Music as expression or communication	23	1.2
23. Training	15	0.8
24. Music in or as career	12	0.6
25. Told that they are musical	7	0.4
26. Musician	6	0.3
27. Interest in music	5	0.26
28. Actor or actress	2	0.1
Total Codes: 28	**Total Frequency: 1877**	

***Do you consider yourself to be musical?* (*Interesting* responses- *Yes*)**

In the course of analyzing the data from Question 1.1 a number of responses were found to be especially unique or insightful. These responses were coded as *Interesting* responses and were tagged for later reference (see Table 3).

Table 3: *Interesting* Reponses to Question 1.1 (*Yes* responses)

I believe all individuals have the potential to be musical.
Any person who has any kind of response to music is musical. Period.
Because we are all created to be so.
I consider myself to be musical not only because I play an instrument, but because I have music in me. Music, for me, is not a hobby as it was when I first started, but it is more a way of life for me now.
Music stirs my soul!!
Currently, I can make sound, but not necessarily MUSIC...
In my opinion, every human being is musical, so yes I do consider myself musical. I tend to hear music in things normally considered 'non musical' such as machinery, everyday objects, and other miscellaneous objects.
I believe I was born with a natural musicality…
Why Not?
I live a life of Music; Thinking, Reading, Writing, Playing, Performing, BEING.
My life has rhythm.
Usually I'd qualify the term "musical" with a "sort of". To me "musical" people are those that play a few instruments and are good singers, but maybe I'm being hard on myself.
I'm the kind of nerd who will harmonize to the hum of an elevator or find the resonance frequency of bathroom stalls.
It has always poured through me.
I have a God given ability that is special.
Music is a huge part of who I am. I cannot imagine not having this enormous joy.
Everyone is musical because everyone is able to organize sounds, creating music.
Music has impacted my life through several experiences (however small or large). Without those experiences I would not be the person I am today, therefore it is my goal for music to remain central in my life. Because of my goals and desires towards music, I consider myself to be musical.

Table 3 (cont'd):

It is with that knowledge and my own convictions that I give shape and direction to the motion that is the music. Does this make me musical? By my standard, yes it does.
This is tough. Yes, I play an instrument and I make music, but does that make me musical? On certain levels it does. I can tell you the difference between country and jazz but to go in depth about it is tough. So in a way I am.
Making music is important to me and it's an activity I strive to do often.
Without being musical, one would not have themselves as a person.
I hear music in every step I take. Every thing I see and speak breathes music, and every time it happens its unintentional. It's as if musicality comes right out of my pores.
It's a gift God has given me in song and instrument (esp. handbells) for His glory!
I consider myself as a musical person because I appreciate music, and love music, and that's more significant than how "good" I am at it.
I've grown up on music--I began studying the flute when I was in the 4th grade and am now going into my junior year as a Flute Performance Major. Music=life.
I am a music major. I love music. I play music. I (fill in verb) music.
In addition, I feel attached to music on a molecular level, almost, and in a way that is an essential part of understanding music.
Love live music.
Yes, but not as musical as I used to be.
I appreciate the thoughts of [genres] of music. They all touch everyone's life in one way or another!
I think that all people are musical in one way or the other. I don't know anyone or have ever even heard of a person who dislikes music all together.
I believe every human being, including myself, has an inherent capacity [genetic endowment] to be musical. The interaction of my inherent capacity and my environment 'grew' a high musical aptitude.
Music is part of me.
eat, sleep, breathe music

Thirty-five pieces of information were assigned the code *Interesting.* Nine of these responses relate the idea that all human beings are musical. Nine of the *Interesting* responses cite music as being an integral part of life or identity. Three of the responses were qualifying answers, as if the respondent answered Question

1.1 (*Do you consider yourself to be musical?*) in the affirmative, and then wanted to clarify that answer.

***Do you consider yourself to be musical?* (*No* responses)**

The negative responses to Question 1.1 revealed many of the same trends as did the positive responses (see Table 4). The most commonly assigned code was *No instrument*, accounting for 65 of 312, or 21% of total code assignments. The third most commonly assigned code was *Non-singer* which had 30 codes. These results, as in the positive responses to Question 1.1, show an emphasis on demonstrable musical activity. Other codes, such as *Not talented* and *Can't read music*, indicate the importance that is placed on the social standard of musicianship and the stigma of the *professional musician* identity as discussed by Regelski (2007).

The second most significant code was *Qualifier*, which was assigned to 12.5% of responses:

"I enjoy music, *but* [emphasis added] I do not have any particular vocal or instrumental talent."

"I enjoy listening to music *but* [emphasis added] do no play an instrument or sing on key."

In these responses participants emphasized that, despite their appreciation for or enjoyment of music, their lack of talent, skill, or even participation in a

perceived legitimate musical activity, did not qualify them for the label of *musical*.

The code *Other*, which received the fourth highest number of code assignments, was given to responses or parts of responses that clearly did not answer the question or that did not provide any data relative to the research purpose and questions of the project. For example:

"I like music but am more interested in talk radio."

"I never know the Musical [category] questions on Jeopardy."

"Just am not."

Table 4: *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* (*No* responses)

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. No instrument	65	20.8
2. Qualifier	39	12.5
3. Non-singer	30	9.6
4. Other	25	8
5. Not talented	23	7.4
6. Can't read music	21	6.7
7. No longer plays an instrument	18	5.7
8. Does not sing well	15	4.8
9. No sense of pitch	15	4.8
10. No interest or enjoyment	9	2.9
11. Does not create music	8	2.56
12. No knowledge of music studies	7	2.56
13. Does not listen to music	6	0.19
14. Red flag	6	0.19
15. Does not play an instrument well	5	0.16

Table 4 (cont'd):

16. No sense of rhythm	5	0.16
17. No training	5	0.16
18. No participation in musical activities	3	0.09
19. Non-dancer	3	0.09
20. Difficulty	2	0.06
21. No musical experiences	1	0.03
22. Not a musician	1	0.03
Total Codes: 22	**Total Frequency: 312**	

***Do you consider yourself to be musical?* (*Interesting* Responses- *No*)**

Six of the *No* responses were coded as *Interesting* because, similar to the positive responses to Question 1.1, they were unique. The prevalent theme of the negative responses to Question 1.1 indicated that while the participant was actively involved in some kind of musical activity, the participant did not feel that this activity justified being musical (see Table 5).

Table 5: *Interesting* Responses to Question 1-1 (*No* answers)

I enjoy music a lot, and that includes playing the clarinet in a small church group. When I compare my capabilities with others, however, I judge that I am not [adequately] competent to be rated "musical". Of course, I am just guessing at what you mean by the term musical.
I only listen to music on MP3 player on 1/2 hour daily walk. I mostly listen to talk radio and otherwise only listen to music on errands.
I'm not a musician- I play, but it's not an integral part of me.
I consider someone who is musical to be a good singer or be able to play a musical instrument.
I have no musical talent. I really wish I did though because I love listening to it.
I am tone deaf, I cannot sing, and I am bad at playing instruments even though I wish I could be musical.

Questions 1.2, 1.3, 1.4: Music Listening Habits

The researcher designed Questions 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4 to illustrate the respondents' participation in musical activities throughout their lives in order to show how such musical interaction affects a person's feeling of being musical or not musical. Question 1.2 was posed as a quantitative-response question, which determined how often participants listened to music. The options for participants to choose from were: *1-3 times a day* (23%), *4-6 times a day* (28%), *7-9 times a day* (28%), and *Other* (21%). When participants selected *Other* they were asked to fill in an amount in a text box (See Figure 2).

#	Answer		Response	%
1	1-3		190	23%
2	4-6		238	28%
3	7-9		235	28%
4	Other		177	21%
	Total		840	100%

Figure 2: *How many times a day do you listen to music?*

The researcher exported responses recorded in the text box to HyperRESEARCH and coded them in groups according to the most frequently cited amounts of music listening participants engaged in. The vast majority of these codes (total code assignment n = 181) were assigned as *All day long* with 98 code assignments. The second and third most assigned codes were *10 or more (times a day)* (35 code assignments) and *Frequently or a lot* (13 code

assignments). When combined, these responses account for 80.7% of the *Other* responses, indicating that a large majority of these participants felt that they listen to music more than could be quantified by the multiple choice options provided. Only nine responses, those that indicated an amount less than 1-3 times a day were coded as *Small amount*. Therefore, almost no survey participants were non-music listeners (see Table 6).

Table 6: *Other* responses to Question 1.2

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. All day long	98	54.1
2. 10 or more	35	19.3
3. Frequently or a lot	13	7.2
4. In the background	9	4.9
5. Other	9	4.9
6. Small amount	9	4.9
7. Only purposeful listening	3	1.65
8. While teaching	3	1.65
9. Audiates	2	1.1
Total Codes: 9	**Total Frequency: 181**	

Question 1.3 asked participants to list the circumstances under which they listen to music. Participants were presented with a number of listening options and then were asked to select all that applied to them (see Figure 3).

#	Answer		Response	%
1	When I am in the car.		805	96%
2	For enjoyment		770	92%
3	While doing chores around the house.		683	81%
4	While I exercise.		617	73%
5	While I am at work.		468	56%
6	While at worship.		367	44%
7	When I go to sleep.		224	27%
8	Other:		161	19%

Figure 3: *Under what circumstances do you listen to music?*

As in Question 1.2, the qualitative responses from the *Other* category for Question 1.3 were exported to HyperRESEARCH for coding. The top two most assigned codes for listening to music were *While working*, which received 32 total assignments, and *In the background*, which received 28 total code assignments. Because the code *While working* implies that the music is being played while another activity is taking place, it can be judged as a type of background music listening. When combined, these two codes account for 35.3% of all *Other* codes.

One trend was revealed by its absence from the majority of responses. Analysis of survey data revealed that many of the participants have had experience playing or creating music in some form or another, yet *In practice or performance* received only 24 code assignments from the *Other* category (see

Table 7). All of the options provided in the survey as well as the majority of the codes assigned to the *Other* responses emphasize the act of listening as separate from the act of creating music, as if to suggest that real music listening does not happen while one is in the act of making music. This is ironic because most musicians and music educators would likely argue that the most active form of music listening takes place during the creation of music. Perhaps the thought did not occur to survey participants and that is why they did not include it more often in their answers.

Table 7: *Other* responses to Question 1.3

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. In the background	32	18.8
2. While working	28	16.5
3. In practice or performance	24	14.1
4. While traveling	22	12.9
5. While relaxing	10	5.9
6. Other	8	4.7
7. Always	7	4.1
8. During music classes or school	7	4.1
9. While teaching	6	3.5
10. Eating	4	2.4
11. Audiates	3	1.8
12. In the shower	3	1.8
13. Social situations	3	1.8
14. Boredom	2	1.2
15. In preparation for music career	2	1.2
16. Spiritual	2	1.2
17. Video games	2	1.2
18. With family	2	1.2
19. During specifically musical activities	1	0.5
20. Emotions	1	0.5

Table 7 (cont'd):

21. Exercising	1	0.5
Total Codes: 21	**Total Frequency: 170**	

Through Question 1.4 participants were asked if they enjoyed listening to music. The results, as seen in Figure 4, show that the majority of participants do listen to music. All but 10 of the respondents indicated that they enjoy listening to music, and even those respondents largely indicated that they did not dislike listening to music, but rather were indifferent about it. The high positive response, in conjunction with the responses to Question 1.2, suggest that listening to music is an important part of people's lives.

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		830	99%
2	No		2	0%
3	Indifferent		8	1%
	Total		840	100%

Figure 4: *Do you enjoy listening to music?*

Question 1.5: ***What do you feel is the importance of music in everyday life?***

Question 1.5 was designed to illuminate the role music plays in the lives of the participants. This question was placed as the final question of the survey before the questions that asked about participants' demographic information. By the time participants answered this question, they had already considered their own musicality, their histories of music listening and creation, and their

musicianship. The intent in placing this question in the final position was to engender thoughtful responses that would reveal greater detail about participants' feelings about music and themselves as musical people.

Unlike the first short-answer question in this group, which separated responses into those who answered *yes* or *no* to Survey Question 1.1 (*Do you consider yourself to be musical?*), the responses for this question were analyzed collectively. All 840 short-answer responses were exported to HyperRESEARCH and coded together. Codes were identified after a primary overview of the information to extract major trends (see Table 8). Participants' responses tended to be longer and more descriptive, requiring the assignment of up to five or more codes, such as the following:

> Music reaches the depth of a person's soul, if a person will allow it. To me, this is a feeling of humanity--being human, being able to feel deeply in a way that cannot be articulated with words. Here are other purposes for music as a part of being human: / / Music as entertainment / / Music as diversion / / Music as social activity / / Music as art / / Music as artistic activity / / Music as a friend / / Music as consoler / / Music as a unifier or divider / / Music as a profession / / Music as cultural glue / / Music as culture.

This particular response was coded under: (a) *Unique* (for a response that said that music had a unique or unusual quality or power); (b) *Part of humanity*; (c) *Entertainment or enjoyment*; (d) *Social activity*; (e) *Art*; (f) *Healing or calming* (meaning that music has a healing or restorative influence over people); (g) *Connects people*; (h) *Profession*; and (i) *Social-cultural effect* (meaning that music ties people together, unites them across the boundaries of society or culture).

The emergent codes from this set of responses ranged from *Inspiration or enrichment* (with 88 assignments), to *Improves or changes life* (with 40 assignments), to *Inspiration or enrichment* (with 88 assignments) to *Sanity* (with 21 assignments). The code *Not important* was assigned only four times, implying that the vast majority of respondents felt that music played at least some role in their everyday lives or in the everyday lives of humans in general.

Table 8: *What do you feel is the importance of music in everyday life?* (All responses)

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. Emotions- inspires or provokes	251	12.8
2. Healing or calming	196	9.9
3. Expression or creativity	188	9.6
4. Entertainment or enjoyment	150	7.6
5. Changes or enhances mood	111	5.6
6. Learning or brain function	96	4.9
7. Inspiration or enrichment	88	4.5
8. Unique	87	4.4
9. Connects people	78	3.9
10. Communication	59	3
11. Part of everyday life	56	2.8
12. Stress relief	56	2.8
13. Social-cultural effect	46	2.34
14. Escape	45	2.3
15. Pass time or background noise	45	2.3
16. Release, diversion, or distraction	44	2.2
17. Other	42	2.1

Table 8 (cont'd):

18. Improves or changes life	40	2
19. Worship or spiritual	39	1.9
20. Identity- connect with self	32	1.63
21. Concentration	28	1.4
22. Part of humanity	28	1.4
23. Relatable	25	1.3
24. Memories	22	1.1
25. Sanity	21	1.07
26. Universal	21	1.07
27. Interesting	13	0.6
28. Sense or experience of beauty	12	0.6
29. Art	11	0.56
30. Social activity	10	0.5
31. Discipline, cooperation or teamwork	5	0.25
32. Encourages productivity	4	0.2
33. Not important	4	0.2
34. Profession	4	0.2
35. Well-rounded	4	0.2
36. Dancing	3	0.15
Total codes: 36	**Total frequency: 1964**	

Six responses were coded *Interesting*, as in Question 1.1. These responses demonstrated unusual insight or a unique view of the question that could not be coded in any other way (see Table 9).

Table 9: *Interesting* Responses to Question 1.5

I need music in my life every day.
I find that I can tackle life's problems better with music in my life.
I believe music makes one more alive.
Music can be very cathartic. It can be both relaxing and motivating. Without music, I would find it more difficult to get certain things done throughout the day.
Music allows one to connect in some way or form to something at anytime.
Music creates order from disorder.
It is not important for everyone, but neither is neuroscience. Same concept.
I believe it also builds self -confidence.
I feel it is [extremely] important. Music is a reflection of the time we live in.
Beyond the emotional response and the stress release aspects, it also encourages creativity and introspection.
It teaches patience, understanding, and provides a closeness with others around you.
Music can help you with just about everything except learning how to be quiet.
Since we are social creatures, music helps soothe and tame the beast in every single one of us and gets us in our zone (which ever that maybe for different people).

Summary

A majority of the participants in Phase One of the present research study feel that they are musical, and incorporate music into their everyday lives by listening to music anywhere from once a day to all day long. The most significant way that people justify their *musicality* is by engaging in a demonstrable musical activity like playing an instrument, singing, or listening to music. Almost all people enjoy listening to music, and engage in music listening primarily in the context of another activity. People use music in many ways in their everyday lives, but it is used primarily as a device for emotional connection, soothing, and mood adjusting.

Research Question Two

Research Question Two, *Why do some people consider themselves to be musical while others do not?* was addressed by the following survey questions as displayed in Table 10:

Table 10: Research Question Two and related survey questions

Why do some people consider themselves to be musical while others do not?
2.1a. Have you ever played an instrument?
2.1b. If yes, in what context? Choose all that apply. If you have never played an instrument, choose the last response, "I have never played an instrument."
2.2a. Do you ever sing?
2.2b. If yes, in what context? Choose all that apply. If you do not sing, choose the last response, "I do not sing."
2.3. Describe your childhood as it relates to music.

The questions in this group were designed to ascertain the specific, purposeful musical activities that they respondents engaged in. The questions focused on the playing/singing activities of respondents' lives as well as their personal musical "histories" by asking them to describe the music in their childhood.

Question 2.1: ***Have you ever played an instrument? If yes, in what context?***

Questions 2.1a and 2.1b assessed each respondent's history of playing an instrument, first by asking if they had ever played an instrument (see Figure 5) and then by asking them to elaborate on that response by describing the context in which they had played an instrument (see Figure 6).

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		768	91%
2	No		72	9%
	Total		840	100%

Figure 5: *Have you ever played an instrument?*

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Private lessons		600	71%
2	School band/orchestra		591	70%
3	For my own enjoyment		531	63%
4	Community band/orchestra		258	31%
5	Popular music group (rock or pop band)		123	15%
6	Other:		120	14%
7	I have never played an instrument		73	9%

Figure 6: *If yes, in what context? Choose all that apply. If you have never played an instrument, choose the last response, "I have never played an instrument."*

Other **responses to Question 2.1**

Question 2.1 allowed respondents to select *Other* if they had a unique response, and then provided an opportunity to elaborate in a text box as to the nature of their participation in playing an instrument. The qualitative data entered in this portion of the survey was exported to HyperRESEARCH for coding in order to further elucidate the answers to this question (see Table 11).

Table 11: *Other* responses to question 2.1b.

Code	Frequency
1. Worship	46
2. Instrumental ensemble or solo	22
3. Professionally	14
4. In school or while teaching	10
5. Choral ensemble or solo	7
6. Early in life	7
7. Other	6
8. Experimental	5
9. Solo performance	5
10. Music class	4
11. Accompanying	2
12. With family	2
Total codes: 12	**Total frequency: 130**

The most commonly cited context in these *Other* responses was that participants played instruments in the course of worship, with the second most popular context being in some kind of instrumental group or solo performance.

Question 2.2: *Do you ever sing? If yes, in what context?*

Questions 2.2a and 2.2b were very similar to the previous two questions, but these addressed whether respondents had participated in singing throughout their lives (see Figure 7) and the context in which they sang (see Figure 8).

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		784	93%
2	No		56	7%
	Total		840	100%

Figure 7: *Do you ever sing?*

#	Answer		Response	%
1	In the car		693	83%
2	For my own enjoyment		549	65%
3	In the shower		528	63%
4	While at worship		399	48%
5	In a choir		368	44%
6	Private lessons		175	21%
7	In a community music group		162	19%
8	Other:		106	13%
9	In a popular music group (pop/rock band)		86	10%
10	I do not sing.		56	7%

Figure 8: *If yes, in what context? Choose all that apply. If you never sing, choose the last response, "I do not sing."*

Other **responses to Question 2.2**

As in Question 2.1b, this question allowed respondents to select *Other* if they had a unique response, and provided an option to elaborate in a text box as to the nature of their singing. The qualitative data entered in this portion of the survey was exported to HyperRESEARCH for coding to elucidate the responses to this question (see Table 12).

Table 12: *Other* responses to Question 2.2b.

Code	Frequency
1. In a musical group	16
2. Theater	16
3. While practicing or performing	13
4. In school	10
5. While working	9
6. Other	9
7. While teaching	8
8. Sings to people	5
9. Professionally	4
10. Sings along with music	4
11. As often as possible	4
12. While traveling	3
13. With family	3
14. When alone	2
Total Codes: 14	**Total Frequency: 106**

As demonstrated in Figure 8, four options that were offered in the survey response related to some kind of organized or standardized musical activity: *In a choir*, *Private lessons*, *In a community music group*, and *In a popular music group (pop/rock band)*. However, these options were chosen much less often than the options *In the car*, *For my own enjoyment*, *In the shower*, and *While at worship*. These four options imply that, for these participants singing happens during another activity, or as part of another activity, as opposed to in an organized group setting. The *Other* responses were exported to HyperRESEARCH for coding, and the trends that emerged revealed that 30.2% of the codes in these responses were for musical or standard theater. These findings suggest that a majority of the singing that people engage in on a regular basis is casual. A significant, though lesser amount of singing takes place in an organized

setting like a choir or musical group, suggesting that, while some participants sing in choirs or in voice lessons, almost all sing when they are alone.

Question 2.3: ***Describe your childhood as it relates to music***

Question 2.3 gave respondents several options to select from to illustrate how music played a role in their childhood in order to determine the most common ways that participants became acculturated to music (see Figure 9).

#	Question	Yes	No	Unsure	Responses
1	Did members of your family sing or play an instrument?	611	217	12	840
2	Was music frequently playing in your house as a child?	648	144	48	840
3	Did you ever watch music television programs like MTV or VH1?	532	290	18	840
4	Did a family member encourage you to play an instrument or sing?	672	150	18	840
5	If you played an instrument or sang, did a family member encourage you to practice?	650	157	33	840

Figure 9: *Describe your childhood as it relates to music.*

Responses indicate that 80% of participants were encouraged by a family member to play an instrument or sing during childhood, and 77.4% of participants were encouraged to practice their instrument or singing. Seventy-seven-point-two percent of participants responded that there was music playing in their house while they were growing up, and 72.7% had a family member who played an

instrument or sang. The least selected response was still cited by 63.3% of participants; this response was for participants who watched music television programs like MTV or VH1 while growing up. The results from this question point to the conclusion that a majority of participants were surrounded by music in some shape or form as youngsters, which may explain the result from Research Question One, that a majority of people feel that music plays a role in their everyday lives.

Summary

The results from Research Question Two indicate that a majority of participants have engaged in playing an instrument or in singing. Data also show that participants had a high amount of musical engagement during childhood, whether through the viewing of music television programs or by listening to music at home. This data also indicates the important role that family seems to play on influencing a person's musical engagement during childhood.

Research Question Three

Research Question Three, *What influences a person's self-perception of being musical?* was addressed by the following survey questions (see Table 13):

Table 13: Research Question Three and related survey questions

What influences a person's self-perception of being musical?
3.1.Can you read music?
3.2.Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician?
3.3.Do you consider yourself to be a musician? Why or why not?

The survey questions in this group focused on aspects that are traditionally associated with musicality: *musicianship* and the ability to read music. These questions were designed to reveal where the participants' idea of *musical* stemmed from. The questions in this group required respondents to judge the link between the ability to read music and musicianship. First, they were asked, in Question 3.1, to assess their own ability to read music (see Figure 10).

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		682	81%
2	No		158	19%
	Total		840	100%

Figure 10: *Can you read music?*

Question 3.2 asked respondents to comment on the practice of associating the ability to read music with musicianship (see Figure 11), while Question 3.3 had them apply this definition to themselves (see Figure 12).

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		284	34%
2	No		556	66%
	Total		840	100%

Figure 11: *Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician?*

#	Answer		Response	%
1	Yes		506	60%
2	No		334	40%
	Total		840	100%

Figure 12: *Do you consider yourself to be a musician?*

These three questions deal with the issue of musicianship, and closer analysis of the responses revealed interesting trends related to respondents' opinions about the importance of the link between music-reading ability and musicianship. The responses were separated according to Question 3.1, *Can you read music?* and then further analyzed based on their responses to Questions 3.2 and 3.3 (see Tables 14 through 21).

Table 14 represents the responses of people based on the common practice of linking music-reading ability to musicianship. Fifty-one of the 840 respondents feel that they are not musicians because they cannot read music, and because music-reading ability is essential to being considered a musician.

Table 14: Questions 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3: Combination #1

1. Can you read music? (NO)
2. Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician? **(YES)**
3. Do you consider yourself to be a musician? **(NO)**
Total: 51

Table 15 represents the responses of two people who consider themselves to be musicians despite the fact that they cannot read music and although they consider music-reading ability to be essential to musicianship. It is possible that these responses were provided by people who did not take the survey in the serious light in which it was intended, and who simply chose random answers without much thought or insight. It is also possible that despite the importance of music reading ability to a feeling of musicianship, there is another factor about themselves that they believe justifies their musicianship.

Table 15: Questions 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3: Combination #2

1. Can you read music? (NO)
2. Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician? **(YES)**
3. Do you consider yourself to be a musician? **(YES)**
Total: 2

Table 16 represents the responses of people who consider themselves to be musicians because, although they cannot read music, they do not feel that music-reading ability is essential to being a musician.

Table 16: Questions 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3: Combination #3

1. Can you read music? (NO)
2. Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician? **(NO)**
3. Do you consider yourself to be a musician? **(YES)**
Total: 15

Table 17 represents the responses of participants who cannot read music and who do not consider themselves to be musicians although they do not consider music-reading to be essential to being a musician. This suggests that

there are other reasons why they do not consider themselves to be musicians besides their inability to read music.

Table 17: Questions 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3: Combination #4

1. Can you read music? (NO)
2. Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician? **(NO)**
3. Do you consider yourself to be a musician? **(NO)**
Total: 90

Table 18 shows the responses of people who can read music and consider this ability to be essential to being a musician. This group represents the perspective that music-reading ability is linked to musicianship, and those who consider themselves to be musical must also be musically literate.

Table 18: Questions 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3: Combination #5

1. Can you read music? (YES)
2. Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician? **(YES)**
3. Do you consider yourself to be a musician? **(YES)**
Total: 170

Table 19 shows the responses of people who do not consider themselves to be musicians, although they read music, and who consider it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician. This suggests that these people believe that there are other factors that play into a person's being a musician.

Table 19: Questions 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3: Combination #6

1. Can you read music? (YES)
2. Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician? **(YES)**
3. Do you consider yourself to be a musician? **(NO)**
Total: 61

Table 20 shows the responses of people who consider themselves to be musicians, who can read music, but who do not consider music-reading ability essential to being a musician. This group contains the highest number of responses, with 319 out of 840, 38% of responses.

Table 20: Questions 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3: Combination #7

1. Can you read music? (YES)
2. Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician? **(NO)**
3. Do you consider yourself to be a musician? **(YES)**
Total: 319

Table 21 represents the responses of people who, despite the fact that they can read music, do not consider themselves to be musicians and do not believe that music-reading ability is essential to being a musician. This result suggests that there is a quality beyond the ability to read music that is required for *musicianship*.

Table 21: Questions 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3: Combination #8

1. Can you read music? (YES)
2. Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician? **(NO)**
3. Do you consider yourself to be a musician? **(NO)**
Total: 132

Summary

The participant responses demonstrated in Tables 14 to 21 represent a dichotomy between music-reading ability and musicianship. The responses that are listed in Table 14 and Table 18 represent the respondents who believe that the

ability to read music is essential to musicianship, and because of their ability or inability to read music, they consider themselves to be musicians or non-musicians; these responses combine to total 221 out of 840, or 26.3% of all responses.

The most salient finding of this analysis is represented in the response that demonstrates that it is not important to be able to read music to be a musician, Question 3.2. The response to this question, when asked of all participants, revealed that 556 participants believe it is NOT important to be able to read music in order to be a musician. Upon further analysis it was found that of the 556 participants, 334 considered themselves musicians (see Tables 16 and 20). These responses represent the participants who consider themselves to be musicians despite their ability or inability to read music, indicating that the ability to read music is not essential to musicianship. This group of responses represents 39.8% of total responses compared to the 26.3% of people who believe that their ability or inability to read music qualifies or disqualifies them from having *musicianship*.

Question 3.3: *Do you consider yourself to be a musician?* (*Yes* responses)

Question 3.3, *Do you consider yourself to be a musician?* was followed by a short-answer response that asked participants to explain why they did or did not consider themselves to be musicians. The qualitative data was coded in HyperRESEARCH in two separate categories: those who responded *Yes* (I do consider myself to be a musician) and *No* (I do not consider myself to be a musician) in order to determine the trends that influence this feeling of having or not having musicianship or (see Table 22).

Table 22: *Why do you consider yourself to be a musician?* (*Yes* responses)

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. Plays an instrument	200	17.4
2. Performs or creates music	114	9.9
3. Enjoys or loves music	101	8.8
4. Sings	85	7.4
5. Plays music	74	6.4
6. Studies music	65	5.65
7. Reads music	64	5.6
8. Other	60	5.2
9. Part of life	45	3.9
10. Part of a musical group	42	3.6
11. Composer-improvises	36	3.1
12. Understands music	36	3.1
13. Talented	31	2.7
14. Listens to music	30	2.6
15. Music as career	29	2.5
16. Music teacher	26	2.3
17. Musician equals musical	26	2.3
18. Music as expression or communication	19	1.7
19. Training	13	1.1
20. Involved in music	10	0.8
21. Interprets or evaluates music	9	0.78
22. Professional musician	9	0.78
23. Experience	7	0.6
24. Sense of pitch	7	0.6
25. Interest in music	4	0.34

Table 22 (cont'd):

1. Exposure to music	3	0.3
2. Sense of rhythm	3	0.3
3. Amateur musician	1	N/A
4. Moves to music	1	N/A
Total codes: 29	**Total frequency: 1150**	

As in the question about musicality, participants cited their ability to play an instrument (17.4%), perform or create music (9.9%), their enjoyment or love of music (8.8%), and ability to sing (7.4%) or play (6.4%) music as the top reasons for their musicianship. Unlike the question about musicality, the next prevalent codes were for *Studies music* (5.65%) and *Reads music* (5.6%), showing the high emphasis on formalized training in order to be a musician. A trend that emerged in the responses was when respondents expressed confusion about the question, saying that to be musical was to be a musician, and that they had already answered that question earlier in the survey. Sample responses, which were coded as *Musician equals musical* are provided below:

"Wasn't this already asked? Haha."

"Wasn't this the first question? I already answered it."

A total of 26 responses received this code, which suggests that for some people musicality and musicianship are one and the same. Alternatively, this could mean that these people believe that you cannot be one without also being

the other, that if you are a musician you must necessarily also be musical, and that if you are musical you must also be a musician.

Question 3.3: *Do you consider yourself to be a musician?* (*No* responses)

The negative responses to Question 3.3 showed different trends than the negative responses to *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* (see Table 23).

Table 23: *Why do you consider yourself to be a musician?* (*No* responses)

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. Does not play an instrument	72	16
2. Not talented	66	14.6
3. No longer plays	51	11.3
4. Can't read music	37	8.1
5. Other	34	7.5
6. Only plays or sings for enjoyment	27	6
7. Music not as occupation	22	4.8
8. Does not write music	20	4.4
9. Does not play music	18	4
10. Non-priority	16	3.5
11. Don't or can't make music	15	3.3
12. Does not sing	14	3.1
13. Does not practice	9	2
14. Not involved in music	9	2
15. No sense of pitch	8	1.76
16. Does not play with a group	7	1.5
17. No formal training	6	1.3
18. No interest	5	1.1
19. Musician equals musical	4	0.8
20. No sense of rhythm	3	0.6
21. Does not study music	2	0.4
22. Does not understand music	2	0.4
23. No longer sings	2	0.4
24. Not part of life	2	0.4
25. No knowledge	1	0.2
Total codes: 25	**Total Frequency: 452**	

The most dominant code was, once again, *No Instrument* (72 total code assignments), but the following codes revealed that different factors play into one's feeling of *non-musicianship* (Table 23). A lack of talent is seen as an exclusion factor (66 total code assignments) and an emphasis is placed on current involvement in making music, whether as a career or priority, or as a serious endeavor (Codes *No longer plays, Only plays or sings for enjoyment, Music not as occupation*, and *Non-priority*). It seems that in order for one to be considered a musician, one must be actively involved in making music in a purposeful manner.

Summary

Results from this group of questions demonstrate that participants largely believe that the ability to read music is non-essential to musicianship, although a majority of participants do consider themselves to be musicians. These results also show that fewer people consider themselves to be *musicians* than to be *musical*. The data also reveals the importance of engaging in playing an instrument to attaining a sense of *musicianship*.

Demographic Information

The remaining survey questions asked participants to provide some biographical data about themselves such as their age and profession or major in college (depending on whether the participant was a student or a working professional). Each of these dimensions (age and profession) were divided based on response to the question *Do you consider yourself to be musical?* (for example, ages of those who consider themselves to be musical; ages of those who do not

consider themselves to be musical; professions of those who consider themselves to be musical; professions of those who do not consider themselves to be musical)

The majority of respondents (63.7%) who consider themselves to be musical were between the ages of 17 and 24. The next highest group (10.7% of the total responses) was for participants aged 50 to 59. The lowest significant age group was age 31 to 39 (4.8%). The code *Other* was assigned to responses that did not list an age (see Table 24).

Table 24: Ages of those who answered *Yes* to the question *Do you consider yourself to be musical?*

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. 17 to 24	440	63.7
2. 50 to 59	74	10.7
3. 40 to 49	56	8.1
4. 60 or older	46	6.6
5. 25 to 30	36	5.2
6. 31 to 39	33	4.8
7. Other	6	0.8
Total Codes: 7	**Total Frequency: 691**	

The majority of respondents (59.6%) who do not consider themselves to be musical were between the ages of 17 and 24. As in the previous table, there is a large difference between the first highest group and the second highest group; in this case, the next most dominant code was for people aged 40 to 49 (12.3%) (see Table 25).

Table 25: Ages of those who answered *No* to the question *Do you consider yourself to be musical?*

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. 17 to 24	87	59.6
2. 40 to 49	18	12.3
3. 50 to 59	17	11.6
4. 31 to 39	10	6.8
5. 25 to 30	8	5.5
6. 60 or older	6	4.1
Total Codes: 6	**Total Frequency: 146**	

Unexpectedly, *Music* was the dominant code in this question; 242 people included music as the whole or part of their profession or major. The next highest numbers were found in science, education, social sciences, and history. Low

trends included math, visual art or communications, culinary, law, religion, and library work (see Table 26).

Table 26: Professions or majors of those who answered *Yes* to the question *Do you consider yourself to be musical?*

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. Music	242	29.8
2. Science	71	8.7
3. Education	68	8.3
4. Social Sciences or History	67	8.28
5. Engineering	50	6.2
6. Business	38	4.7
7. English or Performing Arts	36	4.4
8. Art or communications	35	4.3
9. Medical	29	3.6
10. Foreign Languages	24	2.9
11. Administration	19	2.3
12. Computers	18	2.2
13. Other	16	1.9
14. Human Relations	15	1.8
15. Health Science or Exercise Physiology	14	1.7
16. None or not applicable	14	1.7
17. Marketing and advertising	13	1.6
18. Math	8	0.9
19. Visual art or communications	8	0.9
20. Retired	7	0.8
21. Culinary	5	0.6
22. Law	5	0.6
23. Religious	5	0.6
24. Librarian	4	0.5
Total Codes: 24	**Total Frequency: 811**	

None of the respondents who considered themselves to be non-musical responded that music was their profession or major. The dominant codes were in the social sciences, science, engineering, business, and education. Low trends

included foreign languages, library work, marketing, math, and culinary (see Table 27).

Table 27: Professions or majors of those who answered *No* to the question *Do you consider yourself to be musical?*

Code	Frequency	Percent of Total (%)
1. Social Sciences	19	11.9
2. Science	18	11.3
3. Engineering	18	11.3
4. Business	14	8.8
5. Education	14	8.8
6. Other	12	7.5
7. English or performing arts	10	6.3
8. Administration	9	5.7
9. Health Sciences	7	4.4
10. Law	5	3.1
11. Medical	5	3.1
12. Art	4	2.5
13. Communications	3	1.9
14. Computers	3	1.9
15. Human Relations	3	1.9
16. None or not applicable	3	1.9
17. Religious	3	1.9
18. Foreign languages	2	1.25
19. Librarian	2	1.25
20. Marketing	2	1.25
21. Math	2	1.25
22. Culinary	1	0.6
Total Codes: 22	**Total Frequency: 159**	

The most significant demographic finding in the survey data was that most people who took the survey were between the ages of 17 and 24, accounting for all people who took the survey; this figure amounts to 62.7% of the participants. This finding points to the tentative conclusion that perhaps young adults are more

likely to consider their own musicality, simply in their willingness to participate in taking a survey about music in everyday life, regardless of whether they consider themselves to be musical or not. Secondarily, this finding suggests that the survey distribution favored people aged 17-24, and that these participants forwarded the survey primarily to their peers.

Results: Phase Two

Phase Two of the current study entailed conducting interviews with selected survey participants who agreed to discuss the role of music in everyday life and their perceptions of their own musicality (n=10). The goal of the interviews was to illuminate and humanize the results from Phase One, and to delve into where the concept of musicality comes from for people with diverse opinions about their own musicality.

At the end of the survey, participants had the option of providing their phone number and email address in order to be contacted for an interview. All participants who provided contact information were sorted using a rubric that identified five groups; each group was a combination of survey questions that represented a unique idea about musicality (see Appendix C for rubric). Participants were chosen based upon on which group they were in according to the rubric; the researcher emailed them using a standardized email to invite their participation to be interviewed (see Appendix B).

Audio recordings of the interviews were imported into HyperTRANSCRIBE (2010), computer program that allows the researcher to slow down a recording for transcription. The data from the interview phase of the

project were analyzed using HyperRESEARCH, similar to the data analysis for Phase One. Rather than analyzing the interviews one by one, the interview responses were separated by question so that the interview responses could be examined side by side. Codes were created after the researcher read through the interview information and culled the most salient trends. The five questions are listed in Table 28 below.

Table 28: Phase Two: Interview Questions

1. What role does music play in your everyday life?
2. How does music make you feel? / What is your personal connection to music?
3. What do you think it means to be musical?
4. Do you consider yourself to be musical?
5. Where does this idea of musical come from?

The first three questions revealed three themes about the way interview participants integrate music into their lives: (a) as a mood or emotional outlet; (b) as an identity connection; and (c) as an activity. Participants consistently said that they enjoyed and appreciated music, or used it as a motivator during work, driving, exercise, and other activities. Participants also cited music as a mood adjuster, something that brought happiness to their lives. They use music to relax and to keep them company or comfort them in times of distress; music helps them express themselves and evokes or changes their emotions. They are inspired by music and it helps them connect to parts of their lives and parts of their personalities.

Music gives people a way to connect to different aspects of their lives and parts of their identities. Some participants directly called music part of their

identity, and others said that music was part of, or connected them to, their soul. Participants identified themselves with music in their families or careers, as musicians and music educators, or as the parents or family members of musical people. For example, Participant 2 responded that being musical means "to pursue what's in your heart" and Participant 6 felt a personal bond to music through his children's participation in and talent for music. Participants hear music and remember where they were when they first heard it or they recall the time in their life that they associate with that particular music.

Participants commonly cited music in relationship to an activity, either *as* the activity or *during* another activity. Some participants play music, and cite their talent at playing or singing as justification for their musicality. They engage in music during worship and when they audiate; they also engage in music in less musically purposeful ways, such as while they are driving, doing schoolwork, or exercising. Participants also stated that they engage in music on an intellectual level, finding enjoyment in analyzing music for elements like style and structure.

Six out of the ten participants considered themselves to be musical; two did not; and two were unsure or felt uneasy about their musicality. The two participants who were unsure about calling themselves *musical* expressed confusion about this label, the same confusion that they had felt when they first filled out the survey. They both emphasized that their reasons for feeling that they were musical was based on their enjoyment or appreciation of music, not on their talent, because they felt that their talent did not merit the label of *musical*.

When asked where their idea of *musical* came from, responses indicated that participants define *musical* based on their own personal experiences, as opposed to a definition that had been imposed on them by other people. They said that in some cases their music education influenced how they define musicality, whether by making them feel musical or by providing them with a standard for *musical* that they did not meet. Other participants compared their musical talent to their peers in order to judge their own musicality. Some participants felt that the definition of *musical* promoted by society or the media affected their own definition of *musical* and how they consider themselves to be *musical* or *non-musical*. Two participants claimed that they feel musical because they have an extremely strong emotional bond to music.

Summary

The results from Phase One and Phase Two highlight several themes about participants' interaction with music in everyday life. Trends in the data indicate that most participants engage with music as a regular part of their lives, through music listening and other forms of musical engagement. For many participants, music is also intertwined with emotions, and provides a soundtrack for everyday experiences.

Chapter Five

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND FUTURE RESEARCH

> I think it's a state of mind, being musical; I think that it's a way of presenting yourself to other people, that when you have that little lift in you that, hopefully that music brings you there, or that if you have a song in your head, that just makes you feel uplifted- that's what I think being musical is.
>
> -- Jane, wife of a musician and mother of three grown boys

Jane's response creates a direct link between musicality and a person's inner workings: self, soul or identity. Jane said that she considers herself to be musical but mostly by proxy; after marrying a musician and becoming more knowledgeable about different genres and styles of music she developed a more personal connection to music and what certain music *means* to her. Before this point music was certainly a part of her life, but in the background as a constant activity like listening to music. Musicality, to her, is something that can be enhanced or created by increased exposure to music, especially when that exposure is purposeful, thoughtful, and knowledgeable. She feels musical because she has learned, from her family, to appreciate music in ways that she was not exposed to as a younger woman or child. Her love of music, however, has

persisted throughout her life, and her heightened proximity to *musicians* has only intensified her enjoyment of musical experiences.

Jane's response illuminates the purpose of the current study, to understand *what people believe it means to be musical*. Through this study, the researcher endeavored to uncover how *musicality* is perceived and defined on a personal level, and why some people believe they are musical while others do not. To that end, the study was conducted in two phases, the first of which being a survey that was distributed online in order to ascertain the role of music in everyday life. The second phase of the study involved interviews with selected survey participants, like Jane, in order to illuminate the data results from the survey. The researcher constructed conclusions after consideration of the survey data in concurrence with the interview results.

Delimitations

The viral nature of the survey distribution led to the collection of a high number of responses from young people: 63% of participants were between the ages of 17 and 24. This figure could have potentially skewed the results that were collected from Phase One. A number of possibilities exist for the skew inherent in this population. First, it is possible that young people are more likely to consider themselves to be musical than older people. Second, it is possible that young people are more likely to respond to a survey when it is forwarded to them by one of their peers. And third, it is possible that young people are more likely to take a survey that considers their musicality because they are more willing to think about and discuss their own musical lives than older people. A fourth possibility exists

that would account for the 30% of the population that had musical backgrounds; people who have musical backgrounds might have been more likely to send the survey on to other people that *they* considered to be *musical*. If the participants targeted other *musical* people in this way, it might account for the higher number of responses from participants with musical backgrounds. The delimitations must be kept in mind when considering the conclusions rendered from this study.

The results from Phase One and Phase Two of the current study reveal themes about the role that music plays in everyday life, as well as the way people feel about the idea of *musicality*. The themes extracted revolve around music listening, musical engagement, the relationship between *musicality* and *musicianship*, the importance of talent, and connection between music and emotions. These themes connect to the literature reviewed at the beginning of the present study, and voices of the interview participants will be used to elucidate the conclusions.

Conclusions

Conclusion #1: The role of active engagement in a musical activity is important to being *musical*.

The most salient way that people can be musical is to demonstrate that they are engaged musically. Interview participant James defined a *musical* person as someone who "has skill at producing music. Singing or playing an instrument." It is because of his ability to play an instrument, he says, that he considers himself to be musical. However, the most relevant way that people can demonstrate musical engagement is by playing an instrument, singing, or listening to music.

The act of music listening is a universal activity versus playing an instrument or singing if only because it can happen at any time, even concurrent with another activity. Moreover, anyone, at any time can be engaged in music listening, regardless of skill level.

Enjoyment is also an important part of musicality, and an enjoyment of music can be reason enough for a feeling of musicality. For example, Ethan, a retired physicist who now plays clarinet in church and community ensembles, cited his enjoyment of music as the primary reason for his being musical, especially because he does not consider himself to be particularly talented at playing the clarinet. Enjoyment, therefore, is perceived as a form of musical engagement, or as something that enhances one's musical engagement, making a person feel more musical.

Conclusion #2: Being *non-musical* means not being able to demonstrate some kind of musical engagement.

The inverse of the above conclusion is that being *non-musical* means being unable to demonstrate musical engagement. Playing an instrument is the most salient way to demonstrate musicality to *non-musical* feeling people, perhaps because playing an instrument is a specialized skill, one that requires some amount of purposeful effort and training. Singing and listening to music, on the other hand, are activities that anyone can engage in at almost any time; therefore, a skill that is specialized, like playing an instrument, is a more valid way of demonstrating musicality. Stella, an interview participant, remarked of her own musicality, "I enjoy music and it's a big part of my life but I don't consider

myself musical because I absolutely can't sing, play, do anything [sic.] like that." As a parent of musician children and the wife of a church musician she is constantly involved in music, but her perceived lack of talent has led her to not want to engage in playing music or singing, which ultimately led to her expressed feeling of *non-musicality*.

Even students who are planning to embark on a college career in music tend to be uneasy about their own musicality depending on the amount of music they engage in on a daily basis. As students in Pitts' study (2002) approached the summer between their high school and college years they began to speak with less certainty about their identities as musicians because they knew they would practice less during the summer months. The emphasis on being currently involved in music is mirrored in the present study's survey results, which indicate that even people who at one time played an instrument or engaged in a similar music activity do *not* feel that they are musical because they are no longer actively engaged. Similarly, Ethan was uncertain about how to describe his own musicality because he only played an instrument sporadically throughout his life; he felt more musical when he was actively involved in playing an instrument in a band.

Conclusion #3: The role of family is important in creating a foundation for the musical participation that is important to being *musical*.

The majority of participants indicated the important role that family played in encouraging their musical participation throughout childhood. Family members played music around the house, played instruments or sang, and

encouraged participants to practice playing or singing. Having a family member, especially a parent, that encourages musical participation leads to a child's feeling of empowerment in their sense of musicality. Children who are told that they can succeed musically or that they are musically gifted will latch onto this sense of *musical* identity, making them more likely to pursue music independently later in life (Davidson and Borthwick, 2002).

Three of the interview participants in particular had children that they described as being very musically talented, and they all encouraged their children in their musical endeavors regardless of their own feelings about their personal musicality. Peter's two young children both played two instruments and were actively involved in playing and listening to music on a constant basis. He believed that his children were much more musically talented than himself, and was in awe of their musical accomplishments at such young ages. Peter felt that he was musical, and used his knowledge of and appreciation for music to educate his children about the music they enjoy. Stella and Jane both married musicians and have musical sons, though they both feel that their children are more musical than they are. Stella felt that she was not musical at all, but admired her family's musicality and supported them. Jane considered herself to be musical, but compared to her husband and sons, she did not consider herself to be a musician; this did not stop her from supporting her sons' musical endeavors by providing them with the equipment and lessons they needed to succeed musically.

Conclusion #4: Music provides a soundtrack for everyday life.

Ninety-nine percent of survey participants indicated that they enjoy listening to music, and almost all participants listen to music anywhere from once a day to all day long. This result is important, given the inclusion of music listening as an engagement that provides a feeling of musicality. People use music to narrate their day, whether it is to motivate them to wake up, like Stella, to push through their exercise workout, like James and Kristen, or to help them calm down and relax after a hard day, like Sam. As Peter said, "Music is the background for virtually everything we do," a sentiment that expresses the primary nature of music in everyday life: as a background or soundtrack for a person's everyday experiences (DeNora, 2000).

For many people, music is most often listened to during another activity, like driving or walking from class to class, rather than serving as the activity itself. Adam uses music to motivate himself to do homework, and Kristen uses different kinds of music to enhance or create different moods as her day goes on. The fact that people most often listen to music while they are engaging in another activity does not diminish the importance of music listening as musical engagement: Although music listening is not the primary activity, people purposefully seek out music to engage with as they are performing another task.

While people more often engage in music listening *during* an activity, it does not mean that they never seek out music listening *as* an activity, such as in the context of a attending a concert. Adam makes a clear distinction between listening to a recording of a band and seeing the band in a concert, saying that the

two are completely different musical experiences. Sam enjoys seeking out new music to listen to and he enjoys attending concerts by new bands, a hobby that he qualifies as being different from his own playing or singing. Easy access to recorded music in the modern world, whether on the radio or through personal music playing devices, informs the prevalence of music listening *during* an activity rather than *as* an activity. This type of music listening is more accessible than going to a concert and requires less effort for engagement.

Conclusion #5: The label of *musician* is complex and a person's concept of himself as *musician* or *non-musician* affects the way he defines the term *musician.*

People are more confused about what it means to be a *musician* than they are about what it means to be *musical*. *Musicality* depends on musical engagement, which may include playing an instrument, singing, listening to music, or enjoying music. *Musicianship* depends more upon the skill of playing an instrument. Overwhelmingly, the survey results indicate the importance of having this highly specialized skill in order to be considered a musician. People use other musicians as a means to gauge their own self-perception as being a musician, or not. Sam, who considers himself to be a musician, holds other people to a higher standard, "I've spent a lot of time around a lot of people who claim to be musicians, and …they're just shoddy, and doing it to sound cool, or whatever." He believes that musicians must be creative, talented people, and he compares them his own high, personal standard.

Conclusion #6: Being musical is not the same as being a musician.

When asked if they considered themselves to be a *musician,* some survey participants responded by saying that being a *musician* was the same as being *musical;* therefore, because they considered themselves to be *musical* they also considered themselves to be *musicians.* However, many participants believed that being *musical* and being a *musician* are two different constructs, which was demonstrated in the 22.5% difference between the number of people who believe they are *musical* (82.5%) and those who believe they are *musicians* (60%). To use Jane as an example again, she makes a clear distinction between her sons, who play instruments and sing and are *musicians*, and herself; she is *musical* because she enjoys music, but she is not a musician because, by her own standards, she is not musically talented and she does not play any instruments.

Conclusion #7: The ability to read music does not a musician make.

The ability to read music is a skill that is highly valued in the image of the professional *musician*. This identity has traditionally been associated with years of extensive training in music theory and practice, which necessarily includes music reading. Professional musicians become masters of their craft and are the people that society holds up as the standard for musicianship (Regelski, 2007). Survey results indicated that many people still associate musicianship with the ability to read music, such that if a person cannot read music he cannot be considered to be a musician. Interview participant Sarah, who is a music teacher, admits that although she believes musicality is a universal quality that all people

possess, gets frustrated when she is trying to make music with people who cannot read music.

The emphasis on music literacy and traditional music learning practices excludes informal learning practices as investigated by Green (2002), whose research shows that popular musicians who have had minimal formal training or who simply don't use traditional music learning practices may still be successful, talented musicians. Survey results from Phase One overwhelmingly point to the idea that music literacy is not essential to being a musician, suggesting a shift in popular thought which makes *musicianship* more easily attainable for all people.

Conclusion #8: The presence of perceived musical *talent* goes a long way toward establishing a feeling of musicality or musicianship.

The amount of *talent* a person possesses in a musical skill like playing an instrument or singing has a great impact on the way he views himself as a *musician* or *non-musician*. In fact, talent is more important to establishing a feeling of *non-musicality* or *non-musicianship* than their positive counterparts. Possessing musical talent is less important to being musical or even to being a musician than it is to being non-musical or a non-musician when talent is perceived by a person to be lacking. For example, Stella cited her lack of talent as the reason for her feeling of non-musicality and non-musicianship.

Kristen, who enjoys theater and is friends with many people who participate in musical theater, compares herself to her friends and their musical ability and finds herself lacking the talent that she perceives them as having. Kristen associates *musicality* with "recognizable talent," a quality that she said is

determined by professionals in the music field or through the comparison of a person's talent to that of music professionals. Because her own talent is lacking in comparison to her friends as well as music professionals, she feels that she is not talented enough to be considered *musical.* This conclusion is corroborated by Pitts (2002) who found that university students felt uneasy about qualifying their level of musicianship when they compared themselves to peers that they perceived as being more talented than themselves.

Adam had an interesting viewpoint on talent and musicality. He is a drummer, and though he considers himself to be somewhat musical, he believes that he does not have the "whole package" because his music education was heavily rhythmic in nature as opposed to tonal. Adam expressed that, because he is not a well-rounded musician in this way, he cannot fully claim the identity of *musical* the way that other musicians can.

Conclusion #9: Music provides a way for people to connect to aspects of their everyday lives.

Music is the soundtrack for everyday life, enhancing and creating emotions, motivating actions, and changing the mood of a particular experience. Music also serves as a way of connecting people to aspects of their lives, past and present, unlike other media. Sally, middle-aged mother of three young children, says this about her personal connection to music:

> I am Hispanic. I live in a place where there aren't a lot of Hispanics, and I do listen to a lot of Hispanic music, Spanish music, and that's a comforting thing to me. I also listen to a lot of Christian music, which really helps me and revitalizes me and makes me feel connected with our Creator.

This aspect of music as a bridge between a person and a part of themselves is the most salient finding about the relationship between music and a person's identity. Music provides a bridge for Sally to connect to different aspects of her identity that she otherwise would not deal with on a daily basis. She also uses music in ways similar to those mentioned earlier: as a motivator, for relaxation, as a focus and a means for centering herself. Sarah uses music in worship to connect her with her spirituality; Kristen listens to music and remembers where she was in her life when she first heard a particular song; and Jane listens to the music of her parents' generation in order to recreate the sounds of her childhood.

Music provides people with an outlet for expression. It can serve as a way for people to express or feel emotions from an external impetus; Ethan, for example, cites his enjoyment of opera as coming from its great emotional range. Sam, a graduate student studying philosophy, plays music at least once a day in order to vent out the stress of schoolwork and life in general. Music also provides people with a way to express and connect with their intellectuality: Sam enjoys listening to challenging music and picking it apart, figuring out the musical and lyrical structure. He finds satisfaction in this activity, and feels that his musicality is enhanced by his ability to think about and appreciate the intricacies of difficult music. Similarly, Peter feels that his musicality comes less from his talent at the

production of music and more from his ability to appreciate the complexities of music and the skill that it takes to create it.

> So, I think being musical for me is again appreciating just how beautiful, how complex it can be, not being satisfied or not settling for anything that just calls itself music. I mean, it's music and it's hard, and certainly whatever you hear on the radio is more than I can do. But to know, just like you don't have to be a good cook to appreciate good food, I think just to know that, man, there's good music, and there's better music, and there's really great music. And being musical involves, I think, appreciating just how much better it can be, and understanding and appreciating just how hard it is, and how much time it takes, and how much energy and effort it takes to make it really beautiful.

Implications for Music Education

The above conclusions demonstrate that musicality is a quality embraced by many people, and that for most people, music is an integral part of everyday life. Given these results and the considerations from supporting and related literature, there are implications for the practice of music education and the way that these practices impact the development of *musicality.*

Children should be engaged in music early in their lives to provide a strong foundation for music engagement.

Early childhood is a crucial time for musical development, the time when music aptitude develops and eventually stabilizes at age nine. The influence of family on musical development is important in encouraging children to sing, play instruments, and listen to music. Music educators must teach parents that their participation in their child's musical lives will have a great effect on the way their

children engage with music later in life. The existence of early childhood music programs brings necessary attention to the idea of early musical engagement; even if children only participated in parent-driven interactive music listening, they would be exposed to music early and often, developing greater musical potential. People with high music aptitude are more likely to feel comfortable singing, playing instruments, or listening to music, thus engaging in music in the most common ways that justify *musicality.* If children are provided opportunities to engage musically from a young age, they will likely grow into adults who actively engage in music, and for whom music is an essential part of everyday life.

Music educators must engage as many students in music as possible for as long as possible.

The development of music aptitude occurs in early childhood, which is also when habits of music engagement start to form. But when children start school the music educator's responsibility is to offer musical engagement on a level that will lead to lifelong musical enjoyment. Children, before entering school, are likely to have listened to music and have the ability to imitate and experiment vocally. Elementary music programs usually include active ways of music making: singing songs, listening to music, learning basic musical concepts, and participating in choral or instrumental ensembles. However, most secondary schools don't have general music curricula; when students reach this age they have to choose between band, orchestra, or choir. Secondary school music curricula should also contain relevant music classes for those students who want to be musically engaged outside of band, orchestra, and choir.

Therefore, music educators need to branch out into teaching the types of music that students already enjoy listening to, the pop and rock that most music curricula stay away from in favor of classical music that students usually cannot relate to, because they have had fewer encounters with that kind of music. A curriculum that caters to students with varied interests will encourage students to feel comfortable with their musical selves enough to want to stay involved in music.

Recommendations for Further Research

The present study explored what people believe it means to be *musical*, and how people incorporate *musicality* into their everyday lives and identities. The study examined factors that are related to the development of *musicality*, such as *musicianship* and early childhood music, and these factors merit further investigation through research.

Musician/Musical?

People are apparently confused about what it means to be a musician, or what the difference is between being *musical* and being a *musician*. This problem would benefit from further research investigating what people believe the difference is between these two identities so that music educators can understand why some people are reluctant to call themselves *musicians*. Results indicate that *musicianship* is held to a higher standard of talent and participation than *musicality*, a quality that can be achieved by anyone who is musically engaged.

Discovering why this is would enlighten the ways that *musician* identities are formed or neglected.

Early Childhood Music Efficacy

Research should be done that tracks the impact of early childhood music exposure on students' musical development, and subsequently on their musical engagement. Music education research has focused on the effect of early childhood music education on children's music aptitude, but further research could investigate how early childhood engagement has an effect on musical engagement later in life. This is important because of the strong relationship between musical engagement and a feeling of *musicality*.

So What Does It Mean To Be Musical?

When a person is musically engaged by playing, singing, listening to, thinking about, or loving music, he is considered to be musical. Results indicate that this is not considered to be a universally "talent-required" identity, but rather one that can be shared by anyone who participates with music in their everyday lives. This encouraging finding suggests that people embrace an idea of universal musicality.

"Music is a huge part of who I am. I cannot imagine not having this enormous joy."

(Anonymous Survey Participant)

Music is part of the human vocabulary, and has the power to connect people to parts of their lives and parts of themselves. Music is a genetic endowment of the human race that all people should be able to claim for themselves.

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Appendix A:

DEVELOPMENT OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

Research Questions

What do people believe it means to be musical?

- Do you consider yourself to be musical? Why or why not?
- What is the importance of music in everyday life?
- Do you enjoy listening to music?
- How many times a day do you listen to music?
- Under what circumstances do you listen to music?

Why do some people consider themselves to be musical while others do not?

- Have you ever played an instrument? Context?
- Do you ever sing? Context?

What influences a person's self-perception of being musical?

- Have you ever played an instrument? Context?
- Do you ever sing? Context?
- Can you read music?
- Do you consider yourself to be a musician? Why or why not?
- Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician?

Survey Questions

Do you consider yourself to be musical? Why or why not?

Do you enjoy listening to music?

How many times a day do you listen to music?

Under what circumstances do you listen to music?

Have you ever played an instrument? Context?

Do you ever sing? Context?

Describe your childhood as it relates to music.

Can you read music?

Do you consider yourself to be a musician? Why or why not?

Is it important to be able to read music to be considered a musician?

What is the importance of music in everyday life?

Appendix B:

PHASE ONE IRB APPROVAL

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTOCOL
University of Delaware

Protocol title: What does it mean to be musical?

Principal Investigator
Name: Suzanne Burton, Ph. D.
Contact Phone Number: 302-831-0390
Email address: slburton@udel.edu

Advisor (if student PI):
Name:
Contact Phone Number:
Email address:

Other investigators:

Type of review: (Exempt) Expedited Full board

Exemption Category: 1 (2) 3 4 5 6

Minimal Risk: X yes _____no

Submission Date:

HSRB Approval Signature	Approval Date
Elizabeth Dragon Pelosi	1/27/09
HS Number XMP 361	Approval Next Expires n/a

Investigator Assurance:
By submitting this protocol, I acknowledge that this project will be conducted in strict accordance with the procedures described. I will not make any modifications to this protocol without prior approval by the HSRB. Should any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects, including breaches of guaranteed confidentiality occur during this project, I will report such events to the Chair, Human Subjects Review Board immediately.

Signature of Investigator:_____

Date:_____

1. **Is this project externally funded?** No

If so, please list the funding source:

2. **Project Staff**

Please list personnel, including students, who will be working with human subjects on this protocol (insert additional rows as needed):

NAME	**ROLE**	**HS TRAINING COMPLETE?**
Karen Hauge	Primary Investigator	yes

3. **Special Populations**

Does this project involve any of the following:

Research on Children? No

Research with Prisoners? No

Research with any other vulnerable population (please describe)? No

4. **RESEARCH ABSTRACT** Please provide a brief description in LAY language (understandable to an 8th grade student) of the aims of this project.

Music has been a constant part of my life since before I can remember, and I have always thought that being musical was something that came very naturally to most people- it must, since most people I know either play, listen to, or experience music in some way every day. But when I decided to take an informal poll of my family and

friends, asking them if they considered themselves to be musical, the results were not what I expected at all. Most people said that, no, they weren't musical, often because they didn't play a musical instrument, couldn't read music, couldn't sing very well, etc. Even when I pointed out that they experienced and enjoyed music every day, they still insisted that they weren't musical, usually because they weren't "good at it."

The purpose of this project is to determine why people believe they are musical or not musical. The results of this project will ideally aid in the improvement of music education practices and eventually help more people self-identify as "musical."

5. **PROCEDURES** Describe all procedures involving human subjects for this protocol. Include copies of all surveys and research measures.

The first part of this study involves the use of surveys (attached) which will be distributed to college classes at the University of Delaware.

6. **STUDY POPULATION AND RECRUITMENT**

Describe who and how many subjects will be invited to participate. Include age, gender and other pertinent information. Attach all recruitment fliers, letters, or other recruitment materials to be used.

Describe what exclusionary criteria, if any will be applied.

Describe what (if any) conditions will result in PI termination of subject participation.

7. **RISKS AND BENEFITS**

Describe the risks to participants (risks listed here should be included in the consent document). If risk is more than minimal, please justify.

none

What steps will be taken to minimize risks?

Describe any direct benefits to participants.

none

Describe any future benefits to this class of participants. none

If there is a Data Monitoring Committee (PMC) in place for this project, please describe when and how often it meets.

8. **COMPENSATION**

Will participants be compensated for participation?

No

If so, please include details.

9. **DATA**

Will subjects be anonymous to the researcher? Subjects may choose to be anonymous

If subjects are identifiable, will their identities be kept confidential? yes

How and how long will data be stored? Thumb drive in locked file cabinet; 2 years

How will data be destroyed? Erased from thumb drive and thumb drive will be destroyed

How will data be analyzed and reported?

The data will be analyzed in terms of percentages and primarily descriptive data. It will be used for undergraduate research symposia and used to do scholarly presentations, and write scholarly articles and a culminating senior thesis.

9. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Will participants be audiotaped, photographed or videotaped during this study?

This is phase one of the study and will be used to recruit participants for phase two, and use the data from the questionnaire to develop the interview protocols for phase two;

How will subject identity be protected?

Is there a Certificate of Confidentiality in place for this project? (If so, please provide a copy).

10. **CONSENT and ASSENT**

____Consent forms will be used and are attached for review.

____Additionally, child assent forms will be used and are attached.

____Consent forms will not be used (Justify request for waiver).

11. **Other IRB Approval**

Has this protocol been submitted to any other IRBs?

If so, please list along with protocol title, number, and expiration date.

Appendix C

INTERVIEW SUBJECT SELECTION RUBRIC

Participants were grouped based on their answers to survey questions, and the participants were chosen from the following combinations of answers:

Yes I am musical, yes I am a musician:

Yes I am musical, no I am not a musician:

No I am not musical, yes I enjoy listening to music

No I am not musical, yes I play an instrument

No I am not musical, yes I play an instrument, no I am not a musician

Appendix D

PHASE TWO: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

What role does music play in your everyday life?

How does music make you feel? / What is your personal connection to music?

What do you think it means to be musical?

Do you feel that you are musical?

What influences your self-perception of being musical? (i.e., purely your own definition or influence of outside forces- media, society, peers, etc.)

Appendix E:

INVITATION TO INTERVIEW: EMAIL

Dear _____,

My name is Karen Hauge, and I am contacting you regarding the survey that you took titled "Music In Everyday Life." On your survey you indicated that you would be willing to take part in an interview for the second phase of this research project. I am writing to invite your participation. The interview will take fifteen minutes of your time and can be conducted either in person or over the phone. Please reply to this email by October 30th, at which time I will contact you to arrange the interview.

Sincerely,

Karen Hauge

Appendix F:

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

At the start of the interview subjects will be asked to acknowledge their consent for participation. The researcher will use this script:

Interviewer: This interview is being audio-recorded for the purpose of the research project "What Does It Mean to be Musical?" To ensure confidentiality I have assigned you an identifying code which will be used in place of your name. By taking part in this interview you give your consent to participate in this research study. Do you wish to proceed?

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Thank you.

The interviewer will then ask the following questions:

1. What role does music play in your everyday life?
2. How does music make you feel? / What is your personal connection to music?
3. What do you think it means to be musical?
4. Do you feel that you are musical?
5. What influences your self-perception of being musical? (i.e., purely your own definition or influence of outside forces- media, society, peers, etc.)

Appendix G:

PHASE TWO IRB APPROVAL

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTOCOL

University of Delaware

Protocol Title: What does it mean to be musical?

Principal Investigator

Name: Suzanne Burton, Ph. D.

Department/Center: Music

Contact Phone Number: 302-831-0390

Email Address: slburton@udel.edu

Advisor (if student PI):

Name:

Contact Phone Number:

Email Address:

Other Investigators:

Investigator Assurance:

By submitting this protocol, I acknowledge that this project will be conducted in strict accordance with the procedures described. I will not make any modifications to this protocol without prior approval by the HSRB. Should any unanticipated problems involving risk to subjects, including breaches of guaranteed confidentiality occur during this project, I will report such events to the Chair, Human Subjects Review Board immediately.

1. **Is this project externally funded? No**

If so, please list the funding source:

2. **Project Staff**

Please list personnel, including students, who will be working with human subjects on this protocol (insert additional rows as needed):

NAME	**ROLE**	**HS TRAINING COMPLETE?**
Karen Hauge	Primary Investigator	Yes

3. **Special Populations**

Does this project involve any of the following:

Research on Children? No

Research with Prisoners? No

Research with any other vulnerable population (please describe)? No

4. **RESEARCH ABSTRACT** Please provide a brief description in LAY language (understandable to an 8th grade student) of the aims of this project.

A commonly accepted idea in modern society is that musicality is a trait possessed by some but not by others. However, this idea is contrary to current research in music education, which indicates more and more that all people are born with the potential to be musical, and that persons' differing levels of ability are related to how their potential was nurtured or neglected throughout their lives. The goal of this project is to understand why people believe they are musical or are not musical. To this end, a survey was distributed which constituted Phase One of this project (see HS # SMP 361), to be followed by a round of interviews with selected survey participants for Phase Two. This research will ultimately help in the improvement of music education practices y illuminating those factors that contribute to persons' self-perception of musicality.

5. **PROCEDURES** Describe all procedures involving human subjects for this protocol. Include copies of all surveys and research measures.

In Phase One of this project, a survey was distributed to a large group of people to assess their musical activities and experiences (see HS# SMP 361). Phase Two entails interviews with selected volunteer participants to elucidate the responses found in the survey. Phase Two interview protocol is attached.

6. **STUDY POPULATION AND RECRUITMENT**

Describe who and how many subjects will be invited to participate. Include age, gender and other pertinent information. Attach all recruitment fliers, letters, or other recruitment materials to be used.

Phase One of this project was a survey that collected 834 responses. At the end of the survey, participants were given the option to be contacted for interviews. Ten of these respondents will be chosen for interviews based on their indication on the survey that they would be willing to be interviewed. Participation is voluntary and subjects can drop out at any time.

Describe what exclusionary criteria, if any will be applied.

Participants were chosen based on their responses to the following survey questions:

1. Do you consider yourself to be musical?
2. Do you consider yourself to be a musician?
3. Do you enjoy listening to music?
4. Do you play a musical instrument?

In examining responses to these questions, I looked for novel trends that represented a variety of perspectives on musicality, such as:

(Subject describes as…)

"I am musical, I am a musician"

"I am musical, I am not a musician"

"I am not musical, I enjoy listening to music"

"I am not musical, I am not a musician, I play a musical instrument"

Describe what (if any) conditions will result in PI termination of subject participation.

--There are none.

7. **RISKS AND BENEFITS**

Describe the risks to participants (risks listed here should be included in the consent document).
If risk is more than minimal, please justify.

--There is a slight risk of breach of confidentiality (see "Data").

What steps will be taken to minimize risks?

N/A

Describe any direct benefits to participants.

N/A

Describe any future benefits to this class of participants.

N/A

If there is a Data Monitoring Committee (DMC) in place for this project, please describe when and how often it meets.

N/A

8. **COMPENSATION**

Will participants be compensated for participation?

There will be no compensation for participation in this study.

If so, please include details.

9. **DATA**

Will subjects be anonymous to the researcher?

No

If subjects are identifiable, will their identities be kept confidential?

Subjects will be assigned an identifying code that will be stated by the researcher when the interview is recorded. Therefore, participants will never be identified during the interview audio-recording. The researcher will maintain a record of the subjects and their identifying codes that will be stored in a locked file cabinet in the principal investigator's office.

How and how long will data be stored?

Interviews will be recorded with an iPod and transferred to HyperTRANSCRIBE for transcription purposes for a period of nine months.

How will data be destroyed?

Recorded files will be erased from the iPod upon transfer to HyperTRANSCRIBE. HyperTRANSCRIBE audio files will be deleted upon the completion of senior thesis defense.

How will data be analyzed and reported?

Data will be content analyzed, looking for emergent trends, and used to elaborate on survey findings from Phase One.

10. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

Will participants be audiotaped, photographed or videotaped during this study?

Participants will be audiotaped.

How will subject identity be protected?

Each subject will be assigned an identification number. In order to lessen the potential for breach of confidentiality, participant contact information will be destroyed after data collection and analysis. Audio recorded data will be stored in principal investigator's file cabinet.

Is there a Certificate of Confidentiality in place for this project? (If so, please provide a copy).

No

11. **CONSENT and ASSENT**

____ Consent forms will be used and are attached for review.

____ Additionally, child assent forms will be used and are attached.

__X__ Consent forms will not be used (Justify request for waiver).

When contacting persons to participate in interviews, an explanation of the terms of the interview will be stated; by participating in the interview, subjects give their consent to be included in the study.

12. **Other IRB Approval**

Has this protocol been submitted to any other IRBs?

No

If so, please list along with protocol title, number, and expiration date.

13. **Supporting Documentation**

Please list all additional documents uploaded to IRBNet in support of this application.

Interview protocol is attached.

Approved protocol for Phase One of this project is attached.