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CHAPTER 1

WHAT ARE MUSICAL IDENTITIES, AND WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

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Music is a fundamental channel of communication: it provides a means by which people can share emotions, intentions and meanings even though their spoken languages may be mutually incomprehensible. It can also provide a vital lifeline to human interaction for those whose special needs make other means of communication difficult. Music can exert powerful physical effects, can produce deep and profound emotions within us, and can be used to generate infinitely subtle variations of expressiveness by skilled composers and performers.

At the same time, music plays a greater part in the everyday lives of more people than at any time in the past. This is partly the result of the extremely rapid technological developments that have occurred in the last two decades or so, allied to the increasing commercialization and economic power of the music industry. In the developed countries of the world at least, the widespread availability and relative inexpensiveness of the Walkman, the Internet, the MIDI interface, the video recorder and more means that a vast diversity of musical styles and genres is available to us as listeners. The ways in which people experience music—as 'consumers', fans, listeners, composers, arrangers, performers or critics—are far more diverse than at any time in the past, as are the range of contexts in which this takes place.

One result is that music can be used increasingly as a means by which we formulate and express our individual identities. We use it not only to regulate our own everyday moods and behaviours, but also to present ourselves to others in the way we prefer. Our musical tastes and preferences can form an important statement of our values and attitudes, and composers and performers use their music to express their own distinctive views of the world. Nicholas Cook (1998) puts this succinctly: 'In today's world, deciding what music to listen to is a significant part of deciding and announcing to people not just who you "want to be" ... but who you *are*. "Music" is a very small word to encompass something that takes as many forms as there are cultural or sub-cultural identities' (p. 5).

This concept of *identity* enables us to look at the widespread and varied interactions between music and the individual. The concepts of identity and the self have undergone some radical changes in psychological theory in recent years, to which we will return

later in this chapter. The idea of the self as a kind of focus, or relatively unchanging core aspect of individuals' personalities, has given way to a much less static and more dynamic view of the self as something which is constantly being reconstructed and renegotiated according to the experiences, situations and other people with whom we interact in everyday life. Globalization and technological advance have led to rapid recent changes in many people's lifestyles, and our self-identities are changing correspondingly in ever more complex ways.

This book is about the role that music plays in this process, and we introduce the concept of *musical identities* as a crucial means of doing so. In this opening chapter, we shall attempt to answer some basic questions: what are musical identities, who has them and how do they form and develop? We tackle these questions from a social psychological perspective, as indeed do the majority of contributors to the book. The same questions are also of current interest in other disciplines: DeNora's (2000) sociological exploration of the role of music as a means of structuring everyday experience is a notable recent example. We have made an ambitious attempt to break new ground: our aim is to set out the territory and ask critical questions rather than necessarily to provide definitive answers.

The two-part structure of the book is based on the conceptual distinction between what we will call *identities in music* (IM) and *music in identities* (MI). Part One, on IM, deals with those aspects of musical identities that are socially defined within given cultural roles and musical categories. As we shall see, the ways in which young people do or do not define themselves as musicians, for example, and the role of specific influences such as the school and the family are central reference points for young people's self-concepts with respect to music. In the same way, the culturally defined features of musician, composer, performer, improviser or teacher are central to the identities of professional musicians.

Part Two, on MI, focuses on how we use music as a means or resource for developing other aspects of our individual identities. Our identities can be thought of as complex, hierarchical networks of inter-related constructs: some of these are overarching, superordinate constructs incorporating others which exist at a more subordinate level. For example, Bem (1981) proposed that 'gender schemas', namely our self-definitions as 'masculine' or 'feminine', are at the core of most of the other constructs we use to define ourselves, such that most of the new information we receive about people and their behaviour initially is coded and interpreted in terms of gender norms. This is one aspect of MI that is reviewed in this book, by Nicola Dibben, and we deal also with other aspects including national identity, youth identity and identity as a disabled person.

Four main sections follow this opening section of the chapter. In the first of these, we take a brief look at the development of music psychology over its relatively short history, and attempt to show how various theoretical and empirical developments lead naturally to the investigation of musical identities. We then look more closely at how people's self-concepts and identities have been defined and described within social psychology, and outline the main theoretical concepts that might be useful when we try to explain musical identities. The next section represents our attempt to define and explain the development of musical identities, looking at IM and MI in turn. In the

final section, we look ahead to the remaining contents of the book, and summarize the main orientation and contribution of each chapter.

Musical identity and the development of music psychology

There has been an explosive increase of interest in the psychological basis of musical thinking, behaviour and development over the last two decades or so which shows no sign of abating. Music psychology has very clear overlaps with a number of related disciplines such as cognitive science and computing, sociology, cultural studies, anthropology, education, medicine and health studies, acoustics, broadcasting, marketing and communication studies, as well as with music and musicology. The research is reported in journals in all of these fields, as well as in specialist music psychology journals such as *Music Perception*, *Musicae Scientiae* and *Psychology of Music*. The subdisciplines of cognitive, developmental and social music psychology are now clearly identifiable, and a brief historical outline of the theoretical and empirical developments which led to their emergence shows how the investigation of musical identities is a natural next step.

Psychometrics, acoustics and cognitive psychology

Before the 1980s, the discipline was characterized by a preponderance of psychometric and acoustical studies. Some well-known early texts such as Lundin's (1967) *An Objective Psychology of Music* and Shuter-Dyson and Gabriel's *The Psychology of Musical Ability* (1968, 1981) reflect this orientation very clearly, which can probably be traced right back to Seashore's (1938) *The Psychology of Music*. The main emphasis was on the objective measurement of acoustic abilities, and there was very little interest in the study of musical behaviour as such.

With the publication of two books, both entitled *The Psychology of Music*, by John Daves (1978) and Diana Deutsch (1982, 1999), a new era began which broadened the horizons of the discipline, and which had a strong grounding in cognitive psychology. The cognitive psychology of music deals with the internalized rules, strategies and operations which people employ in musical behaviour, and this early work included studies of the effects on listeners of tones, intervals and scales; of the perception of and memory for melody; and of the internal representation of harmony and larger scale aspects of musical structure (see Sloboda, 1985).

Although this tradition continues in contemporary research, some of the early research was criticized subsequently for its narrow focus on the minutiae of musical experience, for the artificiality of some of its experimental paradigms and 'laboratory' testing situations, for the unrepresentativeness of its participant groups and because many of the experimental stimuli employed bore very little relation to actual musical materials. Whilst these criticisms may still apply to some research studies, the cognitive psychology of music has now developed to include much more complex and ecologically valid questions about musical behaviour and understanding, including such issues as musical expressiveness and performance; the emotional effects of music; creativity in composition and improvisation; and practical issues for musicians such as sight reading and practice techniques.

The investigation of these issues needs to draw on theories and techniques which go well beyond the cognitive paradigms of the 1980s, however, such that these no longer hold centre stage in contemporary music psychology. Twenty years or so later, it is clear that the discipline as a whole has diversified into various subdisciplines. Alongside the contemporary cognitive psychology of music (e.g. Deliège and Sloboda, 1997), whose scope has broadened considerably, we can clearly identify the developmental psychology of music (see, for example, Hargreaves, 1986; Deliège and Sloboda, 1996) and the social psychology of music (see, for example, Hargreaves and North, 1997), and it is easy to foresee similar developments in other clinical and applied areas.

Social psychology

In the broadest sense, the music psychologist's job is to investigate the multifaceted ways in which we engage with music—creating, performing, listening, appraising—and to try to explain the mechanisms underlying its powerful influence on our behaviour. This necessarily means that musical behaviour must be investigated in all of the social and cultural contexts in which it naturally occurs. In a recent attempt to characterize the discipline, Hargreaves and North (1997) suggested that 'psychologists have neglected the social dimension, and that a social psychology of music ought to include the effects of the immediate social environment as well as the impact of broader-based cultural norms. The social psychologist's role is thus to investigate the effects of particular listening and performing/composing situations, as well as those of cultural standards and norms which the historian and the musicologist might investigate' (p. 5).

The social psychology of music is less easy to characterize than the developmental or cognitive subdisciplines since it is less clearly based on a circumscribed set of functionally related phenomena, or on age-related patterns of behaviour. However, its potential scope is delineated by Hargreaves and North (1997), who draw on Doise's (1986) distinction between four types of explanation or 'levels of analysis' in social psychological research. The highest of these are the social-positional and the ideological levels, which deal with the effects of broad institutional or group membership and cultural statements of belief, or norms, respectively. Within music psychology, these might include studies of the effects of social class, educational institutions or the media on musical behaviour. The other two levels of explanation are more microscopic, localized or situation-specific; these are the inter-individual and the intra-individual levels, respectively. The former includes the analysis of small group effects, such as those of conformity or leadership in musical behaviour, and the latter deals with the specific mechanisms with which individuals engage with their musical environments, which might include aspects of individual differences such as gender, age or personality.

The social psychological approach argues for a far greater emphasis on the study of musical behaviour in everyday life situations than in the laboratory and the classroom, and indeed to widen the sphere of investigation beyond specific, formal 'musical' situations such as the concert hall or the practice studio. Another aspect of this argument concerns the *functions* that music fulfils in people's everyday lives. 'What is music for?' is a central question for the social psychology of music, and it has also been discussed in anthropology and sociology (e.g. Merriam, 1964) as well as from an evolutionary point

of view (Cross, 2001). From the psychologist's perspective, the functions of music fall into three broad domains, namely the *cognitive*, the *emotional* and the *social*.

Our contention, along with Hargreaves and North (1997), is that music psychology as a whole has placed a disproportionate emphasis on the first two of these domains, and that the social functions of music in the lives of individuals have been seriously neglected. Because music is essentially a social activity—it is something we do along with and for others, either as listeners or as co-creators—there is a strong argument that the social functions of music subsume the cognitive and emotional functions in certain respects.

The research evidence suggests that the social functions of music are manifested in three principal ways for the individual, namely in the management of *interpersonal relationships*, *mood* and *self-identity* (see review by Hargreaves and North, 1999a). First, people use music as a means of developing and negotiating interpersonal relationships. One's musical preferences can define which social groups one does and does not belong to, and this is particularly clear in the case of teenage music preferences (see Tarrant *et al.*, Chapter 8). Secondly, an increasing body of evidence shows that people use music as a means of regulating their mood, and that this is mediated by the immediate social environment in which listening takes place. This can explain patterns of musical taste and preference which are linked with specific listening situations and social circumstances (see, for example, North and Hargreaves, 2000).

The third area forms the central rationale for this book. We suggest that one of the primary social functions of music lies in establishing and developing an individual's sense of identity, and that the concept of *musical identity* enables us to look at the widespread and varied interactions between music and the individual.

Developmental psychology

The central subject matter of the developmental psychology of music is the description and explanation of the patterns of age-related changes that occur across the life span in various aspects of musical behaviour. Several specific models and theories of musical development have been proposed (see, for example, reviews by Hargreaves and Zimmerman, 1992; Swanwick and Runfola, 2002), and an impressive body of evidence is accumulating about the course of normative musical development, as well as about the specific effects of musical training and education. This rapidly growing body of research and theory has the potential to illuminate the ways in which musical identities develop across the life span, although this issue has not been raised as such in the discipline so far.

One of the most striking features of the recent developmental literature is the study of infant musicality, which is beginning to show how biological and social influences jointly shape musical development. Papoušek (1996) relates early musicality to the development of speech and communication. He suggests that 'speech, as a uniquely human form of communication, represents an unusually effective means of biological adaptation' (p. 38). Early musicality is seen as an integral part of early speech and language, and thus also presumably possesses adaptive significance. Speech-related and musical sounds are partly learnt in the infant's social environment, and Papoušek and Papoušek (1982) have demonstrated how parents scaffold the infant's vocal behaviour towards different levels of expertise, and towards the acquisition of emotional meanings.

Parents reinforce the musical aspects of early vocalizations, and also sing songs and lullabies. Gradually, vocal/musical play gives rise to speech and words on the one hand, and to more specific musical activities such as imitation and improvising on the other, so that singing develops as another sphere of activity in its own right. Early musicality thus encapsulates the interaction between biological predispositions and the social world: the development of babies' sense of their environment is inherently social.

Colwyn Trevarthen (1999, and Chapter 2 in this volume) has developed this idea into a theory of a basic motivation for musicality which he sees as providing the origins of later forms of musical expression and artistic creation. He proposes that 'communicative musicality' is the dynamic sympathetic state of an individual that allows co-ordinated companionship to arise. He considers that music communicates with young babies because it engages with what he calls an 'intrinsic motive pulse' (IMP) which is generated within the brain. This comprises a rhythmic time sense, which is able to detect regularities in musical elements, a sensitivity towards the acoustic elements of the qualities of the human voice, and the ability to perceive 'narrative' structures in vocal or musical performances.

In proposing his theory, Trevarthen uses the term 'communicative musicality' to characterize the broad features of early interaction and development, and this goes well beyond music itself. Early interactions between parent and child develop into 'narratives' of mutually constructed meaning, which are characterized by their intersubjectivity. Investigations of talk, singing and other rhythmic games with infants show that the general features of interactive musicality are displayed in the anticipatory movements and emotions which develop between infants and their caregivers. These early interactions can be seen as forming the foundations of musical self-identity: early musical identities are based on learning one's own position and role in relation to the reactions and communications of the other people around, and they are subject to constant development, renegotiation and change.

There is also a much more specific sense in which the musicality of early infant behaviour has been described, however. Sandra Trehub and her colleagues, for example (see Trehub *et al.*, 1997), have been interested in the biological predispositions which infants bring to *listening*. Their extensive programme of research has shown that young babies are precocious in their sensitivity to rhythms, to melodic contours, to simple frequency ratios such as octaves and even to some aspects of harmony, in ways which previously were thought impossible. It appears that they possess strong biological predispositions to respond to the musical features of the sounds they encounter, although cross-cultural studies will need to investigate the relationship between these predispositions and particular tonal systems.

In the broader field of developmental psychology as a whole, there can be little doubt that the main theoretical trend over the last two decades or so has been the investigation of specific social and cultural influences in more detail and depth: this has influenced the course of empirical research as well as the development of developmental theory. The essence of what has become known as the socio-cultural approach within developmental psychology is the notion that the accumulation of knowledge can only be explained within its physical and cultural context: that we must think in terms of *situated cognition* (see, for example, Butterworth, 1992).

The interest in situated cognition introduced the idea of learning as 'cultural practice', and an interest in the 'ecology' of children's learning (e.g. Crook, 2000). This has led to an emphasis on the interactions between the teacher and the learner and between pairs or groups of learners rather than on the child as an individual learner, as was the case in the past. Children are seen as taking on social practices and cultural rules as active partners in the process of what Rogoff (1990) calls 'guided participation': individual development is based on a developing and accumulative series of shared social understandings. This is the essence of the socio-cultural perspective on development, and is now so widely accepted that the discipline of social developmental psychology, or developmental social psychology, which is based on this perspective, might be said to have emerged (see, for example, Durkin, 1995).

We suggest that the study of the development of musical identity is best approached from this theoretical point of view. Children's development of musical identities, which have their origins in biological predispositions towards musicality, are shaped by the individual groups and social institutions that they encounter in their everyday lives. These form an integral part of those identities rather than merely providing the framework or context within which they develop, and this perspective enables us to explain identities in music (IMM) as well as music in identities (MII).

This approach also puts a new perspective on the investigation of individual differences in musical behaviour: issues such as age, gender and personality differences have been studied largely within the psychometric perspective. However, such lines of research are conducted 'from the outside': they do not deal with people's *experience* of the features which define them as individuals. The concept of musical identity takes us a stage further in enabling us to understand the individual's musical behaviour 'from the inside': to explain some of the processes and mechanisms by which individuals monitor and conceptualize their own musical development. This represents a significant advance for the social and developmental psychology of music, and is the central task of this book.

Concepts of self and identity in social psychology

The notion of identity has long been a topic of interest within psychology, although it has been addressed in many different ways and from some very different theoretical perspectives. As early as 1890, William James, one of the founders of psychology, was perhaps the first theorist to try and understand the self—which he called 'the most puzzling puzzle with which psychology has to deal'. In the century of research and writing since then, this puzzle has stimulated a good deal of effort to explain, 'unpack' and, most recently, challenge the meanings of self and identity.

Self-concept, self-esteem and self-identity

There is a good deal of current research on different aspects of the self and its development, and it might be useful to start by clarifying some of the current terminology in this field. We might say that the *self-system* is made up of a number of *self-concepts*, or *self-images*, which are the different ways in which we see ourselves. These self-concepts

can be context- or situation-specific (e.g. how I see myself as being able to cope under stress, or in an emergency), or domain-related (e.g. how I see myself as a linguist, or a musician). *Self-identity* is the overall view that we have of ourselves in which different self-concepts are integrated, although the ways in which individuals accomplish this remain a central and unresolved theoretical question. *Self-esteem* is the evaluative component of the self, and has both cognitive and emotional aspects: how worthy we think, and feel we are.

Self-image and self-esteem have received most of the research attention. The development of different components of self-image in childhood and adolescence has received particular attention. The self-image includes aspects of personality style, appearance and the social roles that we play. Those components relating to the specific domain of music, for example, might include 'saxophonist', 'jazz fan' or 'music teacher'—all of which are instances of what we have termed identities in music (IIM). Harter (1999) has suggested that these domain-specific self-images typically become integrated into a generalized self-concept at around the age of 8 years, although the existence of such a 'core' self-concept or self-identity is itself problematic.

The self-image develops by a process of monitoring our own behaviour, and making social comparisons. We constantly compare ourselves with others, so that particular situations and social groups exert a powerful influence on what we do and what we say. We also compare our behaviour with what we expect ourselves to do on the basis of our self-image, which is built up from past experience, and with what we would like to do, i.e. with our ideal self-image. Rogers (1961) suggested that when these comparisons give rise to incongruity (between either ideal self and self-image, or between self-image and actual behaviour), psychological distress can be the result. An accomplished musician with classical western training may be disturbed to be asked to improvise in informal situations, for example. Equally, someone whose ideal self is built on their ability to improvise may feel embarrassed about their ignorance of musical theory, or their inability to read a score.

The psychological distress experienced by such discrepancies is often felt in terms of lowered self-esteem—the other factor which has received a good deal of psychological research attention in the last century. Self-esteem can involve overall evaluations of ourselves, e.g. as a musician, or of very specific aspects of our self-image, such as our aptitude as a piano improviser. The factors that influence self-esteem and its development have been studied extensively, and one of the key findings is the importance of the influence that other people can have on an individual's sense of worth.

This influence of other people's views can be felt partly through the indirect process of comparing ourselves and our behaviour with similar others to obtain a sense of our relative effectiveness and worth, even when those others may be unaware of their effect on us. It can also operate more directly, however, when others comment directly on our abilities, appearance and general behaviour. Such judgements are particularly influential when they are made by significant others—for a child, this would mean parents and siblings primarily, but could also include teachers. Family and school contexts can therefore be crucially important for a child's developing sense of self and particularly for their self-esteem. Some striking evidence for this in the case of what we might call musical self-esteem is presented in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 of this book.

Theories of self and identity

William James' (1890) distinction between two components of identity, the 'I' and the 'me', has had a long-lasting impact. The 'me' is that part of our identity which can be observed and known, whilst the 'I' is that part that is able to reflect on the 'me', i.e. which has subjectivity and is the knower. The 'I' therefore constituted the 'real' and unchanging self for James, whereas the 'me' was seen as subject to change since it is composed of social categories. James identified four aspects of the 'me': the spiritual self, the material self, the social self and the bodily self, all of which were seen as plural in that they come in different forms.

This view has been at the heart of the later theories which were influenced by the work of the influential neo-Freudian psychoanalyst Erik Erikson, who coined the term 'ego identity' (see, for example, Kroger, 1993). The concept of a reflexive 'I' influenced by social encounters is also to be found in the theories of Cooley (1902), who wrote of the 'looking glass self' in which we gain our identities partly by seeing reflections of what other people think of us. It is also a central part of the work of the sociologist and social philosopher George Herbert Mead (1934), who made a distinction between the personal and the social aspects of self in describing the 'I' and the 'me'. Mead saw language as the supreme symbolic system for communicating and for negotiating interactions, in that it allows people to carry on 'internal conversations' with themselves and to anticipate the responses of other 'actors'. This was the essence of 'symbolic interactionism', which pre-figured social constructionist theory.

Another account of the development and maintenance of self-esteem and the role played by others is social identity theory, which was developed by Henri Tajfel and colleagues (e.g. Tajfel, 1978). This proposes that individuals have a fundamental motivation to develop and maintain a high level of self-esteem, and that this is established through identification with groups of people who have a positive image, since social identity and personal identity are conceptually distinct, yet inextricably linked. Individuals attempt to maximize the differences between their own group (the in-group) and others (out-groups) on those dimensions that favour the in-group. They maintain a positive social identity by boosting the value of the in-group's attributes in comparison with members of out-groups. For adolescents striving to establish their identities and to increase their self-esteem, identifying with particular genres of music which they rate highly (e.g. 'intelligent drum 'n' bass') and distancing themselves from less valued genres (e.g. 'pop') allows them to establish favourable social and personal identities (see Tarrant *et al.*, Chapter 8).

In many ways, these psychological questions about the self are very much in keeping with the 'common sense' perspective on identity that those of us in the Western world assume to be typical and a pervasive experience, i.e. we experience our selves as being self-contained, internally coherent, different in important ways from others around us, and relatively stable and consistent over our lifetimes. Psychologists in the main have also taken this view of individuals, and their research has focused on investigating the typical range of differences between people in self-esteem and other aspects of self-concept, and what sets of personality traits might account for the key dimensions underlying these differences.

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However, social constructionist approaches within psychology diverge from this in suggesting that the self cannot be characterized in this way. Instead, they suggest that it is formed and developed continuously through conversation and interaction with others. In other words, we are not just influenced by others, but are in effect made up of interactions with others—we are ultimately social and not personal beings. Social constructionist ideas have diverse origins in a number of disciplines and, although there are many social constructionist perspectives, all of them clearly diverge from those of James, Erikson and Tajfel, in which the 'personal' and 'social' aspects of the self are differentiated.

The beginnings of this approach may perhaps be traced to Mead's (1934) emphasis on the interplay between self and society: that we cannot develop an understanding of one without the other, and that this is achieved through interaction with others. We play with a range of social roles in order to understand the self from the perspective of others in different roles (a development of Cooley's 'looking glass self'). Language is seen as vital to this process as it allows people to reflect on their own behaviour as well as that of others, and to come to a reflexive understanding of their selves as a result. Others have built on Mead's ideas in the social constructionist tradition, and their view of the self is well expressed by Bakhtin (1981):

I am conscious of myself and become myself only while revealing myself for another, through another, and with the help of another... every internal experience ends up on the boundary... 'To be' means to communicate... 'To be' means to be for the other, and through him, for oneself. Man has no internal sovereign territory; he is all and always on the boundary' (p. 287).

Social constructionist theories suggest that people have many identities, each of which is created in interaction with other people, rather than having a single, core identity. These identities can be contradictory; for example, a musician can be a 'different person' on stage than when in solitary rehearsals, and be different again when engaged in each of a number of non-musical activities. In social constructionist terms, identities are also always evolving and shifting—each interaction can lead to new constructions.

Language plays a central role in social constructionist accounts of developing identities, and Western theories of the psychology of the self have perhaps clung for so long to the view of a single unitary self because most of the Western languages include words such as 'I' and 'me' which imply that a consistent personal agent exists which underlies our actions. In the language of some other more collectivist cultures, such as Japan, the self is referenced very differently, and is signified by many more words, depending on the other participants in the interaction. Bruner (1990) suggests that we 'make ourselves' and our identities through our autobiographical narratives—the stories about ourselves that we tell others and indeed ourselves. This is perhaps one reason why we have a subjective feeling of having a core identity—a relatively unchanging sense of self that has a history—rather than the shifting and multiple identities of the constructionists' account. We construct particular narratives for ourselves as they fit our Western ideas of what people 'are'.

As we said at the very start of this chapter, music is a fundamental channel of communication, and we argue that it can act as a medium through which people can construct new identities and shift existing ones in the same way as spoken language. The continual construction and reconstruction of the self through autobiographical

narratives can occur in music as well as in language, and Gergen's (1994) definition of meaningful discourse aptly describes some of the properties of musical communication: Meaningful language is the product of social interdependence. It requires the co-ordinated actions of at least two persons, and until there is mutual agreement on the meaningful character of words, they fail to constitute language. If we follow this line of argument to its ineluctable conclusion, we find that it is not the mind of the single individual that provides whatever certitude we possess, but relationships of interdependency.... We may rightfully replace Descartes's dictum ('*Cogito ergo sum*') with '*communismus ergo sum*'. We communicate, therefore I am' (p. viii).

There is an obvious parallel between this process and Trevarthen's notion of 'communicative musicality', which we discussed earlier. The early interactions and narratives which are constructed between babies and their caregivers display inherently musical features, but also exist in other activities such as linguistic play and physical movement, as well as in musical activities themselves. These can be seen as the origins of musical identities, which are therefore not individual but mutual constructions, as Gergen suggests.

Conceptualizing musical identities

We have now set the scene for our discussion of musical identities, and have made some basic conceptual distinctions. Is it true to say that everyone has a musical identity? Very few people claim to have no interest in or liking for any aspect of music whatsoever. Most people have strong musical likes and dislikes regardless of their level of musical expertise: even those who might proudly (and erroneously) describe themselves as being 'tone deaf' are likely to have clear-cut preferences. Individual patterns of preference, described in the literature as 'musical taste', can be an integral part of one's self-concept, and this is particularly clear in adolescence. Musical taste has been shown to be related to age, level of musical training and aspects of cognitive style and personality, and the notions of 'taste cultures' and 'taste publics' have been proposed to explain how social groups might have distinctive patterns of preferences and values (see Hargreaves, 1986; Kemp, 1996).

However, we have already pointed out that people's musical likes and dislikes vary according to their moods, the time of day, their social situation and many other circumstances which are constantly changing. The complexity of these reactions and their relationship to other aspects of everyday life are apparent in an increasing body of recent research (e.g. North and Hargreaves, 2000; Sloboda *et al.*, 2001). In other words, music can have short-term, transitory effects as well as a more deep-seated influence on our beliefs and behaviour. It is perhaps useful to think of a continuum of the levels at which we engage with different kinds of music in different situations. The background music that is playing in a store or restaurant may engage us at such a low level that we are unaware of it; yet even this can be shown to have a strong influence, for example, on our spending behaviour (see, for example, North *et al.*, 1998). This is at the opposite end of the 'engagement' continuum from the 'peak experiences' which people report, showing that music can produce extremely strong emotional and physical reactions (see, for example, Gabriellson and Lindström, 1993).

In between these two extremes, most of us listen to music at varying levels of engagement to regulate our moods in different contexts, and whilst involved in different activities. It seems reasonable to suggest that our broad patterns of preference, and indeed even our transitory likes and dislikes, form part of our musical identities: presumably those that exist at higher levels of engagement are more integral to those identities. Many people regard themselves as fans, amateur critics or 'buffs' within styles and genres that particularly interest them, and can indeed be just as knowledgeable as professional critics within these specific domains. The complexity and ever-changing nature of this process is readily apparent, and it is in this sense that aspects of our musical identities constantly are being reconstructed.

Although tastes and preferences in listening form part of the musical identities of most people, they may nevertheless play a minor or insignificant role for others. As we pointed out earlier, self-systems are made up of a number of different self-concepts, some of which are domain-specific: the importance of the domain of music will vary considerably in the self-identities of different individuals. This variation is very likely to depend on the level of specialist interest or professional training in music. Professional performers or composers are likely to be so highly involved that they see most aspects of their lives in relation to music: in Chapter 6, Jane Davidson suggests that professional solo performers take on additional 'performance identities' alongside their everyday identities. The musical activities of these individuals are at the core of their identities, and this perhaps represents the most clear-cut form of the first of the two broad areas of musical identity that we have delineated, and which we now go on to explore in more detail.

Identities in music (IM)

These are defined by social and cultural roles within music, and might be categorized in a number of different ways. They might be derived from broad, *generic* distinctions within musical activities: we could speculate that the culturally defined roles of the composer, the performer, the improviser or the teacher are central to the self-definitions of professional or skilled musicians. Cook (1998) has discussed some of the relationships between these generic roles in terms of the question of *authenticity*, suggesting that they embody outmoded and hierarchical value systems which derive from 19th century European 'classical' music, and which can be traced back to Beethoven. This view of musical authenticity implies that its creators exist on a higher plane than its reproducers, or performers, which in turn implies that music is something which exists 'out there', in a sense independently of those activities which bring it to life.

Cook argues that this is inappropriate for contemporary musical experience:

There is, in short, a nexus of interrelated assumptions built into the basic language we use of music: that musicianship is the preserve of appropriately qualified specialists; that innovation (research and design) is central to musical culture; that the key personnel in musical culture are the composers who generate what might be termed the core product; that performers are in essence no more than middlemen... and that listeners are consumers, playing an essentially passive role in the cultural process... in truth none of these things are natural; they are all human constructions, products of culture, and accordingly they vary from time to time and from place to place (p. 17).

We agree, and the ways in which humans view themselves in relation to these culturally defined roles are at the heart of our concept of identities in music. Most creators are not solitary figures whose inspiration comes from some mysterious and unconscious muse, but hard-working professionals whose work is constrained by the everyday demands of working with others. Similarly, listeners are not passive consumers, but active partners in a cultural process who use music to fulfil different functions according to different social contexts and locations.

One body of research with an obvious bearing on the question of musical identity is that which has attempted to investigate the personality characteristics of specialists in different areas of musical activity. This has been reviewed painstakingly and expertly by Kemp (1996), who has himself conducted a good deal of the empirical research in the field. Kemp suggests that musicians as a whole have certain distinctive characteristics, such as introversion, anxiety and pathemia (sensitivity and imagination), and goes on to draw finer distinctions between the particular personality profiles of composers, music teachers, instrumental performers, and so on.

The notion of the 'musical personality' raises several obvious questions. Are people with certain personality predispositions drawn to certain instruments or activities, or does taking part in these activities give rise to the development of those personality traits? Another central issue in personality theory is the 'person-situation' debate: can personality traits predict our behaviour across different situations, or is the situational variation so great that it swamps any meaningful consistent individual differences in behaviour? In some ways, these issues run parallel to those we raised earlier about the nature of the self: do we construct 'core' self-concepts which are relatively unchanging across different situations and interactions, or do we adopt different selves in different contexts? This is not the place to try and answer these big questions, and traditional personality theory has some obvious limitations in dealing with these issues. For now, we will simply note that musical personalities and musical identities are closely interwoven, and that our own emphasis is upon the way that both of these are constructed in relation to other people and different situations.

Alongside these *generic* distinctions, we might also propose that *specific* identities in music exist, which derive from special interest groups. Two obvious groupings might be those relating to particular musical instruments and those relating to particular musical genres. In the case of *instruments*, Kemp's (1996) review of the research literature on professional orchestral players suggests that orchestral string, brass, percussion and woodwind players have distinctive personality profiles, as have keyboard players, singers and conductors, and indeed that these may be reinforced by the stereotypical views that groups of professional players might have of each other. This leads to the obvious speculation that specific musical identities might exist in relation to particular instruments, although the theoretical implications of this idea must remain a question for the future.

As far as musical *genres* are concerned, Kemp's review also touches on particular aspects of the lifestyle and personalities of professional musicians in what he calls 'popular' fields, such as pop, rock, jazz and commercial session work. This is an interesting though underdeveloped research area, and the role of genres in musical identity is much more clearly apparent in the notion of 'taste publics', which we mentioned earlier.

These are social groups which exhibit distinctive musical style preferences such as for jazz, country and western, folk, classical, or for subgroups within these broad genres. Defining taxonomies or classifications of these styles is no easy task, not least because the categories themselves change rapidly, particularly in pop music (see Hargreaves and North, 1999b).

In summary, we are suggesting that identities in music might be based on generic distinctions between broad categories of musical activity, as well as on specific distinctions which cut across these categories, in particular *instruments* and *genres*. This is of course extremely rough and ready, and musicologists and others could refine our argument considerably. Nevertheless, it serves as the starting point for our basic argument that 'identities in music' are based on social categories and cultural musical practices.

The development of these identities in childhood, which typically emerge at around the age of 7 years, is based initially on specific activities within music. Alexandra Lamont's research, which she describes in Chapter 3, provides a particularly clear example of the way in which children's self-definitions as 'musician' or 'non-musician' are based on activities within the school curriculum. She found that taking formal instrumental lessons was the critical factor in the self-description as musician. Half of the children she studied described themselves as 'non-musicians' because they did not have this formal tuition even though they did play instruments within general class musical activities.

If children's identities within music are grounded in social contexts, it seems even more likely that their 'musical self-esteem' has a similar origin. Reynolds (1992) has reviewed the literature on what she calls the 'self-concept of musical ability', which is how children see their ability in relation to others. She also reviews some psychometric tests which have been formulated to measure these levels of musical self-esteem. The crucial point is that children's self-ratings of musical ability determine the likelihood of their pursuing further activities in music, which in turn provide the opportunities for any progress and development that might take place. To define oneself as a 'non-musician' at an early stage may preclude such developments irrespective of the child's actual level of potential ability.

The mechanisms of the process by which children's musical self-perceptions determine levels of motivation, and thence actual development and achievement, are elaborated by Susan O'Neill in Chapter 5. O'Neill draws on Dweck's (1999) account of 'self-theories', which incorporate the distinction between 'entity theorists'—those who believe their abilities are fixed and innate—and 'incremental theorists', who believe that their abilities can be changed through practice and effort. People might implicitly hold entity theories about their abilities in some fields (e.g. sport), and incremental theories about those in others (e.g. music). O'Neill provides a convincing account of the ways in which children's motivations to be successful in musical activities are dependent on these processes of self-perception: those with what she calls 'mastery-oriented' strategies of motivation are more likely to persist despite instances of failure, for example, and to pursue new challenges.

Music in identities (MII)

The second part of the book deals with how we use music as a means of, or as a resource for, developing other aspects of our personal identities, including gender identity;

young identity; national identity; and disability and identity. We suggested earlier that people's levels of engagement with music can vary from having virtually no investment to very high levels of commitment, and that these levels may vary markedly between active and passive participation in different individuals. In a similar way, music plays a greater or lesser role in other aspects of people's identities. The musical preferences of many 13-year-olds are a vital part of their overall identities, as Mark Tarrant and colleagues clearly demonstrate in Chapter 8, whereas they may play an incidental role in the self-concepts of others.

In order to explain the role of music in developing identities, we can draw on psychological theories of identity and of self-esteem, and three clear trends can be identified in the developmental literature. First, generalized aspects of the self-concept become increasingly differentiated with age. Whilst younger children might generalize being good at one activity to various others, an understanding emerges in middle childhood that they are good at some things but not at others (Harter, 1999): musical abilities may well therefore begin to be differentiated from others at around this age. Secondly, there seems to be a general shift away from an emphasis on physical characteristics and activities in early childhood, such as sporting or musical interests, and towards more psychological judgements involving feelings and emotions, such as how and why one participates in those activities (Damon and Hart, 1988).

This developing focus on psychological characteristics provides the origin of the mechanisms of self-perception that we described earlier, with its corresponding impact on children's motivation and ability in different activities. These mechanisms reflect the third main trend in the development of self-identity, namely that children's self-concepts become increasingly based on comparisons with others in middle childhood through to adolescence. Their own achievements and attitudes, for example in musical activities, become based on comparisons with their peers. Once again, the message is clear: children's identities, including musical identities, are constructed and reconstructed by making comparisons with other people, and this continues into adult life.

Plan of the book

The previous section represents our attempt to deal head on with the question posed in the title of this opening chapter. This is an ambitious undertaking which raises more questions than it answers; but we hope that others may be inspired to pursue some of those questions. The chapters in the rest of the book make a start on different aspects of the enterprise.

Chapter 2, by Colwyn Trevarthen, provides an account of the origins of musicality in infancy which highlights the communicative power of music, and which thereby illuminates not only the origins of musical identities, but also some of the processes which govern their development. Because this provides a general theoretical underpinning for the book as a whole, the chapter appears before the two main sections of the book. Trevarthen elaborates upon his assertion that we are all musical: that every human being has a biological and social guarantee of musicality. This is not a vague utopian ideal, but rather a conclusion drawn by an increasing number of academic researchers interested in developing our knowledge of the psychological foundations of music

listening and performance (e.g. Hodges, 1996; MacDonald and Miell, 2000). Trevarthen's chapter emphasizes that music is central in babies' lives, and demonstrates the fundamental role that it plays in developing parent-child bonding. His ideas have wide-ranging implications for many issues in the developmental, social and therapeutic aspects of music psychology.

In Chapter 3, Alexandra Lamont discusses empirical research in discussing how the structuring of musical activities within the school environment has a significant influence upon a child's developing musical identity. One of the most illuminating aspects of her chapter is her reflection on the impact that instrumental music tuition provided by peripatetic teachers can have in this respect. She demonstrates that children in school who have no such instrumental music provision are more likely to see themselves as musicians, presumably through their involvement in general class musical activities, than children in schools in which individuals are taken out of class lessons to receive specialist tuition. This chapter has particular educational relevance: if children do not view themselves as musical, it will be difficult if not impossible for them to develop musically, as performers at least.

In Chapter 4, Sophia Borthwick and Jane Davidson discuss the influences that family interactions can exert upon a child's developing musical identity. This chapter utilizes script theory to highlight how certain key features of daily family interactions can have a significant impact on children's developing sense of musical identity. They trace the influence of parents and siblings, noting in particular how parents' perceptions of each child's musicality can affect the interactions of all the siblings in a family. One particularly interesting finding is that the parents involved in the study were very keen for their children to develop advanced musical skills, and viewed music as one of the most important activities in which their children were engaged. At the same time, however, these parents were not keen for their children to become professional musicians, and this *double bind* situation often perplexed the children.

Susan O'Neill, in presenting data from her in-depth interviews with young musicians in Chapter 5, also highlights the fluid and constantly evolving nature of musical identities. She explores the contradictions and complexities involved in adopting the label of 'musician', and uses social constructionist theory to illuminate the delicate interplay that exists between social perceptions of and personal beliefs about musicality. For example, her interviews with four young female musicians reveal that issues such as public performances and friends' expectations of how a musician should behave influence how these young people feel about themselves as musicians.

The final chapter in Part One, by Jane Davidson, introduces the notion of a 'performer identity'. She investigates the identity of the professional adult performer, and the intrinsically social nature of musical performance. The stereotype of composers who lock themselves away in solitude, wrestling with their creativity to produce original works of genius, has very little basis in reality, since a growing body of research highlights the social features of musical creativity: a musician's creative output is inextricably linked to a social and cultural milieu (Miell and MacDonald, 2000). Davidson highlights some key distinctions between the musical identities of individuals who see themselves as 'professional performers' and others who are also technically accomplished, but who see themselves as 'players but not performers'.

Part Two of the book (MII) looks at how music can influence and channel many non-musical aspects of identity: at the impact of music on our sense of who we are. In Chapter 7, for example, Nicola Dibben discusses some central and sometimes controversial issues concerning gender identity and music. Her review shows that boys' and girls' own gender development can influence their musical perceptions: girls often see themselves as good singers, whereas boys have more confidence in composition, for example. This gender distinction exists not only in musical performance, but also in musical taste: preferences for specific styles seem to influence and be influenced by our constantly evolving gender identity.

Mark Tarrant and his colleagues investigate young people's musical identities from the perspective of Social Identity Theory in Chapter 8. The distinction between in-groups and out-groups is central to this approach, and their research highlights the ways in which identification with musical styles affects adolescents' identification with these groups. This research shows that the music we choose signals many other non-musical aspects about ourselves, and that young people use their liking of particular forms of music to ally themselves with members of their peer group. Tarrant *et al.* note that music can act as a powerful badge of identity for adolescents, perhaps more than any other aspects of their lives, and that as such it represents a fundamental influence on their identities.

In Chapter 9, Göran Folkestad explores the relationship between national identity and music from a number of different perspectives. He provides examples that demonstrate how our sense of belonging to a nation can be communicated through music, noting that national anthems and the educational environment in which children learn about music are both very influential in developing and sustaining our national identities. Folkestad also discusses the influence of globalized popular music on people's concepts of national identity. Has the growth of popular music which does not recognize national boundaries diminished our identification with music from our own country, and what are the implications of this for music education? Folkestad provides some thought-provoking answers to these questions which should generate further interest in this topical yet neglected area.

The final two chapters of the book focus on the therapeutic applications of music, and the ways in which musical participation that has explicit therapeutic and/or educational objectives might influence our sense of self. The relationship between musical participation and an individual's psychological well-being is of increasing interest to researchers and practitioners working in this area. Of particular interest are the precise connections between the educational, therapeutic, clinical and musical aspects of this type of work (MacDonald, O'Donnell *et al.*, 1999; Ockelford, 2000), and Chapters 10 and 11 contribute towards the dialogue which is needed between researchers and clinicians. Both chapters discuss how musical participation can help develop an individual's sense of ability in music, and feelings of ownership of a creative product, and this highlights some of the parallels that can exist between therapeutic and educational music interventions.

In Chapter 10, two of us (Raymond MacDonald and Dorothy Miell) focus on the work of a music company that specializes in working with people who have special needs. The chapter discusses both the musical and psychological developments that can

result from musical participation, and then considers how specific observed developments in communication and musical ability can in turn influence the identities of those involved in musical activities.

In the final chapter of the book, Wendy Magee discusses a music therapy intervention. She carried out in-depth interviews exploring the music therapy experiences of her clients and presents here the detailed analysis of one case study of a client with multiple sclerosis, a chronic and progressive neurological disability. Magee highlights a number of key changes in self-concept that appeared to arise as result of the clinical improvisations that took place during the music therapy sessions. In particular, she demonstrates how music therapy gives opportunities for interactions that help to reduce the feelings of hopelessness and isolation that often accompany severe illness.

In this opening chapter, we have tried to develop and map out what 'musical identities' might be, drawing largely on research in the social and developmental psychology of music. The concept of identity is important because it enables us to understand individuals' musical development 'from the inside' whilst clearly locating identity as an emergent feature of our fundamentally social worlds. It provides us with a way of conceptualizing the interaction between biological and social influences, and provides continuity between our explanations of infant, child and adult behaviour. Studying the ways in which people perceive themselves in relation to music has the potential to explain some phenomena of musical behaviour and experience that might otherwise be inaccessible. This is an important undertaking, particularly at a time when the nature of musical experience itself is changing so rapidly in the globalized world.

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