Family Music Listening Legacies: A Case Study-based Investigation of the Intergenerational Transmission of Music Listenership Values in Five Families

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Graduate Program in Music

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Doctor of Philosophy

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Family Music Listening Legacies: A Case Study-based Investigation of the Intergenerational Transmission of Music Listenership Values in Five Families

(Thesis format: Monograph)

by

Jillian Bracken

Graduate Program in Music Education

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Music (Music Education)

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Abstract

This five-family case study examined how five families in Miami-Dade County (Miami, FL), in which neither parent self-identified as a musician, talked about music. Through Internet-facilitated interviews and e-journals, participants responded to questions about music in their family and the listening guidelines that were communicated between members. Study participants included five mothers of similar ages, incomes, and educational backgrounds. Six children participated in the study; they ranged in age from six to thirteen years of age, and included both males and females. The goal of the study was to gain an understanding of the types of discourse around music listening in these families, and to examine the content of their shared family talk about and in response to music.

The theoretical framework for this study was rooted in both sociolinguistics, through the investigation of the relationship between language and society, and family script theory (Byng-Hall, 1995, 1998), which provided guidance in analyzing the intergenerational transmission of music values. Narrative self-reports offered by participating parents and children demonstrated how discourse was used to describe, interpret, construct, and disseminate musical meaning within families. Listening guidelines and listenership roles, enacted and enforced in contextual and reactive ways within a body of shared discourse, were found to both facilitate and influence family members’ music listening exposures. The study yielded fruitful descriptive data regarding the nature of musical exposures and music-use in the participating families in addition to findings facilitated by sociolinguistic analysis.

For each of the five participating families, their communal discourse—their family’s script—described situational music listening guidelines and roles which contended with certain “bad” words and attempted to limit exposure to questionable themes. Sociolinguistic terminology, including notions of age appropriateness and taboo, helped explain several ways in which discourse can link music exposure with the development of music listening preferences. The present study supports previous findings (Borthwick & Davidson, 2002) regarding the important role family plays in shaping individual identities and music listening preferences. Further, this multiple-case study offers compelling evidence as to how intimate relationships, defined and negotiated through shared discourse, can influence individuals’ decisions about what music they value.
Keywords

Acknowledgments

I wrote this thesis at a very exciting time in my life. Executing the study, analyzing the data, and completing this document all corresponded with the birth of my first child: my beloved daughter Trudy. Her arrival and early months ran in parallel with the conception and development of this project, which I referred to as my “other child.” As I worked to complete this study, I often felt like an overwhelmed mother of twins; I struggled to balance my new role as parent with the progress and growth of this project (my academic “baby”). As difficult as it was at times, I can now see how these concurrent events were mutually beneficial. My experiences becoming a mother allowed me to connect with the literature I reviewed for this study and my participants in a way that, previous to Trudy, would not have been possible. I am so grateful to my case study families for opening their lives to me for this project. Your experiences and opinions were not only central to this thesis, but they also inspired me on a personal level to actively think about what it means to be a connected and caring parent.

They say it takes a village to raise a child. I have learned that it takes an enormous village to help someone simultaneously raise two “children.” Two key members of my village helped make this document far more sophisticated and insightful than it would have been had I been left to my own devices. To my advisor, Dr. Ruth Wright: thank you for your unwavering support (both professionally and personally) and encouragement at all points of this journey. You are a meticulous editor and one of the most inspired thinkers I have ever encountered. To my second reader, Dr. Kim Shuey: your insights and expertise challenged me to elevate my thinking and writing. Thank you for all of your helpful recommendations.

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Chapter 1: Introduction and Overview

Introduction

People exist in multiple, overlapping, and sometimes conflicting spheres of musical exposures and experience. Many questions arise from consideration of this complicated musical existence. How do individuals make sense of different listening environments? How do people make choices about what music they listen to and what music they avoid? How are musical preferences and values communicated between individuals? What influences these choices? How do music values change or evolve over the course of a person’s life and differ between generations? How are preferences and values communicated between individuals? How do relationships impact our preferences? And where does the family fit into all of this?

These “big picture” questions drive the work of many scholars from myriad fields, including research into environmental and relational influences on everyday musical engagement and musical skill acquisition (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001; Custodero, 2006; DeNora, 2000; Greasley & Lamont, 2006, 2009; Herbert, 2012; Mills, 2009), the construction of social and personal musical identities (Ivaldi & O’Neill, 2009; MacDonald, Hargreaves, & Miell, 2002; North, Hargreaves, & O’Neill, 2000; Wright, 2008), intergenerational learning (Alfano, 2008; Loewen, 1996; Tempest, 2003; Williams & Harwood, 2004), and communication within families (Giles, Coupland, & Coupland, 1991; Reimer, 2003; Williams & Nussbaum, 2001). They are important questions to ponder, as the answers provide insights into how people come to identify with particular music, and who and what influences the development of the music values.

Study Overview

Many of the intriguing and important questions listed above lie at the heart of this case study examination of music values within five families. This study focuses on the family sphere of musical influence and explores how music listening guidelines are established and communicated within five families. This ties together both music education and
sociological research through its focus on musical transmission, learning, and communication, as will be discussed later in this chapter. The theoretical framework for this study is rooted in sociolinguistics, through the investigation of the relationship between language and society, and family script theory (Byng-Hall, 1995, 1998). This provides guidance in analyzing the intergenerational transmission of values which, in the case of the present study, concerns music values.

Specifically, this study examined how five families in Miami-Dade County (Miami, FL) in which neither parent self-identified as a musician, talked about music, and the resulting legacies of shared discourse within the families. The focus was on discourse content, or how music values are established and transmitted between generations within a family through the communication of different standards and expectations that govern music listening. Sociolinguistics and family script theory were used as means of engaging and analyzing case study interview and e-journaling data.

**Research Questions**

Research questions driving this study centered on two main areas of exploration:

1. **Guidelines, Allowances, and Limitations**: What music is allowed in a family? Who makes these decisions? How are guidelines, allowances, and limitations communicated? What do family members think of the guidelines?

2. **Family Legacies and Relational Values**: What role do different generations play in establishing and maintaining listening guidelines within a family? Are music values passed between generations through listenership limitations and guidelines?

**Introduction to Data Collection and Methodology**

The present study was designed as a qualitative, descriptive case study that engaged five families in Miami-Dade county (Miami, FL) in which neither parent (regardless of
whether both participated) self-identified as a musician.¹ Through Internet-facilitated interviews and e-journals, families responded to questions about the music that was present in their family and the guidelines that were enforced. The methodological perspective of descriptive case study examined five different families in real-life contexts. The goal of the study was to examine the nature of shared discourse within participating families, and to study how this environment created a collective body of talk around music that comes to shape individuals’ understandings of music’s value. The specific data collection tools of interviewing and e-journaling allowed for this descriptive data to be collected—these tools gathered narrative, self-reports offered by participating parents and children that showed how discourse was used to describe, interpret, construct, and disseminate musical meaning within families. A full description of the study’s methodology is offered in Chapter 3.

**Study Rationale and Significance**

This study is interdisciplinary in nature; the guiding research questions are linked to many fields. As such, relevant literature draws from and offers insights to many different bodies of research. The two fields in which the present study is most centrally anchored are music education—studying music transmission and learning—and sociology—studying the language structures in place in the social institution of the family while also examining usage and meaning of language around musical “listenership” (Reimer, 2003). Strong connections to psychology, social psychology, and ethnomusicology also exist through the examination of music values, and individual and collective music identities. The interdisciplinary nature of the study aligns it with other current research in music. As DeNora (2003) astutely observes, blurring of disciplinary lines allows for productive and exciting research to be undertaken:

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¹ All of the participating families featured only one parent participant even if two parents were present in the home. Prior to each family being selected for participation, confirmation was received that both parents of the children participating, regardless of parental participation in the study, did not self-identify as musicians.
The boundaries between ‘sociology’ of music, ‘musicology’, ‘ethnomusicology’, ‘anthropology of music’ and ‘social psychology’ of music continue to blur—no bad thing in my view since the borders are now open and mutual discovery/respect for differing methodologies is on the rise. An obvious next step in this process would be to further the exchange between music sociology and music education—I salute that conversation! (p. 175)

It is hoped that, by way of its interdisciplinary focus, this study will contribute to the conversation DeNora so enthusiastically endorses.

Much of the extant research that brings together music and families focuses on musical skill-building and external influences that enable an individual to build a career as a musician (Smilde, 2008), musical parenting of infants, a lot of which focuses on infant-mother singing (Bergeson & Trehub, 1999; Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2003, 2008; Malloch, 2000; Papousek, 1996; Parncutt, 2009; Trevarthen, 2008; Young, 2008), parental influence on and involvement with musical development/learning to play an instrument (Creech, 2006, 2009; Davidson & Borthwick, 2002; Davidson, Howe, & Sloboda, 1995; Davidson & Pitts, 2001; Gavin, 2001; Lamont, Hargreaves, Marshall, & Tarrant, 2003; Macmillan, 2004; McPherson & Renwick, 2001; Schwartz, 1975; Sosniak, 1985; Zdzinski, 1992, 1996), parental influence on development of popular musicians (Green, 2002), factors that enable a student to become a performer, many of which focus on “gifted” students (Coulson, 2010; Csikszentmihalyi et al., 1997; Hallam, 2001; Sloboda & Howe, 1991; Sloboda, 1994; Sosniak, 1985; Strollery & McPhee, 2002), parental views of and attitudes towards music (Addison, 1990; Katz-Gerro, Raz, and Yaish), and family music-making (Campbell 2010a, 2010b; Custodero, Britto, & Brooks-Gunn, 2003; Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2008; Koops, 2014). This body of research predominantly discusses parental influence in the development of musical skill within families and how the family serves to transmit information and values around various musicianship topics. Another trend is a heavy focus on parental/family influence on music-making in early life, with a large number of the above-outlined studies examining families with infants or children who are not yet attending school.

While research exists that looks at the transmission of musical skills within families, little work has been done to study the role of family discourse in influencing and shaping the development of family members’ music preferences. Szego (2002) makes
several recommendations for such research on music transmission and learning; she calls this a “rich field to explore” (p. 722). One recommendation is to study communication styles—how people talk about music, specifically focusing on the form, content, and impact of these exchanges. The present study attempts to do just that; the research questions driving the inquiry examine the nature of the musical environment in the family not around musical performance but in terms of family dialogues around and about music listening. What is played on the radio, in the house, or in the car while the family is in transit? What music are children allowed to purchase, download, and listen to and who makes these choices? What does discourse around these exposures and choices look like? How does the nature of the talk and musical listening in this environment influence music values? Are there parallels between the development of musical performance skills and the development of music listening preferences? These are the gaps in literature that the study intends to fill.

Providing further evidence of the need for the present study, Boer and Abubakar (2014) comment that “scholarly attention to music listening as a family ritual is scarce” (p. 1) and that “there is surprisingly little research focusing on the function of music within the family” (p. 3). Their study of music listening in families and peer groups looks at musical rituals, social cohesion, and emotional well-being in families from four countries (Kenya, the Philippines, New Zealand, and Germany.) Their psychological, quantitative study examines “whether and how music listening in families contributes to family cohesion and adolescents’ emotional well-being, and what role the cultural context plays in musical family rituals” (p. 1). Building on the work of Parncutt (2009) and Trehub (2009), their research provides some evidence as to how the family serves as a socializing agent, and how relations within the family are reinforced through sharing and talking with family members upon which the present study builds.

While there are many studies that examine music listening, very few look at the specifics of the music-listening environment and even fewer do so in families with children beyond infancy. Three key studies which do consider the music-listening environment of the family with children beyond infancy include Borthwick and Davidson’s (2002) research which used script theory to engage families. They examined how parental experiences and expectations greatly influence older children’s musical
identities. They conclude that “the ‘parenting script’ (i.e. the blueprint of expectation for musical development, is either ‘amended’ or ‘replicated’ in the next generation depending on the levels of musical satisfaction experienced by each parent during his/her childhood” (p. 76). Borthwick and Davidson focus primarily on the development of young musicians—all children involved in their study were learning an instrument. Though the territory of investigation and means of analysis are similar, the present study focused on talk about music within families where neither parent self-identified as a musician, and did not examine the transmission of specific instrument-centric musical skills.

The present study addresses a need for a descriptive level of analysis within the family, further identified by ter Bogt, Delsing, van Zalk, Christenson, and Meeus (2011). While their quantitative, questionnaire-based study of music listening shared between children and parents found that “music socialization can be proposed as a within-family mechanism for the intergenerational transfer of taste” (p. 313), they did not examine the actual processes by which intergenerational similarities are established. Their study, which focused on observed similarities in reported genre preferences between children and their parents, revealed that:

> It is the parents who provide the first musical climate in their households, and this climate is the sum of the fathers’ and mothers’ tastes. Parents may actively or unconsciously model the tastes of their children; hence, links may be present between parental preferences for particular music styles that were formed earlier in their lives and their children’s current preferences for similar types of music. (p. 302)

The question that emerges in response to their study is how intergenerational transmission actually occurs in the family. What are the mechanisms that enable transfer? What do family members do and say to transmit information between members? The present study examines the role shared discourse plays in this process, responding to ter Bogt et al.’s identified need for future research to “explore the contextualized within-family dynamics that produce such… pattern[s]” (p. 316).

The third key study is that of Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves (2001); they examined how the contexts of home and school impact the lives of adolescents, reporting that music listening fills different roles in each context. Home listening was more often
reported as being conducted for enjoyment whereas school listening was more often connected with learning or particular curricular goals. Some of the assumptions about the nature of music learning within the family upon which this study was built are in need of further research. Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves assert that “at home, children usually decide why, how often, for how long and when they listen. They also choose where and with whom they listen (usually family and friends), and select their favorite music styles, performers, and pieces” (p. 104). Is this really the case? Is every home listening environment like this? The authors cite no research to support these claims and their study is devoid of detailed information on the nature of the home listening environment. Further, they argue that “at home, children develop a personal and social identity, as they enjoy listening to music with their family and friends, with whom they have strong emotional ties” (p. 115). What do these ties actually look like? How are they different or similar from one family to the next?

The present study is unique in that it is restricted to families where neither parent self-identified as a musician. This restriction was put in place in an attempt to separate music listening (listenership) from music-making (musicianship) in the family context. Arguably, music listening is the way in which the majority of people remain musically engaged throughout their lives. In their examination of how the contexts of home and school impact the role of music in the lives of adolescents, Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves (2001) report that, “even though many children do not engage in performance, either in informal or formal settings (playing with friends, singing in a choir, or attending instrument lessons), the vast majority of them regularly listen to music” (p. 103). Music is a topic and experience that touches so many lives, including those who do not actively make music. This study builds on previous literature in lifewide music learning (studying music experiences in the context of an entire lifetime of experience) by focusing on music listening in the lives of five families where, at least in the case of the parents, active music-making is not taking place.

An interesting context with broad applications frames the present study—how do regular, everyday families engage with music? How do they form opinions of what music they listen to and value? Rich territory for discovery lies with those who may not identify as musicians or play instruments but who are engaged through music as listeners and
consumers within a family unit. Mithen (2006) argues that “with the exception of those who suffer from a cognitive deficit, all individuals have a capacity to acquire language and are born with an inherent appreciation of music” (p. 13). We are biologically wired to respond to music and have been built with the capacity to communicate our thoughts and feelings about what we hear. Cross (2008) observes that humans “appear to have a generic capacity for culture” (p. 148). This capacity is demonstrated through “shared ways of understanding the world, of understanding each other as ourselves, and of acting together in and on the world” (p. 148). This study engages with how discourse functions as a way by which families negotiate a shared understanding of one particular aspect of culture—music.

Overview of Document

The present study brings together a unique combination of research territory, methodology, and theoretical framework to address the earlier outlined research questions. Studies of music listening and intergenerational transmission tend to be undertaken from psychological perspectives, focusing in many cases on large-sample quantitative data. While the research territory in many of these studies may be the same as the present study, previous approaches have proceeded quite differently. The present study is rooted in music education, sociolinguistics, and family script theory—these topics are given greater discussion in Chapters 2 and 4. A qualitative case study methodology, as outlined in Chapter 3, was utilized to best address the research questions. Together, these approaches and ideas shed light on the listening environments and discourse about music shared within five different families—these descriptions and analysis are offered in Chapter 5 through 7.

This document contains seven chapters in total. Following Chapter 1’s introduction and overview, Chapter 2 provides a review of literature and relevant

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2 Mithen’s *The Singing Neanderthals* (2006) explores the notion of biologically predisposed music appreciation as a universal human attribute. Chapter 6 of this work in particular, entitled “Talking and singing to baby: Brain maturation, language learning, and perfect pitch” (pp. 69-84), provides compelling evidence to substantiate this claim.
terminology. This review considers two broad areas of extant literature: music education (including sociological research in music education and research in lifewide musical learning) and sociology (including research on family and society, sociolinguistics, the life course perspective, the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and family scripts.) Following this review, related literature from several other fields of study grouped under the heading of “Music in Everyday Life” is reviewed. These studies offer descriptions of key terms like music value, musical preference, and identity.

Chapter 3 discusses the present study’s methodology and related methodological terminology. The study is described as a qualitative, descriptive case study which utilizes narrative inquiry as the language of description. Data collection tools used in the participant screening survey, Internet-facilitated interview, and e-journals are discussed. Approaches to data analysis which include sociolinguistics and family scripts, are introduced here. Following a discussion of study methodology, this chapter offers a timeline of data collection, descriptions of research participants, and identifies study limitations and ethical issues.

Sociolinguistics and family script theory combine to form the theoretical framework that guides this study of music listening; these approaches are discussed in Chapter 4. Each theoretical framework is discussed in turn and key terms are identified. Sociolinguistics is defined as “the study of language in relation to society” (Hudson, 1980, p. 1); its focus is language variability, complexity, and usage in different situations. Sociolinguistic terminology is introduced here as the basis for future analysis of talk about music in families. This body of discourse can also be discussed using family script theory—a way to conceptualize the totality of shared talk within a family unit (Byng-Hall, 1995, 1998). It is representative of the shared body of knowledge and values that is passed between members of a family; sociolinguistic terminology helps describe the particulars of this body of discourse.

Chapter 5 shifts the focus to the families at the heart of the study. The five case study families are introduced and described in this chapter; descriptions include basic demographic information, sources of musical exposures, when families listen to music, and what kinds of music participants like. This chapter offers journal responses and interview answers which provide a very basic overview of the everyday music listening
environments of the case study families. This introduction, couched in related research in and about music in the family unit, lays for the groundwork for the remaining analysis chapters.

The first three research questions are addressed in Chapter 6. This chapter focuses on the content of participating families’ family scripts and examines how shared discourse in these families guides music listening. Two music listening guidelines are discussed in this chapter as reported by the case study families; these focus on lyric content (specific words) and themes (inappropriate/offensive/obscene content). These guidelines are then discussed in sociolinguistic terms, highlighting their role in the family script. Discourse around music listening as reported by these five families shows how discourse functions as a link between music exposures and development of music values.

Chapter 7 brings this study report to a close by addressing the remaining research questions. This chapter ties together all preceding discussion through its examination of intergenerational transmission and listenership roles filled in different situations by both parents and children. This chapter closes with a review of participants’ impressions of the study impact, a discussion of limitations of the present study, and recommendations for future research.
Chapter 2: Review of Literature and Relevant Terminology

Introduction

This study of music listening in families is interdisciplinary in nature. As such, the guiding research questions are rooted in many fields. This chapter offers an overview of literature from germane fields of scholarly discourse and an introduction to the broad landscape of extant research that informs and inspires the present study. The sections outlined in this chapter describe the disciplinary boundaries set for this review. As the present study is of interest to and has implications for a variety of fields of study, it was necessary to filter the vast amount of available literature by relevance to the research questions in order to keep the literature to a reasonable and meaningful amount.

The following review is anchored in music education and sociological literature. Music education literature includes sociological research in music education and research in lifewide musical learning. Sociological literature includes research on family and society, sociolinguistics, the life course perspective, the work of Pierre Bourdieu and his Theory of Practice (1977/1972), and family scripts. Together, sociological and music education research inspire and form the basis for the theoretical framework outlined in Chapter 4. In addition to literature on music education and sociology, some psychology, social psychology, and ethnomusicology research is also reviewed. These studies have been organized under the heading of “Music in Everyday Life” and include studies on music value, identity, and/or preference, and studies of music listening. This chapter broadly situates the present study in the theoretical field—the first and most important step to help narrowly define the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 4. Key terminology and definitions are also presented in this chapter; clarification here lays the groundwork for more detailed discussion of these terms in forthcoming chapters.

Music Education

To begin with a broad overview of this area of literature and its relevance, research in music education includes studies related to music teaching and learning in a variety of
contexts across the life course. Research examines pedagogical, historical, philosophical, practical, and sociological topics. Within the realm of music education research, the present study is best housed among sociological studies. Roberts (2007) outlines that sociology in music education concerns power, structures, curricular content, how a person becomes a musician, social rules and expectations, and individuals and groups. He sees sociology in music as “the study of all the really important stuff that we need to know to promote the best kind of music education for our students” (p. 23). Roberts (2007) advises of the need for more sociological inquiry in music education through topics that surround and inform the field. He sees within the borders of sociology “some of the most compelling and important work being researched in music education today” (p. 23). Wright (2010) describes sociological theory as providing useful frameworks and terminology around which music educators can organize their research endeavors. She describes sociological inquiry as making “the familiar strange” (p. 1), challenging researchers to consider new approaches and outlooks. Wright’s recommendations serve as inspiration for the present study, which uses sociological terminology and sociolinguistic analysis to describe the music listening environments and corresponding discourse in five case study families.

The present study is also connected to another domain of music education research: studies of lifewide musical learning (see, for example, Arasi, 2006; Busch, 2005; Ernst, 2001; Jones, 2009; Kerchner & Abril, 2009; Lamont, 2011a; Mantie & Tucker, 2008; Nazareth, 1998; Prickett, 2003; Rohwer & Rohwer, 2009; Rohwer, 2010). Studies of lifewide musical learning consider the place of music in various parts of individuals’ lives both inside and outside of the traditional classroom, including the family. Musical experiences are studied in the context of an entire lifetime of experience. Jones (2009) discusses the adoption of a lifewide learning perspective in music education which builds upon longitudinal descriptions like lifelong and lifespan which were first introduced by Nazareth (1998). Jones observes that “lifewide learning refers to formal, non-formal, and/or informal learning that takes place across the full range of activities including academic, personal, social, and/or professional, at any particular stage in life” (p. 205, emphasis added). While the focus of research in lifewide musical learning tends to be more on music-making than on music listening, the common territory shared with
the present study makes this literature relevant to consider here. The family serves as an influential body across the lifespan through which individuals are enculturated through shared musical experiences, and by which they learn important information about who they are and how to interact with society.

**Music education and sociology.** The notion of using sociological concepts to study music education topics first emerged with Max Kaplan’s 1966 book *Foundations and Frontiers of Music Education*. Since then, much work has been done but many exciting avenues for research remain. Studying music through a sociological lens is a good fit as musical environments are inherently communal. Through music, links are created between fellow listeners, fellow performers, and/or between listeners and performers. Bowman (2009) posits that “musically sonorous experience is never just individual; musical engagement is fundamentally and invariably collective” (p. 121). Further, Bowman argues that both music and education as fields of social studies are, themselves, “socially situated and socially constructed phenomena with direct and intimate ties to individual and collective identities” (p. 125).

Green (1999) presents a summative overview of sociological concepts with important connections to a socially-situated understanding of music and of key interest for music educators—an area of study she calls a “goldmine for research” (p.168). She argues that “sociology is not only about which social groups produce, distribute and consume commodities, cultural objects and other things; it also asks what those things mean to us” (p. 161). The sociology of music must consider both how musical practices are organized and also how musical meanings are socially constructed. Without considering both sides of the sociological coin, Green asserts, music researchers may overlook the most fascinating and important aspects of that which we allege to study.

Keen interest in examining both the organization and function of discourse around music and its meaning to family members drives this study of music listening in families. Through sociological inquiry, consideration is given to how discourse is structured and how it serves as the means through which meaning is constructed and disseminated.

Both Froehlich (2007) and Wright (2010) ground music education research and practice in sociological concepts. Froehlich introduces ideas that are relevant for music
teaching and learning as a means for enhancing teacher practice. She examines not only the ways in which sociology can help music teachers improve their practice but introduces insights from other fields (including ethnomusicology, cultural theory, and education theory) to help better illustrate how sociological constructs impact the field. Wright provides an overview of sociological research within the field of music education, illuminating how this perspective can help music educators engage with many aspects of the field. Wright provides a concise overview of key sociological concepts and figures which is then followed by contributor chapters on a variety of relevant topics. As a whole, the book demonstrates sociology’s utility in engaging topics around musical curriculum construction and power dynamics, attitudes in and around music education and its place in the schools, ethnicity, gender, race and music education, the agency of children in music education, and musical learning and its role in/relationship to society. The present study aims to add to this growing body of literature by demonstrating further ways in which sociological inquiry can guide investigation into various topics of interest and importance to music educators.

**Music in Everyday Life**

Music in everyday life is a popular topic of study as it reveals how music is a means of organizing one’s personal and social world (DeNora, 2000). Psychologists, social psychologists, and ethnomusicologists are among the many scholars who study music in everyday contexts with a variety of approaches to tackle many different research questions. Topics from this body of research related to the present study include research on music listening, and on music preference and identity. While much of the reviewed literature that follows uses methodologies different than the present study, all of the research summarized in this section is relevant by way of a related research topic or territory.

**Music listening.** Studies of music listening exist in many different disciplines and tackle a vast array of research questions. A large body of music listening studies examine the connection between music listening and emotional well-being (see, for example, Juslin & Västfjäll, 2008; Juslin & Sloboda, 2010; Morinville, Miranda, & Gandrea, 2013;
Ruud, 1997) and mood regulation (see, for example, Hargreaves & North, 1999; Saarikallio, 2011; Saarikallio, Nieminen, & Brattico, 2013; Saarikallio & Erkkila, 2007; Thomas, Ryf, Ehlert, & Nater, 2006). Many of these studies report on music’s ability to impact listener mood; “enjoyment” is often given by research participants as a primary reason for listening to music. In a study of young adults’ strong experiences with music (SEMs), Lamont (2011b) found that “music listening... offers the potential to connect to different sources of happiness and, as such, to reach a balanced state of authentic happiness without any apparent negative side-effects” (p. 244). It is posited that part of the reason music is able to elude these feelings is through the creation of desirable social bonds between listeners (Boer, Fischer, Strack, Bond, Lo, & Lam, 2011; Selfhout, Branje, ter Bogt, & Meeus, 2009). In the present study, the social bonds under examination are those within five case study families.

Studies of music listening have considered the psychological processes involved in everyday music listening (Hebert, 2011a) and music listening and consciousness (Hebert, 2011b). These studies tackle topics of absorption, trance, dissociation, and compare musical experiences with non-musical experiences (like drawing or reading.) Music listening has also been found to bring about high levels of engagement (DeNora 2000, Sloboda, 1999; Tekman & Hortaçsu, 2002), sometimes even leading to “flow” experiences (Csikszentmihalyi, 2014; 2002) in participants who are highly attentive to and focused on the music to which they are listening.  Again, this literature is related to the present study by way of common topic but the present study does not delve into any topics from a psychological perspective.

Music listening has been studied to establish the many ways in which music is used in everyday situations. Bailes (2006) found that “disproportionate to the literature devoted to music listening as an activity in its own right, music plays a predominantly functional, accompanying role in everyday activity and is experienced differently according to the listening context” (p. 174). Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves (2001)

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3 Csikszentmihalyi (2014) defines flow as “a subjective state that people report when they are completely involved in something to the point of forgetting time, fatigue, and everything else but the activity itself” (p.230). He describes it as a state in which an individual “functions at his or her fullest capacity” by being fully invested in whatever task holds their attention (p.230).
examined everyday musical usage, studying children’s uses of music. Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves compared home listening and school listening, observing that home listening was done for enjoyment whereas school listening was tied to school-established curricular goals. Young (2008) notes that music listening in early childhood often involves multi-modal exposures where many sources of music (like the TV and radio) are concurrently active. This notion of “media multitasking” (p.33) was also found in the Kaiser Family Foundation’s report on media use of children ages eight to eighteen. They found that, on average, young people spend 7 hours and 38 minutes using different entertainment media in an average day (2010). As was the case with Radelsky, Kistin, Zuckerman, Nitzberg, Gross, Kaplan-Sanoff, Augustyn, and Silverstein (2014), the Kaiser Family Foundation’s report discussed how mobile devices played a role in exposure to media in families, including music. This literature is discussed further in Chapter 5 as part of a more detailed examination of the case study families’ listening preferences and habits.

While studies of music listening yield interesting and useful results in a variety of domains, a challenge in this area of research is attempting to separate music listening from music making. Green (2002) argues that this is difficult to do because “differences between making and listening to music are not necessarily clear-cut” (p. 3). Sometimes, while listening to music, we will tap or sing along. Regardless of this, Green asserts, “it is nonetheless reasonable to draw a distinction between music-making and music-listening, in so far as the former is geared mainly to the production of music, and the latter mainly to its reception” (p. 3). In the present study, the focus on listenership (which is contrasted with musicianship) attempts to create a separation between these two domains which is necessary to narrow the study focus. As will be discussed in Chapter 5, several of the study participants reported singing along to music as part of their music listening. Whenever possible, every attempt has been made in discussion and analysis to describe participants’ reports of listening and/or to present excerpts that offer clarification as to how participants listening experiences may have involved music making as well. The key terminology offered below attempts to clarify the relationships between terms associated with both music listening and music making, and to situate the terminology in the context of the present study’s usage.
Key Terminology:

- **Listenership**: Listenership includes knowledge, skills, and sensitivities surrounding listening to music. This term can be contrasted with “musicianship” (Reimer, 2003). Listenership takes into account the entire body of music listening in which a person engages, including attitudes about preferred music and choices about what music to listen to. The present study examined music listenership guidelines in the context of five different families.

- **Guideline**: As referenced in the above definition of listenership, the present study discusses families’ music listenership guidelines. This builds upon literature examining guidelines in other areas of adolescents’ lives, including behaviors and activities like underage drinking (Friese, Grube, Moore, & Jennings, 2012), sex education (Leyson, 1982), and driving (Scott-Parker, Watson, King, & Hyde, 2015). A guideline is a general piece of advice or principle; it can be contrasted with the more rigid or explicit “rule”—a term which is more controlling than the guidelines unearthed in the present study. This study’s research questions, interview and e-journal prompts, and earlier discussions use the terms “rules” and “guidelines” from an exploratory perspective and often interchangeably. The findings of the present study and use of guideline as opposed to rule is in line with literature that examines parental discipline methods with adolescent children (see, for example, Parkin & Kuczynski, 2012). What was revealed in the collected data from the five families participating in this study was that none of the families had any hard-and-fast, inflexible “rules” for music in their families. This term is used in the analyses offered in Chapter 6 and 7.

- **Musical landscape**: As used in the present study, this descriptive term refers to all music exposures present in the home. These exposures can be both active and passive and, in the case study families engaged in this study, sometimes include children making music to which parents listen. Essentially, this descriptive term speaks to the totality of music present to which a family is exposed.

- **Musicking**: Musicking involves much more than making music; it means being involved with music in any capacity. Small (1998) defines this term as follows,
“to take part, in any capacity, in a musical performance, whether by performing, by listening, by rehearsing or practicing, by providing material for performance (what is called composing,) or by dancing” (p. 9). Musicking involves both musicianship and listenership (Reimer, 2003), with the present study being concerned with the listenership side of musicking. Green (2002) posits that “as distinct from music making, a huge proportion of today’s global population listens to music. Differences between making and listening to music are not necessarily clear-cut” (p. 3, emphasis in original). She describes how sometimes, when listening to music, we tap or sing along. Despite this blurriness, Green states that “it is nonetheless reasonable to draw a distinction between music-making and music-listening, in so far as the former is geared mainly to the production of music, and the latter mainly to its reception” (p. 3). Means of musical involvement are further laid out by Clarke, Dibben, and Pitts (2010). The division of this work reflects the ways in which people interact with music on a regular basis: making music, using music, and acquiring music. The present study is focused on the two latter categories—the use of music in the family and acquisition of musical understandings and values through familial relations.

Musical listening happens inside and outside of the traditional classroom. By examining how people experience and talk about music within the family unit—one of the most influential bodies on a young person’s development of preferences—music educators can build a more well-rounded picture of a student’s musical environment. This broader understanding will equip music educators with necessary insights to better serve and understand their students.

**Listenership roles.** Through an investigation of roles filled by both parents and children in the listening environments of five families, the present study builds upon a large body of research on “musical parenting” (Bergson & Trehub, 1999; Custodero & Johnson-Green, 2003, 2008; Cutietta, 2003; Davidson & Borthwick, 2002; Green, 2003, 2008; Ilari, 2005; Ilari et al. 2011; Malloch, 2000; Papousek, 1996; Parn cott, 2009; Trevarthen, 2008; Young, 2008). Musical parenting describes many early parent-child
musical interactions (Addessi, 2009) and parents’ roles in instrumental music education (for example, Cutietta, 2003, Davidson et al. 1996, McPherson, 2009; McPherson and Davidson, 2002). Much of this literature focuses on music making with young children. Discussion of parental and child listenership roles is a major focus in Chapter 7.

Custodero and Johnson-Green (2003) make reference to some musical parenting behaviors with infants, organizing them into categories of nurturant, material, social, and didactic. Using Blacking’s (1986/1995) term of “sound group” to talk about the family, they report that their “data suggest that the formation and functioning of the family sound group occurs early in a child’s life” (p. 35). Custodero & Johnson-Green call for more research to understand parenting behaviors around musicking by expanding on their study of parents with children under age 3. The present study offers such an expansion to include how five different parents influence music listening and musical identities through shared family discourse collected with a family script. The script is the way by which transmitted capital impacts children’s music values (and vice versa.) Byng-Hall (1998) describes the family script as including role information; it describes “the family’s shared expectations about what roles are to be played in various contexts” (p. 138).

In addition to research on musical parenting, the present study is connected to literature on parents’ roles in family discourse around music listening. Parents play a key role in children’s language acquisition on all topics of discussion, music included; they model and impart information that teaches children how to talk and how to act (Gleason, 1973; Gleason & Weintraub, 1976.) Adult talk provides children with information about the larger world and demonstrates how language use is governed by social and context-dependent rules. Through language, individuals develop opinions and relative positions towards many different things, including music; when discourse is shared within the family, these opinions are shaped by powerful, meaningful relationships. The question is how—what are some of the ways in which this happens? How do parents’ roles in different music listening situations transmit opinions, “relative positions”, and values? Key observations gathered in the present study offer insights to help address these questions while also building on the above-referenced body of literature.

Music-focused literature is also limited in terms of discussion of children’s roles. Much of the related literature is focused on general language acquisition and
development within the family, with great attention having been given to bilingualism (see, for example, Barron-Hauwaert, 2004; King & Fogle, 2013; King, Fogle, & Logan-Terry, 2008; Yamamoto, 2001) and the impact of early family-based language exposures on development at later stages in life (see, for example, Hoff, 2003; Hoff-Ginsberg, 1998; Hoff & Naigles, 2002; King et al., 2008). One study to note with some relation to the present study is Vestad’s (2010) examination of young children’s uses of recorded music. She focused more on behaviors towards music but does detail roles children play in response to interacting with music to which they listen. Vestad’s work is related to the present discussion of children’s roles more so in terms of broad research area (music listening) than a specific discussion of roles filled by children in discourse about music listening. Vestad does not report findings regarding child discourse in response to music. One further study that more directly connects with the present discussion of family discourse around music listening examined family conversations around television viewing. Messaris (1983) observationally studied television viewing as a communal activity within 113 families and found that viewing involves much discussion. He identified two types of conversations: “information-oriented” (p. 295), where information is sought through questions and exchanged, and those involving “behavioral prescriptions” (p. 299) where appropriateness of viewed content is discussed. No description of individual roles was provided, however.

The potential exists with this line of inquiry to further analyze the types of conversations in terms of the roles filled by participating family members, as is the focus of this study. Gillen (2003) offers brief mention of roles in her discussion of children’s play. She reported that children often fill different roles in exploratory play settings, noting that play is key to language development and exploration. The limited relevant literature and limited data gathered by the present study speak to the need for more research on children’s roles in music listening environments. Child roles as uncovered by the present study are further discussed in Chapter 7.

**Musical preference and identity.** Music is everywhere; it factors prominently both inside and outside of the music education classroom. Music educators must confront the challenge of accounting for and honoring the multitude of meanings and uses for
music established by different people in different contexts. Working to acknowledge the complex exposures and influences that shape students’ musical selves is key for music educators who desire to fully engage students. The present study aims to offer insights into the influential nature of five families as a way to begin this necessary acknowledgement; this study reveals several ways in which families collectively operate to shape and influence music value.

Bowman (2009) posits that “musically sonorous experience is never just individual: musical engagement is fundamentally and invariably collective” (p. 121). Both music and education are “socially situated and socially constructed phenomena with direct and intimate ties to individual and collective identities” (Bowman, 2009, p. 125). This study poses significant questions about how individuals employ different criteria to value music and the role the family plays in the formation and communication of music value systems through the establishment and maintenance of listening guidelines. Bowman (2002) argues that “music is without question a ubiquitous presence in human societies, and music propensities are clearly among the most remarkable and distinctive attributes of the human animal” (p. 63). The music we like is intimately tied to who we are and is shaped by the people with whom we interact.

The terminology defined in this section offers clarification of several terms used throughout this document. These include music preference, music value, identity, and self-identity.

Key Terminology:

- **Music preference**: Music preference refers to a greater liking of one type of music over another type of music as demonstrated by a choice (behavior) or assertion (talk, often shared in discourse). ter Bogt et al. (2011) discuss that while preferred music may evolve over the life course, most preferences are formed in late adolescence and early childhood (p.302). Krumhansl and Zupnick (2013) studied music preference of college-aged listeners and found spikes in preference for music before the students were born which they observed as times when the students’ parents’ musical preferences were established (p. 2065). They found that “the personal memories associated with this music were from when participants
were listening with parents, alone, and with other people while growing up. Participants’ feelings of nostalgia were also strong for the music of their parents’ generation” (pp. 2065-2066). These studies illustrate the important role that early music exposures and memories—most of which are rooted in families—can have on the development of music preferences.

- **Musical taste**: Musical taste describes an individual’s self-determined, conscious, general inclination towards a type (or types) or genre (or genres) of music. This term is not used in analysis or discussion within the present study. Rather, discussion focuses on music preference and music value. This definition is included in this review as a means of clarification since a large amount of literature of relevance to the present study utilizes this term.

- **Music value**: Music value is herein defined and discussed as the standards or principles an individual employs to determine what music is important. Music value can be further defined as the sum of individual music preference choices or assertions (as referenced in the above definition of preference.) It is through individual choices and discourse about music that an individual negotiates a position relative to a piece of music. As is the focus of the present study, music value can be influenced by external factors, including relationships within the family unit. Music value is discussed in Chapter 7 as a component of family values, understood to be the overall standards or principles that govern a family’s operations and approach to communal daily life.

- **Identity**: Identity describes what/who a person thinks he/she is, and the characteristics that aid the individual in making this determination. Identity is simultaneously personal and social—individual and collective. Turino (2008) defines identity as “the partial selection of habits and attributes used to represent oneself to oneself and to the other by oneself and by others” (p. 95). The notion of *lifewide musicking* discussed earlier creates what Jones (2009) calls “a multi-dimensional paradigm for understanding an individual’s musical identity and needs based on his or her idiosyncratic combination of musical selves” (p. 205).

- **Self-identify**: The present study engaged families in which neither parent self-identifies as a musician. Self-identity has to do with the way in which an
individual views him or herself. MacDonald, Hargreaves, and Miell (2002) define self-identity as “the overall view that we have of ourselves in which… different self-concepts are integrated” (p. 8). Self-concepts can be “context- or situation-specific… or domain-related” (p. 8). Context or situation specific concepts concern how an individual sees him or herself dealing with an event or occurrence, like dealing with stress. Domain-related self-concepts have to do with labels that include that of “musician.” While individuals do identify what they are and what they are not, MacDonald, Hargreaves, and Miell note that it is still unclear, from a theoretical perspective, how individuals make these decisions.

The present study discusses self-reported instances of music listening and shared discourse around music. Music preference speaks to individual choices and expressions in response to particular music; value refers to larger, lasting patterns of preference by which an individual develops more lasting opinions of what music is important and worth listening to. Family members are positioned to influence and shape each others’ notion of the relative “worth” of particular songs, artists, and even entire genres of music. The notion of music value is used to describe the collective environment of individuals’ identities and (sometimes) differing taste. Value reflects individuals’ relative orientations to music by which they formulate a self-identity and an identity in relation to the others.

Having reviewed key terms from music education and music in everyday life literature, the next step in this chapter’s review is to examine sociological terminology. The remainder of this chapter reviews terminology pertaining to sociology and the family, sociolinguistics, the life course perspective, the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and family script theory. The remaining review provides a necessary terminological foundation for the more detailed theoretical discussion offered in Chapter 4.

**Sociology**

The present study offers insights into discourse about music within the social institution of the family. Relevant sociological literature guiding the present study includes research in/on the family, sociolinguistics, the life course perspective, Bourdieu’s Theory of Practice, and family scripts. Together, sociolinguistics and script theory (briefly
discussed in this section) form the guiding theoretical framework for the study with concepts of cultural capital and habitus of Bourdieu utilized in a minor role (discussed further in Chapter 4).

The family also receives more attention in Chapter 5, preceding the introduction of the case study families. Here, the families’ socioeconomic statuses (SES) are discussed. SES accounts for the total social and economic reality of family as determined by factors which include income, education, and occupation—it is a useful measure to position a family or individual in relation to others. SES comes out of the early work of Weber (1947) whose writings first labeled different classes of people as working, lower-middle, intelligentsia, and upper middle. Warner, Meeker, and Eells (1949) built upon Weber’s work, offering a model whereby classes were identified as upper, middle, and lower (and further subdivided as upper-upper class, lower-upper class, upper-middle class, lower-middle class, upper-lower class, lower-lower class). Warner’s model has since been expanded by Hoff-Ginsberg and Tardif (1995), Gilbert (2002) and Thompson and Hickey (2005). Weber’s initial ideas concerning class have since been built upon, contextualized, and broadened in modern sociological literature in order to reflect and enable discussions of the connections between economic and social factors.

**Sociology of and the family.** Simmel (1895/1998) was among the first scholars to position studies of the family within sociology. He argues that the family developed out of mother-child relationships. Simmel discusses the roles monogamous relationships and private property play in establishing families, and also examines other economic factors influencing the family unit. Regarding the family, he observes:

> For in it we have a socialization of a few persons which is repeated countless times within every larger group in exactly the same form, and which proceeds from simple interests with which everyone can empathize and is, for these reasons, relatively easily recognizable. (p. 284)

Simmel notes that the family provides a forum for socialization which is achieved through repetition, and this repetition of behaviors is a defining characteristic of the family unit. Aside from the family socializing its members, family also plays a key role in children acquiring cultural knowledge and behavior (Kraaykam, 2001; Nagel &
Ganzeboom, 2002; Mohr & DiMaggio, 1995; van Eijck, 2001) and in language acquisition (Gleason, 1973; Gleason & Weintraub, 1976). Several scholars note that mothers play an especially key role in this process, as they often serve as primary caregiver in the family (Fuligni & Brooks-Gunn, 2002; Huttenlocher, Vasilyeva, Waterfall, Vevea, & Hedges, 2007; Tamis-LeMonda & Baumwell, 2012; Trehub, Hill, & Kamentsky, 1997).

Many sociological studies in and of the family have examined the intersections of parenting styles and SES, demonstrating that different classes (or statuses) raise their children in different ways (Devine, 2004; Gillies, 2006, 2007; Irwin & Elley, 2011; Lareau, 1987, 2002, 2011; Lareau & Horvat, 1999; Leondar-Wright, 2014; Power, Edwards, Whitty, & Wigfall, 2003; Reay, 1998, 2005; Roopnarine, Fouts, Lamb, & Lewis-Elligan, 2006; Rudge, Hogan, Snezhkova, Kulakova, & Etz, 2000). Gembris & Davidson (2002) and Cutietta (2003) found that middle-class parents were very involved in their children’s learning. Lareau (2011) observed that “social class dynamics are woven into the texture and rhythm of children and parents’ daily lives” (p. 236); all families had rituals but they were different from one family to the next. For her, SES offered a way to group families into categories while still maintaining an appreciation for the complexity of everyday life. As with Lareau, the present study uses SES as a way to engage with the messiness and complexity of real, everyday life.

Key Terminology:

- **Family**: Despite many attempts on the part of scholars from a number of fields to codify a definition, the family unit continues to evolve and manifests itself differently in different cultures. Cheal (2008) argues that “‘family’ is something that is socially constructed by particular groups of people in their interactions about the meanings of social relationships” (p. 7). He states that “a family is whatever people define it to be in their ongoing social interactions” (p. 7). In the present study, each family was defined as its members saw it; it was not restricted to those related by birth, by blood, or through civil union. This study embraces “family” as a social convoy—a term first introduced by Kahn and Atonucci (1980)—which describes a group of two or more people whose lives are linked
together. Studying a social convoy is studying a group as they move together through time. The only external restriction placed on the term in the present study was that the members of the social convoy (parents and children) cohabit.

- **Cohort**: A cohort is “any group of people with a time-specific common experience, such as graduating from school in the same year, or cohorts defined by time of marriage or widowhood” (Scott & Marshall, 2009, p. 93). The present study’s five participating mothers represent a birth cohort, given that they were born around the same time and have children around the same age. Chapter 5 highlights the intersection of this parental birth cohort with their uses of and experiences with technology.

- **Generation**: Generation is used to differentiate relational birth cohorts within the family unit. “Generation can... be viewed as a structural marker that distinguishes experiences, interactions, and social meaning” (Bass, 2010, p. 340). The case study families involved in this study each have two generations represented: parent and child.

- **Home**: Elmer (1945) defines home as “a concept which implies family-group relationship in or at some designated place of habitation” (p. 332). The present study is concerned with family music listening in general as it occurs inside and outside of a particular physical location. In the present study, the definition of family, which is concerned more with relationships, subsumes this notion of home. Discussion includes but is not limited to music listening in the home; the focus is, rather, on all family listening exposures which include but are not limited to music listening in the setting in which the family lives.

- **Intergenerational transmission**: Intergenerational transmission is a widely used term across many disciplines of study including sociology, economics, and psychology. It refers to the passage of preferences, skills, knowledge, and values between different cohorts within a family. The term can be found in studies of spousal abuse (Stith et al., 2000), marital instability (Pope & Mueller, 1976), constructive parenting (Chen and Kaplan, 2001), child socialization and the transfer of taste patterns (Rosengren, 1999; van Wel, 1994), and preferences and economic behavior (Volland, 2013). There is also a body of literature that
examines parents’ roles in transmitting rules and information to their children, and children’s responses to this transmission (Grusec & Goodnow, 1993; Kuczynski & Parkin, 2007; Maccoby, 2007; Parkin & Kuczynski, 2012; Smetana, 1997).

- **Intergenerational transmission of music values**: This phrase refers to the passage of music values between generations or age categories or a type of cultural transmission. The intergenerational transmission of culture is widely studied (see, for example, Svob and Brown, 2012). Krumhansl and Zupnick (2013) define cultural intergenerational transmission as “the passing on of knowledge, skills, abilities to communicate, and social norms in a social context rather than biologically” (p. 2057). When put in the context of a family unit, such transmission can be unidirectional or multidirectional, and is influenced by forces found both inside and outside of the family unit. ter Bogt et al (2011) point out that the transfer of cultural preferences is not necessarily a strictly parent-to-child transmission, stating that “parents may themselves be influenced by the choices of their children” (p. 302). Maccoby (2007) also discusses how parent-child interactions are generally characterized by directionality. The present study found that transmission in the five participating families was in line with these findings regarding bidirectionality; this is discussed further in Chapter 7.

- **Legacy**: (or musical genealogy, musical heritage, musical lineage) A legacy results from the transmission of music values and guidelines between generations in a family. The contents of a family’s musical legacy include listening allowances and restrictions, specific treasured/loathed songs, musical memories, or music-related stories which are passed down (overtly or subvertly) between generations. The present study utilizes the theoretical framework of family script theory (see Chapter 4) to further discuss this notion of legacy in terms of the contents of each family’s script around music listening.

The family is part of students’ everyday lives and a major influence on their musical preferences and identity. Small (1977) challenges music educators to teach music in the present by integrating what music students know in an attempt to make educational settings less disjunctive from aspects of their “natural experiential matrix” (p. 82)—a
matrix which is shaped by students’ family experiences. This shift in outlook is an important way to broaden the scope of music education, as discussed by Small; he advocates for education and musical learning to be more inclusive by integrating students’ musical experiences inside and outside of the classroom. This study marks an essential step in gathering information necessary to better understand students’ home environments. As Small points out, this information can then be built upon to better connect home and school learning environments, and improve the quality of students’ school-based educational experiences.

Building on the preceding discussion, this literature review moves next to provide an overview of sociolinguistics, the life course perspective, the work of Pierre Bourdieu, and family script theory.

**Sociolinguistics.** The specific theoretical framework that guides analysis in this study is sociolinguistics: “the study of language in relation to society” (Hudson, 1980, p. 1). Studies in this area examine variability in language, social contexts in which language is used, and the complexity of language. It should be noted here, however, that this study is not about structural relationships between language and music, like those examined in the work of ethnomusicologists Bright (1963), Feld (1974) and Powers (1980). Unlike the present study, these take “certain cues from the study of language in its structure and as a symbolic system to gain insight into the world of music” (Nettl, 2005, p. 51). Instead, the present study examines discourse about music and in response to music. In the context of the present study, sociolinguistics serves as both a theoretical framework and as a methodological guide to study language use in families, and as a means to discuss the impact of shared discourses on music listening. This framework is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 as part of the present study’s theoretical framework.

**Life course perspective.** Terminology connected to the sociological paradigm of the life course perspective guides this study’s discussion and analysis of intergenerational communication and family listenership legacy. The life course perspective was first introduced by Leonard D. Cain, Jr. in his 1964 essay “Life Course and Social Structure.” Cain sets out “to identify, isolate, and systematize a life course, or age status, frame of reference” that would “contribute to the advancement of a sociology of age status” (as
cited in Marshall & Mueller, 2003, p. 4). He defines the life course as referring “primarily to those successive statuses individuals are called upon to occupy in various cultures and walks of life as a result of aging” (p. 5). Researchers working within this paradigm strive to understand the effects of historical time on individual biography and to trace how lives intersect and change across time in chaotic and diverse social contexts. Sociologists Mortimer and Shanahan (2003) describe the life course as follows:

As a concept, the life course refers to the age-graded, socially-embedded sequence of roles that connect the phases of life. As a paradigm, the life course refers to an imaginative framework comprised of a set of interrelated presuppositions, concepts and methods that are used to study these age-graded, socially embedded roles. (p. xi)

Elder, Johnson, and Crosnoe (2003) describe this perspective further as being rooted in a contextualist perspective that places emphasis on the implications of different life choices, made within the constraints and opportunities of one’s social environment, on human development and aging (p. 4). A central tenet of this perspective is the notion that no particular period in an individual’s life can be understood apart from past experiences and future aspirations.

A life course perspective lends itself to this study in many useful ways. Using the life course perspective to engage the family helps explore how the transmission of musical guidelines within this unit may be a reciprocal process, with expectations being established and enforced by the parents but still influenced by different members of the family through their linked lives. Analysis of process connects this perspective to early discussion of the unidirectional and multidirectional nature of intergenerational transmission. Further, concepts like life-span development guide the investigation of generational connections within families that last over a lifetime. This body of literature and terminology also connects sociological inquiry with the previously mentioned literature on lifewide musical learning.

*Key terminology:*
Linked lives: Linked lives refer to the idea that individual lives are “lived interdependently and socio-historical influences are expressed through this network of shared relationships” (Elder, Johnson, and Crosnoe, 2003, p. 13). This idea inspired the present study in terms of the notion of intergenerational transmission. Parents and children are linked and share a mutually influential relationship. This relationship plays a pivotal role in the communication of different music listening values, and in the application or acceptance of guidelines shared between family members.

Social pathways: Social pathways refer to domain-specific trajectories that are followed by both individuals and groups throughout society. Pathways can be charted in domains of education, family, and work. The present study is focused on five different family social pathways—those of the five participating families.

Social convoys: (See earlier definition of “family.”)

Trajectories: Trajectories describe how different experiences and life roles occur in sequence. Trajectories attempt to capture the figurative “direction” of experience. They are comprised of transitions, which Pavalko (1997) defines as changes in status or “a shift from one state to another” (p. 130). Trajectories that capture how relationships, time, and even technology affect the transmission of music values are of interest here, used to develop or explore ideas of the establishment of musical heritages within family units. Trajectories capture how relationships and time intersect and influence decisions, and may help conceptualize the directional nature of transmission. Trajectories also help describe the relative permanence and/or malleability of music value judgments.

Bourdieu and the Theory of Practice. The work of French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu offers insights and terminology useful to this study; these terms are drawn from his Theory of Practice (1972/1977) and subsequent writings on personal taste and cultural consumption, and focus on the important place of family in the development of social and cultural capital. While previous sections have extracted terminology to be defined separately, each in turn, the terminology examined in this section represents a body of
terms best described in connection to one another. As such, the following overview of relevant terminology is presented in narrative form. Key terms are highlighted in *italics*.

Bourdieu (1968/1993b) asserted that family is one of two pivotal places where individuals receive knowledge and skills that shape the way they come to interact with the social world. Bourdieu discusses the centrality of both family and schooling in the enculturation of children—in teaching them how to interact with cultural artifacts like art and music and offering opportunities to practice these behaviors. These bodies of influence transmit what Bourdieu calls *capital*; in the case of knowledge and skills around the consumption of music, *cultural capital*. Regarding the importance of these influences, Bourdieu contends:

> A close relationship is... established between the nature and quality of the information transmitted and the structure of the public, its ‘readability’ and its effectiveness being all the greater when it meets as directly as possible the expectations, implicit or explicit, which the receivers owe chiefly to their family upbringing and social circumstances (and also, in the matter of scholarly culture at least, to their school education). (footnote, p. 221)

In the seminal publication *Distinction* (1979), Bourdieu posits that personal tastes and preferences are used to socially position individuals in society—essentially, that which we culturally consume (art, music, food, etc.) assigns us to certain social classes and it is through the consumption of class-connected cultural capital that we learn or unconsciously acquire behaviors associated with a particular class. The cultural capital an individual will acquire determines his or her *habitus*: the culmination of an individual’s preferences learned through social experiences; an individual’s “lifestyle” and consumption patterns. As such, social class is an important factor to address when investigating family musical consumption and what Bourdieu (1968/1993b) calls family inheritance. Further, Bourdieu and Passeron (1977) characterize the family as a “conservatory of inherited traditions” (p.32). The family serves as a forum for the transmission of information between members from different generations. It is a self-sustaining, self-perpetuating learning environment where relationships facilitate the passing of information. The family is defined by both its function as discourse facilitator and the content of the discourse being shared (the inherited traditions.)
More recent uses of cultural capital have seen an expansion of the term. Lareau and Weininger (2003) argue that cultural capital should be expanded because “it allows culture to be used as a resource that provides access to scarce rewards, is subject to monopolization, and, under certain conditions, may be transmitted from one generation to the next” (p. 587). In line with this interpretation, the present study views cultural capital in an expanded sense. Cultural capital has also, in more recent studies, been expanded to include parenting practices (see Lareau and Weininger (2003) for a complete review of literature.) The family should be viewed as territory where cultural capital is intergenerationally transmitted by way of parenting practices. This has been demonstrated by Martin (2012) whose research explores the transmission of educational advantage in families.

The term that adds coherence and cohesion to the various topics and ideas presented in the current study is that of habitus. Bourdieu (1987/1994) defines habitus as a “structuring and structured structure” (p. 170). Maton (2008) clarifies this explanation, stating that habitus is structured by one’s past and present circumstances, which include family upbringing and educational experiences. It is “a structure in that it is systematically ordered rather than random or unpatterned” (p. 51). He states that habitus “focuses on our ways of acting, feeling, thinking and being. It captures how we carry within us our history, how we bring this history into our present circumstances, and how we then make choices to act in certain ways and not others” (p. 52).

Habitus is embraced by the present study as the culmination of an individual’s preferences learned and gleaned through experiences within the field of the family. It concerns the sum of an individual’s lifestyle and consumption patterns but, even more than that, is used as a way to explore and discuss how individual music listening values—individual habituses—interact and influence the collective experience of the family, later discussed in terms of resulting family scripts (Byng-Hall, 1988, 1995, 1998).

**Family scripts.** Byng-Hall’s (1988, 1995, 1998) theory of “family scripts” will be employed to help study family music discourse from a sociolinguistic perspective. His notion of family scripts grew out of his earlier term “family mythology” which he first used to identify interactional patterns and repeated dialogue within families (Byng-Hall,
The family script is used as a concept to discuss sociolinguistic discourse around the establishing and communication of music listenership guidelines within the family. In the context of the present study of music listening, a family script captures the totality of talk in the family—it is representative of the shared body of knowledge and values that is passed between parents and children in the family unit. Family scripts are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4 alongside sociolinguistics as part of the present study’s theoretical framework where it is connected with the preceding discussion of relevant sociological terminology.

**Conclusion**

Relevant literature from a variety of fields of study was presented in this chapter to delineate the ideas that inform the present study of music listening within families. Literature includes sociological research and writing in music education, music listening in everyday contexts, sociological studies of the family, sociolinguistics, writings of Pierre Bourdieu, and family scripts. Key terminology was identified and defined; many of the terms referenced or introduced in this chapter will factor prominently in the discussion to follow. Whenever possible, connections between terms were elucidated to illustrate how the diverse disciplines that guide this study are, in fact, closely related.

The next chapter, Chapter 3, summarizes the methodology that guided the study. The chapter opens with an overview of the study. Discussion then moves into a detailed description of data collection methodology and procedures.
Chapter 3: Study Outline and Methodology

Introduction

The objective of this five-family case study was to provide a detailed picture of the families’ musical listenership guidelines and to examine communication around music listening within the family. Qualitative methods were used to engage the family as both social convoy and discourse community. Qualitative data, including discourse and written text, were gathered through Internet-facilitated interviews and e-journaling with the five participating families. A multi-method research strategy was utilized to engage families in natural settings. This chapter presents an overview of the qualitative paradigm guiding this study, the specific methodology utilized in the project design, and the methods in data collection. This chapter also discusses methodology-related terminology and perspectives, all of which inform both data collection and data analysis. Following a discussion of methodology, this chapter: 1) offers a timeline of the study’s data collection strategies, 2) describes the research participants, data collection methods, study limitations and ethical issues, and, 3) concludes with a discussion of the data analysis. Interview and e-journal excerpts and full researcher analysis of the collected data can be found throughout Chapters 5, 6, and 7.

Table 1 below is offered for clarification before moving any further; it summarizes the many ways in which all of the referenced terms are interrelated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Purpose and Function</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Methodological Perspective</td>
<td>Descriptive Case Study (involving multiple cases)</td>
<td>Examine multiple families in real-life contexts. Gain understanding of meaning for participants. Multi-method data collection. Describe music listening guidelines in families.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Language of Description**

**Narrative Inquiry**
Examine how individuals describe, interpret, construct, and disseminate musical meaning.

**Data Collection Tools (Specific)**

**Screening Survey**
Strategies to collect descriptive data.

**Internet-facilitated interviews**
Means of collecting narrative accounts.

**Participant e-journals**
Collect two types of participant data: spoken (through interviews) and written (e-journals.)

**Data Analysis**

**Sociolinguistics (Narrative Coding and Discourse analysis)**
Guide study design.

**Family Scripts**
Sort, categorize, and engage collected data.
Clarify relevant terminology.
Inform discussion: connect theory with data.
Discussed more in Chapters 4 and 5

This study was carefully and purposefully crafted to enable the researcher to gather rich, descriptive data to address the specific research questions introduced in Chapter 1. Qualitative methodology provided the most suitable approach to examine the topic at hand: how meaning and values around music listening were established and communicated within the participating families. The specific methodological perspective of descriptive, multiple-case case study was selected to allow for an in-depth and detailed analysis of real-life discourse within a small group of families. Data collection tools gathered descriptive, narrative spoken and written accounts that were then coded and analyzed. These particular data collection tools provided the research with a large amount of descriptive data from the small group of study participants. The remainder of this chapter examines each of these methodological elements in greater detail.

**Overview of Study**

Focusing on five case studies, this study explored how five families in Miami-Dade County, in which neither parent self-identified as a musician, talk about music. This study collected qualitative data through interviews and e-journals. The study utilized both sociolinguistics and family script theory (Byng-Hall, 1995, 1998) to examine music listening and talk about music in five families, and to discuss how parents communicated guidelines for their children’s consumption of music. The purpose of the study was to
analyze what kind of intergenerational legacy is created within a family through the communication and enforcement of music restrictions and allowances.

After receiving IRB approval for the study protocol (see Appendix A), potential case study participants were directed to a website (www.musicalfamilytree.ca) for initial screening (through an online survey gathering basic demographic information; see Appendix A) through a call for participants that was circulated by the Miami Herald newspaper (online and in print, see Appendix B) and by several Miami-Dade county online parenting groups and resource websites. From there, five case studies were determined. Extrapolated from the case studies at the center of this study, the information gathered helps establish a better understanding of some families’ discourses around music. This provided valuable insights into personal and collective identities and musical exposures, and the processes involved in music selection and identity formation—information useful in many different scholarly contexts.

Participant recruitment began in January 2014. Data collection commenced in February 2014; final interviews concluded by mid-May 2014. Table 2 below offers a timeline of events.

**Table 2: Study timeline.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-study Action Preparation</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Tool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Website was</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>Fall 2013</td>
<td>Screening survey was created and website content added (including study overview, contact information, information to join the project, references, and resources).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>constructed:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.musicalfamilytree.ca">www.musicalfamilytree.ca</a></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Call for Participants and Participant Screening</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Timeline</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Tool</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calls for participants were circulated in the</td>
<td>Internet</td>
<td>January 2014</td>
<td>Recruitment ads were circulated. Interested families responded and indicated interest in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miami Herald newspaper, on the</td>
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Miami Herald website, and via online Miami-Dade County parenting groups. participation by completing the screening survey on the study website.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Contact Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Tool</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Case study participants were contacted to confirm participation and arrange first interview.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: First Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Tool</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews of multiple members in 5 case study families.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Phase 2: Participant E-Journaling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Tool</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upon completion of initial interview, participants were contacted by e-mail to begin e-journaling. Five e-journals were sent and received over the course of eight to ten weeks of correspondence.</td>
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<tr>
<th>Phase 3: Final Interview</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research Tool</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants were contacted by phone or e-mail to arrange their family’s final group interview. Final interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To participate in the study, at least two members of a family, each representing a different generation, must have agreed to participate. All five case study families ended up being a mother and at least one child. Participation also required that families live in Miami-Dade County, and have regular and reliable access to phone and Internet. The only exclusion criterion put in place limited participating families to those in which neither parent (even if only one parent participated in the study) self-identified as a musician. This limitation was put in place to keep the focus of the study more on the transmission of musical listening skills than on the transmission of musicianship skills. More information about the specific participants in this study is shared in Chapter 5, wherein each family is profiled as part of a larger discussion of music in/and the family.

**Overarching Research Paradigm: Qualitative Methodology**

The present study’s overarching research paradigm was qualitative methodology. Merriam (2009) describes this approach as the most effective means of studying the ways in which humans create meaning. She argues that “qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (p. 5). In their examination of the many approaches that fall under this broad umbrella of qualitative research, Bresler and Stake (2006) argue that “qualitative approaches come with various names and descriptions: case study, field study, ethnographic research, naturalistic, phenomenological interpretive, symbolic interactionist, or just plain descriptive” (p. 271). They provide a set of strategies common to these approaches, which include:

1) *noninterventionist* observation in the natural setting
2) emphasis on *interpretation* of both emic issues (those of the participants) and etic issues (those of the writer)
3) highly *contextual description* of people and events, and
4) validation of information through triangulation. (p.271, emphases in original)
Qualitative studies, including the present study, are concerned with how individuals construct meaning. The focus of qualitative research is on interpretation, and how different people interpret and describe life experience. In the present study, this focus narrows in on musical meaning and, more specifically, on how families come to experience and understand the music they encounter.

Bresler and Stake trace the roots of qualitative research back to William Dilthey (1900/1976) and Max Weber (1949), whose early philosophical writing was rooted in the ideas of Immanuel Kant (1889/1969). They presented the idea that all experience is mediated by the mind, and that our notion of intellect is colored and confined by individual representation and interpretation. Qualitative research examines the nature of knowledge construction to, as Bresler and Stake put it, establish “a clearer experiential memory and to help people obtain a more sophisticated account of things” (p. 273).

Flinders and Richardson (2002) present an overview of qualitative methodologies commonly used by music educators in their chapter on contemporary issues in qualitative methods. They trace the development of these methods in music education from the 1960s onwards, noting that the rise of qualitative research in education “defies simple explanation” as it has grown to encompass many different methods and meanings (p. 1160). The present study adds to this growing body of qualitative research in music education, as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. In line with Flinders’ and Richardson’s observation, the present study utilizes a combination of methods necessary to best address the research questions that guide inquiry.

Qualitative research poses many advantages, as outlined above, and some challenges. Bresler and Stake (2006) argue that weaknesses of qualitative research include “excessive subjectivity in observations, imprecise language in descriptions, vague descriptions of the research design, unwieldy and voluminous reports, implication of generalizability when little is warranted, cost and time overrun, [and] unethical intrusion into personal lives” (p. 299). Whenever possible, the present study’s design has been meticulously crafted to focus on very specific research questions that are clearly and justifiably connected to purposeful data collection and analysis strategies. Limitations of the study are acknowledged throughout this document, including substantive consideration in Chapter 7. Every attempt is made in this document to acknowledge
realistic and accurate applications of the present study, acknowledging that generalizability of findings is limited due to the small body of participants. These steps, in addition to the pre-study institutional ethics review and communication with participants of study expectations and constraints, have been taken to address and hopefully offset many of the challenges outlined above.

**Methodological perspective: Descriptive case study.** The present study is a descriptive case study. This section will clarify this term, first discussing descriptive research and then examining the case study portion. Roulston (2006) explains how “the aim of descriptive studies is detailed accounts of events, experiences, activities; new perspectives on familiar phenomena; participants’ views of processes, groups, settings; and subjective accounts of phenomena” (p. 156). This study aims to provide one such detailed account, striving to comprehend ways in which families come to establish and share music listening values and guidelines. Further, Sidnell (1972) succinctly outlines the broad methodological perspective of descriptive research as follows:

**Descriptive research:** Descriptive research describes what is. It involves the description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of the present nature, composition, or processes of phenomena. The focus is on prevailing conditions, or how a person, group, or thing behaves or functions in the present. (p. 20)

Descriptive research embraces a broad category of studies primarily associated with the present status of individuals, events, social institutions, and other forms of human activity. Case studies of human behavior and its change; growth and development research; sociological studies of communities and collective human action; are also examples of descriptive research. (p. 23)

Sidnell points out that, as is the case with the present study, descriptive research includes case studies and sociological studies of human behavior and action. These studies focus on communities, like the family, and attempt to describe actions within these different groups. As outlined above, descriptive research uses many strategies to study the nature of these different collective realities—different ways in which people act and interact within a variety of situations. Embracing this descriptive perspective, the family is herein studied as a social convoy: a group of people who move together through time as members of an influential body, in which its members collectively experience, grow,
learn, and develop. Descriptive methods allowed for five different families—different social convoys—to be engaged in an attempt to detail how they disseminate music value through shared discourse.

The specific descriptive methodological perspective embraced by the present study is that of case study—an approach used in many different fields of study. Yin (2003) views case studies as a “comprehensive research strategy” (p.14) that guides and defines data collection and overall study design. He states that “case studies are the preferred strategy when “how” or “why” questions are being posed” (p. 1). The majority of the research questions that guide inquiry in this study asked “how” things happened within the family when it comes to the communication of guidelines around music listening. As such, this study is a descriptive case study that gathers qualitative data to address these questions. It is also a multiple-case study which was designed to study interaction and collective behavior within five families. Each family profiled in the study represents a single-case, making the study a multiple-case sociological case study which uses qualitative methods. Each case is a “unit of human activity embedded in the real world” (Gillham, 2010, p. 1), best understood if studied in its own context.

Case studies can involve any combination of qualitative and quantitative research. The case study approach allows for researchers to study real-life events and processes in a way that retains what makes them meaningful (Gillham, 2010, p. 2). Yin provides an excellent summary of the case study, captured below in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I)</th>
<th>A case study is an empirical inquiry that</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2)</td>
<td>The case study inquiry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a)</td>
<td>copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interests than data points, and as one result</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b)</td>
<td>relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Yin views the case study as a separate methodology aside from qualitative and quantitative research. Though much of Yin’s work is aligned with the current project, the present study does not share this idea. Rather, the present study’s use of descriptive case study as a type of data collection approach is more closely related to the view espoused by Hancock and Algozzine (2011) who view case studies as follows:

> Case studies represent another type of qualitative research. They are different from other types in that they are intensive analyses and descriptions of a single unit or system bounded by space and time. Topics often examined in case studies include individuals, events, or groups. Through case studies, researchers hope to gain in-depth understanding of situations and meaning for those involved. (pp. 10-11)

This view of case study as a type of qualitative research is shared by Baxter and Jack (2008) who see the case study as a qualitative methodology that allows the researcher to explore an issue or phenomenon from multiple perspectives (p. 544). Gillham (2010) also shares this view of case study as a form of qualitative research, where the goal is to gather evidence, formulate explanations and descriptions based on that evidence, all in an attempt to understand that meaning of a particular event or activity (p. 10).

The case study is an excellent fit for the present study as the goal is to engage the contemporary phenomenon of discourse about music within the family unit. Multiple sources of evidence, gathered by way of interviews and e-journals, inform the analysis. In the present study no a priori propositions have been formed, however, aside from operating on the basic assumption that families talk about music in one way or another. Rather than test a formed hypothesis, the present study uses data gathered from five cases (five families) in response to research questions that seek to describe family discourse around music listening. Sociolinguistic and family script analysis take these descriptions, makes comparisons and connections between and among participating families, and attempts to explain what may be happening to create the reality captured by the descriptions.
Case study as a methodology is not without criticism. Case studies involve gathering a great deal of in-depth qualitative data from a very small sample. This type of inquiry is not suited to all research questions and should only be employed when aligned with the guidelines outlined by researchers like Yin (2003), as is the case with the present study. In this study, the description needed to address the research questions was best captured by way of the focused, small-sample approach of multiple-case studies. By focusing on five families, this study gathered a large amount of data from a few families in an attempt to understand, on a deep level, their meanings and experience around music listening.

Additionally, a challenge to working with case studies is analysis. Miles and Huberman (1984) point out that “multiple case studies require a kind of analysis that remains largely unformalized. One tries to preserve the uniqueness of the individual case, yet produce cross-site conclusions” (p. 296.) As will be described in a later section of this chapter, a modified version of Seidman’s (2006) three-phase phenomenological interviewing structured and formalized the present study’s data collection. The combined analytical approach of sociolinguistics and family script theory offered an evenhanded way to engage data both in terms of the content of descriptions and the larger impact or result of families’ experiences. Every attempt was made, at all stages of this study, to honor each individual family’s unique experience while also making connections between and among families. The document offers excerpts from participating families, presented just as they were offered in interviews and/or e-journals, balanced with researcher discussion and analysis that looks across families at common trends. It is hoped this approach will, as much and as often as possible, combat the challenges of the case study methodological perspective.

Language of Description: Narrative Inquiry

The present study utilized a qualitative, descriptive case study design to gather narrative accounts of music listening discourse in five families. This approach is aligned with narrative inquiry—an outlook which, for the present study, yielded narrative responses from participants which then facilitated narrative analysis on the part of the researcher.
Narrative inquiry has become increasingly popular as qualitative research gains momentum in music education. Roulston (2001) makes the important observation that, in many ways, all qualitative research is narrative in the way that research is presented. Narrative refers to a story constructed to describe a series of events. Conle (2000) argues that “narrative inquiry” differs from the traditional uses of narrative in education which focus on the strategic and didactic uses of narrative; the major difference is narrative inquiry’s “open-ended, experiential, and quest-like qualities” (p. 50). Bruner (1996) asserts that “it is through narrative that cultures have created and expressed their worldviews and have provided models of identity and agency to their members” (p. xiv).

Narrative is a term common to many fields, including literary theory (where it refers to a story or part of a story), psychiatry and psychology (used as a method to explore personal identity), historiography (a rhetoric device), sociology (narrative analysis of text or as a qualitative research method to capture personal experience), and creative writing (a writing method.) Narrative inquiry as a research approach involves constructions of experiences on the part of the research and/or on the part of the research subject (or consultant.)

Ways to use narrative inquiry as a research technique are varied. Braid (1996) sees narratives as “coherent, followable accounts of perceived past experience” (p. 6). He argues that narratives have two qualities: they present a “temporally ordered sequence of events” (p. 8) which is organized into a meaningful combined statement. Beyond these more general understandings of narrative inquiry, specific narrative strategies include:

- **Narrative as Human Conduct:** Psychology and social psychology employ narrative to capture and describe human conduct. Participants in research studies are often asked to respond to a statement or compose reflections in response to a research probe.
- **Narrative as Life Course:** Giele (2009) argues that “narrative accounts are superior to quantitative survey methods for arriving at a deeper understanding of the dynamics that drive and shape the life course” (p. 238).
- **Narrative as Performed Story:** Polkinghorne (1995) discusses the strategy of collecting preconceived individual stories as a way to describe human activity.
- **Narrative as Persuasive Tool:** Velleman (2003) explores the role of narrative explanation in law, exploring the “explanatory force of narrative” (p. 1). Storytelling is discussed as a persuasive tool used by lawyers wherein narrative is used to convey understanding.
- **Narrative as Professional Development**: Conle (2000) reports the use of narrative as a tool for reflection with pre-service teachers. Narrative was used to help teachers “become better acquainted with their own story” (p. 51).

In the present study, narrative inquiry was used as a strategy to detail participants’ accounts of their own everyday experiences. Participants’ responded to several open-ended e-journal prompts; responses were narratives constructed by the respondents. Narrative inquiry should herein be understood in the way most akin to its use in sociology: as a descriptive method used to capture and describe personal experience. Narrative is further discussed in Chapter 4 as it relates to family script theory and the study’s theoretical framework.

**Data Collection Tools**

Moving forward now from general discussion of the methodological outlook guiding the present study, this section describes the specific tools used to gather data. Three main research tools were used in the present study to descriptively investigate the topics at hand: interviews (conducted via the Internet using Google Hangout, FaceTime, and/or Skype) and participant e-journaling (disseminated via the Internet using e-mail.) Interview participants also completed an initial screening survey to indicate interest in participating in the study. This next section explores each of these data collection tools.

**Screening survey.** The initial screening survey to identify case study participants was hosted on the main research website: www.musicalfamilytrees.ca. The survey was created using a Google document form and a link was placed prominently on the study website. The website address was circulated in the call for participants sent out in an advertisement in the Miami Herald newspaper on the Herald website and through several Miami-Dade county online parenting groups (see Appendix B). Questions from the screening survey are outlined below in Table 4.

**Table 4: Summary of survey questions.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey, Part 1: Identifying and Contact Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Please provide your name. (<em>Free response</em>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Please provide a contact phone number. (*Free response*)

3. What is the best time of day to contact you by phone? (*Free response*)

4. Please provide an e-mail address at which you can be reached. (*Free response*)

5. Please check all that apply to your family. (Please note that all of the items listed below must apply to you and your family in order for you to participate.)
   - My family lives in Miami-Dade County.
   - I do not self-identify as a musician. If applicable, my partner/spouse/significant other does not self-identify as a musician.
   - I have reliable access to a phone.
   - I have reliable access to the Internet.
   - I have at least one child under the age of 18 who lives with me at home and is interest in participating with me in this study.

Survey, Part 2: Demographics

1. Please indicate your gender. (*Male, Female, Other*)

2. Please indicate your age. (*18-19, 20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60 or older*)

3. Please indicate your highest completed level of education. (*Less than High School, High School/GED, Some college, 2-year college degree, 4-year college or university degree, Master’s degree, Doctoral degree, Professional degree (JD, MD]*)

4. Please indicate your occupation. (*Free response*)

5. Please indicate your household net income. (*Under $10,000, $10,000-$19,999, $20,000-$29,999, $30,000-$39,999, $40,000-$49,999, $50,000-$59,999, $60,000-$69,999, $70,000-$79,999, $80,000-$89,999, $90,000-$99,999, $100,000 or more*)

6. What is your current marital status? (*Single and never married, married, separated, divorced, widowed, other*)

7. Please indicate your religious affiliation. (*Protestant Christian, Roman Catholic, Evangelical Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, Other*)

8. Please indicate your race/ethnicity. (*White/non-Hispanic, African American, Hispanic, Asian/Pacific Islander, Native American, Other*)
The screening survey included two parts: the first part collected basic identifying and contact information, offered a brief summary of the survey (building upon what interest parties had available to them on the research website that hosted the survey), reviewed the inclusion criteria for the study, and asked for agreeable times to be contacted by phone. These questions were included so that the researcher could contact potential participants and to confirm that participants had reviewed the study inclusion criteria. The second part of the survey, which was sent as part of Journal 1 once the family had signed-up to participate, gathered basic demographic information. This information was necessary to describe and compare the families participating in the study. Results from the demographic survey questions are reported in Chapter 5 as part of a larger description and discussion of the participating families. The full survey, letter of information, and study participation consent form are included in Appendix C.

The Miami Herald recruitment campaign circulated the ad full word in three print newspapers (January 13, 20, and 27, 2014) and ran the advertisement online on the Herald website beginning January 13, 2014 until the maximum “impressions” (ad clicks) were received. The online campaign ended February 3, 2014 with a total of 60,015 impressions which yielded 69 total clicks. According to Elayne Cardoso, Account Executive with the Miami Herald, the campaign performed quite well, with a “Click-through Rate” (CTR) of 0.11% (see Appendix B for the full report). According to Ms. Cardoso, this is above the national average of 0.03-0.05% (Personal correspondence, February 2014.)

Seven families completed the screening survey and indicated interest in participating in the study. In all cases, one parent (the mother) in the family completed the survey. As families signed-up, they were contacted to answer any questions and discuss moving forward with the study. Two of the seven families who signed-up did not end up participating. One family, upon receiving a phone call, indicated a change of heart and was no longer interested in participating. The other family ended up being disqualified from participation because the father self-identified as a musician. The inclusion criteria for the study required that both parents in the family not self-identify as a musician even if only one of the parents decided to participate. When the study was first designed, a large population of respondents was anticipated; the initial plan was to
select families based on a clustered demographic (such as children of the same age.) The recruitment phase yielded the minimum of five families that each met the inclusion criteria. As such, families were not selected for participation from a pool; the study moved forward with all available participants.

_interviews_. Interviewing is a method commonly used in studies of music use and music listening. Some of the extant research utilizing interviews as a data collection method examine music-networks (Koskoff, 1982), singing practices in families (Custodero, 2006), musical parents and infants’ or children’s experiences with music (Illari, Moura, & Bourscheidt, 2011; Vestad, 2010, 2014; Young, 2008), music absorption and musical engagement (Herbert, 2011a), young people’s uses of music in different contexts (Boal-Palheiros & Hargreaves, 2001; Herbert, 2012), and young adults’ music preferences (Greasley & Lamont, 2006). As a means of collecting data, interviewing facilitates an emergent, responsive dialogue between researcher and participant. Seidman (2006) describes interviewing as a mode of inquiry through which interviewees are encouraged to recount experiences in response to open-ended questions. He argues that “at the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p. 9).

Interviewing was selected as the primary means of data collection for the present study as it allowed the researcher to engage the entire family in a dialogue that, in many instances, recreated their natural discourse about and around music in their families. Seidman’s (2006) three-stage phenomenological interviewing informed the interview questions and the overall data collection design. As per Seidman, the three phases of interviewing centered on the following topics: Focused Life History (Phase 1), Details of Experience (Phase 2), and Reflections on Meaning (Phase 3). Through these interviews, the researcher was provided access to contextual information surrounding how individuals live and make sense of music listening in their families.

It should be noted that the present study modified Seidman’s (2006) approach in two ways. First, as was mentioned above, Phase 2 did not feature interviews; rather, participants engaged in e-mail-based journaling (or e-journaling) over the course of several weeks. Two phases of semi-structured interviewing took place: at the beginning
of the study (Phase 1) and at the end of the study (Phase 3). The middle component of data collection facilitated interaction through participant e-journals, which are discussed in a later section. This modification allowed for the researcher to gather both written and spoken data which is necessary for balanced sociolinguistic analysis. Second, reflection questions were asked in both Phase 2 and Phase 3 to allow for spoken and written responses in this area. These modifications, while noteworthy, are not at all outside of the realm of Seidman’s outline. Although he provides a clear structure for three-stage phenomenological interviewing, he acknowledges that:

As long as a structure is maintained that allows participants to reconstruct and reflect upon their experience within the context of their lives, alterations to the three-interview schedule structure and the duration and spacing of the interviews can certainly be explored (pp. 21-22).

The modifications made to Seidman’s three-phase phenomenological interviewing procedure allowed for necessary structure to be maintained but also addressed the need to gather both spoken and written data from study participants. Spoken and written data were necessary to collect to allow for a more balanced sociolinguistic analysis as is discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4. Seidman’s approach afforded this study structure necessary to address some of the challenges of case study methodology that were discussed earlier. The Phase 2 e-journaling modification, which will be discussed shortly, addressed some of Bresler and Stake’s (2009) aforementioned concerns with cost, time, and intrusion into participants’ lives (p. 299.)

The full progression of data collection is detailed below in Table 5.

**Table 5: Summary of interview and e-journaling data questions and prompts.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phase 1: Group Interview (45-60 minute interview)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Research questions addressed</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formation of musical preferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sources of musical exposure.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Beginning stages of family legacy and relational value.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Connection to literature</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phase 1 of Seidman’s (2006) phenomenological interviewing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions collect focused musical life histories.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Interview

Introductions: Gathered ages and names of participants and members of family not participating; asked how families heard about the study.

Overview of study participation: letter of information, consent forms, any questions; three phases: interview, e-journaling, interview.

Overview of today’s interview: length; questions for group, parent, child.

Interview Questions (Group):

- What kinds of things do you do together as a family?
- How would you describe your family’s musical landscape?
- Follow-up on the above question, depending on answer.
- Do you talk about music as a family? How? When? Why? Who talks?
- Where does the music in your family come from? (TV, radio, Internet, school, work, family, friends, church, community activities, other)
- Does anyone in your family make music? Talk about this.
- Any music-listening memories you’d like to share?

Interview Questions (Parent):

- Questions building on initial introductions – brief musical/life history.
- Gather brief profile of musical preferences – favourite songs. What kind of music do you like best? What kind of music do you like least? Has this changed over the years? (Koskoff, 1982)
- What is music about for you? (Crafts, Cavicchi, & Keil, 1993) Why is it here? What does it do? (Koskoff, 1982)
- How did you come to know what you do about music? (Koskoff, 1982) What are your earliest musical memories?
- What does the music you listen to say about you?
- How has your family’s music listening changed with your child’s age? With your age?
How do you decide what music your children listen to? How do you communicate these expectations? Any experiences with kids listening to things you “don’t approve of”? How do you deal with this? Where did the music come from?

How does your sonic environment differ from the one in which you grew-up?

How do the restrictions you put in place compare to the restrictions you faced as a child?

How do you think your family’s music listening and rules compare to other families’?

Any musical memories you’d like to share?

**Interview Questions (Child/Children):**

- Questions building on initial introductions – brief musical/life history.
- What is music about for you? (Crafts, Cavicchi, & Keil, 1993) Why is it here? What does it do? (Koskoff, 1982)
- What music are you allowed to listen to? Why? How do you know this?
- What aren’t you allowed to listen to? Why? How do you know this? What do you think of these guidelines?
- Is there music that you like that your parents don’t like or music that you don’t like that your parents like? What do you think of your parents’ music?
- What does the music you listen to say about you? About your family?
- How do you think your family’s music listening and rules compare to other families’?
- Any musical memories you’d like to share?

**Phase 2: Participant E-journaling**

**(Five e-journals over 8-10 weeks)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research questions addressed</th>
<th>Music listening restrictions, allowances, guidelines, and influences. Family musical legacy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Nature of relational value of music in family.

Connection to literature

Modified and combined phases 2 and 3 of Seidman’s phenomenological interviewing.
E-journal prompts examined details of participants’ musical experiences and their reflections on meaning.

Overview of E-journaling

- **Week 1**: Follow-up questions from interview, clarification, more information; more about presence of music at home (specifics of how it is heard/played)
- **Week 2**: Questions about what music “is.” What is good music? What is bad music? Why do you like the songs you like? Why do you dislike the songs you dislike?
- **Week 3**: Questions about active and passive listening, computer use, phone use, music purchasing, attending live concerts. (Questions about resources, consumptions, sources of exposure.)
- **Week 5**: “Grab bag” of questions, following up on all journal responses so far. What is popular music? What does “popular” even mean? Music listening in Miami. Providing a listing from a favorite playlist.

Phase 3: Group Interview

(20-30 minutes)

Research questions addressed

Continued discussion of music listening restrictions, allowances, guidelines and influences.
Families reflected on study participation and its impact.
Final opportunity for participants to ask any questions of researcher.

Connection to literature

Modified phase 3 of Seidman’s phenomenological interviewing.
Focus of final interview on reflections of meaning both of questions asked in study and of the impact of study itself.
### Overview of Interview

- Asked questions about family’s journal-completion process: how did you complete them? Who talked? Who typed?
- Did the study influence your music listening? If so, how?
- Did the study influence how you talk about music in your family? If so, how?
- What motivated you to participate in this study? Did your participation meet your expectations?
- What did you like most about the study?
- What did you like least about the study?
- Any questions? Anything you’d like to add?

Interviews were conducted over the Internet using one of three video chatting platforms: Google Hangout, FaceTime, or Skype. Interviews were recorded (only audio, not video) by the researcher using an Apple iPhone and were transcribed.

Each interview included questions directed towards the entire family, questions for the parent, and questions for the child or children. The majority of the questions were designed by the researcher; a few of the questions (indicated in the above Table) were taken directly from the Crafts, Cavicchi, & Keil’s (1993) research on everyday uses of music and Koskoff’s (1982) study of musical networks. Parents were given the option to remain present while their child was interviewed. In all cases, parents remained and were involved in their child’s interview to varying degrees. In one case, with the West family, the interviews took place while the family was in their van, resulting in all parties being present for all portions of the interview. Some parents allowed their child to answer without any interruption or coaching, while others refrained from speaking up much at all. Parents were very helpful in clarifying questions that might include words with which the child was unfamiliar, or rephrasing questions in ways the child would better understand. Children’s presence during their parent’s interview also varied.

As with many qualitative methodologies, a challenge with interviewing in the present study was the “emergent nature” of the strategy and its lack of structure (Seidman, 2006, p. 25). Interviews often took unexpected turns, causing the researcher to respond by adjusting questions, or rewording prompts. There were also various
interruptions, phone calls, family members coming and going, children getting hungry and having to leave, and so on. The age of the participating child/children also impacted the flow of the interview; older children were better able to stay engaged and answer questions. The unpredictable nature of the semi-structured interview environment demanded flexibility on the part of the researcher to be able to jump between question sections, and to pause to regroup whenever distractions surfaced.

**Participant e-journaling.** Journaling is a tool used across many disciplines; Bracken (in press) offers a summary of relevant research, noting that journals are used in educational settings as teaching tools, as a pedagogical study, as a means of facilitating reflective practice, and as a data collection tool. E-mail-based journaling (e-journaling) builds upon the strengths and possibilities of this method as an effective and efficient way to study human interaction. Both Mann and Stewart (2000) and Jones (1999) discuss large numbers of studies that use web-centric methods to gather detailed qualitative data; these methods include both synchronous and asynchronous interviews, virtual focus groups, and e-mail-administered questionnaires.

E-journals are an excellent way to capture and “vividly represent member-recognized meaning” (Emerson, Fretz, and Shaw, 1995, p. 109). This method of data collection allows for information to be gathered when the researcher is not present, gain insider perspectives, and as a data collection tool that augments and builds upon other methods of data collection. E-journals were used in the present study as “asynchronous, semi-structured interactive exchanges designed to collect and chronicle reflections” (Bracken, in press, p. 6). Bracken points out that, as was the case with the present study, e-journaling is most effectively used as part of a larger data collection strategy. Studies like Custodero’s (2006) examination of singing practices in family is an example of a multi-method project wherein both interview and journals were used.

Study participants completed five e-journals over the course of eight to ten weeks. E-journals were completed following the first phase of interviews and before the final phase of interviews. E-journal prompts were personalized for each case study family based on content that came forward in the first phase of interviewing. Despite the fact that specific questions were tailored for each family, general themes for each week of
journaling remained consistent across all participants. Questions were addressed to individuals whenever necessary or to both (or all three, in the case of one family) respondents. A summary of the e-journal prompts was offered above (see Table 5) and a full listing of these prompts is included in Appendix D.

Bracken (in press) points out benefits of e-journaling, which include:

- **Capturing meaning**: E-journaling prompts challenged respondents to move past descriptions and basic information to offer details of experience, opinions, thoughts, and reflections in an open, unstructured, un rushed format.
- **Fluid, research-driven interaction**: The researcher can take ideas from interviews and ask deeper, more pressing questions in e-journal prompts; the same questions can be asked in different ways to seek clarification; this results in an evolving design, which sometimes took research in unexpected directions.
- **Respondents have more control over participation**: Participants are in control of when they answered e-journals (within reason), what they said (they could revise and review their responses within the available time).
- **Efficient data collection**: E-journals can be used to collect a large body of data from a large number of people in a small amount of time; the method yields rich, meaningful responses in a cost-efficient way.

Participants were given the freedom to complete journals in whatever means worked for their family. The final interviews asked participants how they completed journals. Across all participating families, the journals were completed with all parties sitting in the front of the computer. In all cases, the mother read the e-mailed questions and typed the answers either directly into an e-mail or into a word document. Two of the mothers (Pamela Alvarez, Amy West) mentioned playing a role in clarifying the questions when the children did not understand; they would paraphrase or explain some of the vocabulary used. One mother (Morales Family) described the process of journaling as a kind of “conversation” (Nancy Morales, Final Interview).

E-journals provided a means of maintaining dialogue with interview participants outside of structured interview time. As a means of sociolinguistic research, participant e-journaling also allowed for a more complete picture of an interviewee’s experience. Johnstone (2000) supports this claim, stating that “it can be argued, in fact, that a complete view of the sociolinguistic competence of an individual or a social group, if the individual or the group lives in a literate world, must include a study of how they write and how they use writing” (p.121). In the present study, e-journals facilitated
comprehensive and reflective dialogue between participant and researcher and afforded the researcher the opportunity to follow-up with interviewees with any questions that emerged after formal interviews.

**Data Analysis and Coding**

Interview and e-journal responses were coded to facilitate the analysis offered in forthcoming chapters. The overall approach used to code data in the present study was narrative coding. Saldaña (2013) defines narrative coding as follows, describing how it applies the conventions of (primarily) literary elements and analysis to qualitative texts most often in the form of stories. Appropriate for exploring intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions to understand the human condition through narrative. Suitable for such inquiries as identity development, critical/feminist studies, documentation of the life course, and narrative inquiry. (p. 266)

Narrative coding was selected for the present study because it was most helpful in organizing the narrative data that was collected. Narrative coding provided a way to pull out key themes from the gathered data in order to explore families’ understandings of music listening experiences and values.

One slight modification is necessary to apply the above definition of narrative coding to the present study: “literary elements and analysis” must be replaced with “sociolinguistic terminology.” The sociolinguistic narrative coding executed in the present study is an example of discourse analysis; the process employed here “considers how language, both spoken and written, enacts social and cultural perspectives and identities” (Gee, 2005, introduction). Discourse analysis allows for scrutiny of both language form and function; this connects directly with the goal of this study in terms of a sociolinguistic evaluation of communication about music within the family unit.

Coding was the first step in analyzing gathered data. It was a process of labeling and sorting journal and interview responses. Coding involved labeling data with “a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (Saldaña, 2013, p. 3). Initial codes were inspired by Gee (2005), who outlines seven main points of concern for
discourse analysis; these include significance (meaning), activities (“the specific social activity or activities in which the participants are engaging” while talking (p. 98)), identities, relationships, politics (“the distribution of social goods” (p. 100)), connections, and sign systems and knowledge (how talk is oriented; what is valued or not valued.)

Once data was labeled with basic descriptors, common themes started to emerge that revealed connections between participating families’ experience and highlighted some unique experiences worthy of more specialized attention. Individual descriptors applied to the data were next organized into two basic categories for further analysis: description (data that addressed research questions about the nature of music listening within the case study families) and meaning (data that addressed research questions about music listening value and more complex themes around transmission of value.) These categories parallel the present study’s two broad research questions. Coding processes were inspired by several studies, including Pitts’s (2009) analysis of narrative life histories, Shiffrin’s (1994) discourse analyses within family situations, and Jørgensen and Phillips’s (2002) three-stage analytic procedure based on the work of Fairclough (1995a, 1995b). In particular, Jørgensen and Phillips’ procedures of coding interview and journal transcripts as text (looking at specific linguistic characteristics and content/word choices (p. 83)) and in terms of discursive practices (how text is produced and consumed (p. 82)) inspired the present study.

**Data Credibility, Validity, and Reliability**

Efforts have been made at every stage of this study to keep issues of data credibility, validity, and reliability in mind. Awareness of these issues at all steps of the process was essential to address challenges associated with qualitative sociolinguistic research, and to combat criticisms of this type of inquiry. Criticisms include concerns “that qualitative research is merely an assembly of anecdote and personal impressions, strongly subject to research bias” or “that qualitative research lacks reproducibility” (Mays & Pope, 1995, p. 4).

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4 Gee (2005) provides a very detailed guide to analysis of interview texts in Section 7.7 of his chapter on discourse analysis (pp. 110-112). This section outlines specific questions organized in the categories described in the above text which the researcher used to engage data.
This section examines credibility, validity, and reliability as they apply to the present study and clarifies ways in which these issues have been addressed.

**Credibility.** Credibility in qualitative research is defined as “the accuracy or truthfulness of the findings; similar in concept to internal validity in quantitative research” (Ary, Jacobs, & Sorenson, 2010, p. 639). Credibility assesses the truthfulness of a study’s findings. Marshall & Rossman (1999), referencing Lincoln and Guba (1985), assert that a study is credible when it demonstrates that the study subject was thoroughly and accurately identified and described (p. 192). Generally speaking, credibility speaks to the accuracy of a study’s reporting of procedures and findings.

This study has taken steps at all phases of the research project to ensure credibility. Phases, as outlined by Kirk and Miller (1986, p.60) include invention (preparation and design), discovery (observation and data collection), interpretation (evaluation, data coding, and the organization of collected data), and explanation (final analyses and presentation of findings.) This final document contains detailed descriptions of each stage. Every attempt has been made to describe, contextualize, and discuss how the study proceeded from inception to final analysis; it also highlights strengths and drawbacks of the design wherever appropriate or necessary.

One important note regarding credibility concerns a challenge faced in utilizing interviews to gather data. With interviewing, the researcher is left to grapple with issues of credibility as to the accuracy or truthfulness of gathered accounts. Seidman (2006) explains how the three-stage phenomenological interviewing process helps combat this by providing the researcher with several opportunities to clarify interviewee testimony and share researcher understandings to ensure accurate representation. This was employed in the present study through the Phase 2 e-journaling modification, which is further explained in the following section on validity. The e-journaling process allowed for issues and ideas brought forward by participants in their first interview to be further discussed and clarified. This study design modification was purposefully made in an attempt to enhance the present study’s credibility.

**Validity.** A study’s validity is determined by how convergent or correct the findings are deemed to be. Kirk and Miller (1986) define the term as “the degree to which
a finding is interpreted in a correct way” (p. 20). Determining the relative “correctness” of a qualitative study is a very difficult thing to do when, as is the case with the present study, much of the focus is on gathering description of the distinct realities of five specific families’ music listening environments. Johnstone (2000) points out that, with sociolinguistic research like that undertaken in the present study, the best thing researchers can do is to approximate validity by asking “whether we are really observing what we set out to observe” (p. 62). Validity in qualitative, sociolinguistic studies is based upon having labeled observations in the best way possible and having brought forward all possible variables for description. Every attempt has been made on the part of the researcher to ensure the present study has been labeled, organized, and presented in a thorough and comprehensive manner.

Other measures undertaken in the present study to approximate validity include triangulation: “the use of multiple methods or data sources in qualitative research to develop a comprehensive understanding of a phenomenon” (Carter et al., 2014, p. 545). This approach is also known as “diversity of method” (Kirk & Miller, 1985, p. 30). In the present study, the multi-method data collection approach of interviewing and e-journaling allowed for a more complete picture of participants’ experiences to be captured. This approach afforded participants opportunities to clarify previous statements. Many of the e-journal prompts were developed in response to previous statements made by respondents in their first interview. The e-journals lent some validity to the present study as they allowed for secondary responses that often expanded upon or confirmed comments gathered in the initial family interviews.

This focus on the present study’s validity also brings forward concerns with the transferability or generalisability of this study’s findings. If a study’s findings are correct, they should be transferred to other, similar individuals or populations. Stake (2000) cautions case study researchers from focusing on generalizing findings. He comments that “damage occurs when the commitment to generalize or to theorize runs so strong that the researcher’s attention is drawn away from features important for understanding the case itself” (p. 439). The present study was concerned with specific descriptions within five case study families that are then discussed in the context of the study itself (across
and between the families, making comparisons and highlighting commonalities where appropriate.)

This descriptive, multiple-case case study was not designed to yield findings that could be broadly applied; instead, the present study’s goal is rich description and detailed analysis within five distinct family discourse communities. Yin (2009) posits that “the real business of case study is particularization, not generalization” (p. 8). Compton-Lilly (2013) echoes Yin, remarking that “well-argued case studies will neither argue for or against generalizability, but will identify the types of information and insights that extend beyond a particular case” (p. 61). Comparison in the present study between and across participating families is encouraged but broader applications of findings is, by virtue of the case study approach chosen to yield the description necessary to address the outlined research questions, not always possible.

**Reliability.** Reliability considers the repeatability of a study, or “the degree to which the finding is independent of accidental circumstances of the research” (Kirk & Miller, 1986, p. 20). As with validity, Johnstone (2000) argues there is no clear-cut understanding of reliability in sociolinguistic research. She states that the best way to attempt to make a sociolinguistic study reliable is by trying something repeatedly by, for example, asking many different people the same questions (reliability within a study) or by having someone else repeat the study and obtain the same results (reliability across studies). She notes that “reliability and validity really involve having enough good evidence and examining it repeatedly and thoroughly, with a critical eye on one’s own assumptions” (p. 64). As with validity, reliability relies on the researcher being meticulously critical and concise in the organization and presentation of findings.

Marshall and Rossman (1999) see reliability as an unrealistic point of scrutiny for qualitative studies. They note that the real-world phenomena these studies attempt to engage make it impossible to replicate:

First… qualitative studies by their nature (and, really, all research) cannot be replicated because the real world changes. Second, by planning to keep thorough notes and a journal or log that records each design decision and the rationale behind it, research allow others to inspect their procedures, protocols, and decisions. Finally, by planning to keep all collected data in well-organized,
retrievable form, researchers can make them available easily if the findings are challenged or if another researcher wants to reanalyze the data. (p. 195)

These recommendations have been heeded in the context of the present study. Every step of this research process is described in this final document and the accompanying appendices provide ample supplementary information. Interviews and e-journals have been meticulously transcribed, organized, coded, and catalogued, and are readily available to researchers wishing to consult these findings to replicate the present study.

Mays and Pope (1995) note that, “as in quantitative research, the basic strategy to ensure rigour in qualitative research is systematic and self conscious research design, data collection, interpretation, and communication” (p. 110). This type of conscious, systematic reporting has been the goal at every stage of the present study. Methods and data are offered in a way where the research could be easily repeated and the goal has been to “produce a plausible and coherent explanation of the phenomenon under scrutiny” (Mays & Pope, 1995, p. 110). While the present study’s research methodology comes with challenges in terms of credibility, reliability, and validity, it is the approach necessary to engage the topic at hand: music listening, and the communication of music listening guidelines in family.

**Ethical Concerns and Limitations**

In the present study, every attempt was made to inform potential participants of the risks, benefits, and expectations of participation prior to becoming involved. Consent was sought and obtained from all study participants; this process was governed by the University of Western Ontario’s Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (NMREB), which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario (December 6, 2013). Appendix C includes all consent forms and provides detailed disclosures of the pre-study consent procedures.

Other ethical concerns associated with data collection methods must be addressed. Concerns specifically linked with interviewing include the intrusiveness of the methodology. Merriam (2009) offers the following comment on such concerns:
Interviewing—whether it is highly structured with predetermined questions or semi-structured and open-ended—carries with it both risks and benefits to the informants. Respondents may feel their privacy has been invaded, they may be embarrassed by certain questions, and they may tell things they had never intended to reveal. (p. 231)

Participants were provided with opportunities to ask questions at many stages throughout the study and were never pressured to respond to questions that may have made them feel uncomfortable or intruded upon. As is summarized in Chapter 7, participants were also asked to provide feedback on their impressions of study participation. No negative responses were received, aside from a few comments about the study asking difficult e-journaling questions that sometimes took a substantial amount of time to answer.

A further ethical concern with interviewing that requires some attention is the relationship between researcher and participants. In the present study, the researcher’s role was, as Roulston (2010) describes, “to provide a supportive, non-therapeutic environment in which the participant feels comfortable to provide in-depth descriptions of the life experiences of interest to the researcher” (p. 18). In order to create this kind of environment, each interview opened and closed with introductions, clarifications, and opportunities for participants to ask questions. The interviews featured open-ended, inquisitive questions that were, whenever possible, free of judgment or bias. Clear boundaries were established and maintained throughout the course of the interviews. The researcher’s role in these interviews was to learn from the interviewee and to gather descriptive data through participant responses to a set of sensitive questions. Framework questions and topics were outlined prior to the interview commencing, but the interview progressed in different directions based on participant responses.

In addition to concerns with interviewing, several limitations associated with e-journaling as a methodology must also be addressed. While e-journaling offers a host of benefits, there are also several limitations to this method. As Bracken (in press) points out, e-journaling is a type of asynchronous data collection that can lead to distortion and ambiguity because of the lack of synchronous communication between researcher and respondent. Respondents are given freedom to answer questions on their own terms—arguably a benefit that can also turn out to be challenging for the researcher when
participants forget to respond to e-journal prompts. The challenge of distortion was addressed in the present study by, whenever possible, following-up to clarify responses and asking the question again, when necessary, in a synchronous interview. The researcher was flexible with participants who struggled to send in responses. While some took longer than others, all five families completed all five weeks of e-journaling.

A general limitation or challenge associated with the present study’s methodology comes as a result of the sociolinguistic approach to analysis. Sociolinguistic theory, discussed at length in Chapter 4, informed and shaped data collection. Respondents offered both spoken and written responses in an attempt to offer a balanced perspective on their thoughts, opinions, and musical realities. As Wolfson (1997) points out, the dilemma of interviewing is one that sociolinguists must contend with:

> the fact that the interview is a speech event in our society makes it legitimate to ask questions of a personal nature of total strangers, but at the same time severely limits the kind of interaction which may take place within it, and therefore the kind of data one can expect to collect. (p.117)

In the present study, interviews attempted to capture natural discourse whenever possible but were constrained by the rules and format governing the research interaction.

The open-ended phenomenological interview and e-journaling strategy employed attempted to balance the structure of the interview as data collection method with the desire to elicit natural discourse and narratives from respondents. As Saville-Troike (1982) argues, interviewing to collect data of a sociolinguistic variety works best with little structure. Questions and journal prompts were open-ended and followed words and ideas brought forward by respondents. The researcher asked for clarification and sought elaboration by means of open-ended questions. Whenever possible, interviews took the form of conversations whereby respondents were encouraged to offer their experiences in an expanded narrative format.

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5 Speech events are “activities, or aspects of activities that are directly governed by rules or norms for the use of speech” (Hymes, 1974, p. 52). Interviews are commonly governed by rules like turn-taking between respondent and interviewer, and a distribution of power where one party asks questions and the other party answers.
Another strategy that helped elicit natural discourse whenever possible was conducting group interviews with the participating families and having families collectively complete e-journals. Wolfson (1997) contends “the point of recording group sessions rather than individuals is that the constraints inherent in a one-to-one interview are avoided and the normal patterns of group interaction will, it is hoped, overcome the constraints produced by the subjects’ knowledge that they are being observed and recorded.” (p.123) As was the case with Gumperz (1964) and Labov (1972a), having multiple parties present for an interview brought out normal, natural talk when studying people who usually interact with one another.

Even with these strategies in place as part of a larger, thoughtful study design, this approach is by no means without challenges and shortcomings. The present study has collected talk about talk about music listening in families, and, at times, even collected talk about talk about talk about talk (when discussing lyric content) in music. These many layers of analysis at times can distance the study from its initial goals. The methods used to study a phenomenon are what make it difficult to get to the phenomenon itself—an unfortunate irony! Every attempt has been made in the present study to collect data that represents natural talk in the family. Wolfson (1997) explains:

The important point to be made here is that there is no single, absolute entity answering to the notion of natural/casual speech. If speech is felt to be appropriate to the situation and the goal, then it is natural in that context (p.124).

The data collected in the present study represents a thorough and sensitive attempt to capture family discourse in as natural a setting as possible. Natural discourse here is understood to be appropriate to the context in which it occurs. Further discussion of limitations of the present study, including continued reflection on some of the above-mentioned ethical concerns, is offered in Chapter 7.

Conclusion

The present study was a qualitative, narrative sociological multiple-case case study that utilized a screening survey, two phases of Internet-facilitated interviews, and a phase of participant e-journals to collect descriptive data on music listening guidelines and
surrounding discourse within five families. The theoretical framework guiding the study and used to analyze gathered data is discussed in Chapter 4. Theory-driven, integrated analysis, illustrated with descriptive excerpts from interviews and e-journals, is then presented in Chapters 5 and 6.
Chapter 4: Theoretical Framework

This chapter discusses sociolinguistics and family script theory which, together, form the theoretical framework that guides this study of music listening in families. The chapter provides an overview of each area and discusses the particulars of these approaches as they relate to the present study. It also builds upon the terminology introduced in Chapter 2 and the outline of methodology offered in Chapter 3. The terminology reviewed in this chapter forms the basis for analysis of collected data, presented in Chapters 5 and 6.

Sociolinguistics

One component of the two-pronged theoretical framework that guides this study is sociolinguistics: “the study of language in relation to society” (Hudson, 1980, p. 1). Other terms often used interchangeably with sociolinguistics include “sociology of language” (see Peñalosa, 1981, for example), and “ethnography of communication (see Saville-Troike, 1982, for example.) It is a subdiscipline of linguistics that is “concerned with language as a social and cultural phenomenon” (Trudgill, 2000, p. 21) and “with identifying the social functions of language and the ways it is used to convey social meaning” (Holmes, 1992, p. 1). Coupland and Jaworski (1997) observe that “sociolinguistics is the best single label to represent a very wide range of contemporary research at the intersection of linguistics, sociology and social theory, social psychology, and human communication studies” (p. 1). It is an interdisciplinary field that unites linguistics, sociology, and anthropology; it also offers insights for political scientific, philosophical, and psychological research concerning human language use.

Sociolinguistic studies examine variability in language, the complexity of language, and the different situations in which language is used. Sociolinguistics seeks out connections between rules, patterns, and language use (linguistic study), and the social contexts in which language is enacted (sociological study.) Sociolinguistics is both empirical and theoretical; to study language in relation to society is to observe language use while also analyzing attributed meanings and the significance of use. The goal of the
sociolinguist is “to move towards a theory which provides a motivated account of the way language is used in a community and of the choices people make when they use language” (Holmes, 1992, p. 16). In the context of the present study, it serves as both a theoretical framework and as a methodological guide to study language use in families, and as a means to discuss the impact of shared discourses on music listening.

**History of sociolinguistics.** One of the first influential sociolinguistic works was conducted by Chomsky (1965), who expanded the study of linguistics to consider not just language itself but also language competence. Chomsky’s writings opened the door for contextual study whereby language could be viewed as a larger, more significant characteristic of human interaction. His early work was later built upon by Hymes (1974), who advocated for linguistics to study communicative competence. This term-expansion represented a further broadening and acknowledgement of the social, contextual, and interactive nature of language. In order to develop an accurate picture of language use and meaning, Hymes contended that all aspects influencing the transfer of knowledge between speakers must be acknowledged.

Other early pioneers in the field of sociolinguistics include Garfinkel, Goffman, and Sacks (see Shuy (1972) for a more detailed summary of historical contributions to the field). The first academic journals dedicated to reporting sociolinguistic research were *Language in Society*, which began in 1972, and *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, which came out in 1974. The first two noteworthy volumes of targeted readings on sociolinguistics were *Language and Culture in Society* (Hymes, 1964) and *Readings in the Sociology of Language* (Fishman, 1968). Together, these publications, alongside other early research, opened the door for deeper, context-sensitive examinations of the relationship between language and society.

Although it is an interdisciplinary field, sociolinguistics is predominantly comprised of sociological and linguistic research topics and approaches. Wardhaugh (2006) observes:

Both sociolinguistics and the sociology of language require a systematic study of language *and* society if they are to be successful. Moreover, a sociolinguistics that deliberately refrains from drawing conclusions about society seems to be unnecessarily restrictive, just as restrictive indeed as a sociology of language that
deliberately ignores discoveries about language made in the course of sociological research. (p. 13, emphasis in original)

Sociologists view language as a crucial aspect of human communication but, prior to sociolinguistics, tended to focus on the universality of language as opposed to studying its variability. Linguists tended to do the opposite, often studying language as individual “self-contained systems” (Peñalosa, 1981, p. 3). Sociolinguistics merged these two worlds to engage language as a social phenomenon. This development came as a result of recognition that language is evolving and context-dependent. Language is more than just a code used by individuals and groups; it is interactive and variable. It shapes and is shaped by the social situations in which it is used.

**Sociolinguistic research topics.** Sociolinguistic research encompasses all topics that examine how language behavior is socially organized; this includes not just language itself but also the attitudes and behaviors toward language and language-users. Fishman (1997) describes sociolinguistic research as a field that “examines the interaction between... the use of language and the social organization of behavior” (p. 25). Trudgill (2000) points out that this broad study of language is about capturing a social understanding of the uses of language in action by including corresponding behavior (p.2). Language is a powerful way in which people engage the world and, conversely, individuals’ experiences in the world are shaped by language. Wardhaugh (2006) asserts that:

much of what we find in linguistic behavior will be explicable in terms of people seeking to negotiate, realize, or even reject identities through the use of language. Language is a profound indicator of identity, more potent by far than cultural artifacts such as dress, food choices, and table manners. (p.6)

Language is a powerful way to explore and “try on” different identities, as Wardhaugh points out. Beyond serving as a means of exploration, he also asserts that language serves as a marker of identity; the content of our speech and factors like how and when we use particular words or phrases provides others with key information about how we believe we fit into the world.
Peñalosa (1981) observes that “human beings interact directly with each other in a variety of social contexts or settings and likewise influence each other in more indirect ways... what people say to each other and how they say it is a salient component of all such interaction and influence” (p. 3). Studying these interactions includes examining the use of certain languages, language styles or dialects, and specific characteristics of language: word choices, meaning (semantics), and sounds (syntax) (p. 3). He also discusses sociolinguistic studies looking at multilingualism, the impacts of industrialization and modernization on language, and how social and political policies can shape language in society.

In outlining the territory of sociolinguistic inquiry, Trudgill (2000) identifies several ways in which language and society interact—these represent diverse research territories, all ripe for sociolinguistic inquiry. Language can be studied in terms of the impact of social class, ethnic group, sex/gender, context of use, social interaction between speakers, nation, geography, contact (between different groups), and as a marker of humanity. Holmes (1992) acknowledges much of the same research territory as Trudgill, and adds to the list topics including multilingualism, stereotypes, politeness, attitudes to language, and the relationship between sociolinguistics and education.

Modern sociolinguistic inquiry also poses great potential for yielding robust research into personal and collective identity through the study of language use and understanding. Johnstone (2000) explains that “the list of variables we [sociolinguists] consider, which included biological characteristics such as age and sex and attributed ones such as gender and ethnicity, has been expanded to include things about people that are harder to see, such as social identification, tastes, and preferences as well as individual identity” (p. 3). This more recent expansion adds even more possibilities to the long and varied list of topics available to sociolinguistic researchers. This expansion highlights the sociolinguistic territory of interest to the present study—how language in the family is used, how its use shapes music listening value, and how it impacts the development of both individual and collective identities.

As was mentioned briefly in Chapter 2, it is important to acknowledge that the present study is about language use as opposed to examining language itself (through an examination of components such as grammar, pronunciation, dialects, accents, etc.) It
also should be noted that this study of music listening in families is different than work of Bright (1963), Feld (1974), and Power (1980), who study language as a symbolic structure or system in order to better understand music. The present study is about language use in the family context: what language is used, how and when it is used, what it means to members, and what impact it has on musical exposures and listenership values for family members.

**Approaches to sociolinguistic research.** Given the vast interdisciplinary territory of research in sociolinguistics, it is impossible to capture the wide array of approaches taken by sociolinguistic researchers in the limited space available here. Instead, the focus of this section will be on some of the fundamental ideas and terms that serve as entry-points for researchers studying human language in action. Many of these ideas inform the present study’s more detailed discussion and analysis offered in Chapter 6.

Saville-Troike (1982) provides a comprehensive outline of the components of communication, which she divides into three large categories: linguistic knowledge, interaction skills, and cultural knowledge (pp. 25-26). Linguistic knowledge includes verbal and non-verbal elements, patterns of these elements, range of possible element variation, and the different meanings variants take on in particular situations. Interaction skills deal more with how language is selected, interpreted, and perceived in different communication situations, along with the norms that govern interaction and interpretation. The focus of cultural knowledge is the social structure of language, the values and attitudes conveyed through and established by language, and enculturation processes through which language transmits knowledge and skills.

Saville-Troike’s three categories offer a summary not just of the different components that, together, comprise and inform human communication. This list also details different topics to be sociolinguistically studied. Any of the items listed above could be the basis for a study; research could also examine how different areas above relate, overlap, intercept, etc. The present study engages components from all three of the categories outlined above. Linguistic knowledge (including the actual words used) is discussed, alongside roles and relationships in family discourses, and the transmission of cultural knowledge and values by way of enculturation in the family. Chapters 6 and 7
use these categories as part of the sociolinguistic analysis of family discourse around music listening, and when discussing the different roles parents fill.

When examining language behavior, Holmes (1992) identifies four main factors to consider in order to capture the broadest picture possible: 1) The participants (who is speaking and to whom are they speaking); 2) social context of setting (where are they speaking); 3) the topic of conversation (what is the topic of conversation); and 4) the function (what is the purpose of the conversation) (p. 12). In order to study these factors, Holmes outlines four dimensions of analysis which include: 1) a social distance scale, which is concerned with participant relationships; 2) a status scale which also speaks to the relationships between participants; 3) a formality scale, relating to the setting or type of interaction; and 4) two functional scales related to the purposes or topic of interaction (pp. 12-15). In combination, these four factors and dimensions of analysis are useful as guides to identify the basic aspects of language in action. They are used in combination with Saville-Troike’s categories in Chapter 6 as elements to describe the context out of which the shared discourse discussed in the present study has emerged. Table 6 below combines these factors and dimensions of analysis, foreshadowing the discussion in Chapter 6; this Table also identifies the extremes along the continuum axes for each factor being analyzed.

**Table 6: Combining language factors and means of analysis as per Holmes (1992).**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Continuum axes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participants (who, to whom)</strong></td>
<td>Social distance</td>
<td>Intimate vs. distant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High solidarity vs. low solidarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Status</td>
<td>Superior vs. subordinate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High status vs. low status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Setting or social context (where)</strong></td>
<td>Formality</td>
<td>Formal vs. informal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High formality vs. low formality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Topic (what)</strong></td>
<td>Function</td>
<td>Convey referential information vs. affective information (objective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(*see Holmes below)</td>
<td>High information content/affective content vs. low (feelings of the speaker)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When it comes to the function (expanding the final category listed in the above table), speech can be further categorized in several different ways. Holmes (1992, p. 286) outlines several different speech function categories. Speech categories include:

- **Expressive** speech conveys the speaker’s feelings
- **Directive** speech attempts to influence someone’s behavior ("get someone to do something", p. 286)
- **Referential** speech offers information
- **Metalinguistic** speech provides commentary on language (pointing out a commonly used or interesting word)
- **Poetic** speech acknowledges language’s aesthetic features (e.g. a rhyme, tongue-twister)
- **Phatic** speech “expresses solidarity and empathy with others” (p. 286); conveys a social or affective message that offers a lot of insight about relations

Holmes argues that speech can serve one or more function and that the labels given to speech often vary from one linguist to another; none of the categories listed above should be seen as mutually exclusive or universal labels. The first three categories are widely recognized and are “fundamental functions of language, perhaps because they derive from the basic components of any interaction – the speaker (expressive), the addressee (directive) and the message (referential)” (p. 287). These different speech categories are discussed further in both Chapters 6 and 7 as they emerge within shared discourse captured by the present study.

**Language in families.** Trudgill (2000) observes that “a language can affect a society by influencing or even controlling the world-view of its speakers” (p. 13). The words we use shape what we do, what we think, and how we act. Holmes (1992) points out that “language varies according to its uses as well as its users, according to where it is used and to whom, as well as according to who is using it” (p. 246). Language reflects both physical and social worlds; languages across the globe feature lexicons of related words which differentiate terms rooted in contexts. At this most basic level, language defines who we are by differentiating the roles we play in varied contexts and situations. Kinship terms, used to define and differentiate relationships in and amongst families, are one such example of ways in which language shapes how we view the world.
The family represents a social group through which language is learned and language rules are disseminated to members. Sociologists distinguish between primary and secondary groups in society; the family and close-knit friendship groups are primary groups. These groups are central to the development of personality and becoming acculturated to society. Peñalosa (1981) points out that “it is in primary groups, particularly the family, where we learn our first language or languages and rules for their use. Primary group, socialization, and language acquisition are all closely tied together.” (p. 39). Secondary groups are far less involved, less personal, and have a lesser influence on personality and enculturation. These secondary groups include work and social organizations.

There is a body of sociolinguistic literature on families that examines this primary group’s role in developing and disseminating what Bernstein (1971) discusses as language codes (see, for example, Applegate, 1980; Arntson, 1977, 1982; Edelman, 1977; Hill & Varenne, 1981; Sondergaard, 1991; Vidal, 1972). Bernstein claimed that language codes established in the family impact children’s learning within and beyond the family. He identifies two types of codes, first identified as formal and public, and later as elaborated (“explicit, context independent, and have universalistic meaning” Arntson, 1982, p. 34) and restricted (“implicit, context dependent, and have particularistic meaning” Arntson, 1982, p. 34). Bernstein posited that children learn their social roles through language use within the family unit and, as a result, there exist strong connections between social class and language use in the family. Knowledge gleaned through language in the family can be transferred via codes.

While the present study asks questions different to those of Bernstein, it follows his theoretical gaze in the importance it places on the role of the family in language and broader cultural development. Building upon Bernstein’s work, Everts (2003) points out in his sociolinguistic study of humor in families that the influence of the family is especially strong when children are young and their language skills are still developing. He contends:

Members of a family typically share not only region and culture, but also immediate environment (i.e., housing) and history. Moreover, they tend to spend more time communicating with each other than with non-family members,
especially in the years when language style is first developing. A natural extension of individual conversational style, then, is the idea that members of a family develop a collective interactional style unique to that family. (p. 372)

Building upon this discussion, the family unit is engaged further in Chapter 5, when the case study families at the heart of the present study are introduced. There, sociolinguistic research is linked with literature in and about the family.

**Sociolinguistic terminology.** While sociolinguistics is an overarching, interdisciplinary term that encompasses many different approaches, the present study is best labeled under the sociolinguistic umbrella term of “descriptive sociology of language” (Fishman, 1997, p. 26). This approach “seeks to answer the question ‘who speaks (or writes) what language (or what language variety) to whom and when and to what end?’” (p. 26). The descriptive sociology of language is about everyday language usage, patterns of speech that are generally accepted by a group of language bearers—this is the main focus of the present study, and the type of sociolinguistic analysis conducted in forthcoming chapters. The descriptive sociology of language can be contrasted with the “dynamic sociology of language” (p. 26) which is more concerned with comparative studies that examine language variation between similar social groups or networks.

Within this framework, the present study connects written and spoken data with sociolinguistic concepts and ideas in attempt to describe and engage family dialogues around music listening. In order to do this, key sociolinguistic terms are used; these terms are outlined briefly here and engaged further in Chapter 6 as part of the present study’s focused analysis. These terms help discuss salient topics brought forward by the case study families.

**Key Terminology:**

- **Age:** Swann et al. (2004) define age as being “measured either as a continuous variable (in months and/or years) or... conceptualized in terms of life stages (e.g. childhood, adolescence, adulthood and old age)” (p. 7). They point out that age is an important social variable to discuss in many studies of language use. In the present study, child’s age is discussed in Chapter 6 as a variable that impacts
parental choices on what music is or is not appropriate for their children to listen to—one guideline which some parents use to limit exposure.

- **Age-Grading:** Wardhaugh (2006) comments that age-grading involves “using speech appropriate to your age group.” (p. 196). Age-grading is a common observation that age can influence or determine language use; younger and older speakers may differ in the way that they speak (Swann et al., 2004, p. 7).

- **Appropriateness:** In terms of language use, appropriateness concerns the relative correctness of language in different contexts. Parents play a key role in determining appropriate behavior for their children. Swann et al. (2004) comment that this notion has been impactful for the field of education, because “it suggests that children should be given access to powerful language varieties because their use is appropriate in a wide range of contexts. However, children’s home language varieties, where different, should be respected and seen as appropriate in other contexts” (p. 13).

- **Discourse:** Discourse is a term with many sociolinguistic meanings and usages. It refers to the ways in which language is used and the context surrounding and shaping its usage—a “particular way of talking about and understanding the world” (Jørgensen and Phillips, 2002, p. 1). Further, Gee (2005) uses the term to describe “ways of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity” (p. 21). For the purposes of the present study, discourse is used to represent the body of language and discussion shared amongst family members around music listening. Family scripts are used to discuss the body or content of a family’s shared music listening discourse.

- **Discourse Community:** The present study examines discourses in five family discourse communities. Bakhtin (1981) observes that society is made up of many smaller discourse communities. Little, Jordens, and Sayers (2003) define discourse community as “a group of people with sufficiently common interests to use a vocabulary of words and concepts, whose meanings are accepted and whose definitions are assumed, that are brought to bear on the subjects of the discourse”
These communities include “particular religions or churches… trades or professions… political organizations… belief systems, family groups, sporting affiliations” and others (p. 74). Community membership is based upon language use and an understanding of the shared language.

- **Intergenerational Transmission:** Chapter 2 offered a definition of this term in the context of music being culturally transmitted between family members. Language is not passed between generations in any genetic fashion; rather, it is “socially taught and learned” (Peñalosa, 1981, p. 16). Sociolinguistics adds another dimension to this, as the definition broadens to include language’s role in the transmission of music value. Transmission is discussed at length in Chapter 7.

- **Language:** Nettl (2005) describes language as “the body of vocal sounds” used to communicate information from one person to another (p. 51). He explains how “a language can further be defined in terms of its content, a set of words, or perhaps of culturally or structurally acceptable statements” (p. 51).

- **Register:** Language is used in different ways in different contexts; all varieties of language espoused by a community comprise that community’s verbal repertoire (Trudgill, 2000, p. 81). Within that, variance based upon occupation or topics are called registers. In the present study, the parent register will be discussed; the term is used as a way to collectively represent a verbal repertoire associated with the parent role.

- **Taboo:** Words that are considered taboo are avoided by speakers altogether (due to moral, religious, or aesthetic reasons) or in particular contexts. Swann et al. (2004) point out the relative nature of taboo determinations, stating that “what is considered taboo will differ in different cultural contexts and therefore serves as an indicator of social or cultural values” (p. 309). Examples of taboo words include swear-words, which, in the present study were also discussed as “curse words” or “bad words.” The notion of taboo connects with some parents’ listening restrictions; four of the five participating parents discussed their children not being allowed to listen to music that contained certain words. This is presented in Chapter 6.
One final, necessary clarification concerns the difference between talk, speech, and discourse. As outlined above, the present study is concerned with shared talk in the discourse community of the family. Analysis will focus on talk (informal, familiar communication by family members) and discourse (which is shared talk). In forthcoming chapters, the word speech is not used, in order to provide clarity between the focus on the discourse community of the family as opposed to the separate concept of the speech community (a different type of grouping that focuses more on “socialization and group solidarity” (Swann et al., 2004, p. 293)). This chapter does feature discussion of all three of these terms; this is necessary to honor their usages in the literature. For this reason, this chapter views speech and talk as interchangeable terms both referring to the above mentioned definition of talk as maintained throughout the remainder of this document.

Family Scripts

The second outlook that comprises this study’s theoretical framework is family script theory. The family script (Byng-Hall 1998, 1995, 1998) is used as a concept to discuss sociolinguistic discourse around the establishment and communication of music listenership guidelines within the family. In the context of the present study of music listening, a family script captures the totality of talk in the family—it is representative of the shared body of knowledge and values that is passed between parents and children in the family unit through discourse. This section provides background information on this framework and connects it to the preceding discussion of sociolinguistics. Together, family scripts and sociolinguistics help engage and explore many of the ideas brought forward by the case study families in the present study.

An introduction to script theory. Byng-Hall (1988, 1995, 1998) defines a family script as “the family’s shared expectations about what roles are to be played in various contexts, so that family members know their roles and enter on cue in unfolding family scenarios” (1998, p. 138). Family scripts are best used to describe transmission of information and behaviors between generations in a family, and tend to focus mostly on
parenting scripts (1995, p. 4). As a therapeutic tool, Byng-Hall described scripts as having provided:

> a bridge between the individual and the family, and between different generations. It proved possible to maintain a dialogue in which each person kept his or her own perspective within an overall systems framework. It also demonstrated that systems thinkers can usefully help to link various beliefs from different conceptual frameworks into a more complete story than each on its own; the whole is more than the sum of its parts.” (1998, p. 139)

Byng-Hall, in his role as family psychiatrist, was witness to families sometimes unknowingly using scripts to justify and perpetuate certain behaviors. Once identified and acknowledged, family scripts could be engaged in therapeutic settings as a way to change ongoing collective actions that might be detrimental to members of a family. Byng-Hall (1985) explains further that family scripts are belief systems that “connect generations” (p. 302), provide guidance for actions and stability (p. 303), and communicate shared expectations of how family members should act and interact (2008, p. 134). Borthwick and Davidson (2002) note that family scripts include “attitudes, taboos, expectations, myths, secrets, legacies” and represent “the value framework which exists from the very beginning of the child’s life as a result of, among other things, the parents’ own childhood” (pp. 60-61.)

In psychiatric literature and therapeutic settings, the family script is commonly embraced in a negative light. Generally speaking, a script can be used in these contexts as a way to discuss and address the transfer within a family of behaviors like domestic abuse or alcoholism (see Erskine, 2010 for examples of this type of script usage.) The focus also tends to be on how to change, edit, “re-edit” (Byng-Hall, 1979) or rewrite (Byng-Hall, 1995) family scripts, given that they perpetuate behaviors that can be harmful to family members. By identifying the script that allows a behavior to be perpetuated, therapists can intervene in an attempt to help families change how recurring situations within the unit are handled.

Byng-Hall (1995) used metaphors as a way to expand his notion of “script.” In his work with families, he found that this approach was relatable for families while also being easily understood:
The most compelling reason for using the term ‘script’ is that families understand it immediately. If they complain about how the same situation arises again and again, we are soon likely to find ourselves talking about scripts. Although I will probably have introduced the actual term ‘script’, it may soon be forgotten and a shared set of metaphors emerges in the discussion: old scripts, writing new scripts, and improvising.” (p. 23)

These metaphors describe family behavior and interactions as if they were acting in a play on a stage with their script guiding the action. Each family member takes on a different role in response to expectations outlined by the script; as family members fill these different roles, the dynamic within the family changes.

Beyond the influences of parents, script theory does reference the impact of outside influences including figures like teachers and peers (Byng-Hall, 1995). Birth-order also impacts the script—age and position in the family (first-born, second-born, etc.) can influence how children treat one another and are treated by their parents (see Dunn, 1993 and Sulloway, 1996 for examples of this; Borthwick & Davidson, 2002, also discuss birth ordering in their study.)

The present interpretation and use of the term takes an approach that, while used in a different context for different reasons, remains closely linked to the spirit of family scripts as first outlined by Byng-Hall. In the present study, the script is removed from the clinical setting and used instead as a way to examine the body of information and corresponding beliefs espoused by a family, and the ways this information is shared through discourse. Family scripts, as a concept, are used to discuss the overarching shared beliefs and ideas around music listening that provide guidance to family members. This is a selective but purposeful borrowing of the term. Family scripts are embraced in the present study in a more general and literal sense; “script” is still viewed as a metaphor but it is used to discuss the specifics of family talk. When analyzed using sociolinguistic terminology, the script is a helpful conceptual framework by which shared discourse can be collected, labeled, and analyzed.

**Family scripts and music listening.** The present study’s view of family scripts builds upon the work of Borthwick and Davidson (Borthwick, 2000; Borthwick & Davidson, 2002; Davidson & Borthwick, 2002). Their body of work demonstrates how family scripts can be used to analyze family talk in more general terms outside of the
therapeutic setting, including how family members talk about music. Their use of family scripts concerns children learning instruments, developing musical playing skills, and the role of the family. Scripts were useful in their discussion as they helped “describe specific roles within the family like those of “artist” and musician” as assigned to the children” by the families they studied (Davidson & Borthwick, 2002, p. 134). Davidson and Borthwick also discuss how scripts are flexible—parents can change their script in response to life events and transitions as children grow; this results in children’s musical identities changing in response.

In this context, the family script can be seen as a blueprint for listenership within the family; this term, which was introduced and defined in Chapter 2, takes into account the entire body of music listening the family engages in, including individual attitudes about preferred music and choices about what music to listen to, and the impact individual attitudes and choices have on other members of the family. Listenership is an aspect of an individual’s habitus, which, as Bourdieu explains, is the culmination of an individual’s preferences learned through social experiences (including consumption patterns and lifestyle.) The family script is a way to examine multiple individuals’ habituses together—it offers a way to discuss Bourdieu’s (1968/1993b) notion of family inheritance in a different light. This approach allows for a balanced discussion of individual and collective identities and experiences as they exist within the social convoy of the family.

In this study, the role of family therapist is recast as that of researcher, although it must be emphasized that no therapeutic intervention was conducted. Family events, songs, musical opinions, and experiences which impact the rules that govern musical listening in a family, normed through repetition and transmission between generations, comprise a family’s script. Interview and e-journal dialogues provide a window into each case study family’s listenership script. Descriptions and analysis offered in Chapters 5 and 6 focus on points of significance in particular families and across multiple families, and offer information in response to the research questions outlined at the outset of this document.
Scripts and narratives. The notion of “master narratives” as discussed by Nelson (2001) provides another way of viewing the idea of scripted behavior. She defines master narratives as “the stories found lying about in our culture that serve as summaries of socially shared understandings” (p. 6). Nelson defines this term as it relates to individual identities, especially those struggling to identify their place in a society where they do not see themselves valued by or reflected in the master narrative. This lack of appreciation and recognition can result in restricted opportunities which can lead to individuals’ identities being damaged. Nelson describes how, through developing a counterstory in response to society’s master narrative, individuals can be empowered to redefine themselves in the context of a new community which they choose. Counterstories serve as a way for individuals to reclaim control and respond to the narrative that may have damaged their identity in the first place.

While the territory of discussion offered by Nelson around this concept of master narrative is unrelated to the present study (Nelson talks a lot about individuals dealing with recovery from social oppression—how they forge new identities and reclaim a sense of self), the concept of master narrative has several connections to Byng-Hall’s notion of family script. These two terms both describe bodies of collected information that serve to influence, guide, and shape individuals. In the case of the master narrative, Nelson speaks to a societal script; in the case of family scripts, Byng-Hall identifies a body of guiding narrative established by and shared within the family. Both Nelson and Byng-Hall speak to the ways in which individuals identify themselves in relation to others, especially those who have power. In both master narrative and family script theory terms, individuals can choose to accept the narrative or challenge it. Either way, the self is identified in a broader context of external influences and ideas.

Nelson’s work on master narratives owes much to the earlier work of moral philosopher Alasdair MacIntyre (1981/2007). Nelson (2001) notes that “the communities into which we are born and reared—families, neighborhoods, nations—have been accorded special significance by communitarians by Alasdair MacIntyre” (p. 9). MacIntyre offers a philosophical and historical examination of the notion of virtue (a human quality first discussed in the early philosophical writings of Aristotle and Homer, among others) and its absence in modern society. As part of his discussion of virtue,
MacIntyre details how narratives constructed by individuals comprise our history. Individuals are more than just actors—they are also authors who chronicle their actions in history. History is a collection of narratives which document and reflect on action. But MacIntyre is quick to caution that this process is a collaborative one, noting that, “we are never more than coauthors of our life narratives” (p. 213). He goes on to provide a lengthier comment on the topic:

If a person’s identity is constituted by the content of her self-narrative, that content comprises those features of our lives and ourselves that we care most about, there is also an extent to which our identities are constituted by the content of other people’s narratives—the features of our lives and ourselves that they care most about.” (p. 81)

Individuals’ narratives are mutually influential. In the context of a family where mutual relationships tend to tie one another together in tight bonds, the sharing of narratives also constitutes a process of shared identity construction.

In terms of script theory, MacIntyre’s discussion of narrative can be seen as one way of describing the content of a script. MacIntyre himself talks about narratives in a literal sense, where they serve as a way to transmit understandings, information, and values by man who is ultimately a “storytelling animal” (p. 216). He observes that:

It is through hearing stories… that children learn or mislearn both what a child and what a parent is, what the cast of characters of the world are. Deprive children of stories and you leave them uns Typed, anxious stutterers in their actions as in their words. (p. 216)

These stories, shared through narrative, form the body of scripts which come to comprise the collective, formative history of a family. MacIntyre discusses how shared narratives offer information to families about the family itself and about greater society.

Aside from MacIntyre, Nelson’s (2001) notion of master narrative also builds on the work of family therapist Salvador Minuchin (1974) who is credited with developing structural family therapy (a situated therapy which focuses on relationships between individuals and uses inventions informed by these relationships to address dysfunction and harmful family behaviors.) Reflecting on the work of Minuchin, Nelson argues that:
When we are children, we live inside the larger narrative that is our family’s history, and the stories our parents and grandparents tell us about their own and our other relatives’ lives add to our sense of ourselves” (p. 8).

Minuchin states further that “the individual influences his context and is influenced by it in constantly recurring sequences of interaction” (p. 9). These sequences speak to the scripted, repeated family-member behaviors that were also observed by Byng-Hall.

Together, the work of Nelson, MacIntyre, and Minuchin help elaborate the notion of family scripts through their discussions of identity construction, narratives, and ways in which identities and narratives are socially constructed. When put into the context of the family, these authors’ observations and ideas further illustrate how the construction of a family’s collective history/narrative/script is a process through which and by which individuals’ histories/narratives/scripts are also forged.

**Connecting family scripts and sociolinguistics.** A family script represents a collection of information shared through discourse within the family unit. The script is a metaphor for that information—in the case of the present study, it contains information about what music to like, when to listen, how to listen, what music is important and what is not, and so forth. Byng-Hall (1995) calls the family script a “familiar pathway” (p. 3) by which rules and routines like these are established, communicated, maintained, and challenged. The information captured in scripts is established by listening experiences within the family, through talk about music, and through the communication, enforcement, modeling, and challenging of rules about what music is allowed and not allowed in the family unit.

Family scripts serve as both a theoretical and a practical concept, as mentioned by Byng-Hall (1985). They simultaneously represent: 1) the way in which rules or routines around music listening are both established in the family and communicated to members; 2) the resulting legacy created by rules, routines, and discourse about music within a family unit. As a practical framework, family scripts offer a way to discuss the family “practice” of talking about music as it occurs in everyday settings. Theoretically speaking, script theory offers a conceptual way to analyze and discuss what this talk means and how the individual parts (the individual family members) come together through discourse. Table 7 below offers a brief summary of how sociolinguistics, other
key terminology (see Chapter 2), and script theory operate in tandem as the theoretical backbone underpinning the present study. This table foreshadows the forthcoming analysis presented in Chapter 6.

Table 7: Relationships between key terminology and script theory.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sociolinguistic/Sociological Terminology</th>
<th>Framed in terms of family scripts</th>
<th>Used to discuss...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discourse, Discourse Community</td>
<td>The content of the family script is based upon discourse shared within the discourse community of the family</td>
<td>The particulars of discourse within a family. Family is analyzed as both a social convoy and a discourse community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intergenerational Transmission, Linked Lives</td>
<td>Script theory acts as bridge between and across generations. Byng-Hall (1985) states that “family scripts connect generations. Every script has its origins in each parent’s family script taken from their own family of origin and blended into a new plot. Because generations overlap the latest generations may be inducted into the previous generation’s script, often at age specific times.” (Byng-Hall, 1985, p. 302). Scripts are a useful tool to discuss the intergenerational transmission of value by way of parent register and listenership roles; talk between generations conveys information connected with topics like age appropriateness and taboo. The sharing and dissemination of scripts</td>
<td>The guidelines shared between family members, and how the information is transmitted. These terms are also useful to conceptualize how the sharing of this information creates and strengthens relationships.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
is the means by which children acquire received pronunciations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Script theory can be used as a tool to capture and analyze interactions. The talk captured in a script offers insights into what individual members of the family think and what they value, which informs how they see themselves in the world. Families are comprised of people with both individual and collective identities.</th>
<th>Individuals’ habits, attitudes, choices, which, in the family, are simultaneously individual and collective. The script conceptualization offers a way to look at how individuals impact collective identities and vice versa.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legacy</td>
<td>A family script, as a concept, is a way to codify information, identities, values, and preferences within the family. The script acts as a mechanism by which information is connected to music and then transmitted between family members. Analyzing a script’s content, in a very literal sense, allows for descriptions and interpretations that, together, lead to discussion of more abstract concepts like family legacy and value.</td>
<td>Terminology like family’s legacy (musical genealogy, musical heritage, musical lineage.) A legacy results from the transmission and perpetuation of information between generations, all of which is captured in and communicated by the script.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The goal of this analysis is to pull apart discourse shared within the family by way of terminology-driven sociolinguistic analysis. From there, script theory facilitates higher-level analysis by broadening the focus to the impact or result of the sociolinguistic analysis.

When coupled with sociolinguistics, script theory allows for individual habituses to be discussed in terms of how influences, opinions, and experiences work together in the family—how information and knowledge are transmitted, what it means, and how it
shapes and is shaped by the family unit. Bourdieu’s notion of habitus, introduced in Chapter 2, is relational and concerned with social interaction. It is shaped by context and exemplary of a relational mode of thought (Maton, 2008, p. 61.) Habitus is concerned with dualisms like the social and individual, and represents “the social embodied” (Maton, 2008, p. 64.) While this may add another layer of terminology and analysis to an already thick stack of theory, Bourdieu’s notion of habitus is embraced in the present study as a way to analyze and discuss an individual’s musical listening values, a family’s music value, and the interaction between these two domains. It is through habitus that individuals are linked to others; the contents of individual habituses may differ from one person to another, but the structure can be shared. The family script is the means of discussing the shared structure of habituses communicated via language (discussed in particulars using sociolinguistics); the script is a metaphor for the communicative legacy or sum of habituses that influences, shapes, and is shaped by discourse within the family.

**Conclusion**

The notion that a family script is more than the sum of its parts is something that Byng-Hall himself acknowledged; the script is an effective way to capture a family’s complete story or, as it is described in the present study, a family’s legacy. It acts as a collective, collected representation of a family’s shared understanding of the value of music, and the ways in which those values guide listening for its members. The next step in the present study is to meet the five case study families before moving forward with analysis of the collected data. Chapter 5 introduces the study participants, profiles each family in turn, and sets the groundwork for the analysis of Chapter 6; this discussion is offered in the context of literature on music in/and the family.
Chapter 5: Music in/and the Family

A child “grows into the social structure of his family as a grafted bud becomes part of the tree; not by any sudden, abrupt operation, but by a gradual absorption of the life, the flow of energy, and the life process. He is modified by the activities and attitudes of the home, as expressed by constrained silence, casual expression, or free conversation.”

(Elmer, 1945, p.407)

Introduction

The family plays a critical role in enculturating and socializing its members. Campbell (2010b) stresses the important initial role that family plays, stating that “children are born within the intimacy of families, and it is there in this closest and most constant social unit that children first learn the cultural patterns that define them” (p. 64). When it comes to music, from an early age, musical exposures shape children’s musical identities; Campbell identifies the family as the “primary locus of children’s musical meaning-making” (p. 66). She observes that children “begin the formation of their musical identities within the nuclear culture of their families” (p. 61). This influence includes the transmission and modeling of both musicianship and listenership guidelines; the focus of the present study is on the latter.

Family is an influential domain that impacts talk about music and the listenership guidelines that govern musical exposure. Through discourse, family members put forth individual thoughts and participate in shared discourse; talk about music is one component of the collective discourse which impacts and is impacted by individual identities, preferences, and opinions. Through language, family members create collective scripts that capture and then transmit ideas about what music matters and what music should be avoided (among other information.) This chapter profiles the participants in the present study and connects the basic information about these families to themes and trends found in literature on music in/and the family. It offers preliminary analysis by way of music-use profiles of each of the families and offers insight into the “music textures of home” (Campbell , 2010a, p. 92). These introductions and base-level analyses
are built upon in Chapter 6, wherein the content of shared discourse within the families becomes the primary focus of discussion.

**Discussions of the Family**

Thus far in this document, family has been examined from many different angles. In Chapter 1, extant research on music in the family on which the present study builds was presented. Topics included musical parenting of infants, infant-mother singing, parental influence on and involvement with musical development (mostly focusing on children learning how to play an instrument), parental influence on development of popular/career musicians, and factors that enable a student to become a performer, (mostly focusing on “gifted” or high-achieving students). Together, these subjects provided a detailed picture of many ways in which music exists in the family while also helping to identify how the present study fits into an existing body of rich and detailed research.

Chapter 1 highlighted several key articles which, together, form the inspiration and outline the need for the present study. Boer and Abubakar (2014) point out the lack of research on the function of music within the family unit. Their study of music listening in families examined the influence of music listening rituals on family unity and the emotional security of adolescents in the family. Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves (2001) discuss the influence of both home and school music listening on adolescent identity development. They found that music fills different roles in different contexts, with both settings being greatly influential. ter Bogt et al. (2011) discuss the important role parents play in modeling music consumption and how parents provide the first musical “climate” through the family—a climate which is shaped by parents’ musical tastes (p. 302). Borthwick and Davidson (2002) also found that parental influence shapes children’s musical identities. Through the formation of family scripts, parents transfer information to their children; in the case of their study, that information concerned learning to play an instrument.

Chapter 2 featured a more detailed literature review that examined research relevant to the present study. Music education and sociological literature demonstrated the family’s place as a discourse community in which shared language influences its
members’ preferences and values. Here, Bourdieu was introduced through an examination of the family’s role in transmitting cultural capital which shapes *habitus*. Music education literature only echoed this importance, illuminating in many contexts the family’s role in transmitting, among other things, musicianship skills. Chapter 2 also offered a definition for “family.” This study embraces the term as a social convoy—a term first introduced by Kahn and Atonucci (1980)—which describes a group of two or more people whose lives are linked together. Studying a social convoy is studying a group as they move together through time. The only external restriction placed on the term is that the members of the social convoy cohabit.

The discussion of methodology in Chapter 3 introduced the families in the context of the present study’s design. The basics of the survey taken by all participating families were presented, and the data collection process was detailed; this included questions given to parents and children in both interviews and journals. Chapter 4 took the examination of the family to a deeper level, engaging it as a domain for sociolinguistic research. We see the family discussed here as a primary social group that develops personalities and enculturates its members. Discussion in Chapter 4 highlighted how family members spend more time communicating with one another than with non-family members and how family members often develop “a collective interactional style unique to that family” (Everts, 2003, p. 372). This chapter set the groundwork for discussion of family as a discourse community—family as a body of interactions through which rules for conduct are established and communicated. The totality of this body of discourse is a family’s script which represents a “family inheritance” (Bourdieu, 1968, p. 24) or collection of shared, transmitted values.

**Case Study Families – Meet the Participants**

The next step in this study of music listening in families is to put a face—or, more accurately, eleven faces—to the preceding more abstract, theoretical, and literature-based discussion of “family.” Five families from Miami-Dade County, in which neither parent self-identified as a musician, participated in this study of music listening in families. Each family included at least one parent participant and at least one child participant; one
of the participating families included two children. The original plan for this study was to purposefully select the five case study families from a pool of potential participants; from there, families would be selected based on clustered demographic characteristics in order to focus the study on a specific, similar pool of families. As was indicated in Chapter 3, the five families who ended up participating in the study were the only respondents. As such, purposeful sampling of the participants was not possible.

This section profiles each of these families, offers basic demographic information collected via the study’s screening survey, and summarizes responses given by the families to questions about music use and exposure in the family. Specific child ages are indicated in the profiles. All mothers who participated identified in the age range of 30-39. The five families are identified throughout the study using pseudonyms.

**The Alonzo family (Pamela and Alicia):** The Alonzo family consisted of a mother, Pamela, and daughter, Alicia. Pamela was separated from Alicia’s father who had since remarried. Alicia was 11 years old and in Grade 5. Pamela worked as a coordinator of a community-based program. Pamela was born in Argentina to American and Argentinean parents; she had lived in the US for most of her life. Her first language was Spanish; both English and Spanish were spoken at home. Alicia was born in Miami and had lived in the US for her whole life. As a family, Pamela and Alicia liked to take trips to the beach; they also enjoyed shopping and cooking together.

**The Cruz family (Lisa and Deborah):** The Cruz family consisted of two daughters and a mother, Lisa. The youngest daughter (age 3) did not participate in the study. Lisa was divorced from Deborah’s father. Lisa’s eldest daughter Deborah participated in the study; she was 8 years old and in Grade 2. Lisa worked as an arts administrator. Lisa was born in Venezuela to Venezuelan parents; she had lived in the US for most of her life. Her first language was Spanish; both English and Spanish were spoken at home. Deborah was born in Miami and had lived in the US for her whole life. As a family, Lisa and Deborah liked to spend time together at the park and went on trips to far-off destinations.

**The Morales family (Nancy and Liam):** The Morales family consisted of a mother, Nancy, her husband, and two children (a son, Liam, and a 14-month-old daughter). Nancy and Liam were the two members of the family who participated in the study. Liam was 9 years old and in Grade 3. Nancy worked in community outreach. She was born in Colombia to Colombian parents but had lived in the US for most of her adult life. Her first language was Spanish; both English and Spanish were spoken at home. Liam was born in Miami and had lived in the US for his whole life. As a family, Nancy and Liam liked to go camping, watch movies, dance, and eat together.
The Santiago family (Brandy and Laura): The Santiago family consisted of a mother, Brandy, her husband, and three daughters (ages 4 years old, 22 months old, and Laura who was age 6). Brandy and Laura participated in the study. Laura was in Kindergarten. Brandy was a former librarian who now stayed at home full-time with her three daughters. She was born in the US to Cuban and Spanish parents; she had lived in the US her entire life. Both English and Spanish were spoken at home. Laura was born in Miami and had lived in the US for her life. As a family, Brandy and Laura liked to watch movies and go out for dinner together.

The West family (Amy, Kevin, and Kyle): The West family consisted of a mother, Amy, her husband, and her two sons, Kevin and Kyle. All members of the West family were African American. Amy, Kevin, and Kyle were the only members of the West family to participate in the study. Kevin was 11 years old and in Grade 5. Kyle was 13 years old and in Grade 7. Amy was married and worked as a teacher. She was born in the US, where she had lived her entire life. English was spoken in the home. Both Kevin and Kyle were born in the US and had lived there their entire lives. As a family, Amy, Kevin, and Kyle enjoyed exercising, going to church, and watching TV together.

Demographics. The five mothers who participated in the study provided basic demographic information as part of their first e-journal. This information is compiled below in Table 8.

Table 8: Demographic comparisons across five participating families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Race</th>
<th>Religious Affiliation</th>
<th>Highest Completed Level of Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Net Household Income</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alonzo</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>White, Hispanic</td>
<td>Humanist views</td>
<td>Four-year college or university degree</td>
<td>Separated</td>
<td>$30,000-$39,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>Four-year college or university degree</td>
<td>Divorced</td>
<td>$50,000-$59,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>30-39</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>Four-year college or university degree</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>$40,000-$49,999</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As the demographic information indicates, the group of five mothers who participated in this study did end up, by chance, being fairly homogenous. All were between the ages of 30 and 39 years. All of the mothers had at least a four-year college or university degree.

If you consider number of members in the household, net household income was fairly similar across the five families; the smallest family (Alonzo – two members) had the smallest income, while the largest family (Santiago – five members) had the largest. Differences emerge in race, religion, marital status. This study is, therefore, focused on a pool of families who share the following common traits. The five participating mothers are residents of Miami-Dade County with at least one child, are of similar ages, incomes, and educational backgrounds, and do not self-identify as musicians. The six children participating in the study range in age from 6 years old to 13 years old and include both males and females.

**Socioeconomic status (SES) and participant families.** The demographic information gathered provides a picture of the socioeconomic status (SES) of the five participating families. SES takes into account the total social and economic reality of family as determined by factors which include income, education, and occupation—it is a useful measure to position a family or individual in relation to others. The labels of “high,” “middle,” and “low” SES pertain to the amount or level of each of the factors considered in assessment. These subdivisions offer a way to connect and describe the relationship between different social and economic factors within a family, a way to connect these factors with observations of what is actually going on in the family (the
effect or impact of SES), and a way to make comparisons across and between different families.

SES is built upon the work of Weber (1947) whose writings first labeled different classes of people as working, lower-middle, intelligentia, and upper middle. Warner et al. (1949) built upon Weber’s work, offering a model whereby classes were identified as upper, middle, and lower (and further subdivided as upper-upper class, lower-upper class, upper-middle class, lower-middle class, upper-lower class, lower-lower class). Warner’s model has since been expanded by Gilbert (2002) and Thompson and Hickey (2005); these latter examples have different labels for the classes but maintain Warner’s original six hierarchical levels. More modern writings about groupings of people favor SES over social class and/or use the terms interchangeably. Weber’s initial ideas concerning class have since been built upon, contextualized, and broadened in modern sociological literature in order to reflect and enable discussions of the connections between economic and social factors. Hoff-Ginsberg and Tardif (1995) explain that SES “connotes a more continuous variable” whereas social class “implies discrete categories of people” (p. 166).

The five families participating in the study are representative of a similar socioeconomic status or class—they are all members of the middle class, with the Santiago family belonging more specifically to the upper-middle class. This is indicated by similar household incomes and mothers’ education level. The case study families represent a fairly homogenous group with similar incomes and education. Four of the mothers work outside of the home; the fifth mother (from the Santiago family) currently stays at home with her young children but has a college education and, previous to having her children, worked outside of the home. Leondar-Wright (2014) comment that membership in the American middle class is usually indicated by at least a four-year college education, homeownership, and moderate economic security where members are employed but employment is necessary to pay bills. Middle class people differ in terms of culture, political beliefs, values, and race, but are, for the most part, white. Upper-middle-class people tend to possess more wealth usually from higher incomes (they still work), allowing them more luxuries and travel opportunities than middle-class families.
Relationships between parenting styles and SES have received increased attention in recent studies; there is some evidence to suggest that parenting styles differ by class (see Lareau, 2002, Roopnarine et al. 2006, and Tudge et al. 2000, for examples). Hoff-Ginsberg and Tardif (1995) argue that:

Parents from different socioeconomic strata rear their children differently, partly in response to the different circumstances in which they live. Parents from different socioeconomic strata also rear their children differently because they are themselves different sorts of people with different characteristic ways of interacting with the world—their children included. (p. 161)

In music education literature, there is evidence to suggest that middle-class parents tend to be very involved in their children’s learning (see, for example, Cutietta, 2003, and Gembris and Davidson, 2002).

Lareau (2011) contends that SES is a way to identify mechanisms that undergird rituals; it allows for certain things to happen and certain things to be priorities that might not be if money and parental education were not present. Through “naturalistic observations” (p. 8), Lareau examined daily life in twelve families; she was curious about what a childhood should look like, asked who should be/is in charge of it, and considered all of this in terms of how different social structures, class, gender, and race impact child growth and development. Lareau observed that “social class dynamics are woven into the texture and rhythm of children and parents’ daily lives” (p. 236); all families had rituals but they were different from one family to the next. She found that social practices within low and middle/upper-middle class families “cohere by social class” (p. 236). For her, SES offered a way to group families into categories while still maintaining an appreciation for the complexity of everyday life. As with Lareau, the present study uses SES as a way to engage with the messiness and complexity of real, everyday life.

SES offers a way of narrowing in on the way that influences and resources shape the atmosphere or reality of the family at least in the context of the mother-child dyads discussed in the present study. It is also a way to connect the social and economic realities of the family to the way the family operates, and to the values and beliefs shared by family members. Income, education, and occupation shape who we are, what we do, and what we can do; they structure family life and are the backdrop for decisions,
experiences, interactions, and the results of these decisions, experiences, and interactions. SES provides layers of description that in many ways show commonalities shared between these families—it can help identify the “type” of families (in very broad terms) from which the findings captured here emerge. The type of talk discussed here and the beliefs examined within these families can be seen as emerging from a group of similar middle-class families.

Expanding Weber’s (1968 [1922]) examination of class, status, and lifestyle, Bourdieu (1984) points out that there is a strong relationship between an individual’s class position and their cultural preferences and tastes; one’s SES impacts the experiences and values that allow for cultural capital to be built. As mentioned in Chapter 2, cultural capital in the case of the present study refers to knowledge and skills around the consumption of music. There is a large body of literature that shows class influences social action and outcomes; much of this literature has to do with education—different classes raise children in different ways (e.g. Devine, 2004; Gillies, 2006, 2007; Irwin and Elley, 2011; Lareau, 1987, 2002, 2011; Lareau and Horvat, 1999; Power et al., 2003; Reay, 1998, 2005.) While this literature informs the present study, the current focus is not on transmission of advantages or disadvantages but, rather, is focused on talk around music listening and how shared discourse in the family develops a collective *habitus* that, in turn, shapes individual *habituses*. Cultural capital is a major component of one’s *habitus*, which is greatly impacted by the collective family *habitus* (all of which is buttressed and shaped by different social and economic factors). One major component of the knowledge and skills about cultural consumption which are a part of cultural capital are music listening guidelines (as a component of musical taste.) These constructs and terms are helpful ways to connect the many cultural influences of and in the family to individual members of the family.

**Music in participating families’ lives.** This next section builds upon the demographic profiles of the families and the discussion of the homogenous pool of participants with an examination of the musical realities of the five participating families. The descriptive responses gathered through interviews and journals offer insights into and descriptions of how music was present in each family, and the way music was used
by family members. While the study limited participating families to those in which both parents did not self-identify as musicians, music-making did factor into this discussion. Parents and children both reflected on times (past and present) in which they made music—this contributed to the sonic landscape of the family. Alongside the basic demographic profile, this information provided another dimension of description which facilitates a deeper understanding of the study’s participants. It sets the backdrop for analysis.

All families were asked in the initial interview to describe the musical landscape within their family. Families were asked if they listened to music, and if, yes, how present they felt music was in their family. All five families indicated that music was either present or very present in their lives. Nancy Morales (mother) described her family’s listening habits as follows: “we’re not, like, super musical (laughs) but, I guess, when we have, like, get-togethers at home, you know, we play music.” Of the five families, the Alonzo and Cruz families indicated music was very present. Lisa Cruz (mother) described her family as follows: “whenever we go inside the house or outside, we always have music on.” Families were also asked, in broad terms, how they listen to music; all five families reported they listened to music both independently and together.

Each member of each family participating in the study discussed, as part of their responses to several different questions, what types of music they enjoyed listening to. Below is a summary of some of the artists and genres mentioned by members of each of the families:

**The Alonzo Family**: Both mother and daughter mentioned liking many of the same artists which included Jason Mraz, Katy Perry, and One Direction. Pamela (mother) mentioned liking Matt Nathanson; Alicia (daughter) said she struggled with his music because of unclear lyric meaning. The music from the movie *Wicked* was also discussed several times.

**The Cruz Family**: Lisa (mother) discussed liking a mix of music, including Latin music, music from the 1970s, the 1980s, Katy Perry, Michael Jackson, the BeeGees, and the Beatles. Deborah (daughter) mentioned liking One Direction, Lady Gaga, Lorde, and Justin Timberlake. She also said she used to like Katy Perry but did not anymore.

**The Morales Family**: Liam (son) mentioned liking Macklemore, Michael Jackson, and Metallica. Nancy (mother) talked about listening to hip hop.
The Santiago Family: Brandy (mother) discussed liking classical music, country, and some “embarrassing songs” by artists like One Direction. She mentioned liking “folksy” music which she described as music “where you can hear the instruments more.” Laura (daughter) talked about liking Britney Spears, Lady Gaga, Katy Perry, Nicki Minaj, Bruno Mars, and Maroon 5.

The West Family: Amy (mother) talked about listening to “old school” music from the eighties and that she really “likes everything” when it comes to music. She also mentioned listening to Kanye West, Guns ‘N Roses, gospel, and R&B music. Both sons mentioned listening to John Legend, Drake, and rap music. Kyle (older son) mentioned listening to Katy Perry.

There was overlap, in many cases, between the music liked by the parent and their child/children. This introduction to musical preferences and exposures is built upon in Chapter 6 wherein the notion of intergenerational transmission of value is discussed, illustrating ways in which shared discourse within families connects parent with child and greatly influences preferred music. It should also be noted that a line in the semi-structured interview scheduled pursued answers to questions about music’s place in society—its larger purpose and function (see Chapter 3’s overview of Phase 1 questions inspired by work of Crafts et al., 1993 and Koskoff, 1982). While interesting, the answers received fell outside the scope of the present study and/or reiterated answers to questions herein summarized in other sections. As such, they are not presented as a separate section in this chapter.

The descriptions offered thus far detail a group of parents who, connecting back with the earlier discussion of SES, represent a homogenous pool of participants. All of the participating mothers are in the same age range and have children who are roughly the same age. Another way to discuss this homogeneity is to view the mothers as representing a specific birth cohort: they are a group of women with similar experiences governed by time. The unique historical circumstances in which these mothers live and raise their children impact the decisions they make. The section that follows offers descriptions of technology usage common to this particular cohort, which offers another way to describe how the pool of parental participants was quite similar. Many of the characteristics of technology use discussed in the following section provide examples of cohort differences in the role of technology in music listening habits. The intersection of
their cohort with technology has an impact on how they consume and come to understand music, and how they then, in turn, convey their understandings and experiences to their children. Music listening habits or characteristics of this cohort described in the sections to come, as demonstrated by these five mothers, include use of streaming devices to listen to music, not purchasing or owning music, and the primacy of the car as a setting for music listening.

**How do you listen to music?** Having established that the participating families listened to music, the next question asked in each initial group interview attempted to capture sources or means of musical exposures for the participating families. Many of these exposures were discussed in greater detail throughout journals and in the final interviews as well. The goal here was to establish, in general terms, the ways in which the participating families interacted both collectively and individually with music. Table 9 offers a summary of sources and means of musical exposures for the participating families.

**Table 9: Sources/means of musical exposures for participating families.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Pandora*</th>
<th>Spotify*</th>
<th>YouTube (videos)</th>
<th>Live concerts</th>
<th>Radio in car+</th>
<th>Radio at home</th>
<th>iTunes</th>
<th>TV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alonzo</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Pandora and/or Spotify was/were accessed by phone or computer. The eldest three children in the study reported having their own phone (Alicia Alonzo, both West children.)

+ The Cruz family reported listening to 97.3FM (Top 40), 101.5FM (“lite music”), and 107.5FM (Spanish station; “Música Romántica”); the Morales family talked about listening to NPR; the Santiago family reported listening to 93.9FM (Top 40, “variety”), Y100.7FM (Top 40), and “a country station.” The West family talked about listening to 90.9FM (Christian, “lite music”), “gospel,” Hot 105 (105.1FM; R&B Hits and Oldies), 99 Jams (99.1FM; Hip Hop and R&B).
All five families indicated that Pandora (a searchable, customizable Internet radio program), YouTube, and the radio in the car were sources of musical exposures for both children and parents. Other exposures included Spotify (similar to Pandora), live concerts, radio in the home, iTunes, and the TV. The sources or means of musical exposures for these families echoed findings of a poll conducted by Social Science Solutions of Media on behalf of CBS News in April 2014. The telephone poll was conducted in Spanish and English, included 1,017 American adults, and featured questions about favorite artists, genres, and musical activities. The first question collected data on how respondents listened to music; the graphic below offers a summary of their findings (from http://www.cbsnews.com/news/60-minutes-vanity-fair-music/).

![Graph showing music listening preferences]

**Figure 1:** Responses to question “How do you most often listen to music?” taken from CBS/Social Science Solutions of Media April 2014 poll.

The poll found that radio was still the most often used source of music listening, with digital media services (like Pandora and Spotify) coming in second. These results are similar to the findings reported in the present study, though it is unclear where YouTube would be categorized and the poll only took into account adult responses.

Sources of family-based musical exposures have received minimal attention in the literature. Technology-driven changes in music listening are motivating new research. There is a body of research on family TV-watching (see, for example, Dubas and Gerris,
2002; Fiese et al., 2002; Lull, 1980), some of which mentions exposure to music. North, Hargreaves, and Hargreaves (2004) report that technology has made music into a resource, changing the way humans are musical and interact with music. Lury (2002) noted that the TV is often a primary source of musical exposures for young children; a large body of educational TV targeting young children often includes a lot of music. She brought forward the notion of a “genealogy” of musical taste, or the evolution of musical appreciation in children” (p. 296) as shaped by exposure to popular music via TV. The Santiago Family—whose children were the youngest among the case study participants—mentioned “educational television” as a source of musical exposure especially to popular music. Pamela Alonzo also discussed her daughter watching Hannah Montana and recalled having facilitated conversations with Alicia about Miley Cyrus’s image in that show as opposed to her more recent image in the popular media. Lisa Cruz also mentioned her daughter watching the Fresh Beat Band on the Disney Channel. Beyond television, all families discussed using YouTube to listen to music, where videos commonly accompany songs.

As with television, YouTube often provides listening experiences that are integrated into video or accompanied by music videos. Nancy Morales commented that YouTube was the primary way her son listened to music. Amy West’s son Kyle reported that YouTube was what he used to download any song in which he was interested. Lisa Cruz mentioned in her first interview using YouTube to learn about a new Shakira song:

So, after-care has the option to use the Internet, to use videos. That scares me so much because it can be a very well-known artist, to give you an example: Shakira. She just recently did a video that I don’t think is proper for my kids to see it yet. So, um, I have to let them know… whenever they tell me a new song, or I hear them listening or singing a new song, that I have never heard before, um, I basically Google it and go to YouTube and I check the lyrics and video are proper for their age. (First interview)

For Lisa, YouTube provided an opportunity for her to research the music to which her daughter was listening. This information played a role in Lisa deciding whether or not a song was appropriate for her daughter.

Another extant study that considers technology-driven listening habits is Vestad’s (2010) examination of music listening practices and attitudes toward music listening in
her study of how young children (ages 3-6) use recorded music (CDs and MP3s) in everyday situations. She observed a variety of different responses. Ways of interacting involved absorption in music; close listening on the part of the young children motivated creative play responses. It is interesting to see that this notion of “recorded music” never surfaced in the present study; instead, all families predominantly talked about the means of accessing music through streaming services and broadcast radio. Few of the families even mentioned owning CDs or MP3s.

The use of mobile devices within the family is discussed by Radelsky et al. (2014) but music is not a focus of the research; they discuss mobile devices and absorption during family meal times, noting that mobile devices’ have positives (they provide entertainment) and negatives (they can distract parents from face-to-face interaction with their children.) It is clear that technology impacts the way we listen and that this domain of research offers many fruitful avenues for future consideration.

A listening exposure that was discussed by many of the families was that taking place in the car, with most of the families discussing playing music on the radio while traveling. There is one existing study on family music use in the car by Koops (2014). This author studied use of music by children ranging in age from ten months to four-and-a-half years old and found singing, listening, playing games/doing activities, movement, improvisation, and composition was occurring. “The family vehicle provided several advantageous characteristics, including reduced distractions; proximity to siblings, leading to increased sibling interaction at times; and opportunity for parent and child reflection” (p. 9). The present study supports the findings here—while present discussion focuses on a different range of children’s ages, similar evidence indicates that the family vehicle is a primary source of music exposure and listening.

The information gathered here is offered to present a basic overview of the ways in which the participating families came to experience music—sources were predominantly radio and digital media services/YouTube/Internet radio. These sources are important to note as they outline behaviors and attitudes that parents model (i.e. how music is used, accessed, where music comes from) and help identify some of the listening exposures that children have (which parents may monitor—some of which they may promote, others they limit or restrict.) Many of the categories discussed here are difficult
to pull apart. Based on findings from her study of early childhood (under age 2) a musical experience, Young (2008) posits that:

Studies that assume conventional demarcations of activities such as music listening, TV watching and live singing may be failing to recognize how these activities are being modified, integrated and hybridized in everyday music to an extent that they barely exist in these separated forms. This is due in part to the varied, multi-modal nature of contemporary digitized musical resources and in part due to the ways that these resources are being incorporated and used among family members within daily activities. (p. 40)

She observes that “children’s audio music listening cannot be neatly separated from other multimedia, nor from music listening patterns within the family as a whole” (p. 41). This is a challenge faced by the present study as well. Much of the music listening exposures and experiences reported by the families include video components and may be accompanied by some type of musical participation (such as singing along to the radio.) Whenever possible, attempts have been made to describe the nature of the musical environments within the families involved in this study and to provide detailed descriptions that further support the notion that music listening today has become a hybridized, multi-modal activity.

**When do you listen to music?** Having established that the families do listen to music, and having identified ways in which they listen to music, the next step is to discuss in very general terms some of the times and situations during which music is present in the families’ lives. Many of these answers were (expectedly) directly linked to exposures (i.e. sources of music)—place and means/media are obviously connected so the lines are a bit blurry here. Whenever possible, clarification has been provided between whether or not listening was active (wherein listening to music was the focus of the activity) or passive (where music was on in the background.) As mentioned earlier, families listen to music independently and collectively; most of what is reported here is collective listening. If the listening was described as not applicable to both members, either mother or child/children are indicated below in Table 10.
Table 10: Occasions in the family for music listening (both passive and active).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Chores at home</th>
<th>Parties, celebrations, outings</th>
<th>While in the car/traveling</th>
<th>Exercising</th>
<th>At School</th>
<th>After-school/during homework</th>
<th>Watching YouTube videos*</th>
<th>Around the house+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alonzo</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Child</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Child</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td></td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>Children</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Focused listening, not in the background. This usually represents a purposeful, directed pursuit wherein a family member would search for a song or video and then share the results with another family member.

+Includes collective and individual listening by means of various sources listed earlier. This speaks to mainly focused or active music listening.

Uses of music within the participating families ranged from the everyday to the exceptional—it was used to both distract from the mundane and sometimes to celebrate the infrequent. YouTube is included because it is both a source and an activity; it involves mostly focused listening. Other “when” examples in the chart above could feature music from any of the sources enumerated earlier. Beyond the categories outlined above, Lisa Cruz (mother) mentioned reading Billboard charts to see what music was “hot” or new. One mother (Pamela Alonzo) and one child (Kyle West) also discussed using music to regulate mood, supporting some of the findings of literature in this domain (see, for example, Hargreaves and North, 1999; Saarikallio, 2011; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007; Saarikallio, Nieminen, & Brattico, 2013; Thomas et al, 2006).

**Making music.** While not the focus of the present study, making music represents another music listening exposure. Table 11 below summarizes child participants’ everyday experiences making music.
Table 11: Children participants’ experiences making music in everyday life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>In school</th>
<th>Out of school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alicia Alonzo</td>
<td>Music class once a week, plays recorder (Grade 5)</td>
<td>Viola lessons once a week. Talked about liking to sing (informally)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deborah Cruz</td>
<td>Music class once a week, plays recorder (Grade 2)</td>
<td>Violin lessons once a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liam Morales</td>
<td>Music class once a week, plays recorder (Grade 3)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura Santiago</td>
<td>Daughter in Kindergarten; no formal music class at school until Grade 2</td>
<td>Daughter likes to play on keyboard at home; lots of singing around the home with everyday tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kevin West</td>
<td>Music class once a week, plays recorder (Grade 5)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle West</td>
<td>None (Grade 7)</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As captured in the above table, only some of the children from the present study discussed actively making music. Four of the children reported making music once a week in school. Two children mentioned taking instrumental lessons once a week outside of school.

Only one mother, Amy West, reflected on making music at an earlier point in their life: “I used to play the piano when I was growing up. Um, I played from, like, from when I was like, five to twelve. And that was pretty much it” (First interview). She further reflected that she’d tried to get her sons playing but it did not happen:

They don’t make any more music… and I have a drum set, a piano, and a keyboard in my house. They made me buy all this stuff that I cannot sell and they…they were going to have a band called K-squared. And there you have it. Nothing. K-nothing, that’s what it is. (Laughs). So, he has a drum set that he doesn’t touch, and I spent $500 on this thing and then [Kyle] has his piano but now [Kyle] says he’s going to start playing again and teaching himself because all his friends at school plays the piano. So, he’s like, they have a talent… and I’m trying to tell him, “you should have a talent.” You can use it at church and stuff like that, you know? (First interview)
Two parents reflected on their own abilities to sing. Pamela Alonzo mentioned that she identified as “tone-deaf” but still sang and Nancy Morales described her musical aptitude as follows:

I think… we are… very, like, like, uh, frustrated singers. We love to sing and we try to sing all the time but we know we are awful. I mean, I don’t want to make [Liam] feel bad about it, but we are awful at singing. (First interview)

The mother of the youngest child participating in the study, Brandy Santiago, mentioned singing as part of her family’s everyday routine:

We make up songs at any time. It helps to relieve tension. If I have to ask something 99 times it can get really frustrating, if I sing the request it helps remind me that the request isn't so serious and I don't yell it. It also helps with their selective hearing. (Journal 1)

Brandy mentioned also using songs to structure daily activity and as accompaniment to monotonous activities like diaper-changing. Her experiences are consistent with research on the heavily singing-focused musical landscapes of many families with small children (see, for example, Custodero, 2006, 2008; Custodero, Johnson, & Green, 2003, Young, 2008.)

**Music in Miami.** As the study focused on families in Miami, the participants were asked to reflect on how their location influenced their exposures and music-listening experiences. The Alonzo, Cruz, and Santiago Families indicated that living in Miami increased exposure to Spanish or Latin music on the radio. Nancy Morales commented that living in Miami “has given me the opportunity to experience a good variety of performances and independent music and art festivals” (Journal 5). She further mentioned that “Miami has been a great incubator for experiments influenced by its transient population performance art that mostly includes sound and dance is well accepted and every year there are more new and interesting projects” (Journal 5). The West family discussed how living in Miami gives them access to many different concerts, reflecting on a recent trip to Ultra Music Fest (an electronic dance music festival).
Time and resources spent listening to music. Journal 3 asked family members about time spent listening to music. As with the earlier question about time spent listening, the distinction was again made here between active and passive listening. Active listening was defined as times when you are attentively listening to music and was contrasted with passive listening, when the music is on in the background and is not the focus of the activity you are undertaking. A follow-up question to this inquired about computer use, since previous answers indicated that, for many of the families, computers and phones were primary sources for music listening. The journal also asked about money spent on acquiring music and attending live concerts. Discussion of resources, including both time and money, gives an idea of relative value or worth—how we spend these resources provides insights into both preference (what we like) and value (what matters to us.) This is detailed below in Table 12.

Table 12: Estimations of amount of time spent by participants actively and passively listening to music in everyday life.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily Active Listening</th>
<th>Daily Passive Listening</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Child/Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alonzo</td>
<td>Pamela: Up to 1 hour</td>
<td>Alicia: Around 15 minutes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>Lisa: Around 3 hours</td>
<td>Deborah: Around 3 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>Nancy: Up to 5 hours (variable)</td>
<td>Liam: None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>Brandy: Around 1 hour</td>
<td>Laura: Around 1 hour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>Amy: Did not quantify</td>
<td>Kevin: Did not quantify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kyle: Did not quantify</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data supported earlier descriptions that music was present or very present in each of the participating families’ households. Family members’ self-reports indicated that, for most, the bulk of listening time was passive when music was on in the background as an
accompaniment to other activities. A full breakdown of this study’s participant’s computer usage is offered below in Table 13.

**Table 13: Estimations of amount of time spent by participants using computer (total daily time which includes amount of time using phone for music.)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily Computer use (total)</th>
<th></th>
<th>Daily Computer use (involving music)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Child/Children</td>
<td>Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alonzo</td>
<td>Pamela: 4-5 hours</td>
<td>Alicia: Did not quantify</td>
<td>Pamela: 2-3 hours (background music at work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>Lisa: 8-9 hours</td>
<td>Deborah: 3-4 hours</td>
<td>Lisa: 2-3 hours (background while working, cleaning)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>Nancy: 5-6 hours</td>
<td>Liam: Maximum of 2 hours</td>
<td>Nancy: 5-6 hours (background music at work)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>Brandy: Maximum of 30 minutes</td>
<td>Laura: Maximum of 30 minutes</td>
<td>Brandy: None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>Amy: Around 3 hours</td>
<td>Kevin: 4 hours Kyle: 5 hours</td>
<td>Amy: Will sometimes listen at work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These numbers included a mix of passive and active listening. Three of the parents (Alonzo, Cruz, Morales) mentioned listening to music at work on their computer. Four of the children (Alonzo, Morales, and both West children) talked about using the computer for extended video viewing sessions.

The Kaiser Family Foundation’s 2010 report on media use in the lives of children ages eight to eighteen years old sampled over 2,000 young people from across the United States, asking questions about media use, time spent on media (“watching television and movies, playing video games, listening to music, using computers, and reading
newspapers, magazines, and books”, p. 6), and differences between genders, age groups within the identified range, and races. They found that, on average, young people spend an average of 7 hours and 38 minutes using different entertainment media in an average day, and that much of this time can include “media multitasking” (p. 33) where they are using multiple media at once. On average, music/audio exposure (which includes both passive and active exposure) was 2 hours and 31 minutes. While the present study is by no means as comprehensive or detailed as the Kaiser Report, the four children in the present study who fall into this age range who provided answers to the question (Cruz, Morales, and West children) supported the claim that media exposures and usage, including music, occupy a substantial part of an average day. Unfortunately no known report exists to provide similar support or insights into average daily adult use with which to connect to the adult data.

Many of the respondents indicated in their interviews that they used their phones to listen to music. Table 14 below summarizes daily phone use and how much of that time was dedicated to music.

Table 14: Estimations of amount of time spent by participants using phone (total daily time which includes amount of time using phone for music.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily Phone Use (total)</th>
<th>Daily Phone use (involving music)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>Child/Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alonzo</td>
<td>Pamela: 1 hour during commute, texting, a few calls</td>
<td>Alicia: 15-30 minutes a day, Instagram, texting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>Lisa: Most of the day (10+ hours)</td>
<td>Deborah: Does not have a phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>Nancy: 1 hour, texting and e-mail</td>
<td>Liam: Does not have a phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>Brandy: About 5 hours</td>
<td>Laura: About 4 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>Amy: 8 hours on the phone</td>
<td>Kevin: 2 hours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Kyle: 5 hours</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Two of the families’ children (Cruz and Morales) did not have phones. The data revealed that the phone was not necessarily a widely-used source for music listening.

The final two areas of questioning concerned money spent acquiring/purchasing music and attending live concerts. Table 15 details participating families’ purchasing habits and estimations of money spent on music, as reported in e-journals.

Table 15: Families’ music purchasing habits and estimations of amount of money spent on music within each family.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Purchasing music</th>
<th>How much do you spend?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alonzo</td>
<td>Pamela: “I have purchased music less in the past five years than ever before. I have purchased a few CDs in the past few years and they have all been at performances I’ve attended.” Alicia has no allowance, does not buy music.</td>
<td>Did not quantify.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>Lisa purchases through iTunes. Deborah has no allowance, does not buy music.</td>
<td>Around $5.00/month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>Nancy: “To be honest we don’t buy music, all the music we listen to is free via Internet.”</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>Brandy: “We very rarely purchase music because we can access it very easily from YouTube.”</td>
<td>Never more than $15.00/month if there are purchases. Brandy noted that sometimes her husband will buy a CD at Starbucks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West</td>
<td>Amy: “Yes, we purchase but not a lot, mainly when someone gives us an iTunes card.” Boys work odd jobs for money but spend it on shoes.</td>
<td>Amy: “We don’t have money to buy music for the family.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is interesting to note that while music listening happened frequently in the homes of the participating families, very little money was spent on acquiring music. Many of the
families indicated that this was because so much free music is accessible via YouTube, Internet-based streaming radio, regular radio, or programs like Spotify and Pandora (which offer both free and subscription-based services.) Pamela Alonzo mentioned purchasing a few CDs in the past few years and two of the parents (Lisa Cruz and Amy West) mentioned purchasing music through iTunes. None of the families reported their children purchasing music; some because they did not have the means and others because their spending priorities lay elsewhere.

Journal entries and interviews brought forward music performances as a source of exposure for several of the families. Journal 3 inquired about attending concerts, asking questions about resources spent on live music.

Table 16: Families’ concert attendance and corresponding spending.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Attending Live Concerts</th>
<th>How much do you spend?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alonzo</td>
<td>Pamela: “I miss attending live performances but it is increasingly difficult financially as well as scheduling. I would say I average three or four concerts a year.”</td>
<td>No more than $50 per concert, tries to go to free concerts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cruz</td>
<td>Lisa: 3-4 times a month</td>
<td>Lisa gets in free or receives discounts to many concerts because of her work. Does not usually spend more than $60 on a concert.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morales</td>
<td>Nancy: “With a small baby that hasn't been the case lately, however we used to go out attending either live performances or concerts.”</td>
<td>When attending, would never spend more than $100 a month.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Santiago</td>
<td>Brandy: “Unfortunately we never attend live performances. I am hoping as our youngest gets older (2 now) we will be able to attend more performances.”</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| West  | Amy: “I attend about 4 concerts a year. The boys per say have not been to a concert alone or with them saying hey mom take | Amy: “Last month we saw the Soweto gospel choir in concert and a dance performance and a good
Many of the parents indicated that the age of their children influenced their ability to attend concerts. The families with the eldest children—Alonzo and West—mentioned attending concerts together. None of the families discussed occasions when their children attended concerts by themselves.

**Conclusion**

As was highlighted in the opening of this chapter, the family represents a key influence in children’s musical lives. This chapter provided detailed descriptions of the five participating families’ listening environments in attempt to better understand the nature of this influential setting. This chapter connected descriptions of the families to relevant literature, using examples to illustrate and support different themes. Building on this foundation, the five case study families were profiled in terms of basic demographic information, SES, and general information as to their music exposures and sources, and listening behaviors.

Together, the demographic and music exposure information paints a colorful picture of the sonic tapestries that surround family life for each of the participating families. Main sources of music for all families include Internet-based radio programs and YouTube, as well as radio in the car. Other exposures include the Television, iTunes, live concerts, making music/music in school, and listening to the radio at home. Times for listening correspond accordingly with exposures. Occasions for listening across all five families include while completing chores in the home, during celebrations or parties, while traveling in the car, and, generally, around the house. These exposures include both active and passive listening, and collective and individual listening. Little money is spent by either parents or children on purchasing music or attending concerts; many of the families indicated that purchasing music was unnecessary due to free content being
available on the Internet. Together, these responses provide a very basic, general overview of the everyday music listening environments of the five case study families. This information provides the backdrop for the forthcoming discussion of families’ discourses around music listening. The responses illustrate how all of the participating families actively listened to music and did so by way of similar sources (most Internet-based) in many similar situations (around the home, while traveling).

The next step in this analysis is to examine how discourse shared within the family—set against the descriptive backdrop constructed in this chapter—actively influences music listening in the family. Chapter 6 connects the threads of information about the family as a social convoy, a discourse community, with participating families’ discourses concerning music, and weaves them together. The remaining two chapters unite literature, terminology, and theoretical ideas with the study’s five families, and move beyond description towards deeper analysis.
Chapter 6: Music Listening Guidelines and Sociolinguistic Analysis

Introduction

This chapter focuses on the content of participating families’ family scripts and examines how shared family discourse can guide music listening. The family plays a key role in shaping individuals’ musical selves. As ter Bogt (2009) notes, “music socialization can be proposed as a within-family mechanism for the intergenerational transfer of taste” (p. 313). Dialogue with family members influences individual decisions about what music matters. Through discourse with other members of the family information about what music matters, how to listen, when to listen, and why to listen to particular music (among many others value-related pieces of information) is communicated. Choices made on these basic exposure levels are expressions of individual preferences which, together, form larger value patterns which influence individual member identities.

This chapter connects the preceding discussion with the data collected in the study and offers analysis to address the research questions outlined in Chapter 1. The present study’s research questions are first reviewed. The presence or absence of guidelines for musical listening in the family is then discussed. Discourse around music listening in the family is then engaged in sociolinguistic terms to illustrate how discourse functions as the link between music exposures and the development of music values. Themes identified are organized around sociolinguistic terms which include age-grading, age appropriateness, register, and taboo. Together, this terminology illuminates key content of participating families’ scripts around listening. The chapter closes by reporting family members’ responses to and opinions of the aforementioned music listening guidelines.

Revisiting Research Questions

The research questions outlined at the beginning of this document target two main areas of inquiry: discourse about music listening in participating families and the perceived impact or effect of shared talk in participating families. The first set of research
questions—the focus of this chapter—examines discourse content and listening guidelines, and listening allowances and limitations within the family. This summary serves as a map for what is to come in this chapter and helps connect previous chapters’ discussions with this chapter’s analysis.

**Research Question (RQ) 1a: What music is allowed in a family?**

Data addressing this research question was put forward in Chapter 5; there, descriptions of what music is listened to in each participating family and sources of listening exposure were reported. The present chapter adds another dimension to this initial layer of description; it builds upon that analysis by considering the particulars of talk that help define the musical landscape found in the five participating families. Examination here focuses on how language is used to influence and transmit value.

**RQ 1b: Who makes these decisions?**

Again, building on Chapter 5, this chapter examines participating families’ reported listening rules. It foreshadows Chapter 7’s discussion of listenership roles, which offers descriptive categories that capture the many ways parents and children interact with each other in the family music listening environment. This provides valuable insights into the ways the five participating families make decisions regarding music listenership guidelines.

**RQ 1c: How are guidelines, allowances, and limitations communicated?**

Addressing this question is the bulk of the present chapter’s focus. The analysis here considers specific sociolinguistic terminology which is used to describe how music listening guidelines are communicated within the family. This analysis connects content (much of the descriptive data already reported) with the actual communication in and around music listening which takes place in the participating families.

**RQ 1d: What do family members think of the guidelines?**

Analysis includes some reflection on the part of participants about their thoughts of the guidelines within their family. This is shared at the end of the current chapter.
While some data has already been reported in Chapter 5, the bulk of the data collected in the present study has not yet been discussed; most of the data presented in Chapter 5 were descriptive responses which were reported as such. As discussed in Chapter 3, the first step in analyzing gathered data was to label and sort responses. What emerged during data analysis in the present study were clear connections to different sociolinguistic terms and concepts which are discussed later in this chapter as themes. Codes were grouped together into categories; categories were then sorted into thematic groupings. Together, these themes provide the inspiration and explanation for the theories being put forward in the present study. These themes form and inform the present study’s theory of family scripts around music listening, and provide examples of the ways in which talk is a mechanism by which the family is influential in shaping individual music listening *habituses*.

**Music Listening Guidelines**

This section addresses the first two research questions: RQ 1a, which questions what music is allowed in the family and the ways in which guidelines are established, and RQ 1b, which questions who in each family makes the decisions about music listening allowances. This section offers analysis addressing these questions and shares descriptive excerpts around music listening guidelines in the families. Interview and journals gathered information as to what music was allowed in the family and the guidelines that were communicated between members. Thus far, descriptions of how family members come to experience music, when and how they listen, and basic information about their musical preferences have been shared. The next step in this analysis is to examine if guidelines are in place in the case study families and, if they are, the nature of these guidelines. From there, sociolinguistic terminology is utilized to assess the role discourse around music listening plays in shaping individual and collective *habituses*.

The original research questions, interview and e-journal prompts, and earlier discussions had, at times, used the terms “rules” and “guidelines” from an exploratory perspective and often interchangeably. What was revealed in the data from the five
families participating in this study was that none of the families had any hard-and-fast, inflexible “rules” for music in their families. As was first introduced in Chapter 2, the term “guideline” offers a more accurate description of the general ideas that guided the policies that were enacted in the families around music listening—fluid principles that were enforced on a situational basis and usually accompanied by conversations to clarify their implementation. Generally speaking, families in the present study reported two main guidelines in the family that shaped music listening. The first concerned lyric content, specifically “curse,” “swear,” and “bad” words. The second was the notion of parent-determined age appropriateness which considered lyric content in addition to song themes (references to violence or drugs, for example) and artist image (public actions, affiliations, and so on.) Working with these guidelines as a backdrop, parents reported taking a responsive and situational approach to their children’s music listening.

“Bad” Words, Bad Music

One of the two main guidelines for limiting children’s music exposure as discussed by four of the five families participating in this case study centered on “curse”, “swear”, “dirty,” and “bad” words. These include a select group of words deemed off-limits; the specific words varied slightly from family to family. The idea of “bad words” is discussed further as taboo in a later section connecting listening guidelines with sociolinguistic terms. Essentially, these words offer a clear distinction between content that is allowed and content that is not; this dichotomy offered case study parents guidance as they determined what music is and is not permissible for their children.

The idea of “bad” words as a restrictive guideline surfaced as a point of discussion across all five families in the case study, though only four of the five reported enforcing it as a guideline for music exposures. As a result of this topic emerging throughout interviews, it was discussed at length in Journal 4 wherein participants were asked about “good” and “bad” words. Mother Pamela Alonzo described her understanding of these terms as follows:

I think that is very much socially and culturally determined, as some words are considered “bad” in one culture and not in another. I think bad words have
meaning and purpose. I think for some artists it may be how they talk, or it may be used to sell more records. I noticed, after starting this project, that there was a song I listened to in the car with [Alicia] often as the CD is in the car. I think because I feel the artist may share my cultural norms I was okay with listening to a song with one bad word in it. [Alicia] brought up the fact it makes use of the word, “asshole” and we still listened to the song. We talked about what the song meant, etc. I think ultimately the songs I choose not to hear, which have lots of “bad” words are really just songs that don’t reflect my culture and maybe don’t resonate. That may be why I may not encourage [Alicia] listening to certain songs, but I would never tell her she is forbidden to listen to something. (Journal 4)

The above excerpt shows how the idea of “bad” words served as a guide for Pamela, not as a restriction that leads her to outright forbid certain music in her family. Pamela commented that “bad” language should be evaluated in the context of its usage in a song alongside consideration of who (what artist) is performing. In the same journal entry, Pamela’s daughter Alicia (age 11) stated that artists use bad words to get attention and, echoing some of her mother’s reflections, that they are often used unnecessarily.

Amy West discussed how her sons Kevin (age 11) and Kyle (age 13) were not allowed to listen to songs with “bad” words, mentioning some concern with the potential lasting impact of exposure to this type of language. Amy described her concerns from a spiritual perspective, stating: “I try to monitor what they listen to because if they do, I don’t want a lot of bad words and… and certain… certain things I don’t want in their spirit” (First interview). Amy raised concerns about any long-term impact that exposure to “bad” words might have on her sons. In terms of conveying her guidelines, she described her approach as follows:

I plainly tell them I don’t want you to listen to music that does not motivate you to be better. At first I was banding [sic] artist but I realized sometimes the artist I like would make a song I don't agree with so I just tell them to listen and be aware of what they are putting in their minds subconsciously. (Journal 4)

Amy’s comment illustrates the challenge for parents in setting hard-and-fast rules, such as outlawing a particular artist, since artists have large bodies of work that often deal with a variety of topics. She mentioned asking her sons to be aware of the message in the music, to think about how it is being used, and modeled a situational response to music where an artist is not banned simply because one song in their repertoire includes
questionable content or offensive lyrics. Amy’s younger son, Kevin, demonstrated understanding of his mother’s view in the family’s first interview. He commented on how context plays a role when talking about “bad” words—a word’s relative “badness” or “goodness” is dependent upon how the word is used, not always the word itself.

When asked what music was not allowed in the family, Lisa Cruz’s daughter Deborah (age 8) referenced one particular guideline: she was not allowed to listen to songs that contained one particular curse word. This excerpt from the family’s first interview revealed Deborah’s knowledge of a family guideline concerning “bad songs”:

Researcher: Is there any music you’re not allowed to listen to?
Deborah: “Bad songs with the f-word. Yeah.”

Researcher: How do you know if you’re not allowed to listen to a song?
Deborah: Um… I know… because my Dad will spank me.

Researcher: Do your parents tell you if you are not allowed to listen to a song?
Deborah: Yes. (Pause). Sometimes I’m, like, I don’t know, maybe I should sneak around.”

Deborah demonstrated knowledge of a guideline regarding the use of “the f-word” (fuck) and indicated that her parents had explicitly told her the word was off-limits. When asked to give her perspective on bad words, Deborah’s mother Lisa clarified her view:

A good word is a word that makes you feel good. A bad word tends to be insulting, demining [sic], degrading, sex explicit, etc. A word is bad if it offends or hurts someone. Bad words are considered offensive and degrading. Good words are those that encourage, and make you feel great. Some words are good because they remind us of nice things and feelings; some are bad because they remind us of bad circumstances. (Journal 2)

Bad words are those that made Lisa “feel insulted or uncomfortable.” She mentioned “bitch” and “pussy”, as examples. For Lisa, she connected the relative “badness” or “goodness” of a word with feelings, including not just the impact a word has on her, but also the potential a word may have to hurt or offend another person.
Brandy Santiago discussed limiting her children’s exposure to “bad” words, stating concerns with the children unknowingly “parroting” (repeating words without context or understanding of meaning) undesirable content. Brandy reflected on some social pressure to avoid exposing children to “bad” words which she encountered when publicly playing music at her daughter Laura’s (age 6) birthday party:

Laura had… for her fifth birthday she had, like, a dance party. That’s what she wanted. And so I made CDs and, like, I had some Moms be like… and I made sure they were the PG version of everything, you know, the really, really cleaned-up versions. And I had some Moms, like, asking, like “oh, but you have Nicki Minaj on that?” And I’m like, no, it’s fine. It’s like, it doesn’t have anything. But they were, like, you know? (First interview)

Laura clarified that bad words are “the kinda words I say when I hit my pinkie toe” and include “fuck, shit, asshole, cunt, and the n-word” (nigger). Note her use of “PG version” and “cleaned-up” in the above quotation; they are used in direct contrast to “bad” words and, for Laura, identify the presence of appropriate content.

The only parent who took a different outlook on “bad” words was Nancy Morales, who talked about how “bad” words were permissible if used in an artistic context for a reason. Nancy’s comments echo those shared earlier by Pamela Alonzo regarding the importance of context in determining if a word is “bad” or “good.” Interestingly, Nancy makes a distinction for her son between content in songs and everyday discourse content, where “bad” words are not allowed. Through conversation, Nancy contextualized these differences for her son in this excerpt taken from the family’s first interview:

Nancy: Well, I think… I don’t know if he remembers but we had the discussion once about, like… in pop, and, like, using bad words, but then again I’m an artist so I understand that those are, like, you know, like artistic expressions and, uh, so I… am very lenient on… letting him listen to songs that have, like, bad words while they’re used in the context of music or art or, like, you know some way to express himself. That’s, you know, the reason of it. But that doesn’t mean that we talk like that (laughs) at home. You know?

Researcher: But you have conversations about that?

Nancy: Exactly! So, you know, I pretty much understand that instead of singing those words, because they’re expressing while they’re singing the song, not while we’re talking, like, to each other.
In Journal 4, Nancy talked more about what she means by “bad” words, stating that she had problems when the words were used nonsensically or repeated for no reason:

A bad word would be one that on top of being offensive doesn’t carry a purpose, its [sic] simple meaning is overused. In other words, a bad word is one that is just used as an ornament rather than being used as the means to express a message. But I am also teaching my son how to behave in society so I will refer to bad words as those pejorative terms that can be strongly offensive or impolite. (Journal 4)

Nancy offered a contextual understanding of offensive language as rooted in artistic expression, where words are used for specific, creative purposes. She also discussed her role in helping her son understand how to navigate how one word can have different meaning based on its context or usage.

All of the families offered written insights in their second journal as to the differences between “good” and “bad” words, and the connection between the presence (or absence) of “bad” words and their determination of a piece of music as “good” or “bad.” As might be expected, families reported connections between music that was liked and music that was allowed—with the exception of the Morales family, the presence of “bad” words made a song “bad.”

**Thematic content and artist image.** While specific lyrics in music seemed to carry power—being labeled as “bad” or “good”—case study parents also voiced concerns with thematic content, making this the second category shaping music listening guidelines across all five families. This category is less defined than “bad” words—what constituted offensive or off-limits content varied even more from one family to the next. In broad terms, off-limits thematic content included references to violence, racial slurs, and overt sexuality. Some of these themes extended beyond lyrics to what artists represent (“image”): who they associate with, and how they are portrayed in the media.

Amy West mentioned that she does not allow what she calls “derogatory content” and that she does not like “so many N-words,” calling this her “biggest thing” (First interview). She discussed her concerns with content and how she talked to her boys to see if they understood what was being said in the lyrics:
‘Cause I like Drake. I like what he talks about. Some of it… like, I don’t like. Like… Well, I like Drake. I really like Drake, so. He’s a good rapper. I like rap music, too, it just depends on the artist… what they’re saying. I have to… I listen to music for content. What they’re talking about. I used to like Lil Wayne but I stopped listening to him because everything he says he refers to something red and that’s, like, an undertone of the gang. So he’s going to throw in the color red somewhere… But I let them listen to whatever and then I tell them, “hey, you understand what he’s talking about?” And then they’re like, oh no, like… oh my goodness, it was a song the girls were singing. I want to say it was Katy Perry or something. It was with Timbaland. (First interview)

In this reflection, Amy mentioned how she will ask her sons if they understand what a particular artist is talking about in a song. She also described how, in terms of her personal music listening, lyric content plays a role in her decisions about what music she does and does not listen to.

Echoing Brandy Santiago’s earlier comment about being concerned with her daughter Alicia “parroting” content, Pamela Alonzo mentioned similar unease with questionable song content:

I thought about the Rhyanna [sic] song with “whips and chains”. I don’t know if I don’t like her listening because I’d be embarrassed if she was singing this song as a five year old or if I really was concerned about the themes as I understand she’d just be singing the lyrics and not really understanding them. (Journal 1)

Pamela Alonzo also talked about having conversations with Alicia around the television show “Hannah Montana.” The following excerpt, taken from the Alonzo family’s first interview, provided some insight into what that conversation might look like:

Hannah Montana. So, and you know, the songs are catchy and they’re songs apart from the show, so, um, so I think, as she grows up and, even though, it’s not at home, she picks up on them… and her friends talk about what Miley Cyrus did and what she didn’t do, and we have these discussions, and we talk about it, and we say, “What do you think is going on with her” and what choices has she made? The song is beautiful, what do you think that she’s, you know, everything else that’s behind it, is it something about getting people to hear her song, is it because she’s starting to get into drugs, so that affects the choices you make, so I think I use that kind of perspective. (First interview)

Pamela described how, much like Amy West, she discussed song content with her daughter. Pamela also offered important clarification as to her concerns with music
content being shaped by the lifestyle choices and/or image of the artist putting forth the music. Further, as Pamela mentioned, a challenge for parents is also to reconcile the attraction to a catchy or “beautiful” tune with the content of a song which may be deemed offensive. This is especially challenging when trying to guide children’s listening since offensive content (a general category) is not as explicitly “bad” or “good” as many of the words mentioned earlier. This highlights a key place where many of the case study parents stepped in to offer clarity through discourse.

As with Pamela’s comments, Brandy Santiago discussed the notion of thematic content by bringing in artist image and what the artist represents beyond the words they say. Her concerns with R&B artists R. Kelly and Chris Brown’s respective “histories” make their music off-limits for her children:

> I don’t like R Kelly, like, I don’t… I don’t like them to listen to Chris Brown either because of their history. Just… I don’t feel like it’s appropriate. And that song especially I feel is… you know, cause I feel like, what they… even if they don’t understand what they’re saying, I feel like… somewhere, in the back of their mind, it’s… so… (First interview)

Brandy raised concerns with the appropriateness of her children listening to particular artists because of how that artist has been portrayed in the media. Her concern, as was mentioned in the earlier discussion of “bad” words, is that her children may internalize certain messages or content that may prove harmful, or that her children may repeat material without knowing what a phrase or word means.

Building on her discussion of “bad” words, Nancy Morales voiced some concern with content that referred to violence and war:

> The only thing that we don’t like is, I guess, in this house that I would be imposing restrictions would be with things that are about, like, war. Um… you know like, guns, and, like, you know, violent stuff… However, with bad words, as I was telling you, you know, I understand music is also an artistic expression, so… I’d rather have him not repeating those words but I’m not going to, like, condemn him listening to them. Because of, I guess, for me, it’s important that we all have the freedom to express ourselves, you know? And then… everything that you do in life has a consequence and a reason. So, it’s also… I kind of want to teach him that, you know. If you’re going to say bad words, they have to be for a reason… not just because. The same way, you like, approach somebody or you make any decision in your life it has to be for a reason. (First interview)
As with her previous comments, Nancy mentioned valuing artistic freedom and wanting her son to learn about contextual uses of language in music and the potential consequences when language does not align with the context in which it is presented.

Reflections and discussions shared by all parents illustrate how “bad” words and thematic content are two guideline areas that shape music listening to varying degrees in the five families at the heart of this study. In both of these areas of discussion, it is interesting to note the concern with children unknowingly “parroting” lyrics was brought up by three parents—Brandy Santiago, Nancy Morales, and Pamela Alonzo. On one hand, some parents seem concerned with children internalizing negative messages and images put forth by popular artists and music; on the other hand, the concern is the opposite, with children repeating words or phrases without understanding their meaning. As described by the case study parents, both are reasons for the creation and enforcement of these guidelines.

**Situational, responsive approaches to music listening.** Interview and e-journal responses described many situations across all five families wherein parents took situational, responsive approaches to music listening. With few exceptions, these responses focused on popular music—a genre of music that is constantly shifting and changing as new songs are released. This responsive approach seems well-suited to this particular genre and this narrowed-focus should be noted here: while not the original intent of the present study, much of the discussion of listening guidelines focused on popular music. This is not to suggest that the case study families only listen to popular music; as was detailed in Chapter 5, all of the families listen to a variety of different genres of music. Initial interview and journal questions did not specify popular music as the sole territory of the present study. As the study progressed, responses to questions about music listening included descriptions that, almost exclusively, commented on popular music and, even more specifically, popular music that came into the family in ways where content was not pre-determined by the listener (e.g. the radio). It seems that popular music radio, due to its unpredictability, necessitates a kind of flexibility on the part of the parent that may not be required by other means of exposures and/or genres.
Parents’ guidelines around “bad” words and thematic content provide them stability in an otherwise chaotic world of music exposures. Beyond shaping their children’s music exposures, guidelines offer parents steady footing in the sometimes overwhelming world of popular music. Guidelines provide parents with a way to instill in their children criteria by which they decide what music is good and what music is not. This is especially helpful for parents when you consider that their children are exposed to music in many different situations when the parents are not present. Case study parents acknowledged that they cannot control, limit, or monitor all of their child’s music exposures. Listenership roles outlined in Chapter 7 offer further insights into how case study family members contend with this reality.

Several families discussed how they deal with the unexpected, which most commonly comes into their lives via the radio (which includes Internet radio). Amy West discussed her actions when music she does not want her children listening to comes on the radio:

> Sometimes I turn it off and say I don't want to hear that and we discuss a better way to say things. Now I'm known as a huge curser but some lyrics go beyond the curse to just plain mean and hurtful. For example this rapper named Piles he has a song that says are we F-ing or what? The lyrics talks to the person as if you have sex with me or I'm leaving. Which is what most boys do but the way he says it as if you only good for that nothing more. In the car is where we may hear something I don't agree with cause we like to radio surf since we don't have satellite radio to skip commercials. (Journal 4)

Amy’s comments tie together earlier discussion of guidelines around specific words and offensive content. She also described the actions she took in response to music she deemed unacceptable coming onto the radio—she will often turn off the station, change stations, and will discuss with her sons the lyrics or content they may have unexpectedly been subjected to.

Brandy Santiago mentioned changing radio stations in her first interview; she described how, like Amy, she too will change a song as soon as it comes on if it contains “bad” words or offensive content. Pamela Alonzo echoed this as well. She described engaging her daughter in dialogue about the music as a way to clarify her actions in response to the music:
I make the choice where we have open conversations about everything. Um, where she doesn’t have to hide that she saw this video or she heard this song. I mean, we talk about it and I make the choice where I can say, “I’m sorry [Alicia]. I know you really like this song but I really can’t listen to it. So I’m going to switch the station.” And that’s just, right, that’s just my personal limits, I guess. There are choices that I do make if we’re in the car together and I don’t want to hear a song and I can tell her why, that I don’t like what she’s talking about and it doesn’t make me happy to hear it. (First interview)

Pamela described how she tried to actively maintain open dialogue with her daughter especially when she makes a decision to change the radio. She described that her decisions were rooted in what she called her “personal limits” which are based upon song content and how a particular song makes her feel.

Responding to music exposures on a case-by-case basis is an approach which Pamela Alonzo greatly values. She mentioned how she believes setting strict rules could have the opposite intended impact, making a song or performer more enticing or interesting that it would if there were no rules limiting exposure. The following exchange, taken from the Alonzo family’s first interview, demonstrated this balance between situational determinations of what music is allowed, and working to uphold guidelines around lyric content:

Pamela: “I don’t think that I had ever sat down, you know, there’s rules for a lot of other things where we limit this or we limit that… but I never considered, no… there’s no… I don’t think there are rules where I’d sit down with her and say “we don’t listen to this kind of music,” right?”

Alicia: “We’re kind of free to listen to whatever music we want but it’s kind-of… because I don’t really listen to any music with, like, bad words… or terrible messages…

Pamela: “I think anything you try to prohibit then it’s almost like “what’s behind that” or “I want to know more!” and I… I don’t think that’s going to help her grow or make her own choices about what…what’s decent, what’s okay, what’s not okay. So, I think I tend to do more of the “well, let’s talk about it”, right?”

It is interesting to note that parents are willing to risk the potential of exposing their children to music that contains offensive content that may violate their guidelines. None of the parents discussed avoiding popular radio stations; rather, they talked about how
they contend with this reality and the actions they take to respond in the moment by changing the radio station. Instead of avoiding the exposure altogether, they put themselves in a position where they have to respond, intervene, and often explain to their children why they intervened. Again, this speaks to the notion of prohibiting “bad” words and avoiding questionable lyric content as guidelines, rather than rules. The unpredictability of radio exposure, especially radio that brings new or unknown popular music into the lives of these families, necessitates a kind of situational flexibility on the part of the parents.

**Social value and relationships.** Of particular interest in the present study is how relationships in the five participating families influence and shape individual music listening preferences. Listening guidelines put in place and enforced by parents set the tone for how their children come to value music, and how they make decisions about what music is “good” and “bad.” Brandy Santiago commented on this, using the idea of a song being not “good” as a way to steer her daughter away from being interested in it. This quote also connects with preceding discussion of parents changing the radio station when certain undesirable songs come on:

Researcher: What about any rules about what you can and can’t listen to in the house?

Brandy: Um…

Laura: I cannot listen to… Daddy’s phone calls.

Researcher: *(Laughs)* That’s important!

Brandy: Okay, there’s one song by… they just came out from *(spells it out)* L-a-d-y G-a-g-a…

Researcher: Yeah…

Brandy: … that I really don’t like. *(Laura says something in the background.)* With that other person. So, that one’s off-limits. As soon as I start to hear it, I change.

Researcher: And we can talk about that a bit more later, if you’d like to…
Laura: Mommy, which one?

Brandy: It’s just a song that, it’s just… it’s not fun. It’s not a good one.

In many cases, like Brandy Santiago, case study parents used their relationship and influence on their children as a way to steer children’s listening. The notion of “good” music—music that does not violate the aforementioned guidelines—can be contrasted with “bad.” Other words like “cool” and how the song makes you “happy to hear it” were frequently mentioned (see Pamela Alonzo’s statement in the previous section, for example). The opinion of the parent, at least in the cases captured in the present study, carried tremendous influential weight. This idea was brought up in Journal 2 wherein the Alonzo, Cruz, and Santiago families discussed, with great detail, how good music is about feeling—it has to make you feel something. Some case study parents were able to tap into this as a way to influence and direct listening. The relationship shared between parent and child provides a forum for a type of influential discourse through which music listening preferences are expressed, confronted, and sometimes changed.

Using particular words like “good” and “bad” to influence listening was a topic that formed the focus of an entire journal entry for all participating families. Thanks to the semi-structured design of the study, Journal 5 unpacked terms which kept appearing in interviews across all five families. This journal asked questions about notions of “popular” and “cool” as they related to popular music.

In Journal 5, Lisa Cruz mentioned that she uses the notion of “cool” as a way to steer her daughter towards or away from particular music. Pamela Alonzo, Nancy Morales, and Amy West all discussed how the label “popular” is rooted in the notion of being “cool”—doing things that appeal to large segments of the population. The label given to popular music follows this trend; Lisa Cruz described it best: “Because there are more people paying attention to it, it is considered to be “in” or more “cool”. It becomes ‘pop culture’ because not only people but media pay more attention to it” (Journal 5).

Amy West commented that using “popular” language is a way to connect with others: “I sometimes use the language they use so others can relate and know that I’m cool or know the latest slang topic” (Journal 5).
Unpacking these notions of “cool” and “popular” caused Brandy Santiago to reflect on experiences from earlier in her life:

The words “popular” and “cool” bring back memories of high school. I went to a small very cliquey private school. There were so many cliques that you weren’t really sure who were the “cool” kids. In media to be “cool” or “popular” means you have the power of influence. Music can shape what it means to be cool by their image. (Journal 5)

Brandy’s reflection connects words with her desire to be a part of a particular group at an earlier stage in her life. Her peers, who she considered “cool,” conveyed a particular socially desirable image and were considered influential. This reflection provides insight into the double-edged sword that parents confront when helping their children navigate the popular music landscape. “Coolness” can be a good and a bad thing—it is the basis for a listening restriction or guideline, as discussed earlier (restrictions based upon artist image) but can also be harnessed as a way to direct listening (with parents explaining to their kids what is “cool”—a positive attribute—as a way to steer their listening.) Parents are able to use words to directly influence how their children view particular songs. The intimate relationship shared between parent and child creates the environment for this type of influence to take place and to be successful.

**Guidelines and Transmission in Sociolinguistic Terms**

Descriptive excerpts from interviews and e-journals shared thus far illustrate the many ways in which case study families contend with a colorful world of musical exposures. These excerpts describe the many different settings and types of dialogue that accompany music listening in the participating families. Discourse about music listening, shared between family members, provides a forum through which opinions are shared, guidelines are conveyed, and values are negotiated. These excerpts demonstrate how families respond to music with discourse; music is a frequent topic of conversation, even in the lives of the five families in this study where neither parent self-identifies as a musician.

This section offers sociolinguistic analysis of the discourse shared between family members. It provides insights into how language acts as a bridge between music
exposures and the development of music listening preferences within the five case study families. The terms first introduced in Chapter 4 are revisited here both in broad and specific terms. Generally speaking, sociolinguistics offer a way to discuss the discourse shared in families. More specifically, this analysis identifies some of the mechanisms at work within the discourse. This section addresses RQ 1c: how guidelines, allowances, and limitations are communicated within the discourse community of the family.

The focus of this study has thus far been on language as a mechanism for transferring information that can influence both exposures (what music is present in the family) and opinions of music (how individuals make decisions about what music is “good” or “bad.”) While the specific content of each family’s script around music listening may vary in terms of specific “bad” words that are off limits, artists that are deemed bad influences, or thematic content labeled as out-of-bounds (for example), this study posits that the ways in which language functions in these families when it comes to music listening can be discussed using common sociolinguistic terminology. These terms include discourse community, register, age-appropriateness, and taboo. Together, these elements can be used to describe family discourse around music listening; they comprise each family’s script around music listening and provide a blueprint for the “musical manners” that are transmitted to children as members of their respective families.

**Discourse community.** As mentioned in Chapter 4, Little, Jordens, and Sayers (2003) define discourse community as “a group of people with sufficiently common interests to use a vocabulary of words and concepts, whose meanings are accepted and whose definitions are assumed, that are brought to bear on the subjects of the discourse” (p. 74). Bakhtin (1981) observes that discourse communities are everywhere—that society is made up of many different discourse communities. Little, Jordens, and Sayers argue that membership in a discourse community offers security but in exchange for this, requires a certain amount of conformity to be accepted. Membership in a discourse community like the family brings with it certain limitations—shared discourse within the family unit “potentially constrains what we should think” (p. 74).

Family discourse features language that contains meanings and uses which are defined by the group. This is a way of describing how the family comes to influence
things like music listening—through language and the ways in which language is used, the family transmits information to its members about what language to use and how to use language. Discourse perpetuates ideas and transmits meaning; it creates a body of talk and ideas, described here as a family script, which is established, negotiated, transmitted, and replicated between generations. In the case of the families participating in this study, to differing degrees, each family script written by shared discourse contains information to avoid songs with “bad” words and/or with certain unfavorable thematic content.

As first introduced in Chapter 4, Saville-Troike (1982) outlines several components which describe communication in terms of linguistic knowledge, interaction skills, and cultural knowledge. The discourse shared within families around music listening focuses on verbal elements of communication and how meaning is communicated (linguistic knowledge), norms of interaction (interaction skills), and values and attitudes towards language and language as a means of enculturation (cultural knowledge.) Broadly speaking, discourse in family facilitates all of these processes when it comes to talk about music listening in families. Holmes’ (1992) description of factors to consider when discussing language behavior was also first introduced in Chapter 4. His focus is on discourse participants (who is talking and to whom), the setting (where they are talking), topic (what they are talking about), and the function of talk (why they are talking.) These elements are important to outline at this stage as they frame the territory from which this particular type of discourse emerges. In the present study, the participants are members of families, conversing in a variety of settings in which they are together, about music they have heard or are currently listening to, in order to achieve linguistic, interactive, and/or cultural goals outlined by Saville-Troike. For example, discourse can function to communicate meaning, to communicate values, or to norm interaction with music or opinion of music.

The next step in this first layer of analysis is to consider social distance, formality, and more general functions of discourse in the discourse community of the family. As mentioned in Chapter 4, discourse can be plotted on several dimensions to measure social distance, formality, and function. Social distance considers both distance and status; it addresses how members are positioned or “related” (in non-familial terms) to one another. In the present study, in terms of social distance, speakers share high intimacy
and high solidarity due to extended and ongoing cohabitation and genetic connections. The statuses of parent and child can, at times, create a superior-subordinate dynamic, especially when parents are enforcing music listening guidelines. Status tends to shift with roles, especially with listenership roles (discussed in Chapter 7.) For the purposes of the present study, status and roles are embraced as synonymous terms.

Formality in family discourse describes how official or proper interactions may be; this provides insights, as with social distance, into how speakers are positioned in relation to one another. In terms of formality, discourse shared within families tends to be informal. Function describes the purpose of shared discourse. The function of the discourse around music listening shared within the participating families ranged from expressive (discussing feelings and connecting the worth of a piece of music to how it makes one feel), directive (guidelines which they enacted as a way to influence or guide behavior), and/or metalinguistic (where the focus became particular words, as was the case with parents’ concerns with “bad” words.)

A more detailed study could focus on the specific variations within these categories (analyzing, for example, the differences in intimacy or informality, from one family to the next); this is not the primary goal of the present study. Rather, these basic descriptions are offered as a way to describe the general environment out of which the discourse being addressed in the present study has emerged. The family discourse environment, at least in the case of these five families, was intimate, informal, and involved a superior-subordinate status dynamic between parent and child.

Discourse communities feature interaction by which language is shared between at least two people. The sharing of language in this interactive manner both defines a relationship and is defined by the existing relationship between the discourse-sharers. The totality of these relationships comes to define the discourse community itself. As has been referenced several times thus far in this document, the family plays a key role in socialization and enculturation of its members. One of the key ways these processes occur is through the sharing or transmission of language between members. Peñalosa (1981) describes this notion of “traditional transmission” as “the fact that language is not biologically transmitted by genes, as are call systems, but is socially taught and learned”
Hoijer (1969) also discusses this notion of transmission as one of four main characteristics of human language.

Because of the relational nature of discourse, language is more than just a means of sharing information, be it about music listening or otherwise. Bourdieu and Passerson (1977) discuss how language, especially language transmitted within relationships of the family, provides a means of navigating the world:

Moreover, language is not simply an instrument of communication: it also provides, together with a richer or poorer vocabulary, a more or less complex system of categories, so that the capacity to decipher and manipulate complex structures, whether logical or aesthetic, depends partly on the complexity of the language transmitted by the family. (p. 73)

Bourdieu and Passerson go on to discuss how “no one acquires a language without thereby acquiring a relation to language” (p. 116, emphasis added). The acquisition of language involves not just words but also knowledge of how, when, where, why, with whom to use language—situational information that informs the language-user of “the objective relationship between the social characteristics of the [language] acquirer and the social quality of what is acquired” (p. 116). Referencing the work of psychoanalytic theorist Henry Stack Sullivan, Jenkins (2009) sees these relationships as forming “‘relatively enduring patterns’ of interaction” which “give children a sturdy relational base from which trust, empathy, optimism, and resilience can grow” (p. 40). Perhaps, in the context of findings in the present study, the Bourdieu and Passerson quotation shared at the opening of this paragraph should be expanded to mention how language acquisition is a symbiotic process that involves developing relationships in, through, and by language.

When parents communicate guidelines around music listening to their children, the guidelines influence more than just their children’s exposures to certain music; they also communicate information through which relationships are established and/or further defined. These are the processes that make a family a discourse community. Discourse shared within the family helps define family members’ relationships to music, and relationships to one another. All of this information comes together to form a family’s musical script around listenership.
Register. Holmes (1982) defines register as a term that “describes the language of groups of people with common interests or jobs, or the language used in situations associated with such groups” (p. 276). Registers “refer to variation according to the context in which language is used” (Swann et al, 2004, p. 261). The term offers a way of describing different bodies of language that are developed in different contexts. Registers involve routines and formulas “which involve a small number of fixed syntactic patterns and narrow range of lexical items” (p. 279) which are ultimately determined by context. Language differs based on the role enacted in a social situation. People filling common roles tend to talk the same way in similar situations.

In the present study, parents represent a unique discourse register. This term is herein embraced as a way to collectively represent the verbal repertoire associated with the parent role and enacted in situations involving the communication of music listening guidelines to their children. It is the body of language by which ideas and language are transmitted to children. The parent register involves the use of labels like “good”, “bad”, and “cool” given to music in the context of talking to their children. Parents use these terms in this context in ways they might not use the language elsewhere in their lives. This term is linked with roles that parents fill and discussed and connected with this term in the final chapter of this document.

Taboo. The next sociolinguistic term of interest—taboo—provides insights into how the first guideline communicated by parents around “bad” words is rooted in a broader, social idea of the appropriateness of words in different contexts and for different groups of people. Chapter 4 introduced this idea of taboo, defined as a body of words that are avoided for particular reasons and/or in particular contexts. This connects with the forthcoming discussion of age-appropriateness, where age is embraced as a context for avoidance.

Gao (2013) observes that “tabooed subjects can vary widely: sex, death, illness, excretion, bodily functions, religious matters, the supernatural. But quite often they extend to other aspects of social life” (p. 2310). Gao reports the origin of the word from Tongan, a Polynesian language, means “holy” or “untouchable” (p. 2310). Taboo terms
include swear words (or “bad” words, as they have been labeled in the present study), most of which have to do with body parts, body functions, discriminatory language, sexist language, and racially-biased or hurtful terms. Wardhaugh (2006) discusses how “taboo is the prohibition or avoidance in any society of behavior believed to be harmful to its members in that it would cause them anxiety, embarrassment, or shame” (p. 239). He describes taboo as an “extreme politeness constraint” that determines when certain words can and cannot be used (p. 239).

In the earlier section examining “bad” words, several families talked about how they disliked it when artists used “bad” words for no reason, or repeated them nonsensically. Trudgill (2000) discusses how taboo terms can be used as swear-words “because they are powerful” (p. 19, original emphasis). Trudgill observes that “it is perfectly permissible to say “sexual intercourse” on television. Taboo is therefore clearly a linguistic as well as sociological fact. It is the words themselves which are felt to be wrong and are therefore so powerful” (p. 19). Artists using words without context or any understandable purpose demonstrate how “bad” words operate as a subsection of taboo—a particular category of socially understood terms deemed offensive regardless of context.

A further challenge for parents, connecting with the need for a responsive approach to enforcing music listening guidelines, is that taboo terms change to reflect larger changes to language use and meaning in society. Trudgill (2000) outlines how changes in societal values impact language (p. 18), bring about changes in social/political policies, political correctness, and impact which words are considered taboo words. Changes rooted in technological developments, including the primacy of the Internet in the lives of the families in this case study, add another layer to this, sometimes removing the parent’s involvement in or knowledge of changes to what should or could be considered “taboo.” The novelty and power of taboo words sometimes make them attractive for artists looking to get attention; this same novelty and power is what attracts people to their music.

Censorship is a way that society deals with language and ideas that are deemed taboo. One form of censorship in response to taboo content discussed in the present study was the notion of radio edits: popular songs, often heard on the radio, where certain words have been changed or “beeped” (where a short sound is inserted to cover a
particular word.) Mothers Brandy Santiago and Lisa Cruz mentioned that they like radio edits; they felt that edits allowed them to listen to songs with their children without worrying about the presence of curse words. Brandy referred to these edits as providing “PG versions” of songs that were appropriate for all ages. Amy West also mentioned liking them, commenting that radios lately “haven’t been doing a good job with the beeps” (Journal 4). Overall, the West family felt the editing was necessary to “protect and control what minors hear” (Journal 4).

When asked about radio edits as part of the larger discussion of “bad” words in music, Natalie Morales’s son Liam (age 9) commented that even when he hears a “beep” he knows that there is curse word, mentioning that it almost draws more attention to it. It is interesting to see how this comment connects with the earlier observation of Pamela Alonzo’s regarding how implementing strict rules could have the opposite intended impact. Censorship can promote “the creation of highly inventive and often playful new expressions, or meanings for old expressions, causing existing vocabulary to be abandoned” (Allan & Burridge, 1995, p. 2). In many ways, the intent of trying to “protect” listeners from particular words draws attention, and sets these words apart in a way that makes them more taboo. In order to deal with this reality, parents must be informed beyond a list of a few words—they must consider the meaning behind words and how the context of usage impacts meaning. This was discussed by several case study parents, who explained how their guidelines take into account how a word is being used in a particular song.

Parents are not alone, for better or worse, when it comes to deciding what content is taboo and off-limits, and what words and ideas are allowed. Individual parental choices are steeped in societal uses and associations which can constrain and offer social penalties, connecting back to earlier comments about parents’ worries about children simply saying words without understanding their meanings. The Recording Industry Association of American (RIAA) has long worked to educate parents and equip them
with tools to be involved in determining the appropriateness of music for their children.\(^6\)

In the mid-1980s, the RIAA worked with the National Parent Teacher Association (National PTA) and the Parents’ Music Resource Center (PMRC) to address the presence of explicit content and lyrics in music (see Chastagner, 1999, Cutietta, 1986, and Napier, 1997, for reviews of the history of the Parents’ Music resource Center). The PMRC and RIAA were able to work together to create the “Parental Advisory Explicit Content” labels on music, which are currently monitored and put in place by the RIAA since the PMRC dissolved. The RIAA describes these labels as “a tool to help parents make the choice about when—and whether—their children should be able to listen to a particular recording” (“Parental Advisory Label (“PAL”) Program, n.d.).

The work of the RIAA demonstrates action in response to a concern on the part of greater society—efforts put in place to “protect” children and families from indecent, profane, and obscene content in the media in the US. The Federal Communications’ Commissions (FCC) also has many restrictions in place that regulate when and what content can be broadcast on TV and radio.\(^7\) These efforts create some separation between children and content deemed socially inappropriate or taboo, but to have a real impact, they still require parents to be informed about, aware of, and involved on an ongoing basis with their children’s media exposures. Parents also need to make the decision as to whether they agree with these constraints and must work to educate their children as to why society values and enforces these guidelines.

Deeper, philosophical questions surface here outside the scope of the present study—including whose role it is to censor and how do we, as a society, determine what is taboo? How do we deal with comments and observations that censorship has the opposite intended impact? Whose job is it to “protect” children from taboo content and how do we do this? Another big challenge is the way in which technology has altered the

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\(^6\) One of the RIAA’s current outreach programs is entitled “Pause Parent Play.” This campaign encourages parents to be involved in their children’s music. For more information, visit: [https://www.riaa.com/toolsforparents.php?content_selector=pause_parent_play](https://www.riaa.com/toolsforparents.php?content_selector=pause_parent_play).

role of the parent. So much music and other media content are available for free on the Internet. Children no longer rely on their parents for the resources necessary to purchase music (at least not to the degree they used to), removing parents’ ability to see a “Parental Advisory” label on a CD and intervene. Another layer to this is the music video, which brings images and ideas that are beyond words and more difficult to censor. All of these realities combine to necessitate what parents in the present study reported: taking a flexible and responsive approach to monitoring and limiting what music their children listen to as much as possible, whenever possible.

**Age-grading and age appropriateness.** Thus far, the notion of a contextual, responsive approach to enforcing music listening guidelines has been discussed. Beyond implementing these approaches in response to music containing “bad” words and other forms of taboo contact, parents in the present study reported the notions of age and age appropriateness as factors that impact how parents make their decisions. Age appropriateness was brought forward first in Chapter 4; it is discussed here in the context of sociolinguistic terminology and linked with excerpts from the case study families engaged in the present study.

Swann et al. (2004) argue that age involves life stages that can be described as childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age. It is a number that represents biological and developmental processes. Age impacts parental determinations of appropriateness. The notion of age-grading is a sociolinguistic term used to describe how age and language use are connected—younger and older speakers may differ in the way they talk (Swann et al., 2004, p. 7), about “using speech appropriate for your age group” (Wardhaugh, 2006, p. 196). The term also denotes rules or expectations that are linked to age. Parents’ concerns with appropriateness involve both exposure to music with specific words and themes, and what happens as a result of this—children learning and using words that may not be appropriate for their age, or using words out of context. It should be noted that age-grading is a very context-driven term, where determinations of appropriateness are driven by myriad factors including culture, social class, and gender. Whenever possible, information about these different aspects of participants’ lives has
been provided in order to contextualize the forthcoming discussion of age, age-grading, and age appropriateness.

The present study engaged five families with children that ranged in age from 6 to 13 years old. The average age among child participants was 9.67 years old. It is difficult to group these children in a specific life stage given that there are no set age brackets for each stage, nor are there any age-binding developmental standards by which all children can be sorted and labeled. Given the types of responses from the children and parents, five of the six children can be generally categorized as adolescents. The one remaining—the 6 year old who was the youngest in the study—was still in childhood. Swann et al. (2004) offer a definition of adolescence which can be used to describe the life stage into which the majority of the child participants can be grouped:

Adolescence—sometimes referred to by anthropologists as ‘emerging adulthood’—is conventionally defined as the time located between childhood and adulthood. Adolescents typically explore aspects of adult identity and engage in activities which are seen as adult prerogatives (e.g. in Western contexts, smoking, make-up, drinking and staying out late, dating, etc.). In many societies this time is characterized by an increasing awareness of the norms of the standard variety of language (which is taught at school) as well as the playful and sometimes subversive use of non-standard variants within the peer group. The extensive use of obscenities and profanity is another (frequently noted) linguistic practice of adolescent peer groups. (p. 6)

Based on the topics of conversation on the part of both parents and children, the above stage applies to five of the six child participants. Conversation with the Santiago family, who had the youngest child participant, focused on the same music listening guidelines as the other families, but the concerns were mostly with the daughter “parroting” or repeating words or phrases without knowing the meaning. Another result of the child being so young was that there was limited participation in the study—Laura Santiago did not/was not able to participate to the same extent as the older children.

The notion of age-appropriate music was discussed throughout the case studies, both in terms of the content of music being listened to and the transfer of content to children’s everyday talk. This is another element of responsive parenting when it comes to music listening—as children grow and change, passing through different age stages,
what parents deem developmentally appropriate will also shift. In Journal 4, Pamela Alonzo discussed how her daughter’s age will impact her listening guidelines:

As she gets older she will find the kind of music that makes her happy and I will accept her choices. I know if I restrict something as a teen, that will make it that much more interesting. I hope to continue to be available to her to provide context if it’s needed. I can remember my parents hearing The Smiths when I was a teen and thinking it was the most depressing thing in the world. It was, but as a teen it was what I was drawn to. I will respect Alicia to listen to what makes her happy. (Journal 4)

This consideration of age appropriateness is one way in which parents make contextual decisions about what music is allowed in their family. Parents do what they can to have their children exposed to music that they feel is appropriate to what their children can handle. Lisa Cruz reflected on the difficulties of this, in terms of not being present for all of the music to which her daughter is exposed. In her first interview, she described her daughter Deborah’s experiences at an “after-care” (after-school) program:

So, after-care has the option to use the Internet, to use videos. That scares me so much because it can be a very well-known artist, to give you an example: Shakira. She just recently did a video that I don’t think is proper for my kids to see it yet. So, um, I have to let them know… whenever they tell me a new song, or I hear them listening or singing a new song, that I have never heard before, um, I basically Google it and go to YouTube and I check the lyrics and video are proper for their age. (First interview)

This excerpt shows evidence of Lisa’s case-by-case response to what her daughter brings home. One criteria by which her decisions are made as to the permissibility of Deborah listening to the song is if Lisa feels both the lyric content and video are “proper” for Deborah. These determinations of age appropriateness are rooted in the two guidelines discussed earlier.

In the same vein as Lisa’s reflection, Amy West acknowledged that she cannot control all of the music exposures in her sons’ lives. She mentioned age appropriateness in this excerpt, taken from the family’s first interview:

I know I can’t control everything he listens to. I know they’re around… in my house, they play video games but I don’t buy gun video games, anything with that, I don’t do that. Like, they don’t have a Facebook, and they’re not on Twitter. I just think everything is age appropriate. But if they go to school and their friends
Amy’s reflection ties together several of the themes that have been discussed thus far in this chapter, including the challenges that come with new material constantly being released by popular artists, how the Internet and videos that accompany music add additional layers of meaning to a song, and how the family is an important influence on music listening but not the only influence. Amy mentions that her sons bring music into the family to which they were exposed at schools and/or with friends. She views her role in response to this as making determinations of the suitability of the music based on the developmental readiness of her boys to understand specific words and specific content in the lyrics of the music.

A concern for parents was the potential “damage” that exposure to age-inappropriate content might bring about. Reflecting on her practice as a clinical psychologist, Jenkins (2009) talks about a “fast-forward phenomenon” (p. 140) which happens when children are exposed to things for which they are not yet prepared. She identifies four main realities, paraphrased below, that create challenges for both parents and children attempting to navigate popular culture:

- An increasingly destructive gender code starts younger than ever.
- Social cruelty has become in vogue and more intense via social media.
- Popular culture deletes childhood by normalizing violence, sexual exploitation, and pornography, once adults-only domains.
- The tech accessible to children at this age far exceeds their capacity to manage their use of it or anticipate the consequences of their misuse. (talking about grade-school children)

Jenkins argues that parents play a key role in helping children develop curiosity, trust, optimism, and an eagerness to learn—all strategies and skills that help them deal with the realities outlined above. She stresses the importance of this, arguing that it must happen before harsh messages are internalized. Parents should aim to keep their children protected before “the harsh truth” (p. 41) sets in. She stresses the important role parents
play in knowing their child and making appropriate choices based on where the child is developmentally:

Only you know your child’s sensitivity or the extent to which he or she is mimicking cultural content that doesn’t feel age appropriate to you. Pay attention to that, think clearly about where your child is developmentally, and in that context, choose what feels appropriate for exposure. (p. 155)

Jenkins acknowledges that this is a difficult but important role to play as a parent. She observes how children are constantly changing, requiring parents to modify parenting strategies along the way. Reflecting on music exposures, Jenkins comments that sometimes, with children, “just moments ago, they were rocking to Raffi and the constant chorus of parental coaching at home; suddenly, it’s R-rated music videos and popular songs with lyrics unprintable in family newspapers” (p. 141). If anything, Jenkins’ observations and recommendations give credo to the importance placed by case study parents on their music listening guidelines and further demonstrate the central role parents must take to help their children understand the words and messages put forth by popular media, including music.

The case study families all reported age appropriateness as a way of deciding what language and themes in music were permissible for their children. This is a never-ending process, with parents constantly revisiting the notion of appropriateness as their children develop while balancing this with the external, social pressure to have their children behave and speak a certain way. The children themselves are evolving and growing; based on the data collected in the present study, what the case study family children are allowed to listen to grows and changes as they do. No real hard-and-fast rules were ever discussed, and everything was contextualized in each parent’s knowledge of “where the child was” in developmental terms which were uniquely understood by each parent. At the end of the day, parents are left to make determinations of what children “can handle” based upon their own knowledge of their child while also balancing what external sources tell them about taboo, the need for censorship and protection, notions of age appropriateness, and their own music values and experiences.
Responses to Guidelines

The final research question to be addressed in this chapter (RQ 1d) questioned how family members feel about the guidelines in place in their family. Having established that families do talk about music, and that the discourse shared within the family include guidelines passed between parents and children about what music is allowed, this line of inquiry collected family member feedback about impressions of the impact and/or utility of these guidelines.

All of the case study parents discussed the importance of the guidelines. Pamela Alonzo talked about how implementing restrictions is a way of demonstrating cultural norms:

I think the restrictions are important because I am attempting to show her what my values and cultural norms are, by showing what I don’t think is acceptable, maybe in the same way I restrict what she may wear, or if she paints her nails, burps at the table, or says “thank you”. I guess the words she uses are important because they shape your worldview. I think that as she gets older the limits will change and she will listen to the music she wants to listen to and what is part of her peer group, along with her dress, and slang, but for now I want her to have a model and don’t think she might have the maturity or ability to put context for some things yet. I guess it’s the same way I limit movies or shows she may watch right now because of her capacity to understand certain things. I think that at her age she needs limits on the media because there is so much constantly coming at her, be it from magazines, radio, tv, music, etc. (Journal 4)

She described her restrictions as helping to foster a kind of “musical manners” that shaped her daughter Alicia’s worldview. Pamela discussed the importance of her role in modeling appropriate behavior to help her daughter develop and mature.

As was mentioned earlier, Brandy Santiago’s daughter was the youngest in the study. Brandy saw the importance of the guidelines as preventing her daughter from being exposed to content that might be repeated without knowing the meaning. Lisa Cruz echoed this comment, adding that the guidelines helped prevent her daughter Deborah from being exposed to “bad things” (Journal 4). She described the guidelines as important to help alleviate confusion by the messages put forward in pop culture; the guidelines provide clarification and grounding.
Building upon her earlier comments about music not being censored because it is a form of artistic expression, Nancy Morales discussed the absence of guidelines in her house:

As any other form of expression, music shouldn’t be restricted or censored. I believe that by not restricting him to artistic content he will value the power of expression and create an understanding of the purpose of art, it being a reflection of society and how people interact with each other. I guess if I put severe restrictions -there are always some type of restrictions- I will be raising a hypocritical individual without the ability to discern good vs. bad, the ability to criticize and form opinions. (Journal 4)

She articulated a desire for her son to come up with his own understanding of what is good and bad, and saw the absence of severe restrictions as the best environment for that to happen. Just as many of the other case study mothers discussed the importance of implementing their listening guidelines, Nancy spoke quite passionately about the importance of not placing what she believed to be hypocritical restrictions on her children’s listening which could be seen as a form of censorship.

The West family had the two oldest children participating in the present study (ages 11 and 13, respectively). When asked to reflect on guidelines in their family, Amy West mentioned how the guidelines have changed as their sons have grown. She described the restrictions as providing guidance and outlined several steps she had taken to ensure for her sons to avoid undesirable music while with friends:

The restrictions have eased up but they know I don't want them listening to satan worshiping music or kill yourself or music that puts down others. It eased cause let's face it they will attend parties where music will be played or at a friend house where music is played so they know if they don't like the music cause I told them certain music change the atmosphere to leave or ask them to change the music. I gave them true stories of when I was in my club days and as soon as the gangsta rap this my crib music came on the drunk boys began to fight and I would always exit soon because by the 3rd song they can't control the crowd and I had a friend to lose her eye in a club fight! If I don't have restrictions they would think it's ok to say and do anything without consequences and they may believe what they hear and so it trying to be like the musicians. (Journal 4)
Amy acknowledged that she cannot monitor nor control all of her sons’ music listening experiences. She mentioned that her hope is that the guidelines she discussed with her boys will provide guidance for situations when they are not together as a family.

The journal prompt that asked about responses to guidelines yielded responses from all parents but no direct responses from the children participating in the study. The present study collected only two instances of children voicing concerns or being unaware of guidelines—with the youngest participant, Laura Santiago (see earlier quote with mention of not being allowed to listen to “Daddy’s phone calls), and with the second youngest participant, Deborah Cruz (see earlier quote with mention of sneaking around.) Both the West sons and Pamela Alonzo’s daughter Alicia demonstrated solidarity in the guidelines and evidence of understanding the value of having guidelines in place (see the earlier exchange between Pamela and Alicia where Alicia mentions “we”; both West children repeated several times, almost verbatim, the concern with bad music “getting in your spirit”—a phrase which their mother Amy referred to several times.) Due to this lack of information, a child register is not discussed in a way similar to the parent register outlined earlier in this chapter. There simply was not enough data gathered to speak to a child-specific body of language around music listening as was the case for parents in the study. This limitation is further discussed in Chapter 7.

**Conclusion**

This chapter provided descriptions of the music listening guidelines reported by members of the five case study families. Following an overview of how data was coded, two guidelines were discussed as they surfaced across the participating families. Addressing RQs 1a and 1b, excerpts from interviews and journals revealed two guidelines by which parents attempt to shape their children’s exposure to music containing “bad” words and music with suggestive or offensive content by artists deemed controversial or inappropriate.

Addressing RQ 1c, this chapter offered specific sociolinguistic terminology as a way to describe the above-mentioned guidelines as mechanisms of family discourse—components of each family’s script, discussed in general terms to codify the idea of
“musical manners” as established by shared discourse. Sociolinguistic terminology was used as a way to describe how talk about music, shared in the discourse community of the family, links music exposure with the development of individual music values, describing how the identified guidelines operate within the intimate, informal discourse around music listening shared in the five case study families. Discussion included mention of family as a discourse community (how the family domain is able to do what it does in terms of discourse, transmission), register (to examine the connection between talk and roles), taboo (discussing larger notion of societal function, censorship of offensive language), age appropriateness (a factor that determines how/when/why/where parents enforce guidelines; shifting as children grow, breadth/depth of what’s permissible increasing as children age.) Together, these terms illustrate how discourse operates as the mechanism of transfer of value between generations around music listening.

Addressing RQ 1d, excerpts were shared to put forward what participating families think of the guidelines in place in their families. Parents expressly conveyed the importance of guidelines around music listening as they function to influence and shape the music to which children are exposed. Parents reported making determinations on a situational basis, accompanying their enforcement of guidelines with conversations intended to clarify implementation. These guidelines undergird parents’ responsive approaches to music listening in their family which are shaped by a desire to protect their children from content they deem age-inappropriate, harmful, hurtful, or obscene. Analysis revealed how the identified guidelines are not strict rules; rather, they inform context-dependent approaches to influencing what music children are both exposed to and come to understand as “good.” This process involves negotiation, with guidelines as touchstones, amid a tumultuous landscape of popular music where content is always changing. Parents use their relationship to influence children’s opinions and shape their exposures; discourse in the family is shaped by relationships and, conversely, shapes relationships within the family.

This notion of contextual, responsive enforcement of guidelines around music listening as uncovered in the present study parallels findings from literature that looks more generally at the enforcement of parental guidelines and expectations. Parkin and
Kuczynski (2012), referencing the earlier work of Grusec and Kuczynski (1980) and Smetana (1997), argue that:

Developmental research has challenged the assumptions of earlier socialization models by demonstrating that, rather than enforcing rules consistently across contexts, parents take a flexible approach to their expectations, adapting their behaviors and goals depending on the nature of the child’s misdeed and the context in which it occurs. (p.633)

Parkin and Kuczynski found in their interview-based study of adolescents’ opinions of and responses to parental expectations that guidelines were described as “loose and co-constructed” (p.640). The present study’s findings are consistent with this observation, in addition to the work of Grusec and Goodnow (1993), Kuczynski and Parkin (2007), and Maccoby (2007) who discuss how guideline sharing between parents and children is a bidirectional process that involved interpretation and negotiation.

The present study’s findings are also consistent with extant research into guidelines communicated in targeted areas of adolescents’ lives, many of which are concerned with parental safeguarding of children: discussions of parents’ rules around underage drinking (Friese, Grube, Moore, & Jennings, 2012), sex education (Leyson, 1982), and driving (Scott-Parker, Watson, King, & Hyde, 2015), in addition to countless popular media newspaper and magazine articles that almost endlessly put forward various parenting advice and suggested guidelines. Rules and guidelines found in these sources are similar to those detailed in the present study in that shared discourse between parent and child imparts both language itself and information about language use. They are also similar in that both this study and general research on parental guidelines are focused on safety, and the important place of the parent in protecting and guiding their children. Safety concerns with music exposures seem to be rooted in worries that musical messages could lead to the development of negative behaviors, or the adoption or internalization of age-inappropriate messages that might damage a child’s character, personality, or “spirit.”

One important difference between these other types of research and the present study is this study’s focus on language and discourse as a means of intergenerational transmission, and its examination of ways in which shared talk, shared experiences,
memories, and identity intersect in the discourse community of the family. These topics are further examined in the final chapter of this document, Chapter 7, in response to remaining unaddressed research questions. This document’s final chapter offers reflective excerpts which examine intergenerational transmission of music value within the case study families and describe several listenership roles filled by family members.
Chapter 7: Intergenerational Transmission and Family Roles

Introduction

This chapter ties together all preceding discussion through its examination of the intergenerational transmission of music values and roles filled by case study family members. It addresses the two remaining research questions, pondering if and how music values are passed between generations, and examining what roles different generations play in transmission. This chapter closes with a review of participants’ impressions of the impact of the study in their lives, limitations of the present study, and recommendations for future research to build upon the present study’s findings. It also reconnects discussion with the literature outlined in Chapter 1 and speaks to the overall significance of the study in this context.

At this point, a review of the preceding content may be beneficial to clarify what material has been covered; this content is tied together through the analysis offered in this concluding chapter. In Chapter 1, the need for this study was outlined: it fills a gap in the literature by focusing on the transmission of music listenership skills. This builds on existing literature examining mostly music-making and the transfer of musicianship skills within family along with literature on music listening and everyday music use. Chapter 2 offered a detailed review of all relevant literature, focusing on music education literature, music’s presence and use in everyday listening situations, and sociological literature.

Chapter 3 presented a discussion of the study’s qualitative, sociological case study methodology which acts as the lens through which the study was conceived and the descriptive, narrative data was gathered. Chapter 4 balanced the methodological discussion with a review of the theory guiding the present study. The notion of Byng-Hall’s family script theory was discussed as a providing a representation of the collective music listening values in the family, which is established through shared discourse. Family script theory, together with sociolinguistic terminology, provided a way to engage how family discourse serves to establish this reality.

The family as a primary source of enculturation and socialization was the focus of Chapter 5. This chapter also introduced the five case study families who participated in
the present study. Their basic SES and demographic information was offered, revealing them to be a somewhat homogeneous group. This chapter presented an overview of families’ musical profiles, exposures, and reported preferences. Chapter 6 analyzed data collected in the present study through the lens of sociolinguistics and family script theory. It offered a discussion of the situational nature of music listening guidelines within the families—guidelines that focused on avoiding “bad” words and limiting exposure to questionable themes in music whenever possible. Sociolinguistic terminology, including discussions of age appropriateness and taboo, demonstrated how discourse links music exposure with the development of music listening preferences.

**Revisiting Remaining Research Questions**

At this stage of the present study’s analysis, two research questions remain; addressing these outstanding questions forms the bulk of this chapter’s discussion. The two remaining research questions discuss the roles that different generations play in transmitting listenership guidelines within the family and examine if certain music values are passed between generations.

**RQ 2a: What role(s) do different generations play in establishing and maintaining listening guidelines within a family?**

The present study offers evidence to suggest that family members occupy a variety of roles through which they shape and influence each others’ listening. Roles are filled both by parents and children, and work in tandem within each parent-child dyad. This chapter offers general discussion of these roles, and then focuses specifically on roles filled by mothers and children as uncovered in the present study. Mother roles include filter, mediator, companion, guide, and model. Corresponding child roles include heir, originator, companion, and observer.

**RQ 2b: Are certain music values passed between generations through listenership limitations and guidelines?**
This chapter provides evidence to support an affirmative answer to this research question. Excerpts taken from the case study families offer descriptive indications of this through reported examples of transmission taking place in each of the case study families. RQ 2b is addressed through a discussion of themes or types of transmission as found within the five case study families: parents’ musical memories, children’s musical memories, Christmas memories, child-to-parent transmission, and examples of a particular role-based musical association (Mom’s music.)

**Listenership Roles**

Case study family members described ways in which they fill many different roles that come to shape their musical exposures and interactions. RQ 2a questions what roles family members play in establishing and maintaining listening guidelines with the family. This section addresses this question by offering descriptions of listenership roles discussed by the five case study families. Analysis is, whenever possible, balanced with excerpts from interviews and journals.

It should be noted that the discussion of children’s listenership roles herein presented is somewhat limited. Much more detail was gathered by the present study on roles of the participating mothers. The study design may be to blame for this limitation. In both group interviews and as part of the journaling process, parents took the lead in offering answers which made their voices most strongly heard. Broadly speaking, the parents involved in this study offered the majority of responses during the interviews and, in all cases, facilitated their family’s journal completion. As noted in Chapter 3, parents worked to interpret and clarify study questions and journal prompts; they would often rephrase questions and explain words with which their child was not familiar. Parents were also the individuals who signed-up the families for participation in the study in the first place.

That being said, children roles are discussed here with as much detail as was made available in the present study. These roles were often implied as counterparts to the parental ones. Communication and transmission happens between family members; in the
case of the present study, the focus was on the communication between parent and child. When a parent fills a role, by way of the shared relationship and shared discourse, their child also fills a role. It is also interesting to note that one particular role was not exclusive to just parents nor just children. As will be discussed in the following analysis, the role of companion was filled, in different situations, by both parents and children.

The following section situates the present discussion in literature about parental roles and outlines some of the specific roles case study mothers and children reported filling. This ties together earlier discussion about parental language use in enforcing guidelines, and their place in transmitting music values through shared listening experiences. Following the discussion of each parental role, each child role is discussed. As was previously mentioned, limited space is given to discussion of children’s role due to limitations in gathered data.

**Parent roles.** In her study of children’s musical landscapes, Campbell (2010a) observed that “direct or indirect involvement in music by either parent… steered these children to many of their musical reckonings” (p. 211). In her observations she found that even if the parent was not musical, by virtue of their role in the family, they greatly influenced how their children interacted with and came to value music. ter Bogt et al. (2011) report that:

> Parents may model their tastes simply by playing music in the environment they share with their children or they may more actively persuade their children of the value of music by listening or singing together, taking them to concerts, or encouraging them to play an instrument. For most people, music is an important medium and it [is] reasonable to assume that parents want to share their enthusiasm for certain artists, bands or composers with their children, resulting in intergenerational similarities. (p. 315)

Observations similar to those offered above were also noted by Davidson and Borthwick (2002), who found that parents with no musical backgrounds shaped their children’s musical identities as the children learned to play an instrument. They found “that musical beliefs and experiences of the parents… shape the way in which the subsequent generation experience and value music for themselves within the family” (p. 76). The data from the current study appear to confirm this previous research.
As outlined in earlier chapters, the present study builds on a large body of research on “musical parenting” (Bergson & Trehub, 1999; Custodero & Johnson-Cutietta, 2003; Davidson & Borthwick, 2002; Green, 2003, 2008; Ilari, 2005; Ilari et al. 2011; Malloch, 2000; Papousek, 1996; Parncutt, 2009; Trevarthen, 2008; Young, 2008). In one such study, Custodero and Johnson-Green (2003) observed that the “family context may provide a nurturing environment for a child’s innate inclination toward music; however, there are many questions about the role of parents’ musical experience in raising their children” (p. 103). While their study focuses on both music-making and music listening exposures in families with very small children (4-6 month olds), their territory of inquiry brings forward questions similar to those posed by the present study.

The family’s transmission of values, which ultimately influences individual identities within the family, is directly shaped by the relationships shared between family members. Perhaps the most impactful relationship within the family is that which is shared between parent and child. Katz-Gerro et al. (2007) found, in their study of the transmission of musical tastes in Israeli families, that “musical tastes are shaped by parents’ rather than respondents’ social position” (p. 163). Relationships position family members in relation to one other, and involve individuals filling different roles. Of particular interest to the present study is the connection between relational roles and discourse. Roles are ultimately related to discourse—our behaviors shape and are shaped by the way we interact with others. Stubbs (1983) observes that “roles have to be acted out in social interaction” (p. 8). He goes on to state that “it is principally through conversational interaction, the give-and-take of everyday multi-party discourse, that social ‘roles’ are recognized and sustained” (p. 8). A role is accompanied by (or sometimes even creates) a social orientation which provides guidance for interaction. Particular roles, like that of “parent,” can be accompanied by a language register as discussed in Chapter 6. This register is a distinct body of language used by common groups of individuals. In filling the role of “parent,” individuals speak a certain way which helps to define what it means to be and act as a parent.

The present study engaged only mothers as active parent participants. Despite this reality, other parents often came up in discussion; several of the excerpts included in the forthcoming discussion include references to fathers. Because of this, discussion of
parental involvement has been kept general, to honor the reported influences and importance of parents (in the case of all five case studies, fathers) who did not participate in this study but were still very much “present”. It should be noted that, although it was not the original intent of this study to focus exclusively on mothers, the primacy of mothers’ involvement in the family aligns with existing literature (see, for example, Trehub, Hill, et al., 1997 and Fuligni & Brooks-Gunn, 2002). It should therefore not be surprising that mothers were the ones to sign-up their families to participate in this study. Further, literature looking at the impact of parents’ language on children offers further support. Referencing an enormous body of research on parents’ language with young children, Tamis-LeMonda & Baumwell (2012), found that mothers factor prominently in such studies “because mothers are overwhelmingly the primary caregivers in families” and, citing the work of Huttenlocher et al. (2007), hypothesize that mothers are “the main providers of verbal input to children” (p. 414).

**Child roles.** As mentioned in earlier chapters, limited literature exists that examines roles children take in family discourse (see, for example, Barron-Hauwaert, 2004; Gillen, 2003; Hoff, 2003; Hoff-Ginsberg, 1998; Hoff & Naigles, 2002; King & Fogle, 2013; King et al., 2008; Messaris, 1983; Yamamoto, 2001). The limited relevant literature and limited data gathered by the present study speak to the need for more research on children’s roles in music listening environments, including that of the family. What findings are available from the present study are reported in the next section, as counterparts to the more documented mother listenership roles.

**Listenership roles explained.** This section details five mother roles observed in the present study: filter, mediator, companion, guide, and model. Four of the five roles are active; the fifth role—model—speaks to the implied, passive role mothers fill by virtue of simply being a parent, as brought forward in the earlier Campbell quotation. Four children roles are also presented here: heir, originator, companion, and observer. These roles are discussed as counterparts to corresponding mother roles.

The ensuing discussion weaves together preceding sociolinguistic analysis and descriptive excerpts shared by case study participants; it illustrates several ways in which
talk and action can work in tandem to create specific categories of discourse with corresponding behaviors. Further, this analysis speaks to the pivotal, influential place of parents and the ways in which their actions and words can shape their children’s music values. In the case of the present study, it is evident that mother roles happen in relation to child roles (and vice versa), even if not a lot of data to exhaustively detail child roles was captured.

Table 17 below lists the mother and child roles, identifies the individual in the family who initiates talk or introduces music which results in the mother filling a particular role, describes the role as active or passive, and clarifies who is in “control” when it comes to introducing music or initiating talk about music. All of these roles involve both listening to and talking about music.

**Table 17 – Listenership roles explained.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mother role</th>
<th>Child role</th>
<th>Who initiates talk or music exposure?</th>
<th>Who’s in control?</th>
<th>Passive or active process</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Filter</strong></td>
<td>Heir*</td>
<td>Both Child and Parent</td>
<td>Parent (in establishing filter); child can also be seen as control if they accept, understand filtration</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mediator</strong></td>
<td>Originator</td>
<td>Child, external source</td>
<td>Negotiated; can fluctuate during mediation</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Companion</strong></td>
<td>Originator</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Child</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Guide</strong></td>
<td>Companion</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model</strong></td>
<td>Observer</td>
<td>Parent</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Passive</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Heir is used here a common gender noun. It is used to describe and include both male and female children.

Case study mothers fill these different roles in response to a situation or in anticipation of a situation (as is the case with the aforementioned listening guidelines which parents sometimes preemptively implement.) Filter, mediator, and guide represent active processes where the mother takes an active role introducing music or talk about music, to which the child responds. The mother role of companion also represents an active role.
process, but the child (acting as guide) introduces the music or initiates talk about music. The final mother role—Model—is a passive, implied role assumed by the mother just by virtue of the parent-child relationship. It should also be noted that these roles are not as clearly demarcated as the above table and following discussion may suggest. Family members may switch between roles as a situation changes or a new musical exposure is introduced.

As was mentioned in Chapter 6, discourse within the family around music listening involves expressive (about feeling), directive (influencing behavior), referential (conveying information), and metalinguistic (focusing on specific words) talk. When mothers occupy roles, the roles are defined by both their actions and the types of talk they put forward. These types of talk are listed below in Table 18.

**Table 18 – Connecting mother roles with types of talk.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Role</th>
<th>Types of talk involved</th>
<th>Description of talk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Filter</td>
<td>Referential, Metalinguistic</td>
<td>Convey information, based on specific words and guidelines, that limit music listening.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mediator</td>
<td>Expressive, Referential,</td>
<td>Use feelings and discourse to influence behavior and convey information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Metalinguistic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Companion</td>
<td>Expressive that may become</td>
<td>Share listening experiences that may involve discussing feelings that can influence values of music.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Directive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide</td>
<td>Directive, Referential</td>
<td>Purposeful exposures, some of which are accompanied by discourse intended to influence behavior, convey information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model</td>
<td><strong>Passive role</strong></td>
<td><strong>Passive role</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unfortunately, due to limitations in the amount and content of the gathered data, a similar table for children cannot be offered, nor can this study speak with any certainty as to the presence of a child register of speech, as is the case being argued for mothers in the present study.
This next section further examines each of the mother and children roles outlined above by connecting them to interview and journal excerpts offered by the case study families. The focus here, given the data collected, is predominantly on the mother. These roles are filled by different mothers at different times, and it should be noted that not all of the participating case study mothers talked about all roles. Some of the mothers also reported ways in which their husbands (fathers) filled different roles. Each role is reviewed in turn. Following discussion of the mother/parental role, the corresponding child role is discussed.

Filter (Parent), heir (Child). In many situations, the case study parents reported acting as a gateway to their children’s musical experience. The idea of parent as filter was introduced by Lisa Cruz in her family’s first interview:

I have to work as a filter. Nowadays, just because it is considered a “cool” song doesn’t mean that my daughters will listen to it. For example, Gangam Style. Just because everyone was dancing… There are plenty of songs that have a similar beat as Gangam Style but doesn’t have anything to do with, uh, an artist saying a bad word. It doesn’t necessarily have to be a cool song. (First interview)

Lisa described her role as limiting some music while deeming other music permissible. In this role, the parent places limitations on some musical listening—letting certain things pass through—and enforces guidelines that restrict some music. Filtering involves both referential and metalinguistic talk through which parents convey information and guidelines that may limit music listening. Acting as a filter is about establishing guidelines (the “size” of the filter’s holes) which determine what goes through and what “impurities” are suspended or blocked. How porous the filter is varies from parent to parent, and from situation to situation. Differently sized holes in the filter represent differently sized restrictions around the topics and specific words as discussed in Chapter 6: “bad” words and suggestive or offensive content. The criteria for filtration were discussed in sociolinguistic terms in Chapter 6: age appropriateness and taboo.

Amy West discussed how her husband acts as a filter through his involvement with what music their sons are allowed to download:
They use the computer alone and it's mainly for homework. If they listen to music it's been an unwritten rule Dad needs to download it because they don't have an account and the music is either going in my music bank or Dad’s so that's how we all listen to the same music. (Journal 3).

Amy also talked about her role as a filter when it comes to downloading music that her sons request, discussing how it allows her to make sure she gets the “clean versions” of songs—those that do not violate her guidelines:

When I download the music for them, I try to get the clean versions. But like, we went to a party and his friends, [Kyle’s] friends, they played the dirty versions and I was like, “Come on! You’re going to play the dirty versions?” And then that song has so many curse words that you can’t even hear the beat, it was like “beep, beep”, it doesn’t make sense. (First interview)

Filtering works together with the next role to be discussed: mediator. Filtering establishes rules before the fact; mediating is about responding to situations—the process of changing the “size” of a filter’s “holes”. Though these roles seem quite similar, they are subtly (but importantly) different.

In response to the parent acting as filter, a child acts as an heir. Their listening environment is often preemptively shaped and sometimes limited by the enforcement of music listening guidelines. In the filter-heir role dyad, parents tend to exercise more active control of a listening exposure and the child is left to inherit the information and music that is allowed to pass through the parent-created filter. The notion of child as heir builds upon Bourdieu’s (1968/1993b) notion of family inheritance, as discussed in Chapter 2.

Mediator (Parent), originator (Child). Case study parents acknowledged in many different ways how they cannot control the entirety of their children’s music listening. As a mediator, parents respond to what permeates or bypasses their filters; in this role, they act as a responsive mediator. Mediation in this case often involves parents responding to unexpected exposures and unknown music to which their children have been exposed outside of the family unit. The parent acts as an intervening agent, engaging different situations and responding to music whenever challenges arise. As a mediator, parents are engaged in expressive, referential, and metalinguistic talk. Often
times, parents talk about how a piece of music “makes them feel” as a way to explain why a restriction is in place. Mediation involves offering clarifying information as part of a responsive negotiation. Part of that negotiation is about control—often times, mediation is in response to a child asking a parent to listen to a song with which they may not be familiar. The parent responds to this to reannounce/renegotiate control. If the parent does not have any concerns with the music, this negotiation of power does not take place, and the parent instead assumes the role of companion.

Filter and mediator are similar roles that are still subtly and importantly different. As a filter, a parent sets guidelines in anticipation of exposures. As a mediator, the parent responds to what passes through or challenges an established filter/guideline. The difference between these two roles is the time of implementation. Filters are established prior to an event—in anticipation of an event—while mediation happens in response to an exposure, and can result in renegotiation or redesign of the filter. The relationship is actually a cyclical one, where mediation results in filtration, as captured in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Illustrating the interplay of filter and mediator.

Mediating involves both listening to and talking about music. The parent responds to a new exposure using their existing guidelines as touchstones. Mediation can also be necessary if exposure to an unexpected or unknown song occurs (by way of the radio, for
example) while the parent and child are together. The parent is put in a position to mediate the experience for and/or with the child, through the lens of their relationship.

Changing radio stations is a particular type of active mediation which often is accompanied by discourse; this was first introduced in Chapter 6 as discussed by several of the case study parents. Instead of restricting a music exposure, parents put themselves in a position to mediate content by changing the station if a song comes on that violates one of their guidelines. Lisa Cruz describes how her process of radio mediation involves both changing the station and conversation:

Well, I try to convince them, uh, but it is hard because “my best friend listens to this music” or “my neighbor listens to this music, how come I’m not allowed to?” So basically I speak to them and I tell them exactly why I think it’s bad. And when I listen to the radio, I try to change it without them noticing. Since they don’t notice, I can literally change it to another station. But when they notice, I tell them that I don’t think it’s a cool song. (First interview)

This excerpt demonstrates not only Lisa filling the role of mediator but her also acting as a filter. Lisa explained her mediation using expressive language intended to persuade her children. As was the case in this example, the roles of filter and mediator often work in tandem because filtration and mediation are part of a cyclical process through which mediation can result in the establishment of a filter. This also speaks to discussion in Chapter 6 about parents’ responsive enforcement of guidelines. The situational enforcement is achieved through mediation which results in the creation and implementation of filters.

Beyond mediating listening exposures as they occur, one case study participant reported an example of lyric mediation—changing the content of a song. In their family’s first interview, Pamela Alonzo’s daughter Alicia recalled an interesting example of parent mediation:

But it was the Katy… Katy Perry song “I Kissed a Girl and I Liked It.” My Dad changed it to, “I Kissed a Squirrel and I Liked It.” (First interview)

In this example, Alicia’s father attempted to mediate actual song content in an attempt to prevent Alicia from hearing words or being exposed to themes he may have felt were inappropriate. Since Alicia was able to recall both the actual title of the song and her
father’s modification, it appears that this mediation may have not been successful. This is also an example of how mediation can operate to address individual songs or instances of music parents deem inappropriate for their children to hear. This one instance may have contributed to the creation of a broader listening guideline for Alicia, or it may have simply been a way of sanitizing this particular song.

The child role identified in response to parental mediation is that of originator. A child can originate or instigate a musical exposure or discussion about music that requires mediation on the part of the parent. It should be noted, however, that children are not the only originators of content that may require parental mediation. External music exposures, like the radio, can also fill the role of originator.

**Companion (Parent), originator (Child).** In the role of companion, the parent participates with their child in a child-instigated listening experience or music-related discussion. In this interaction, the parent offers support and encouragement, often acting as an audience. A parent fills the role of companion when a listening exposure or discussion does not violate or challenge an established guideline (which would then require mediation in response.) Companionship involves both listening to music and talking about music, and often puts parents in a role where they learn something from their child and/or are exposed to certain music for the first time. Parent talk in this role is directive and referential; the focus is often on conveying information and sometimes on influencing behavior. In this role, a parent is in a position to accompany their child’s discovery and/or sharing of new musical content. In addition to acting as a companion in these situations, the parent may also end up filling the role of mediator, should the content challenge any listenership guidelines. The following interaction, taken from the Alonzo family’s first interview, is an example of a parent (Pamela Alonzo) filling a companion role:

Alicia: “Like, if I really like a song… if I really want to hear it then I go on YouTube and hear the song and watch the video. Like ‘Happy’”.

Pamela: “I hadn’t heard that one. And that one, you called me over to watch it together.”
Alicia led her mother through a listening experience which Alicia herself initiated. She acted as the guide for this shared experience and her mother, Pamela, acted as her companion.

The role of companion is one that seems to be more available to parents when their children are older. Several case study mothers reflected on how the roles they filled would change as their children aged, allowing them to modify or remove listening guidelines. The absence of guidelines would allow them to fill the companion role more often, lessening the time they spend actively filtering or mediating. Mothers Laura Santiago and Lisa Cruz both discussed this outlook in several journal entries, commenting on how age played a major part in the roles they filled in their children’s lives. Lisa reflected on her relationship with her daughter, stating that “as Deborah grows, and with my guidance, she will be able to make her own judgment calls” (Journal 2). Age transforms not just the child him or herself, but the relationship the parent and child share, and the role the parent plays in guiding music listening, among many other things. This builds upon the discussion in Chapter 6 regarding age appropriateness as a music listening guideline. It appears that, at least in the case of these five families, age appropriateness also impacts how and when parents fill different roles.

It should be noted that Nancy Morales was the only parent of the five who talked about not enforcing guidelines that limited exposure to “bad words” in music; she did mention, as was discussed in Chapter 6, limiting some music that contains offensive and violent themes. Because of this, she did not mention acting as a filter or mediator in many contexts, but did discuss acting as a companion to her son Liam’s music listening more often than others.

The child role often filled in response to parents acting as companion is that of originator—the same role discussed as bringing about a mediation response from parents. Children initiate listening experiences or music-related discussions that elicit parent response. If the child-instigated listening experience or discussion does not violate or challenge an established guideline, the parent often responds as companion. If the exposure or discussion challenges an established guideline, the parent fills the role of mediator. In both of these situations, the child acts as originator.
Guide (Parent), companion (Child). Parents can also guide their children’s listening with directive and referential talk. When acting as a guide, parents facilitate direct, purposive listening or guide discussion in response to a particular musical exposure or topic. In terms of the nature of the response, when acting as a guide a parent is not focusing on implementing a guideline. Rather, these exposures are more focused on transmitting cultural and/or religious beliefs, family memories, and family values. When acting as a guide, the parent is in control and offers music exposures and discourse that shares their experiences, often intended to influence and persuade. When the parent acts as a guide, listening and talking about music take place. This is an active process, contrasted with parent as model (the last role to be discussed) which is a passive role.

Nancy Morales commented that sharing music in her family has, at times, been done with a specific goal in mind. She described acting a guide for her son Liam by sharing what she called “decent” music with him:

We started, like, brainwashing him. We told him about the Beastie Boys. And, uh, and then I overheard him talking to a friend about the Beastie Boys. And it made me feel so proud. Something decent. (First interview)

Nancy described exposing her son to music that she liked and valued. In her role as guide, she purposefully played certain music for Liam with the hopes that he, too, would come to like it as much as she did.

Pamela Alonzo also commented on sharing songs with her daughter Alicia, including searching for her old favorites on the Internet:

So I think that I’ve shared songs from when I was little, right? And we looked up, um, some of my favorite songs from when I was little online. (First interview).

Pamela described engaging her daughter Alicia in music listening and dialogue whereby she actively and purposefully exposed her to music that held great meaning in Pamela’s childhood. The Alonzo family spoke, at length, in Journal 2 about the songs that Alicia had come to know and appreciate through ongoing instances of mother-guided musical experiences. Other examples of this type of sharing—involving cultural/religious beliefs, and family memories—are offered in the next section which examines intergenerational transmission.
When the parent acts as guide, the child fills the role of companion. This parallels the earlier discussion where the parent acts as companion to child-instigated discussion and music-listening but the roles are reversed.

**Model (Parent), observer (Child).** While companion is an active role filled by the parent, being a model is a role that all parents fill simply by having a child and cohabitating with that child. Cohabitation puts parents under almost constant scrutiny—children see (and hear!) how their parents act, what they do, and of interest to the present study, how parents talk about music and what music they choose to listen to. Parents model ideas and behavior, sometimes without even knowing. Just by virtue of the relationship between child and parent, and the common living situation which they share, by virtue of exposure and relationship, ideas are influenced.

In response to parents as models, children act as observers. Again, by virtue of the shared living situation and relationship, children are witness to parent actions, conversations, and discussion about the music they like and listen to and, even when not actively processing what they witness, are impacted by that which they observe.

**The Intergenerational Transmission of Music Values**

The remaining research question, RQ 2b, ponders whether certain music listening values are passed between generations. Excerpts including reflections on memories are offered here as insights into family-based situations that include both music listening and shared discourse about music. Many of these excerpts address RQ 2b while also providing further examples of the listenership roles detailed above. In general terms, there is evidence to support the claim that, at least in the case of the five families who participated in the present study, families do pass music listening values between different generations through shared discourse. Together with the discussion of guidelines and sociolinguistic terms offered in Chapter 6, this section provides evidence to support this claim.

Intergenerational transmission was defined in Chapter 2 as the passage of preferences, skills, knowledge, and values between different generations within a family. When it comes to music, intergenerational transmission concerns the passage of values
(or the relative worth of a song, artist, genre of music, etc.) from one family member to another. As mentioned in Chapter 2, value refers to standards or principles an individual employs to determine what music is important. Music value is further understood as the sum of individual preference choices or assertions. As is demonstrated in this section, transmission is not unidirectional; it occurs in both directions between parents and children. Several of the shared excerpts also reference family members who did not participate in the current study.

Providing “evidence” of the intergenerational transmission of music proved relatively easy to do—all families in the present study reported ways in which music exposures and listening experiences were shared by members. Exposures and discourse have been documented throughout this report as they occur in each family. The challenge lies in pinpointing the connection between the transmission of music and the transmission of music value in order to address RQ2b. If a mother reports that her son introduced her to a song, the song (or music) has been intergenerationally transmitted. But has the value of the song also been transmitted? Shared exposure to a piece of music does not necessarily guarantee the transfer of value as well. And the pressing concern for the present study is the ability to determine if value has been transmitted and, if it has, how that transmission took place. To address this, the present study offers both descriptions reported by participants, and details mechanisms, roles, and processes by which this transfer takes place, as determined by informed analysis on the part of the researcher. It is hoped that this bipartite strategy will provide compelling evidence that the described instances of transmission involve not just sharing of music and discussion about music, but also involve the transfer of opinions and preferences by way of listening and discourse.

Discussion now focuses on six distinct themes or types of transmission as found within the five case study families: parents’ musical memories, children’s musical memories, Christmas memories, child-to-parent transmission, and examples of a particular role-based musical association (“Mom’s music”). Parent-to-child transmission also occurred but has already been discussed at length as part of this chapter’s examination of roles. This study posits that it is these different processes that facilitate opportunities for family members to negotiate, determine, and transmit value. The
excerpts offered in this section are intended to augment the preceding discussion of
listenership roles discussed in response to RQ 2a.

**Parents’ musical memories.** Several parents offered reflections on memories from early in their lives. While these memories do not involve transmission between the parents and children involved in the present study, they provide descriptions of how parents were influenced, in their own lives, by experiences within their families while growing up. Pamela Alonzo offered memories of her mother playing records and commented that music was very present in her family’s household in Argentina. Lisa Cruz mentioned musical memories from her childhood as well, reflecting on how music in her family was much different than it is for her daughter Deborah (age 8). Nancy Morales offered very specific musical memories from growing up in Venezuela, including her family playing *boleros* (love ballads), her Dad playing *carrilera* (a form of popular Venezuelan rumba), and her Dad playing music she and her brother did not like if they were misbehaving in the car. Nancy described it as music “used to torture us” (Journal 1).

Pamela Alonzo talked at length about her purposeful efforts to expose her daughter Alicia (age 11) to music from when Pamela was young. In journals and interviews, Pamela talked about looking up songs online with Alicia. Pamela commented on the importance of this activity as follows:

> It was very important to me to share this with [Alicia] and I looked up songs and asked family in Argentina to send me her books to share with her. I am guessing just like I sang lullabies to her in Spanish from my childhood when she was an infant I must have wanted to share this part of my childhood with her as well. I also thought it would help to transmit the language as well. (Journal 2)

During their first interview and in subsequent journaling, Pamela and Alicia listed songs they had learned this way, often singing lines back and forth to one another as they attempted to remember song titles. They listed “The Little Mouse” (*el Ratoncito*) and *Margarito Terere* (to which Pamela remembered dancing with her Mom), among others, as favorites. In the first Journal reflection, Pamela offered further reflections on Topo Gigio, the lead character on an Italian and Spanish television show from the 1960s:
He sang and [Alicia] and I spent time together listening and watching his videos when she was younger. I remember this character would come on tv each night for a few minutes and tell everyone it was “hora de ir a la camita” or “time to get to bed”. This must have been a popular character throughout Europe and Latin-America because I have friends who remember him fondly who grew up in different parts of the world but none in the United States. (Journal 1)

Pamela purposefully sought out music from her childhood to share with her daughter. Throughout these exposures, Pamela would act as Guide and Alicia as Companion. As evidenced by Alicia’s ability in their interview to sing many of the songs Pamela discussed, Pamela’s efforts in transmitting the musical and lyrical content of many of these songs was successful. It is interesting to see here the lines between the transmission of musical skills and values being blurred; Alicia not only knew of and liked the songs, she was able to sing many of the songs.

**Children’s musical memories.** Limited description of children’s musical memories were offered; this may be due to limitations in the study design and analysis, as previously mentioned, or it may be due to the fact that many of the case study children participants were very young (and thus did not have many years of memories on which to reflect.) The two children who offered musical memories were the eldest children in the study. These examples were provided in response to journal prompts and interview questions, which included descriptions of memories of music that included specific people and/or events where music was shared with or by another person. In the family’s first interview, Kyle West (age 13) offered a reflection that contained two listening memories: one with his grandmother and one with his father:

Well, I heard the John Legend song with my Grandma. Uh, she was, uh… she loves John Legend. She has every single CD. So, we stayed over, like, three weeks ago and she was listening to John Legend. And I said, I like that song, and, like, I’ve been singing it ever since… then. And, like, “All Me,” my Dad, I told… my Dad told me about it and, uh, the Katy Perry song um, I heard it on the um, um… what’s the Grammys. She performed on the Grammys with the song… with that song. (First interview)
When asked to talk a bit more about external influences on his music listening, Kyle’s brother Kevin West (age 11) also mentioned the influence his Dad has on his music listening:

He loves music. He has, like, old hip hop songs and, then he has, he has a lot of Drake. So, when Drake’s album came out, his new album, which I think is one of his best albums so far. He, um, he had that song. He had ‘Worst Behavior’ and ‘Pound Cake’ and ‘Tuscan Leather’… ‘All Me’… I can name all of the songs on the album. (First interview)

Both West sons discussed memories of listening to music while in the presence of relatives, speaking quite often about the influence of their father. These memories offer descriptive evidence of situations in which important figures in these boys’ lives exposed them to music, and they reported liking the music they encountered in these situations.

The “magic” of Christmas. A recurring theme that came up when discussing musical memories and transmission was Christmas. The Cruz, Morales, and West families all offered reflections that centered on Christmas music. Lisa Cruz mentioned Latin American gaitas (Christmas carols) and her desire for her daughter to be familiar with this body of music:

We have in the US… we have Christmas carols. In Latin America we do have our Christmas carols as well. And it’s called gaitas. And I want my daughters to get to know that when they listen to gaitas it is not going to be played at any time of the year. It’s going to be playing a certain time of the year. I want her to get familiar with it in spite of our culture as well. She doesn’t like it. But I’m not going to force her to listen to it. I start dancing when we listen to but if she doesn’t like it, I will change. I will negotiate with her. I will tell her, okay let me listen to three or four songs, and then I can put on three or four songs from your playlist. And we can negotiate. Most of the time I negotiate with her. (First interview)

Nancy Morales also reflected on the importance of Christmas music in her home, which is rooted in her family’s religious beliefs. As with Pamela’s comments above, Nancy mentions not just listening to the music but singing the songs as well.

When I was little, uh, during Christmas time we sing, uh, villancicos… which are, like, carol… not carols, but yeah, you know, like nativity scene songs. In
Colombia… from the 16th to the 24th, we all get together and we pray for baby Jesus and we sing songs. Um, very traditional songs. Actually the way that we pray is by singing. Um, so, Christmas time for us is pretty much a time to actually get together with your family (laughs) and, uh, sing songs to the baby Jesus. Um, some of the songs that I sing to, like, [her baby] or that I used to sing to [Liam] were those songs, like, completely out of context just because they are, like, embedded in my head. (First interview)

When asked if she had any musical memories, Amy West recalled how Christmas time brought a lot of music into their house when she was growing up and how she has continued that tradition in her own household:

But we had a big stereo and we would play music every Christmas. And I still do that with my boys. We decorate the tree, play Christmas music. So we can get into the, you know, into the feeling of Christmas… into the season. Those are my memories. (First interview)

For the case study parents, all of whom did not self-identify as musicians, memories of Christmas included the few instances reported in the study of music-making on the part of the parents. Three of the four case study mothers were not born in the US, making their children first-generation American who may not be as closely connected with their culture of origin. In these cases, music memories around Christmas served as ways to connect children with specific cultural and religious values or beliefs espoused by their parents.

**Child-to-parent transmission.** Intergenerational transmission was observed in the case study families to be a multidirectional process, involving the transfers of information and exposures not just from parents to children (as detailed in the earlier discussion of parent listenership roles), but also from children to parents. In their first interview, the Alonzo family offered a reflection on an instance where Alicia brought a song into the family that her mother Pamela had never heard before:

Alicia: The first time my Mom heard Thrift Shop was… I was singing it with my friends [names omitted]…

Pamela: They were all in the backseat of the car.
Alicia: They were in the backseat of our car ‘cause we were going to the beach for my birthday and we just started singing, um, Thrift Shop, and my mom was like, “what’s that?”

Pamela: I never had heard it, and this is like, now, yes, it’s, like, huge, but this was right at the beginning. (To Alicia) And how had you girls heard it? [Friend 1] had heard it?

Alicia: I heard it from [Friend]…

Pamela: And how did [Friend] hear it?

Alicia: I don’t know. My friend [Friend], she has an older brother in high school. So that might be something, where she’s getting music.

Pamela: So, they didn’t quite get the lyrics but they knew the lyrics, and so, I don’t know what they thought they meant, but it was not the lyrics. But anyway…

Alicia: [Friend] didn’t know the right lyrics. I told you the right lyrics, but you were like, “Oh, but [Friend] knew first.”

Pamela: Anyway, so, yeah, that was a perfect example, right, of how it can happen… they, all three of them knew the song and I had never heard it. So… and I don’t even know… (to Alicia) had you even heard it? You just knew the song because [Friend] sang it.

This exchange describes an occasion when Alicia introduced a new song to her mother; in this example, Alicia was acting as Originator and Pamela vacillated in response to this exposure between Companion and Mediator. We also see evidence of another form of transmission by way of music exposures shared between friends completely removed from the family context. In this example, Alicia heard music with her friends which she then shared with her mother.

In a similar way, Nancy Morales reflected in her family’s first interview on how Liam (age 9) acts as an Originator and brings in new music:

Liam loves to bring, like, new songs that he listens at school. (Both laugh.) And then he brings them and we are very much connected to new, mainstream, you know, pop music (laughs) thanks to [Liam]. And he plays them back to us. (First interview)

Brandy Santiago reported a much different reality than Nancy regarding her daughter, Laura (age 6). Brandy commented that this type of music introduction on the part of her
daughter has not yet happened, maybe due to her age and limited experiences outside of the family. Brandy commented that Laura has exposed her mother to new movies and TV shows (including the Power Rangers, commenting in their family’s first interview that Laura is “obsessed with Power Rangers”) but that since the family tends to listen to the same kind of “Top 40 and whatever’s on the radio” (First interview) that Laura had not yet surprised her with what music she knows and likes. As with the earlier discussion of children’s musical memories, age is a factor again here. Older children were more likely to bring external, potentially new-to-the-parent-music into the family since they were outside of the family more often than younger children (at school, predominantly.) This also connects with earlier discussion of enforcement of listening guidelines as age-connected; since younger children are less likely to have musical exposures separate from their family, parental guidelines may not need to be in place as of yet.

“Mom’s music.” The present study noted a trend among case study families where certain songs or artists became closely associated with family members. Phrases like “Mom’s music” and “your music” were used by several participants, shedding light on how music use can become a self- or externally-imposed marker of identity, and perhaps even how certain genres of music and artists are connected with particular family roles. This also shows a different side to the topic of appropriateness, where certain music, if associated with particular roles which also are associated with particular age brackets, is deemed appropriate or inappropriate. From a sociolinguistic perspective, it is interesting to see how language is used to connect particular individuals with different songs, artists, and/or types of music. This is similar to Illari et al.’s (2011) mention of “adult music” which they describe as a label given by parents to “music made by and for adults” (p. 64) which they contrast with “baby music” and “children’s music” (p. 64). The difference in the present study is that music is being associated with particular individuals and specific family roles and not with more general groups of people organized by age-related labels like “adult” or “baby.”

One of the earliest instances of this type of specific-role labeling within the present study occurred in the West family’s first interview. When discussing how and when her family listens to music, Amy West stated, “Going to school we drive together.
They… they listen to my music.” The italicization of “my” is intended to show the extra emphasis given to this word when Amy made this declaration. Labeling the music as “mine” shows how important this music is to Amy while also signaling her sons that she considers the music to be a part of how she views herself. We see this distinction also made by Amy’s youngest son, Kevin. When discussing how he chooses what music he listens to, he made the following statement:

It depends on… for me, it depends on my mood ‘cause if I’m really happy or something I would want something with a fast beat so I would listen to my Dad’s music. But if I was really sad, I would listen to, like, my Mom’s music.” (First interview)

Kevin indicated two different categories of music that he associates with either his Mom or his Dad, and also described how he decided what music to engage with based on mood. An interesting connection can be made here with Green’s (1997) work on music and gender development. Though the present context is much different, Kevin’s mention of tempo-based musical associations with different parents may be worthy of investigation in a future study. Comments like this could serve as inspiration for research into gender, family roles, and musical associations, which could examine the influence or importance of specific musical elements like tempo.

In their first interview Pamela and Alicia Alonzo also mentioned “Mom’s” music during a discussion of Pamela and Alicia’s respective individual music listening preferences. While Pamela was making comments about liking Matt Nathanson’s songs, Alicia indicated that her Mom was “obsessed” with music and that she didn’t like his songs. Pamela responded as follows:

(To Alicia) But you sing along to them… (to Researcher) She sings along to it. So, you don’t agree with it because it’s “Mom’s music,” maybe, but you… Jason Mraz, yesterday, you were jamming to it! (First interview)

Of note with this excerpt is an apparent tension between Alicia liking a song but knowing that her mother Pamela is also fond of the song. This may be related to Alicia’s age as she grows and seeks to define a personal, individual identity. In doing this, she may choose to differentiate herself from her mother by avoiding music she associates with her mother even if she may genuinely like a particular song. This demonstrates yet another
way in which relationships in the family may come to influence decisions about particular music. A desire for family role differentiation led to choices about what music to value. It also provides an example of mother acting as Guide and child as, in this example, a somewhat reluctant Companion.

Nancy Morales offered an observation, referencing music she associates with her son Liam. Her comment differentiates between her music (“my music”) and her son’s music (“his music”):

My music feels young. (Laughs.) But I completely do not identify with his music or, like, with new music that is going on. So, that’s very… That is very, you know? That’s very weird. (Final interview)

Age is a factor in this example, in addition to differences associated with family roles. It is interesting to see how Nancy describes her music as “young” while also mentioning feeling disconnected with popular music—music connected with her son’s younger generation.

Differences in cultural experiences between parents and children also came up when identifying how respondents labeled parent and child music. During the Cruz family’s first interview, Lisa Cruz talked about how her music is rooted in a different language and a different cultural upbringing than her daughter:

Lisa Cruz: “I love Latin music because that’s basically what…”

(Deborah Cruz, in background: “Spanish, Spanish, Spanish…”)

Lisa Cruz: “…I enjoy that best and that’s what I work with most of the time.”

As with the earlier discussion of Christmas music, in this example, music exposures are used as a way to facilitate parent-valued cultural exposure where parents acts as Guide. Later, Lisa’s daughter Deborah commented that she did not like her mother’s music because she did not understand the words. Despite this, Lisa mentioned working to provide her daughter with exposures to “her” music in an attempt to bridge this gap and recreate some of Lisa’s childhood experiences, which were rooted in a different culture, for her children.
Building on this notion of “Mom’s music,” one mother reflected on how simply being a parent has impacted her musical preferences. Lisa Cruz offered the following observation during her family’s first interview:

Lisa: “Because of my daughter… she’s been growing up so fast…”
Deborah: “I like One Direction.”
Lisa: “I was not that involved until the One Direction-style… now I have to listen to Disney Channel, when they put on the band called, something…”
Deborah: “Fresh Beat Band!”
Lisa: “Yes, Fresh Beat Band. So it is different, yes. My priorities now are more like into the kids’ songs.”

This example describes a type of child-to-parent music transmission which Lisa described as occurring simply as a result of becoming a mother. She mentioned how her “priorities” for music listening have changed since having children. Along similar lines, Pamela Alonzo and Brandy Santiago commented that being a parent has changed the time and money they have available to spend on music and to attend concerts. In becoming a mother, a role is defined and a relationship between individuals is created; the result is a fundamental change to what music is present in a family, how music is experienced, and the musical associations that are possible.

Together, these themes and types of transmission as found within the five case study families provide descriptive evidence to address RQ 2b. Transmission, in many of these examples, serves to connect memories to guidelines—past experiences motivate and inspire parents and children to talk and act. In some of the excerpts offered above, there is evidence to show multigenerational transmission where parents are actively guiding their children’s musical exposures and listening guidelines based upon their experiences while growing up. In other situations, sometimes transmission does not involve a purposeful, guided exposure that results in values being transmitted; it is simply the act of sharing and of listening together that creates a bond or memory that strengthens a relationship and, accordingly, imbues a song or artist with importance. The act of sharing with another—of listening and talking together—connects a particular song or
artist with a person in a way that makes the song or artist more important, more special, and, in many cases, more highly valued.

It is this information—about relationships, memories, roles, how to use music, what music matters, and so forth—that is captured within a family’s script around music listening. The script here is viewed as metaphor for the body of information created within a family and transmitted to members. The family script is a collection of elements of the family’s cultural heritage; it is also one means by which children come to develop their own personalities and situate themselves in relation to greater society. In his seminal sociological investigation of the family, Elmer (1945) describes the cultural heritage as influential on the children who come to inherit the information transmitted within the family unit:

The cultural heritage of the family is of first importance in determining the personality of the children and their manner of doing things. The children’s effectiveness may be modified by their biological inheritance; but without the cultural heritage, which is the result of centuries of accumulated experience, the children would be wholly ineffective in our present society. (p. 459)

He goes on to describe how:

The family then plays a part in the development of personality: first, in providing the early guidance, standards, and controls; and second, in helping the child to become self-reliant in his social thinking, participation, and leadership even as he was first guided and then urged to become self-reliant in his walking, talking, and eating. (p. 459)

Elmer’s comments reflect some of the findings of the present study, especially concerning the importance of the family placing “standards” and “controls” (like the music listening guidelines enforced by the case study families), and the family’s role in helping children understand who they are and how to function in greater society.

What remains to be tackled in this analysis is reflection upon the implications and applications of this research. The final portion of this chapter is dedicated to discussion of the impressions of study impact offered by research participants, limitations of the present study, recommendations for future research, and a final conclusion that looks back upon the literature that inspired the present study and indicated its need.


Participants’ Impressions of Study Impact

As part of the final interview conducted with each family, study participants were asked to reflect on their impressions of the study’s impact. Parents reported that their participation brought more attention to something of which they were already aware, showing them the pervasiveness of music in their lives and the lives of their children.

Pamela Alonzo commented as follows in her final interview:

One of the times, and I don’t know if it made it into the questions but [Alicia] made a comment sort of like, “Well, when we’re together I don’t pick a lot of the music we listen to.” So it made me more aware of that. Um, right? That I, um, as much as I really… as much as I think… I do limit a lot of what she hears and what she’s exposed to. Um, I think I, um, I’m a lot more aware of when she’s with friends, right, kind of what’s being accessed more on YouTube than I think it was before. Because I think she is, on her own, different than when friends are here and this made me realize that a lot more. (Final interview)

Pamela indicated that the study raised her awareness of her daughter Alicia’s lack of involvement in what music is played in the household and how, upon reflection, she limits music exposures more than she thought she did. Along the same lines, Lisa Cruz commented that her family’s participation in the study raised her awareness of the music her daughter Deborah was listening to at school and during her afterschool program. Brandy Santiago also mentioned participation as raising awareness; she said the study helped bring her attention to “what was in the music” (Final interview).

Nancy Morales reported that her family’s participation in the study encouraged them to do something that was outside of their normal routine:

I think it was the first time we sat together and talked about the subject. Ah, it’s not like a familiar subject. Sometimes it was like, even difficult to sit-down and, like, come up with answers about something that is not our subject. You know, or, or trying to come up with some sort of answer that has, you know, a meaning of something that might be obvious but it’s not. (Final interview)

She mentioned that while music is present in their lives, they did not think as deeply about it as the study challenged them to, especially when it comes to clarifying what certain words mean and how they are used.
As a result of her family’s participation in the study, Amy West reported that her son Kyle was starting to share more of his music. Kyle mentioned that participation helped him realize that he liked R&B music more than he thought he did. Amy commented that the study helped her learn that she values lyrics in music more than “a good beat” (Final interview). Kevin mentioned that participation helped him develop an understanding of what music he listens to.

The final interview also asked participants about what they liked most and least about the study. The West family did not offer anything they did not like, mentioning that they enjoyed participating. The Alonzo, Cruz, and Morales families mentioned that a challenge to participation was answering the difficult questions asked in the journals. The Alonzo family mentioned that sometimes the reflections took a long time to complete because there was so much discussion in response to the questions. Pamela Alonzo commented that “some of the questions were tough to really get at the gist of really what was behind it” (Final interview). It was really interesting that The Morales family mentioned enjoying doing something out of the ordinary. Brandy Santiago mentioned that she enjoyed how the study afforded her an opportunity to ask her daughter Laura “some more serious questions and treat her like a grown-up” (Final interview). While the study was not designed to offer participants any explicit benefits, it is encouraging to find that participants enjoyed their participation and even benefited from thinking about the questions they were asked through journals and interviews.

Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

The present study has many limitations that suggest a need for future research. This section details several areas which include generalizability and research applications, representation and inclusion, researcher bias, second language interpretation, layers of talk, and pedagogical applications.

Generalizability and applications. The present study sought to gather descriptions of the five family’s listening environments. To gather the necessarily detailed data, only a small group of people, all of whom ended up being quite similar in
terms of demographics, participated in the study. The group of families engaged in this study was operating in a specific cultural and historical context. It is difficult to speak to the generalizability or applicability of these findings to other families. Findings of the present study reveal that discourse can operate as a way to transmit values among these particular families, showing that the family can, at least in some situations, shape music listening values. Only through replication and the discovery of findings similar to those uncovered here could any broader statements about families’ music listening environments be put forward.

The present study demonstrated the rich territory available to researchers interested in studying the diverse and complex music listening environment of the family. Future research could delve further into the impact of the place of the development and transmission of music listening values in families. While there were a few questions in the present study about families’ experiences of living in Miami as they applied to music exposures (for example, what radio stations were available, concert opportunities, etc.), this focus could create an entirely separate study where the emphasis could become place and music influences, perhaps undertaking a comparative study with families in several different locations. The focus could also be shifted from place to focus on class-based advantages; the present study could be modified and replicated to look at the transmission of music listening values within families from advantaged and disadvantaged SES backgrounds. Lareau (2011), referencing Bourdieu, comments that “the complex nature of social life means that multitudes of subtle skills are drawn on in the transmission of class privilege” (p. 196). SES influences how parents are able to activate different kinds of cultural capital, not to mention the ways in which cultural capital is activated.

Future research could repeat a similar study but remove the inclusion criterion of both parents not self-identifying as musicians. It would be interesting to compare the findings of the present study with those from families where parents self-identify as musicians to see how listening environments are similar or different. Future research might also attempt to engage families where not all members may see eye-to-eye. All family members who participated in the present study were on good terms with one another. The present study posits that relationships, family memories, and opinions from people we care about shape what music we value. If the relations between family
members are strained or contain negative experiences, might the opposite effect be reported? And what if members did not identify with the guidelines in place in their family, or had come to develop negative associations with particular songs due to difficult or painful memories or past associations?

**Representation and inclusion.** While it was not an initial goal of this project, the present study ended up revealing more information about parents, specifically mothers, than it did about children. This is not to say that the information herein presented about parents is not important; rather, this limitation illuminates the need for more balanced research that focuses equally on parents and children, or perhaps future research that responds to the present study with a similar examination of only children. This study’s design and analysis may, unintentionally, be to blame for the unbalanced data gathered by the present study. As was discussed in this chapter’s earlier section on parent roles, the way that families responded to the study’s design, with parents talking more in group interviews and being the ones who administered the journal prompts and typed up responses, resulted in parents offering more feedback than their children. In terms of analysis, the theoretical framework of family script theory focuses much more heavily on parental scripts than on children scripts. This, too, may have impacted the study’s focus due to the existence of more literature regarding parents on which this study could build.

The lack of child responses is a limitation of the present study, and the few child-centric findings reported here in response to their family’s music listening guidelines should be built upon by future research. The lack of child responses may be as a result of the power dynamics that characterize the family talk environment. In addition to this, children’s responses to discussed music listening guidelines were mostly positive. A question remains as to whether or not children felt comfortable speaking out if they did not agree with the guidelines. The authority that parents yield which allows them to enforce guidelines and influence their children’s opinions may also restrict children’s ability to voice their opinions. This is not to say that parents are knowingly or purposefully oppressing their children—rather, this may have illuminated a shortcoming of this type of study, or, even more specifically, the design of this particular study. The decision to have children and parents complete e-journals and interviews together was
made in an attempt to create a dialogue-friendly environment that would elicit family interactions and reflections upon past interactions. This type of interaction was essential, as the focus of the study was on shared discourse and transmission.

Future research should, if possible, work to find a way to support children’s agency and should strive to provide an open forum through which their voices can be heard. Future investigations could attempt to provide children with parent-free opportunities to respond to questions. Even with this modification, challenges will always remain. Providing children with a research-based opportunity to openly speak about their opinions of family rules or guidelines will not free them from their family-based reality, nor can it guarantee them amnesty should their comments upset or offend their parents. And if this dynamic contributes to children’s inability to speak freely, it is not easily addressed; it is a reality with which all studies examining parent-child interactions will have to contend.

Future research could address some of the present study’s limitations by focusing more on children’s roles in the family music listening environment. Research could examine topics like acceptance and resistance towards music listening guidelines, or perhaps examine the impact of variables like children’s gender or age (building on the work of Green, 1997, for example) on music listening preferences in the family. A longitudinal study might also be useful to examine how processes and discourses uncovered in this study may change as children age. Along these same lines, future research could consider the influence of other impactful relationships on music listening values, such as close friends. To balance the present study’s examination of mothers, future studies could focus on just fathers or to necessitate the participation of two parents. Perhaps an expansion could also seek out a variety of heterosexual and homosexual parental couples. Inclusion criteria could be adjusted to require the participating of two parents and analysis could focus more on the differences in roles between parents, in addition to parental and children roles.

Researcher bias. This study is shaped and colored by the biases, experiences, and choices of the researcher completing the study. While many qualitative researchers will opt for reflexivity to acknowledge bias whenever possible, the descriptive nature of the
present study and the direct reporting of collected data from participants within this final document have lessened the need for reflexive commentary to be included throughout. That being said, it important to acknowledge that the researcher falls within the same age range, is of the same gender and SES as the five mothers who participated in the study, and is a mother herself. These similarities may have had an impact on participants, making them feel more comfortable as they were talking to someone with whom they could relate on a personal level.

**Second language.** Three of the five case study mothers reported English as their second language. The study was conducted in English, leaving several of the mothers to convey their thoughts in a language in which they may not have been completely comfortable. More detailed description may have been available if interviews and journals were administered and analyzed in these mothers’ first language of Spanish.

**Layers of talk.** The present study was focused more on descriptions of music listening than on observations of families listening to music or talking about music in more “natural” settings where the text may have occurred without prompting by the researcher. This study was designed to ask question to gain descriptive self-reports by the case study families and to, whenever possible, elicit discourse similar to what may naturally occur without the intrusion of a researcher’s questions. This study yielded not just talk about music but, at times, talk *about talk* about music in families. This extra layer is a difficult one to pull apart. What has been reported in this document includes both talk about music, including discourse between family members similar to what would occur when the researcher was not asking questions, and talk *about talk* about music, given in response to the researcher asking questions.

**Epigenetics.** Future research in neuroscience could build on the qualitative insights offered in the present study by considering if there is a genetically-inherited counterpart to the socially transmitted phenomena discussed here. There is emerging neuroscientific research in epigenetics that shows how “changes in an organism’s external environment—its life experiences and even its choices… can influence the
expression of its otherwise inflexible DNA code” (Hughes, 2013). Exciting new research from the Ressler Lab at the University of Emory suggests that mice inherit smell memories from their fathers. Future research in this area might examine if preferences for music are also epigenetically transmitted.

**Pedagogical applications.** The current study also has exciting pedagogical applications, similar to those suggested by Crafts, Cavicchi, and Keil (1993). Research situated in the classroom could empower students to conduct small-scale investigations of concepts and ideas discussed in this study. Students could facilitate interviews with their family members, or encourage family members to interview one another. Further research could gather information on individual exposures and collective exposures, and discuss how these may be mutually influential, ways in which they are different, and reasons for these differences. These lines of research are outside of the scope of the present study however projects like these could be individual or larger class activities which could be modified to be conducted by students at any level of schooling and in many different topic-focused classes (music, social studies/anthropology, family studies, etc.)

**Conclusion**

This study of music listening in five families addressed a gap in the existing literature regarding the role of the family in influencing and shaping family members’ music listening preferences. As reported in Chapter 1, Boer and Abubakar (2014) called for increased study of the specifics of family music-listening environments especially in families with children beyond infancy. The present study responded to this call and offered rich description of ways in which five families engaged with music, and how they

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8 This research has not yet been published. Proceedings from a report given at a 2013 conference can be found here: [http://www.abstractsonline.com/plan/ViewAbstract.aspx?mID=3236&sKey=b8777f87-e87b-48ce-b047-9e2b36b833dc&cKey=b4c82dcd-2a7d-4393-b8bc-661cde6e2678&mKey=8d2a5bec-4825-4cd6-9439-b42bb151d1cf](http://www.abstractsonline.com/plan/ViewAbstract.aspx?mID=3236&sKey=b8777f87-e87b-48ce-b047-9e2b36b833dc&cKey=b4c82dcd-2a7d-4393-b8bc-661cde6e2678&mKey=8d2a5bec-4825-4cd6-9439-b42bb151d1cf). More information on the Ressler lab is available here: [http://resslerlab.com/site/projects/](http://resslerlab.com/site/projects/).
formed opinions of what music they listen to, value, and subsequently pass between generations. Utilizing sociolinguistics, family script theory, and life course perspective terminology, this study described reciprocal and multidirectional mechanisms of transmission and listenership roles that are shared by way of linked lives within a family.

At the beginning of this document, several formal and informal research questions which compelled this study to be undertaken were outlined. Both sets of questions were devised in response to the work of Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves (2001), Boer and Abubakar (2014), ter Bogt et al. (2011), and Borthwick and Davidson (2002). To address the formal research questions, the present study offered descriptions of the music listening environments in five families, and analyzed reported discourse. This study uncovered how listening guidelines and listenership roles, all enacted and enforced in a contextual and reactive way within a body of shared discourse, facilitated the creation of music listening exposures and the corresponding transmission of music values. Discourse was discussed as a way in which exposures were linked to preference within a body of communal discourse, guidelines, and memories which came together to form each family’s script around music listening. The script can be seen as both an analytical tool used here to describe information created by and shared within a family, and as a prescriptive blueprint used by families as they encounter and respond to music.

This study offered description and analysis which, together, elucidated several ways in which music is present in these families’ daily lives, and some processes by which family members come to shape and share individuals’ determinations of what music matters. Responding to Boal-Palheiros and Hargreaves (2001), this study revealed how “strong emotional ties” (p. 115) in these environments shape and are shaped by discourse, and used as a way to transmit and influence music values. In response to Boer and Abubakar (2014), and ter Bogt et al.’s (2011) calls for increased research into the function of music in family, the present study offered evidence of sociolinguistic discourse mechanisms at work within five families. Contextualized analysis of discourse events was presented herein and discussed in terms of shared music listening guidelines.

The present study demonstrated how relationships—interactions with people we care about—can influence our decisions about the relative value of music. The family serves to socialize and enculturate its members; through shared discourse and
experiences, members learn different ways to interact with the world. These interactions are first modeled in the family unit by way of listenership role dyads discussed earlier in this chapter. Parents, filling the roles of filter, mediator, companion, guide, and model, and children, filling the roles of heir, originator, companion, and observer offer family members social orientations. Discourse is shaped by and through roles which determine discourse contents and types of interaction.

Shared discourse and listening experiences provide opportunities for memories to be made, for family members to convey opinions, and for a body of information about how to use music and what music matters to be transmitted between family members. This idea of a relational value of music—that the people we care about can serve as criteria for determining the relative worth of a piece of music or musical artist—represents a distinct way of listening. Elmer (1945) discusses this term in the context of the family. He states that:

The family is a social institution which provides the mechanism through which social heritage works. Much of what we used to speak of as heredity is actually the influence of the family in interpreting people, customs, and attitudes and associating them with individual and group reactions, ways of thinking, ways of speaking, and ways of listening. (p. 37)

Each family has its own distinct way of listening—five of these were detailed in the present study. The rich description put forward in this document provides insights into the unique sonic, social heritage of each participating family; analysis offered explanations as to what specific sociolinguistic mechanisms facilitate the transfer of the customs, interpretations, and attitudes mentioned by Elmer in the above quotation.

Connecting back with Borthwick and Davidson (2002), the present study supports findings regarding the context of music listening and the family’s role in influencing identities while establishing a collective body of shared understandings about music. They explain that “evidence has shown that the combination of the parents’ family histories, emergent expectations, role allocations and current dynamic interactions within the household plays a central role in defining musical identity” (p. 77). Using sociolinguistics and family script theory, the present study can claim much the same, as demonstrated in these five families. Discourse, guidelines, and observations drawn from
the five case study families were discussed in collective terms as family scripts. This term, when removed from the clinical setting and viewed in a more literal sense, represents a general label or framework useful for comparing shared discourse around music in different families. The present study demonstrated this approach’s utility in facilitating comparison and inter-family analysis, and in describing how music listening is an influential component of five families’ individual and collective identities.

One of the final informal questions put forward in this document’s first chapter pondered if there were parallels between the development of music performance skills and development of music listening preferences and values. The present study demonstrated how parents play several key roles in the family music listening environment just as parents were identified in the literature (see Chapter 1) as greatly impactful on children’s development of musicianship skills. Parents were discussed here as helping their children music—connecting back to earlier discussions of Small (1998)—which “includes learning and being taught the complex skill of how to use music—what music does, what it can do, and how it can be tapped for social purposes” (Batt-Rawden and DeNora, 2005, p. 289.) This type of learning, facilitated by parents in family-centric experiences that involve both music listening and making music, equips children with the social competencies that allow them to both create and use culture.

With guidance from scholars including Wright (2010), the present study used sociological terminology and analytical strategies to examine music listening and talk about music in five families in an attempt to make “the familiar strange” (p.1)—or perhaps, more appropriately given the territory of the present study, make the familial strange. Families were asked to describe and reflect upon everyday music listening experiences and responsive discourse. The collected responses and reflections were then analyzed and peculiarized (“made strange”) using sociolinguistic terminology and family script theory. But the present study then took Wright’s comment one step further to refamiliarize “the strange.” The final chapters of this document reconnected analysis with the families at the heart of this study; their discourse, comments, responses, and relationships were therein presented in an attempt to return analysis to the familiar participants who inspired inquiry. This was made possible through a summary of mechanisms by which transmission occurred and by way of Chapter 7’s focus on specific
listenership roles. This document started and ended with focus on the familiar lives of the participants—they whose life stories inspired this study, and whose thoughts, opinions, and experiences are meaningful even if the specialized analysis captured here is distant from their everyday understandings of their music listening experiences.

In some ways, this examination of the transmission of music value has provided evidence to suggest that discourse around music as reported by the five case studies is also a way in which families transmit more general family values. Music listening and talk about music are vital components of each family’s music value script—the body of information that is established in the family and, through exposures and discourse, shared within families. It serves as a blueprint or touchstone for evaluating and experiencing music. But listening and talking about music also provide information about other family values, relationship, modes of conduct, and roles that may transfer or influence other areas of families’ lives. Examining how some of the findings in the present may apply to other areas of families’ lives in future research could provide valuable insights on a variety of important topics (such as guidelines around other media usage, language use in general, or how notions of age-appropriateness influence other parenting decisions about what children can and cannot do.)

In the context of the present study’s contributions to music education research, this study aimed to inspire researchers and practitioners to take a step back from time to time to examine the people and ideas at the heart of our programs. Lamont (2011a) contends that “to capitalise on the opportunities of music at school requires a different approach of considering music education for life, recognising that development can be diverse, dynamic, and distinctive.” (p. 384) This study represents a humble attempt to understand some of the people with whom we deal—constituents, community members, students—and the webs in which they live and through which they experience music. Children come to know music in many different contexts, including the family. These experiences shape their identities, and influence what music they value. Lamont reflects that “developing a stable but flexible musical identity is essential to support lifelong involvement with music making and finding opportunities to explore musical passions is also absolutely vital” (p. 385). Perhaps, as is the case in many family settings, a key role
for school music education should be to help children synthesize different identities, exposures, and values.
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Appendices

Appendix A: Ethics Approval Form.

This is to notify you that The University of Western Ontario Research Ethics Board for Non-Medical Research Involving Human Subjects (NMREB) which is organized and operates according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario has granted approval to the above referenced revision(s) or amendment(s) on the approval date noted above.

This approval shall remain valid until the expiry date noted above assuming timely and acceptable responses to the NMREB’s periodic requests for surveillance and monitoring information.

Members of the NMREB who are named as investigators in research studies, or declare a conflict of interest, do not participate in discussions related to, nor vote on, such studies when they are presented to the NMREB.

The Chair of the NMREB is Dr. Riley Hinson. The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.
Appendix B: Miami Herald Print and Online Participant Recruitment Ads.

Print Ad

Music in Your Family: A Research Study

Are you a parent who talks about music with your child? Join a fascinating study that examines music listening within families. Families in Miami-Dade with children under 18 years may participate. Your family will receive a $100 gift card upon completion of the study.

For complete details, visit musicalfamilytree.ca

Online Ad
**Screenshot**

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**Online Ad Click-through Statistics**
Appendix C: Survey, Letter of Information, and Consent Forms.

SURVEY LETTER OF INFORMATION AND CONSENT

Family music listening legacies: A case study-based investigation of the intergenerational communication of music listening within selected families.

Note: This letter and the survey is viewed online at http://bit.ly/3LcQGF. This letter will not be distributed in paper copy, hence the formatting is very simple.

My name is Jillian Bracken and I am a PhD student in Music Education at the Don Wright Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the intergenerational transmission of musical listening guidelines with families. This survey is the first step in identifying families interested in participating in the study. By completing this survey, you are expressing interest in participating in this study.

This initial survey is targeting parents with a child or children at home and with a living parent (your child's/children's grandparent) who lives with you or lives nearby. You, the parent completing this survey, should do so having spoken with the other member of your family and having confirmed their interest in participating. Not all members of your family must be interested, but at least one parent, one child, and one grandparent must participate.

My research explores how selective families in which neither parent self-identifies as a musician talk about music. Five families will be selected from the pool of survey respondents for the next step in this project. In-depth case studies which will involve online and telephone interviewing, e-mail-based journaling, and a final phone interview. In-person interviewing opportunities are also available and can be discussed if you are selected to participate. You will be e-mailed if you are selected as one of the five case study families.

To participate in this first survey phase of my research, you must:

- Live in Miami-Dade County
- Have stable and regular access to an Internet and phone
- Be available and interested in participating in the case study portion of this study during January-June 2014

Further selection criteria require that you:

- Are a parent who does not self-identify as a musician
- Have a child or children currently at home who is/are also willing to participate in the case study.

A more detailed informed consent process will be undertaken if your family is selected for the case study portion of this study. Please note that completing this survey does not guarantee that you will be chosen to participate as a case study family. There are known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study.

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time.

If your family is selected as case study participants, you will receive a $100 gift card to Amazon upon completion of the study. If your family is selected but is unable to complete the entire study, you will be partially compensated. If you complete the initial group interview only, you will receive a $25 gift card to Amazon. If you complete the initial group interview and the second phase of journaling, you will receive a $75 gift card to Amazon.

All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. The information you provide on the survey is accessible only to the researcher. If you are not selected to participate in the rest of the study your information may be used in reports of the research results but your name and any information that might identify you will not be used.

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, Western University.[[Office of Research Ethics, Western University]]

[[Office of Research Ethics, Western University]]

You may also contact Dr. Ruth Wright, Ms. Bracken’s doctoral supervisor.[[Dr. Ruth Wright, Ms. Bracken’s doctoral supervisor]]

[[Dr. Ruth Wright, Ms. Bracken’s doctoral supervisor]]

The participant screening survey that follows is 5 pages in length and should take approximately 5 minutes to fill out.

I have read the above research description and wish to fill out the participant screening survey.[[I have read the above research description and wish to fill out the participant screening survey]]

Please enter your first and last name in the text box below. Entering your name below is your virtual signature, indicating your informed consent as a survey participant.
The Intergenerational Transmission of Musical Values within Families

Initial Survey Indicating Interest in Participation
LETTER OF INFORMATION

Introduction and Invitation to Participate

My name is Jillian Bracken and I am a PhD student in Music Education at the Don Wright Faculty of Music at the University of Western Ontario. I am currently conducting research into the intergenerational transmission of musical listenership guidelines within families in the Miami-Dade area. I would like to invite you to participate in this study.

Purpose of the study

This study will explore how select families in Miami-Dade County in which neither parent self-identifies as a musician talk about music. This study will examine parental guidelines for children’s music consumption over generations.

Inclusion/Exclusion Criteria

This study will include at least two members of your family representing two different generations. You may not participate in this study if either parent in your family self-identifies as a musician.

If you agree to participate...

If you agree to participate, you will be asked to participate in one group interview session with your family members, several months of individual e-mail correspondence where you respond to the researcher’s questions, and an individual follow-up phone interview. The questions asked will inquire about your music preferences, whether there are differences across generations, and whether and/or how preferences are encouraged/discouraged across generations. The group interview will take place via the internet via Skype or Google Hangout, will be conducted in spring 2014, and will take approximately 90 minutes. An in-person interview may also be possible, should you prefer. E-mail correspondence with the researcher will take place following the group interview and will take approximately 30 minutes each week over the span of about 2 months. If you are not comfortable using email the researcher will work with you to arrange another way to collect this information. Follow-up phone interviews will be conducted in summer 2014 and will take approximately 90 minutes. The group and phone interviews will be audio-recorded and transcribed into written format.

Confidentiality

All information collected for the study will be kept confidential. The data collected will remain confidential and accessible only to the investigator of the study on her password-protected computer and will be kept indefinitely. If the results are published, your name will not be used unless you indicate that you wish it to be used. Please indicate whether or not your name can be used in the accompanying consent form. If you or any member of your family chooses to withdraw from this study, your data will be removed and destroyed from our database.
Risks

There are no known or anticipated risks or discomforts associated with participating in this study.

Voluntary Participation

Participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions or withdraw from the study at any time.

If your family is selected as case study participants, you will receive a $100 gift card to Amazon upon completion of the study. If your family is selected but is unable to complete the entire study, you will be partially compensated. If you complete the initial group interview only, you will receive a $25 gift card to Amazon. If you complete the initial group interview and the second phase of journaling, you will receive a $75 gift card to Amazon.

Even if other members of your family have agreed to participate in this study, you should not feel that you must participate because they have agreed to do so. It is up to you to decide whether participation is right for you.

Questions

If you have any questions about the conduct of this study or your rights as a research participant you may contact the Office of Research Ethics, Western University at [insert contact information]. If you require any further information regarding this research project or your participation in this study, you may contact Jillian Bracken at [insert contact information]. You may also contact my supervisor Dr. Ruth Wright, Chair of the Music Education Department at the University of Western Ontario at [insert contact information].

This letter is yours to keep for future reference.

Jillian Bracken

Letter of Information, Page 2
CONSENT FORM
(Child)

Project Title:
Family music-listening legacies: A case study-based investigation of the intergenerational communication of music listenership guidelines within selected families

Principal Investigator:
Jillian Bracken, PhD candidate, Don Wright Faculty of Music, The University of Western Ontario

I have read the Letter of Information, the nature of the study has been explained to me, and I agree that my child may participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Please initial your choice:

_____ The researcher may use my child’s name in reports of the results of the research.

_____ Do NOT use my child’s name in reports of the research.

Child’s Name (please print): ________________________________

Signature of Child: _______________________________________

Name of Parent Providing Consent (please print):

Parent’s Signature: _______________________________________

Date: ___________________________________________________

Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: (please print)

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: _______________

Date: ___________________________________________________

Consent Form - Child
CONSENT FORM
(Parent)

Project Title:
Family music-listening legacies: A case study-based investigation of the intergenerational communication of music listenership guidelines within selected families

Principal Investigator:
Jillian Bracken, PhD candidate, Don Wright Faculty of Music, The University of Western Ontario

I have read the Letter of Information, the nature of the study has been explained to me, and I agree to participate. All questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Please initial your choice:

[ ] The researcher may use my name in reports of the results of the research.

[ ] Do NOT use my name in reports of the research.

Participant’s Name (please print): ____________________________

Participant’s Signature: ____________________________

Role in Family: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

Name of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: (please print) ____________________________

Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent: ____________________________

Date: ____________________________

Consent Form - Parent
Appendix D: Participant E-Journal Prompts.

Four families completed the journals as text in an e-mail. One would type up answers in a Word document and send as an attachment to an e-mail.

Timeline of Journals (all 2014)

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Alonzo – 5.5 weeks  
Cruz – just over 11 weeks  
Morales – 8.5 weeks  
Santiago – 8.5 weeks  
West – just over 4 weeks

Guidelines sent out with first journals; resent as reminder with second journal.

I hope this e-mail finds you well. I enjoyed speaking with all of you in our FaceTime interview. Thank you for taking the time for the interview. This e-mail is the first of up to eight weeks of e-mail-based “journals” that will come your way weekly. My study is gathering both spoken and written responses to a variety of questions about music listening in your family.

A few notes about the journals:

1) Please try to complete the journal response in one sitting. Responding to the journal should take you no more than 30 minutes. You can simply type your responses in an e-mail and send it back to me.
2) You are welcome to have one person type responses to all of the answers, or you can take turns based on who the question is directed to. Our final interview at the end of the study will ask you to comment on how you filled out the journals.
3) You are welcome to include anything that helps you answer the question - text, pictures, song lyrics, web links, questions back for me, etc.
4) Please complete this journal entry within a week. Your next journal will be e-mailed soon after I receive your response.

Thank you again for your ongoing participation!  
Jillian
E-journaling Prompts

### Journal 1: Follow-up, Clarification for Initial Interviews

#### Questions that all participants received

Each journal for this round was tailored specifically to individual participants based upon their responses in the first round of interviews.

All parents were asked to complete a short demographic survey as part of this first journal. ([http://bit.ly/1kWWp1C](http://bit.ly/1kWWp1C)).

The journal ended with the following question:
- Please let me know if you have any questions or thoughts that came up following our Skype interview.

#### Questions that were different for individual participants

**Alvarez Family**

**Daughter:**
- Tell me a bit more about listening to music with your friends. Do you do this at home? At school? How do you listen? Do your friends influence what music you like or don’t like? If they do, how do they influence you?
- How does the way that you listen to music compare with to your friends’ music listening?

**Mother:**
- Clarification: In our Skype interview, you mentioned four different Spanish songs from your childhood. Can you clarify these for me? The first came from a memory of your mother dancing but I couldn’t catch the name. The second one you sang a bit of to (daughter), and then after that (daughter) remembered *El Ratoncito* (the Little Mouse). The last one (daughter) brought up and it sounded like it might be about the months of the year.

**All:**
- Which language (English or Spanish) is predominantly spoken at home? Do you switch back and forth, or use different languages in different contexts?
- Tell me a bit more about the circumstances in which music is present in your house. You’d mentioned it’s usually on in the background. When do you turn it on? Turn it off? Does it ever move to the foreground? If so, when? How much of your listening at home is active? How much is passive? Do you use musically differently in different situations? If so, how?
- Please let me know if you have any questions or thoughts that came up following our Skype interview.

**Cruz Family**

**Daughter:**
- Why do you like One Direction? What is your favorite One Direction song, and why? Are there particular words in the songs that you really like? If so, which ones and why do you like them?

**Mother:**
• You'd mentioned in our interview that you will pursuing graduate studies in the future. What will your Master's degree be in?
• What does [Deborah’s] Dad do for a living?

All:
• How do you listen to music in your home? What equipment do you use (stereo, computer, etc.)? How do you listen to music by yourselves? What equipment do you use (stereo, computer, etc.)?
• Does either or both of you have phones on which you play music or personal music players (iPods, etc.)? Tell me a bit about when you use these, if you do.
• Please bring up any other questions, comments that may have arisen following our Skype interview.

Morales Family

Son:
• Clarification: During our Skype interview you'd made a comment about a singer you like but I couldn't quite understand what you said. It sounded something like "Meeka Moore." Can you let me know what artist it is?
• What other artists do you like? You'd mentioned Michael Jackson and Metallica in our interview. Can you think of any others?
• Tell me a bit more about listening to music with your friends at school. When does this happen? How does it happen? What do you think of the music your friends listen to?

Mother:
• Clarification: During our Skype interview, you'd mentioned several types of Colombian music. I understood villancicos and boleros, but there was one I couldn't quite understand. You'd described it as Latin American country-style music and it sounded like "caballero." Can you clarify that for me?
• You'd mentioned listening to some Hip Hop artists that you'd rather Liam not be exposed to. Who are these artists? Do you remember when and/or how you first came across them?

All:
• One of the music exposures you'd mentioned in our Skype interview was the TV. What are some of the television shows you watch on which you hear music? What music that you've heard on the TV do you like or not like?

Santiago Family

Daughter:
• Tell me a bit more about listening to music at school. Who puts on the music? When do they play the music? How long do you listen? What are you doing while the music is playing?
• What music do you listen to? You mentioned listening to Debussy’s Clair de Lune. Any other songs?
• You mentioned hearing music on the TV. What kind of music do you hear? When do you hear it? What do you think of the music you hear on the TV?
Mother:
- You mentioned in the interview that sometimes you put on music in the car (you referenced country music) that your kids don’t like, and that they won’t “let you” play the music. What are their responses? How do you know they don’t like the music?
- What is your response to this behavior?

Both:
- What language(s) do you speak at home?
- What kinds of songs do you make up at home?
- When do you make up songs? Why do you do this?
- You’d mentioned watching movies as a family. What are some of your favourite movies?

West Family

Sons:
- In our interview, you’d mentioned several artists that you like listening to. You both mentioned Drake and John Legend, among others. What music don’t you like, and why? Is there any music you used to like (when you were younger) that you don’t like now? Why has this changed?

Mother:
- Has having kids influenced the music you listen to? If so, how?
- Have your boys introduced you to music that you might not have heard elsewhere? If so, can you share some examples?

All:
- What are the circumstances in which music is present in your house? You’d mentioned it’s usually on in the background. When do you turn it on? Turn it off? Does it ever move to the forefront? If so, when? How much of your listening at home is active? How much is passive?
- You’d mentioned watching TV and discussed watching music awards shows like the BET awards and the Grammys. Is music present in other shows on the TV? If so, when and which shows? How does music you hear on the TV influence what music you like?

Journal 2: What Is Music?

Questions that all participants received

Note: All participants received the same journal questions this week.

All:
- What do you think music "is"? Why is it here? What does it do?
- How do you decide what "good music" is?
- How do you decide what "bad music" is?
- Why do you like the songs you like? Why do you dislike the songs you dislike?

Journal 3: Resource Distribution (Money and Time Spent – Music)

Questions that all participants received

Note: All participants received the same journal questions this week.
All:
- How much time would you estimate you spend each day actively listening to music? How much time is music present but your listening is passive (the music is on in the background)?
- How much time do you each spend on a computer each day? How much time is spent doing things that involve music and what are these things?
- How much time do you each spend on your phone each day? How much time is spent doing things that involve music and what are these things?
- Do you purchase music? If so, estimate how often, and from where/how you purchase the music. (Child), do you have an allowance? Do you spend any money on music? Who controls the money used to purchase any music in the family?
- How often do you attend live music performances and how much money would you estimate spending in a month on these activities?

Mother:
- Do you place any restrictions on (Child’s) computer use? If so, what are they and why? Is (Child) allowed to use the computer at home by herself? Do you use the computer together or independently?
- Thinking back over your life, so far... how has the amount of time and money you spend on music changed? ((Child) is welcome to take a stab at this question, too, if she wants!)

Journal 4: Power of Language, Role of Language in Music

Questions that all participants received

This Week’s Journal tacked four main areas (outlined below.) Introductions were couched in terms and exampled pulled from previous interviews and journals to make the questions relevant to each participating family’s experience. General questions asked of each family were:

Good Music vs. Bad Music
- What makes a word good or bad? Why are some words bad and some words good?
- How do you know what a bad word is and what a good word is?
- In terms of music, why do you think some artists use bad words while others don’t?

Changes to Content
(Alvarez, Santiago different; Cruz, Morales, West got this) Radio stations often release “radio edits” where popular songs that originally contain curse words or offensive content are “bleeped” or a non-offensive word is substituted. The “clean versions” and “dirty versions” are often identical, with the exception of a few small changes to the lyrics.
- What do you think of these changes?
- Does it change your opinion of the song? If so, how?
- What do you do if a song has a good beat/groove/feel but contains offensive content or “bad words”?
- How does lyric content influence your opinion of an artist?

Music Videos
(Alvarez, Cruz different; Morales, Santiago, West got this) Popular music is often
accompanied by videos. These videos can send messages that enhance the lyrics or they can offer interpretations that are different than what the song is talking about.

- How does the accompanying video impact your opinion of a song?
- How do music videos influence your opinion of a song and/or of an artist?

**Listening Restrictions**

- Why are these restrictions important to you?
- Will these restrictions change as your (Child) grows older?
- What do you think would happen if you didn’t put these restrictions in place?

### Questions that were different for individual participants

**Alonzo Family**

**All:**

*Lead-up to Good vs. Bad Questions:* In our first interview and throughout your journaling, you have both referenced music’s ability to impact how you think, act, and feel. If I have interpreted your thoughts and opinions correctly thus far, you believe that music can send both explicit and implicit messages—through lyrics, thematic content, and accompanying materials (like music videos). (Let me know if this is inaccurate or if there’s anything in this summary that needs clarification.)

*Lead-up to Lyric Content Questions:* (Daughter) shared a memory of her Dad changing the lyrics of a popular Katy Perry song to “I Kissed A Squirrel.” In many ways, this is similar to radio stations that release “radio edits” where popular songs that originally contain curse words or offensive content are “bleeped” or a non-offensive word is substituted. The “clean versions” and “dirty versions” are often identical, with the exception of a few small changes to the lyrics.

*Lead-up to Music Videos Questions:* (Mother) mentioned in our first interview that music isn’t just “sound and lyrics” and referenced, as an example, the video “nonsense” that went along with what was otherwise a catchy Miley Cyrus song.

**Mother:**

*Lead-up to Restrictions Questions:* In our first interview, you’d mentioned placing listening restrictions for (Daughter) around lyric content; namely, sexual explicitness, and songs that depict graphic violence. You discussed that the concern was not with individual words in songs but rather with themes, and that you didn’t want (Daughter) to “parrot” things “without knowing what she was saying.”

And one last topic for reflection: the idea of age appropriateness. This has come up in two different ways: in a reflection from our first interview about a concert you attended with your Mom (you referenced the music you heard as “her music”—as music that wasn’t specifically “for kids”), and in the music you encourage (Daughter) to listen to (you commented that some of the themes in particular songs “were above where she was.”)

- What is “kid music”? What did you see as your Mom’s music? What is “your” music and what is (Daughter’s) music?
- What makes music appropriate for different ages?
- How do you decide when music is appropriate for (Daughter)? Might this change at all as (Daughter) grows older? If so, how? If not, why?
Cruz Family

All:

Lead-up to Good vs. Bad Questions: In our first interview and throughout your journaling, you have both discussed music’s ability to impact how you think, act, and feel. If I have interpreted your thoughts and opinions correctly thus far, you believe that music can send both explicit and implicit messages—through lyrics, thematic content, and accompanying materials.

Building on these ideas, let’s examine some general questions about the power of language and the role of language in music. Let’s start by looking at the idea of good and bad language through lyrics, thematic content, and accompanying materials.

Lead-up to Restrictions Questions: In our first interview, you talked about how you act as a filter when it comes to what your daughters listen to. You also talked about how you explain to your daughters what makes songs good or bad, and how music can send both explicit and implicit messages.

Morales Family

All:

Lead-up to Good vs. Bad Questions: In our first interview and throughout your journaling, you have both discussed music’s ability to impact how you think, act, and feel. If I have interpreted your thoughts and opinions correctly thus far, you believe that music can send both explicit and implicit messages—through lyrics, thematic content, and accompanying materials.

Building on these ideas, let’s examine some general questions about the power of language and the role of language in music. Let’s start by looking at the idea of good and bad language through lyrics, thematic content, and accompanying materials.

Lead-up to Restrictions Questions: In our first interview, you talked about how you do not put any restrictions on your daughters’ music listening. You talked about how you facilitate conversations around music and how you see music as artistic expression that should not be censored or limited.

Santiago Family

All:

Lead-up to Good vs. Bad Questions: Let’s examine some general questions about the power of language and the role of language in music. Let’s start by looking at the idea of good and bad language. In our first interview, Nancy talked about bad words as forms of artistic expression when used in the context of music. "Bad words" also came in a discussion of some friends of her family who say "really bad words" to their kids all of the time.

Building on these ideas, let’s examine some general questions about the power of language and the role of language in music. Let’s start by looking at the idea of good and bad language. In our first interview, (Mother) talked about "bad words" in songs. (Daughter) also mentioned in the first interview that she wasn’t allowed to listen to "bad songs with the F word in songs."
songs that originally contain curse words or offensive content are “bleeped” or a non-offensive word is substituted. (Mother), you mentioned in our first interview that you included the clean version of a Niki Minaj song on (Daughter’s) birthday party CDs and a few Moms commented on it. Often times, the “clean versions” and “dirty versions” are identical, with the exception of a few small changes to the lyrics.

West Family

All:  
*Lead-up to Good vs. Bad Questions:* In our first interview and throughout your journaling, you have all talked about music’s ability to impact how you think and how you act. At one point, music was also discussed from a religious point of view as something that could negatively influence your spirit. The concern comes not from “the beat” or the groove of the music but rather from the words. In your journaling about bad music, you discussed how it was an “ill message” that would make a song not worth listening to.

Mother:  
*Lead-up to Restrictions Questions:* You’d mentioned placing listening restrictions for your boys around lyric content; namely, derogatory language, curse words, blatant gang references, and the use of the N-word. How are these restrictions communicated to your boys?

- What do you if you’re listening to music with your kids and you hear offensive lyrics? Where has this happened? Do you address it? If so, how? What do you talk about?

At one point during our initial interview, you expressed some concerns with the “sub-meaning” of music lyrics even when curse words are not present.

- What do you mean by “sub-meaning”? Can you think of any examples in songs you’ve heard?

Journal 5: Popular Music, Music and Place

Questions that all participants received

Popular Music

All:  
In last week’s journal, you offered some reflections and insights on language in popular music. Let’s pause for a moment and think about the label given to “popular music” itself.

- What do you think the label “popular” means as it relates to music?
- Who decides what music is “popular”?
- What does it mean to be "popular" or “cool”?
- How does music, be it popular or otherwise, influence or shape your idea of what it means to be “cool”?

Music and Place

You’ve talked throughout the study about musical activities you do in Miami. How does living in Miami influence your music listening and musical activities? What are some of your favourite Miami radio stations?

Sample Playlist

If you have a favourite Spotify, Pandora, YouTube, iPhone/iPod playlist, send a screenshot.
picture, or listing along.

Mother:
How does music-listening in Miami compare to other places you've lived and/or travelled?

*Final Interview*

The final stage of this study is a follow-up group interview, much like what we did via Skype to start the study. Please suggest a date or two by which you can have the final journal complete, as it must be submitted prior to completing the final interview.

Here are some dates and times I am available next week:
(Dates and times were suggested)

This interview will last approximately 30 minutes. Upon completion of this interview, you have completed the study and will receive your $100 gift card by e-mail as thanks for your participation.

*Questions that were different for individual participants*

**Alonzo Family**

The *Music and Place* question referenced previous mention of the Alonzo Family attending concerts around the city and at the University of Miami.

**Cruz Family**

Mother:
Does your job in the music industry influence the guidelines you put in place for (Daughter’s) music listening? If so, how?
From Journal 5, Sample Playlists

Alonzo Family – Sample Spotify Playlist

Cruz Family – Sample iTunes Playlist
The West Family did not provide any playlists.
Curriculum Vitae

Name: Jillian Bracken

Post-secondary Education and Degrees:

University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada
2001-2005 B.M.

Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida, United States
2005-2007 M.S.

Florida State University
Tallahassee, Florida, United States
2008-2010 M.M.

The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario, Canada
2010-2015 Ph.D.

Honours and Awards:

Province of Ontario Graduate Scholarship
2012-2013, 2013-2014

Related Work Experience

Teaching Assistant
Florida State University
2008-2010

Teaching Assistant
The University of Western Ontario
2010-2012

Research Assistant
The University of Western Ontario
2012-2015

Publications:
Bracken, J. (in press). In their own terms, on their own terms: Capturing meaning in community musical theatre cast member e-journals. *International Journal of Community Music.*


