Hidden Musical Lives:
The Roles and Significance of Music in Everyday Life at a Supported Living Scheme

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy by Mr Nedim Ali Hassan

December 2008

This thesis is dedicated to the residents of '17 Orwell Street' for showing me the value of music in everyday life.

Acknowledgements

CONTENTS

1

Abstract

HIDDEN MUSICAL LIVES: THE ROLES AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MUSIC IN EVERYDAY LIFE AT A SUPPORTED LIVING SCHEME
By Nedim A. Hassan

This thesis argues that existing academic approaches to studying music in everyday life underplay various contextual factors and neglect momentary musical activities that are enacted amidst the demands of domestic life.
The connection of music to everyday life is often taken for granted. For example, the musical activities that often accompany domestic routines, such as singing, dancing or humming to songs heard on the radio or television may be quickly forgotten. Yet, as this thesis will demonstrate, these relatively mundane activities can become highly significant on a number of levels.

Between the years 2000-2006 the significance of such activities was explored through ethnographic research conducted at a supported living scheme for four adults with learning difficulties based in North West England. As a support worker at this scheme, which is based in a bungalow on a housing estate, I was able to observe and participate in musical activities that frequently occurred during the routines, events and interactions that were part of the residents' everyday lives. This approach to ethnographic fieldwork was informed by ethical principles and supplemented by interviews and diary entries from key informants.

This research produced a number of findings. Firstly, it was found that small instances of musical activity, particularly musical performing such as singing or dancing, were central to the self-management and self-presentation of certain individuals within this specific social and domestic setting. Regardless of residents' difficulties with verbal communication, musical activities were a flexible and accessible personal and social resource. Secondly, it was evident that these activities often had an important influence on domestic situations and helped to foster a distinctive sense of place. Domestic musical activities were facilitated by the pervasive mediation of music through technologies such as a stereo system and television. However, the thesis argues that in order to understand the relations between such mediation and activity in this setting a

variety of contextual factors needed to be examined. These included the immediate social relationships in the house and also the wider social and political factors that determined how the supported living scheme was established.

Introduction

Marie put the Jim Reeves CD into the stereo system that was in the kitchen/dining area so that we could hear it in the lounge. Whilst sat in her usual chair I noticed that Christine was softly humming along to almost all of the songs. She was humming in such a way that I could hardly see her lips moving, she just pouted her lips slightly as she sat back seemingly watching the comedy channel on T.V. (Field notes, 16.2.01).

Very soon after I'd given him a cup of tea, (in fact I think as he'd entered the kitchen) John had sang "Happy Christmas". As he sat down John had asked me to "put music on". I interpreted this as meaning that he wanted some Christmas music on as he'd been singing about Christmas. The CD that was in the player already was a Christmas hits compilation. I put that on and the first track was Bing Crosby's 'White Christmas'. John sang along to the first verse with great enthusiasm but also accuracy. He seemed to know every word, just mispronouncing them slightly due to his speech impediment. As he held his cup of tea close to him John sang, with Christine [sat] in front of him.
(Field notes, 26.12.04)

Domestic, seemingly mundane, uses of music such as those outlined in the brief ethnographic descriptions above often seem unproblematic. As someone who has supported adults with learning difficulties (LD) in their own homes on a part-time basis during the last 15 years, the connection of music to home life is some 'thing' that has frequently seemed self-evident. Music was prevalent: songs often accompanied domestic routines such as housework, cooking and gardening. Music could be potentially heard in various domestic spaces such as bedrooms, bathrooms, lounges and kitchens as well as during the often essential car journeys that punctuated the routes and routines of daily life. The usage of music was also varied – people sang along or hummed or whistled to music mediated through the television, radio, discs or tapes in a variety of locations; conversely there were times when music seemed to be part of the furniture, simply 'there' without being explicitly attended to. Yet music's place within domestic environments is not inevitable and should not be taken for granted. Also, everyday music usage is deceptively complex and in order to understand the significance of seemingly simple actions such as those described above we need to pay rigorous attention to context. These were realisations that were affirmed

after extensive ethnographic research within a supported living scheme for four adults with LD in the Merseyside area of England between the years 2000-2006.

Whilst various scholars have stressed the importance of examining the contexts of everyday music usage (see for instance, DeNora, 2000; Middleton, 1990; North and Hargreaves, 1997; Hesmondhalgh, 2002; Cohen, 1993a), there remains a dearth of empirical studies that examine this usage in relation to domestic contexts. On the surface this absence seems unusual because the examination of audiences' uses of music is something that has been the focal point of various studies conducted within the interdisciplinary academic field of popular music studies. Yet, as will be revealed below, the lack of research on domestic music usage has been greatly influenced by the historical development of this field.

As David Hesmondhalgh and Keith Negus (2002) have pointed out, an important strand in the development of the academic fields of popular music studies and cultural studies was a new cultural sociology (Hesmondhalgh and Negus, 2002, pp. 5-6). Sociologists reacting against the consensus theories of 1960s U.S functionalism began to pay greater attention to the audiences for popular music and popular culture (ibid. p. 6). Influenced by writers associated with the Chicago School of Sociology in the U.S such as Herbert Blumer and Howard Becker, and the writing of Richard Hoggart, Raymond Williams and E.P Thompson in the U.K, various scholars began to adopt a more anthropological definition of the notion of 'culture' (Ruddock, 2001, p. 7). Rather than being seen in moral terms as constituting 'great' works of art, which was the case in the immediate post-world war two period, 'culture' became associated with the other strong sense of its meaning that had developed historically - "a particular *way of life*" (Hall, 1980; Williams, 1983, p. 12). Hence academics began to interrogate cultural *practices*, the activities people engaged in within everyday life, and this involved examining popular cultural practices that had been previously deemed unworthy of study (Hall, 1980). Accordingly, the ways in which people used popular music became an important area of study within the field of popular music studies. However, it will become clear that the epistemological foundations of popular music studies and cultural studies have, in many respects, marginalised the study of domestic music usage. Consequently, there are a

number of significant absences and exclusions that are yet to be seriously addressed in existing research on audience reception.

As Nick Couldry argues, one of the priorities of cultural studies was to validate popular culture as an area of study (Couldry, 2000, p. 3). In relation to the studies of audiences this involved focusing on those groups and practices that were hitherto ignored and dismissed in academic study. Consequently, social groups who were often previously defined as 'deviant' and 'vulnerable', as well as apparently 'corrupting' popular cultural texts, became the central objects of . study for fledgling cultural theorists and researchers. Hence, particularly during the 1970s in Britain, there was considerable research concerning youth audiences. Most notably, there were influential studies of youth subcultures and these asserted that young people were not passive and vulnerable but that they engaged with popular cultural texts in complex and active ways (Hebdige, 1979; Hall and Jefferson, 1976; Willis, 1978).

As the 1970s drew to a close cultural studies of audiences expanded their remit and, influenced by feminism in particular, researchers sought to study a diversity of texts and practices. No longer confining themselves to the study of (predominantly male) youth subcultures, scholars began to examine other previously maligned areas of cultural consumption such as soap opera viewing (Ang, 1985), romance novel reading (Radway, 1984), domestic radio listening (Hobson, 1980) and television viewing in general (Morley, 1986). Such studies emphasised that popular cultural practices were significant and complex; these audience activities were *active* and involved conflicts, struggles and resistance (Hall, 1980, p. 27). Therefore, from its outset, it can be seen that cultural studies has consistently sought to critically engage with popular cultural practices; stressing that such practices are not inconsequential but bound up with questions of power.

Similarly, Hesmondhalgh and Negus argue that popular music studies has within its constitutive disciplines a unifying goal to "rescue popular music from being treated as trivial and unimportant" (Hesmondhalgh and Negus, 2002, p. 6). Accordingly this goal has also involved examining the musical practices of both musicians and audiences. Therefore, there is literature that has explored the practices involved with music making (Cohen, 1991; Finnegan, 1989), music scenes (Cohen, 1993b; Shank, 1993), particular musical genres (Walser, 1993;

Thornton, 1995) and fandom (Cavicchi, 1998). With both popular music studies and cultural studies, therefore, it is clear that their epistemological foundations were partly built upon this "rescue operation" (Hesmondhalgh and Negus, 2002, p. 6). Researchers began to assume that popular culture and popular music were valid subjects but they also had to *assert* that what they were studying was worth studying. As Nick Couldry suggests, this validation was essential, yet the rescue of popular culture and music has had a number of unhelpful implications for subsequent socio-cultural research.

In seeking to validate practices that were deemed unworthy there has been an over-emphasis on the emancipatory potential of such practices. Popular texts were assumed as meaningful and audiences were discussed as active, but more than that this activity was celebrated and forms of resistance were emphasised. In contrast, more recent research has suggested that it is necessary to be more critical of the notion of the 'active' audience and that it is unwise to assume that texts are always meaningful (Hermes, 1995; Negus, 1996; Williams, 2001). Furthermore, the fields of popular music studies and cultural studies, in seeking to rescue 'popular' cultural practices, have paradoxically excluded certain groups and practices. As Couldry makes clear:

> The problem with the term 'popular culture' is symptomatic of a wider difficulty. If we take seriously the principle that culture is a process in which each person's experience is significant, then surely any limitation on what aspect or 'level' of culture we study – including any bias against or towards the 'popular', the 'marginal', the 'deviant' – is problematic. If we accept this, we must start thinking about culture differently, and radically expand the aspects of culture we study. This means facing up to the exclusions which cultural studies itself has entrenched over the past thirty years. (Couldry, 2000 p. 3)

In relation to popular music studies, writers such as Negus (1996) and Hesmondhalgh (2002) have acknowledged that there have historically been biases in studies of music audiences. The musical activities of young people have often been favoured in research, with public activities and phenomena being prioritised. This situation has gradually begun to change and there is now a growing body of literature that examines music reception in more everyday contexts, paying serious attention to more domestic and routine uses of music (Crafts et al. 1993; Cohen, 1995; DeNora, 2000; Bull, 2000; Williams, 2001;

Hennion, 2001; Lincoln, 2005). However, one of the main contentions of this thesis is that there remain specific exclusions that are entrenched within the study of popular music reception.

Firstly, the privileging of youth culture in cultural studies and popular music studies has led to, as Couldry puts it: "*the silencing* of the cultures of the old" (Couldry, 2000, p. 59). Similarly, this imbalance has also contributed to the neglect of the cultural practices of people with LD. The domestic musical activities of people with LD have hardly been considered in academic accounts , examining music reception. As will be expounded in Chapter 2, this neglect is significant. This is because, as many writers have noted and a government white paper (2001) pointed out, there are often considerable barriers that people with learning difficulties have to face in order to access leisure activities outside of the home (Department of Health, 2001).

Thus, the home as a site of leisure may take on added importance for a number of people with LD. This was the case for the four residents who were the main subjects during my ethnographic study. Whilst access to leisure pursuits outside of their house was often limited, listening to music and associated domestic musical activities were important to both the residents and the staff members who supported them for a number of reasons. Music was an accessible *resource* (DeNora, 2000) within the household and, as will be revealed during this thesis; musical activities were frequently integral to individuals' self-presentations, social interactions, the development of social bonds and connections, and the facilitation of peoples' moods. However, the exploration of the significance of such domestic music usage has traditionally been precluded due to the emphasis on youth and on the more 'spectacular' public elements of musical activity. Whilst there has been a recent shift towards studying everyday uses of music within academic research on music audiences, domestic musical activities are still underplayed and the musical experiences of people with LD are still virtually hidden.

As well as neglecting certain groups of people, many previous studies of music usage have tended to marginalise specific types of activities and experiences. Writing in 1950 David Riesman grappled with the dilemmas of how to limit scholarly bias when studying popular music audiences. He proposed that it was essential to engage in a dialogue with such audiences but envisaged

problems concerning how "we can find the vocabulary to talk to people about *experiences which are not particularly self-conscious ones*" (Riesman, 1990 p. 6, my italics). In this discussion Riesman outlined a methodological issue that has rarely been appreciated in subsequent research on music use – how does one account for those musical activities that are taken for granted as mundane and routine? Musical activities within everyday life are often *momentary*. Within the contexts of daily life, particularly within urban, industrialised societies, we are not always reflexive during all the encounters we have with music. The demands of daily life in contemporary societies can be considerable; musical experiences and activities that are central to our routines, social relationships and interactions are not necessarily memorable. Thus researchers investigating the roles of music within peoples' everyday lives have to tackle these methodological difficulties from the outset.

I became aware of these difficulties whilst conducting research for a previous smaller ethnographic project. When interviewing three normally forthright and vocal young men about their uses of music in their daily domestic lives I found that they were surprisingly reticent and played down the significance of music (Hassan, unpublished M.A dissertation, 1998). This was the antithesis of what observational data had revealed because a variety of musical activities seemed integral to many of their routines and interactions with each other within their household. It became clear that, in some cases, interviewing is not a method that is conducive to providing insight into the more mundane, less memorable, but nonetheless pervasive uses of music within peoples' lives.

These types of methodological difficulties informed the approach to the ethnographic research that this thesis is based upon. Ethnographic methods were utilised in an attempt to capture and subsequently elucidate how music became part of the experiences of people living and working in a single household. This involved attempting to explore the manifold activities relating to music usage that occurred during the fleeting moments of everyday domestic life, rather than considering these activities solely on the basis of my research subjects' recollections. Therefore, participant-observation regularly conducted over six years was paramount to this research. The ethnography expounded in the chapters that follow depicts many aspects of the day-to-day lives of four people

living in a house I will call '17 Orwell Street'. This pseudonym will be used for confidentiality purposes from this point onwards. The thesis primarily focuses on the everyday musical activities of the four residents living at this house who, from this point on, will be known as 'Andrew', 'John', 'Charlotte' and 'Christine' (again pseudonyms are used to maintain confidentiality). In addition, there were many members of staff working to support the four residents and they will also feature prominently in the chapters that follow.

As a part-time support worker at 17 Orwell Street for almost seven years my actions are also frequently part of the ethnographic descriptions and analyses that follow. The limitations and ethical implications of this approach will be highlighted in Chapter 3. Nevertheless, this role in the house enabled (indeed often required) me to observe and participate in a variety of domestic practices that involved musical activity. In certain respects because I was familiar to people in this field, and as I had frequent involvement in a multitude of aspects of my subjects' daily lives, this enabled me to adopt key elements of ethnography as it has been traditionally practiced in anthropology. Data collection was, to a large extent, carried out in context; a considerable amount of time was spent with informants and this enabled iterative participant-observation. Such elements are consistent with classic ethnographic research fostered within anthropology from the likes of Bronislaw Malinowski onwards (O'Reilly, 2005, pp. 10-15).

This approach generated a wealth of information and due to space limitations not all of the ethnographic findings from this long-term project will be featured in this thesis. The research also laid bare a number of areas for potential further study, some of which are not discussed here, in particular the connections between musical performing and memory.[1] However, what will become clear during this thesis is that ethnographic research enabled the explication of the distinctive domestic environment at 17 Orwell Street. This setting elided being simply labelled as a 'household', a 'home' or even a 'supported living scheme' which is the term used to define the house by the organisation that runs it. This was because a number of individuals who frequented 17 Orwell Street identified with the house and its various spaces in

---

[1] Issues relating to the performing of memory were presented in a paper entitled "He'll Have to Go: Exploring everyday listening and performing" at Sounds of the Overground: A postgraduate colloquium on ubiquitous music and music in everyday life (University of Liverpool, May 2006).

different ways. Roger Silverstone argues that such domestic spaces are deceptively complex; being shaped by social, economic, cultural, political and technological factors (Silverstone, 1994 p. 25). Yet academic studies of everyday music reception often fail to pay rigorous attention to the specificity of domestic contexts, the relationships within them and how these relate to musical activity. In contrast, this thesis will reveal that an intimate knowledge of domestic settings as social fields can provide an insight into how activities such as 'putting music on', that are often taken for granted, are related to social power.

Conversely, this ethnographic account will also reveal that seemingly mundane musical actions, such as humming, singing or dancing, that occur amidst everyday routines and interactions can have a profound impact on domestic settings. They can become integral to the fostering of a 'home-like' environment and can greatly influence social interactions and relationships. Therefore, small instances of momentary musical performing will be elucidated as important resources for self-presentation, even amongst people who have some difficulties with verbal communication (Goffman, 1959). Furthermore, building on the work of DeNora (2000), everyday musical activities will be illuminated as a resource central to self-management. As will be made clear, such activities, whether witting or unwitting, can become intrinsic to the processes that are essential for *coping* with the various circumstances that people encounter in their everyday lives.

Music, as DeNora contends, "is much more than a decorative art…it is a powerful medium of *social* order" (ibid. p. 163, my italics). However, despite the valuable contributions from those scholars who have investigated the roles of music in everyday life, there remain areas of neglect precisely in relation to *how* musical activities become socially important (Frith, 2003 p. 101). This is particularly the case with supposedly 'mundane' domestic activities that may seem inconsequential. As this thesis will demonstrate, these often momentary musical activities are nonetheless a vital area for further research.

Chapter 1

Literature Review

The aim of this chapter is to build on the contention outlined in the introduction; namely that, despite the valuable contributions of a variety of studies, there remains a number of absences in relation to the study of music in everyday life. Furthermore, this chapter will reveal that the processes involved with an ethnographic study focusing on the regular musical activities of a group of people with learning difficulties required a consideration of literature relating to music usage from a number of different academic fields. However, at this point it is important to note that, whilst this chapter focuses on some of the main studies and theories that have influenced the approach to research adopted in this thesis, it is by no means an exhaustive evaluation of all the literature that will be referred to. Rather, in the chapters that follow a diverse range of sources from academic fields such as disability studies, anthropology and sociology will be examined in relation to the aims, methods and findings of this ethnographic study.

1. Music and everyday life

In the introduction to this thesis it was suggested that until relatively recently there has been a dearth of studies of music's impact on daily domestic life from within the evolving interdisciplinary field of popular music studies. A discussion of aspects of the epistemological foundations of this field indicated that this neglect was partly attributable to the need to 'rescue' the audiences of popular culture and to treat their practices seriously. It is not necessary to repeat the arguments made in the introduction here, other than to emphasise that as writers such as Keith Negus (1996) and David Hesmondhalgh (2002) have rightly pointed out, there has traditionally been an overemphasis of the 'spectacular' aspects of youth music audiences within studies of reception at the expense of consideration of apparently more mundane domestic musical activity. In recent years, however, the situation has began to change and there is now an increased interest in researching issues relating to musical experiences within daily life.

Drawing on a variety of methodologies, scholars from a diversity of fields such as social psychology, cultural anthropology, sociology and cultural studies have focused on more quotidian musical activities, raising a number of important questions (for instance studies include Crafts et al., 1993; Cohen, 1995; DeNora, 2000; DeNora and Belcher, 2000; Bull, 2000, 2003, 2005; Sloboda and O'Neill, 2001; Hennion, 2001; Frith, 2003).

Many of these existing studies have been particularly influential in relation to my understanding of the significance of music within the specific setting in which I conducted ethnographic research. However, after considering methodological problems encountered in this research field, it became increasingly evident that there remain considerable areas of ambiguity and neglect within existing studies of music's impact upon daily life. As I shall explicate below, previous approaches to the study of everyday music usage often fail to adequately address the complexity of what I have already referred to as *momentary* musical activity. Daily musical activities such as listening to music, humming, foot-tapping and singing are momentary in the sense that they are often fleeting and easily forgotten therefore they are difficult to pin-down and document. Yet paradoxically such musical activities as they occur in the moment can be vital for communication and can provide people with feelings of pleasure and empowerment.

Many existing studies of the uses of music in everyday life are ethnographic in orientation. Put simply, that means that scholars have attempted to understand music reception from the point of view of the participants; they have focused on what people do with music and discussed this by using participants' own terms.[2] As has already been made evident, this study is also based upon ethnographic research although, as will become clear in Chapter 3, it was necessary to prioritise observational data to a far greater extent than previous studies of music usage. Despite certain limitations with this approach, an emphasis on close participant-observation raised questions regarding the existing theories relating to everyday music usage. In order to outline such questions it is

---

[2] Clearly the notion of an ethnographic approach to music reception is complex. As will be elucidated in Chapter 3 there is considerable debate about what this approach entails and about the efficacy of ethnography as a methodology.

now necessary to explore some of the central theories about music's impact in everyday life that have been formulated within the existing literature.

Tia DeNora's study on <u>Music in everyday life</u> (2000) is an influential piece of work that has been formative for my ethnographic research. At present it is the most sustained empirical and theoretical exploration of music's impact on everyday life that has been published. As such it warrants detailed analysis in order to consider its strengths and limitations. More importantly, for the purposes of assessing the body of literature examining music and daily life, the absences within DeNora's work are instructive because they are consistent with limitations across a range of other studies.

Highlighting the lack of ethnographic studies on everyday music usage, DeNora utilises a number of methods that are ethnographic in orientation. She analyses in-depth interviews with a number of respondents and data derived from participant-observation in order to explore how music is used in various daily contexts. Her examples range from the use of music in neonatology, music therapy sessions, aerobics classes and the retail sector, to the use of music in more domestic contexts such as intimate personal home relationships and social gatherings. Drawing on these examples DeNora proposes a reception theory that, as Daniel Cavicchi points out, is formulated from the 'bottom up' (Cavicchi, 2002, p. 10). Hence DeNora's theories are audience-centred; she pays serious attention to what music does for people and what people do with music.

DeNora's approach also addresses the problems involved with bridging the compatibility between the 'grand' tradition of the sociology of music represented by theorists like Theodore Adorno and the production of culture tradition represented by socio-anthropologists like Howard Becker (DeNora, 2000 p. 5). Alongside the symbolic interactionist perspective on music's roles in society (which basically theorises that musical meaning is socially constructed), DeNora brings musical materials into the equation through her concept of 'affordance'.[3] Rejecting the simplistic notion that music acts as a stimulus that makes people do things, DeNora argues that music constitutes an "affordance structure" (DeNora, 2000, p. 40). In other words, musical materials with their

---

[3] The theory of symbolic interaction was developed by the sociologist Herbert Blumer who asserted that: meanings are "formed in and through the defining activities of people as they interact" (Blumer in Martin, 1995 p. 29).

distinctive rhythms, timbre, tempo, melody and so on afford people various ways of thinking, moving and being in the world. However, this process depends upon the social context of the people listening to the music. Therefore, DeNora focuses on how music as an affordance structure is *appropriated* by people within day-to-day situations (ibid. p. 43). Subsequently, DeNora expounds her theory by exploring how music is used as a resource for self-formulation, body action and social ordering.

DeNora's theories and arguments have strongly influenced the approach to examining everyday musical activity that will be adopted in this thesis. They have also influenced academics from fields such as psychology and music therapy (see for instance, Clarke, 2003; Ansdell, 2004). Accordingly, they will be utilised and discussed at various points within the chapters that follow. DeNora's perspective on the tasks that are required in order to explicate the roles of musical materials and activities in everyday life was particularly influential on my research. She emphasises that it is essential to explore what the appropriation of music in everyday life "achieves *in action*" (DeNora, 2000 p. 6). Furthermore, DeNora stresses that ethnographic research is fundamental to this process of revealing how music becomes integral to human action (ibid. pp. 38-39). DeNora's approach thus reinforced that it was vital to pay careful attention to peoples' actions as well as what they said about music. Her work affirmed that even during apparently mundane domestic situations musical activities can be a "powerful medium of social order"; influencing relationships and everyday actions in significant ways (ibid. p. 163).

DeNora's text, therefore, introduces a number of useful theoretical concepts that are developed in order to explore the power of music in everyday life. However, as David Hesmondhalgh (2002) argues, one of the limitations of DeNora's work is that she does not provide any definitions of the notion of 'everyday life'. The implication in her work is that the notion of 'everyday life' itself is unproblematic. Yet, as Hesmondhalgh and Berger and Del Negro (2004) have suggested, how people interpret phenomena as 'everyday' is dependent on various social and cultural factors. In particular, Berger and Del Negro suggest that researchers should not automatically assume that a particular event or activity engaged in by an individual or group can be straightforwardly characterised as 'everyday'. They identify a number of contextual, ideological

and economic factors that determine whether an event is interpreted as part of 'everyday life'. Summarising their arguments they assert that: "everyday life is an interpretive framework, and the reading of any social practice as everyday or special depends on a complex interplay of factors and the interpreters own meaning-making process" (Berger and Del Negro, 2004, p. 14). Therefore, such writing indicates that it is important to be specific when analysing 'everyday' uses of music; developing an insight into how individuals or social groups understand 'everyday life' in order to place their music usage into a wider context. It is this appreciation of the variegated factors that contribute to the specificity of peoples' musical activities which is underplayed in DeNora's account. The main limitation with her study is not, as Hesmondhalgh suggests, in relation to the absence of an adequate definition of 'everyday life' (since as Berger and Del Negro suggest there is no singular definition), rather it is in relation to methodology. As will be made clear below, DeNora's primary method, whilst highly productive and illuminating for exploring 'everyday' domestic musical activity, does not allow for the appreciation of the complexity of the contexts of such activity.

In the early sections of her book DeNora stresses the importance of context, arguing that it is difficult to discuss music's powers without examining contexts of use. She also argues that too much writing in sociology and cultural studies is abstract and does not pay attention to the 'ground level' of social action (DeNora, 2000 p. x). In addition, as has already been established, the methods that DeNora utilises to analyse the 'ground level' of peoples' uses of music are ethnographic in orientation. She elucidates what people *do* with music primarily through analysis of in-depth interviews with individuals. During these interviews it is clear that DeNora laboured to ensure that interviewees discussed their uses of music in detail. As she argues:

> ...leading respondents back to the practical level of real-life examples of who-did-what-when-how, the 'nitty-gritty' level of mundane action...has the capacity to undermine accounts and the various identity claims, posturings and role play that often occur within an interview. Sticking close to the level of respondents' musical practices helped to reveal how respondents used music rather than their depictions of relations between themselves and others. (DeNora, 2000 p. 121)

Whilst DeNora's desire to focus upon what respondents said about musical practices is understandable, this account of interviewing method is somewhat ambiguous. If she recognises the importance of social context then it is incongruous to indicate that she is not interested in her interviewees' depictions of relationships. This section is indicative of the problematic position of methodology within DeNora's account as a whole. Nowhere in her book does she adequately discuss her research methods. Whilst this does not diminish the force of her theoretical discussion, it does leave aspects of her accounts of mundane social action open to question in a number of respects.

Firstly, whilst many of her interview-based accounts of music use detail the 'nitty-gritty' of music use by focusing on immediate listening situations, there is a lack of a concomitant commitment to examining wider social contexts. Although her study reveals the diversity of ways in which people can use music, consideration of respondents' wider social networks would enable us to have some understanding of *why* they are able to use music in certain ways (e.g. through knowledge they've developed, social status, where they live etc.). Conversely such an approach would also involve a consideration of whether respondents were *unable* to use music in particular ways (due to a lack of financial resources etc.).

Furthermore, as many of DeNora's theories, particularly those concerning music as a resource for the development of self-identity and for social ordering, are formulated through interview data, this leads to the prioritising of certain types of phenomena over others. By focusing on the verbalising of respondents, on their tales of what they do with music, DeNora asserts that: "Music is a device or resource to which people turn in order to *regulate themselves* as aesthetic agents, as feeling, thinking and acting beings in their day-to-day lives" (DeNora, 2000 p. 62, my italics). Thus, DeNora's account of domestic musical practices such as listening to music in the home stresses the *agency* of respondents. In everyday relationships respondents describe how they use music for their own ends and domestic musical experience seems to be associated with *active* control. However, as will be explicated during this thesis, particularly during Chapters 4 and 5, issues regarding access to music even in domestic environments are subject to power relations.

In her discussions of various domestic listening situations DeNora thus suggests that music listening is overwhelmingly *intentional*. However, as Anahid Kassabian (1999, 2002) suggests, the actual notion of 'listening' is far from self-evident in contemporary societies. This is because there are various types of listening amongst people in such societies due to the proliferation of what Kassabian calls "ubiquitous musics" (Kassabian, 1999 p.117). This term refers to those 'background' soundtracks that can be heard whilst people go about their routines in daily life (for example, at work, whilst shopping or eating etc.) but that aren't necessarily intentionally chosen to be listened to. DeNora and Sophie Belcher (2000) begin to address these issues when they provide an article on how music is utilised by certain retail outlets in order to structure shoppers' agency. They suggest that listening experiences are variable in retail settings by pointing out that the older shoppers they interviewed considered music an unwelcome distraction in clothes shops (DeNora and Belcher, 2000 pp. 91-92). This greatly contrasted with the views of younger participants in their study who described music listening as something that enhanced the atmosphere of such retail outlets.

Yet DeNora's account in <u>Music in everyday life</u> (2000) provides only a limited insight into the varied aspects of music listening experiences as they occur in other more domestic areas within daily life. This variation has previously been suggested by other writers. For instance, as certain authors examining radio consumption have argued, radio is a medium that is particularly suited to fostering a number of listening experiences (Crisell 1994, Frith 2003). Andrew Crisell argues that radio is a "'secondary' medium" with which "more than any other medium a whole *range* of attention is possible, from hearing through 'over hearing' to listening, from those who want unobtrusive background noise – 'acoustic wallpaper' – to those who seek an object of concentration" (Crisell, 1994 p. 15). Hence, as previous ethnographic studies have indicated, music on the radio is often an accompaniment to other essential domestic activities (Hobson 1980, Hassan, unpublished MA dissertation, 1998). This diversity within domestic listening experience tends to become marginalised within DeNora's account along with more mundane examples of daily domestic duties such as housework and childcare.[4] In contrast, this thesis will explore a

---

[4] Hobson (1980), for instance, examines how British housewives utilised pop radio in order to accompany essential domestic chores such as house work and child care.

number of variations in listening experience within one single household. Therefore, it has been made clear that whilst DeNora's conceptualisation of music as a resource is a useful one, her reliance on music users' interview accounts excludes other aspects of domestic musical experience, in particular, instances where people have less control within their domestic environments.

The absences evident in DeNora's account are consistent with those within other studies of music in daily life. Despite the valuable insights into musical usage provided by studies that rely heavily on in-depth interview data, such as Michael Bull's work on personal stereo and i-pod use (2000, 2005) or the work of the Music in Daily Life project that is documented in My Music (1993), such studies foster a rather individualistic impression of the uses of music in 'everyday life'. The narratives of music use that are presented convey some of the richness and diversity of individual experiences of musical practice. Such portrayals reveal media industry terms such as consumption to be simplistic and hackneyed (Lipsitz in Crafts et al. p. xiii). Yet by locating the individual interview as the unit of analysis *par excellence*, such studies preclude the consideration of music's connection with social context and they marginalise certain aspects of more mundane musical activity. People asked to talk about their uses of music in an interview context will understandably discuss those aspects that are memorable and important to them.

Ostensibly there is nothing invalid with this approach; as I will explicate in Chapter 3 different kinds of ethnographic approaches all have their limitations. However, as writers such as DeNora are constructing theories concerning music's powers in daily life then it is imperative to consider the kinds of domestic experiences that such interview data might exclude. As will be made clear with my own ethnographic descriptions, domestic life can be bewildering and the demands of daily routines can be considerable. In such contexts it is not always possible to remember musical experiences and activities that are part of such routines (for instance, how many of us can remember the tunes we might hear when our radio alarm clock wakes us in the morning?).

Clearly then, when thinking back to such mundane occurrences it is not always possible to be reflexive about them. This is a point that psychologists John Sloboda and Susan O'Neill make in their article on "Emotions and Everyday Listening To Music" (2001). They argue that there are a number of

difficulties with capturing emotional experiences involved with everyday music listening and highlight important methodological issues. As they assert:

> ...the everyday is, by definition, unmemorable, and so retrospective studies (such as interviews) may not capture the richness and diversity of musical experience. The more mundane occurrences are simply forgotten or filtered out. Understanding how music interacts with everyday contexts requires a method that not only examines the phenomenon in 'real-world' situations or events, but that does so as the events are unfolding and are experienced by individuals in the course of their daily lives.
> (Sloboda and O'Neill, 2001 p. 417)

DeNora also discusses elements of this aspect of everyday interactions with music in her discussion of music's importance to memory. She argues that music is a powerful aid to memory because of its *unfolding* nature – as she clearly points out music unfolds over time, unlike material objects (DeNora, 2000 p. 66). She writes: "when it is music that is associated with a particular moment and a particular space...music reheard and recalled provides a device for unfolding, for replaying, the temporal structure of that moment, its dynamism as emerging experience" (ibid. p. 77). Yet a reliance on verbal recollections in interviews only enables DeNora to approach such dynamic aspects of musical experience in a somewhat posthumous manner. Obviously, this does not greatly hinder a study of music's relationship to memory and DeNora's rich interview data provides an insight into how music is used by her respondents to structure memories and notions of self-identity. However, the fact remains that interview data alone is ill-equipped to capture the complexity and immediacy of daily domestic musical experience as it occurs *in the moment*.

Thus, the fleeting nature of everyday encounters with music poses particular problems for researchers interested in explicating how music can become significant to people in social contexts. As an ethnographer who was interested in exploring how musical activity became significant for a number of individuals within a particular domestic setting, the problems associated with describing and interpreting fleeting, momentary experiences had to be dealt with. Writing about live performances of Irish Traditional Music in Galway City, Ireland, Frances Morton (2005) grapples with the problems involved with representing musical activity. For Morton, "despite the intensity in duration, skill

and affects, musical performances and their content...are *momentary and ephemeral*" (Morton, unpublished PhD thesis 2005, p. 29). Morton argues that live music performances involve affective, emotional experiences that elide description and representation. Her ethnographic research is heavily influenced by non-representational theory. This is a theory that, as Nigel Thrift argues, attempts to interrogate the more practical aspects of human life, rather than cognitive elements. Hence, the project of non-representational theory involves developing knowledge about human practices that veers away from notions of events as 'representing something' towards seeing events in more practical terms as embedded in social networks and settings. Thus, as Thrift puts it in his theoretical discussion of dance:

> Non representational theory is about practices, mundane everyday practices, that shape the conduct of human beings towards others and themselves in particular sites. The domain of investigation is the absorbed skilful coping of these practices... (Thrift, 1997 pp. 126-127)

Consequently Morton, like Thrift, focuses on musical practices as they are embodied, confronting their momentary nature and the difficulties involved with representing such unfolding practice. As will be made clear throughout my ethnographic account I encountered similar problems whilst I sought to describe and interpret the musical activities of residents and support staff within a supported living scheme. Whilst working in this environment as a support assistant I gained many opportunities to conduct iterative close participant observation. Such opportunities, coupled with the various learning difficulties of individuals who lived at the household which often restricted verbal communication, made it essential to prioritise the *activities* of my informants. I became increasingly interested in issues related to what people did: how they responded to music, both verbally and physically; how music affected them emotionally; what they were doing whilst music was played (whether they seemed to outwardly respond to music or not); when music was encountered and who initiated these encounters.

Such attention to various musical activities as they unfolded also revealed regular types of music related *performing*. Momentary musical activities frequently involved impromptu dancing, humming, singing, foot-tapping and

similar expressive gestures. Consequently, it became imperative to explore the notion of musical performance in more depth. Performance theory, particularly the work of American sociologist Erving Goffman, enabled me to place this performing within a wider theoretical framework. Accordingly, it is now necessary to focus upon this body of literature and to link this to studies of dance and to more recent studies of musical performing from within popular music studies.

2. Musical Performing

Whilst discussing the notion of everyday life as an "interpretive framework" (which was referred to earlier), Berger and Del Negro go on to argue that constructions of everyday life are strongly connected to the concept of performance (Berger and Del Negro, 2004 p. 14). Rather than assuming that performance and everyday life should be seen as two separate realms when considering social practice, they assert that the two are strongly linked and that it is important to study the relationship between them. They propose that how people interpret practices as 'everyday' will have an influence on how performances become meaningful. As they put it:

> Performances can be found in any culture. The meanings given to performance, however, vary widely across cultures, and the differing constructions of everyday life in a given society...deeply inform the ways in which performance is understood there (ibid. p. 15).

What will be revealed during this thesis, particularly in Chapter 6, is that for individuals living and working at 17 Orwell Street, various types of musical performing were often integral to everyday activities and routines. That is, they were not simply framed as 'musical performance' separate from other domestic activities but were often part of essential routines. The concept of 'framing' is used here in accordance with Erving Goffman to refer to how social experiences are understood according to "principles of organization which govern events" (Goffman, 1974 p. 10).

Relating this concept directly to my observation of daily musical performing at 17 Orwell Street, it became apparent that performing was

frequently organised (or framed) as part of routine; it was often understood as ordinary behaviour rather than as a special event. For instance, Charlotte (one of the residents) would often sing along to music whilst carrying out tasks such as washing dishes or folding laundry. Such performing was not always necessarily explicitly designed to be attended to by other people as a performance *event*, but that is not to imply that these types of activity did not have influences on social interaction. Thus, following Berger and Del Negro, it will be argued during this thesis that the ways in which everyday life was constructed at 17 Orwell Street informed how musical performing was interpreted. Consequently, during Chapters 4 and 5 a variety of factors that aided in the construction of domestic daily life in this setting will be focused upon.

Yet whilst such factors influenced the types of musical performing that often occurred at 17 Orwell Street (mediated music, for example, often facilitated acts of music related performing such as humming and foot-tapping) it was clearly inadequate to merely explain this performing with reference to social context. Rather, these often seemingly mundane domestic musical activities had to be carefully theorised. Thus at this stage I am not going to straightforwardly categorise such activities as musical performances. This is because there are clear differences between musical performing that is enacted at events such as concerts and the types of everyday musical performing that I observed during my ethnographic research.[5] Consequently, the various sections of this part of the chapter will seek to carefully explore the problematic notion of everyday musical performing and its relationship to social situations by drawing on a variety of sources. In order to accomplish this it was necessary to turn to literature on performance studies, particularly from within the disciplines of sociology but also from anthropology and various music scholars.

The study of performance has become an important aspect within the social sciences especially since the 1960s and 1970s when scholars predominantly from Britain and the United States utilised the concept to advance sociological and anthropological studies (Carlson, 2004 p. 11). This field of study has become rich and varied and involves a number of interesting debates

---

[5] Note that the word 'musical' is used here to refer to its general definition which is: "of or relating to music" rather than its more narrow definition which relates to someone who is skilled in music (The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1991 p.781).

regarding the nature of performance in various societies. There is not sufficient space in this thesis to comprehensively discuss such debates which have had an impact on a number of academic disciplines such as linguistics and psychology, as well as the aforementioned sociology and anthropology.[6] Rather, the intention here is mainly to examine the relevance of performance theory as it has been developed in sociology and anthropology for studying the kinds of everyday musical performing that were observed during my ethnographic research project. However, it should be noted at this point that researching and theorising incidences of musical performing that occurred predominantly within one household also entailed engaging with areas of debate central to the study of performance. Marvin Carlson notes that a contested aspect of performance study "involves the question of to what extent performance itself results from something the performer does and to what extent it results from a particular context in which it is done" (ibid. p. 15). Therefore, as has already been suggested in the introduction to this thesis, by exploring the dialectical relationship between the household context of 17 Orwell Street and the musical performing within that setting, this ethnographic study offered a way of engaging with this debate.

The 'Performative Turn' in Music Studies

Within studies of music in general, performance is an aspect that, as Nicholas Cook (2003) notes, has been historically underplayed. However, Cook identifies a 'performative turn' in music studies and recent debates relating to this proved timely in aiding my analysis of everyday musical 'performing'. Articles by David Shumway (1999), Nicholas Cook (2003) and Philip Auslander (2006) illustrate the importance of studying musical performing. Cook and Auslander's articles are particularly useful to consider at this stage because they constitute a debate over the nature of musical performance and illustrate some of the difficulties with conceptualising this.

Cook critiques studies of music that have traditionally tended to separate text (in the form of notation) from performance. This was a point that was also

---

[6] See Carlson (2004) for a useful introduction to such debates and their influence on these disciplines.

emphasised by Shumway (1999) in his discussion on rock performances. Shumway argues that the distinction between text and performance is often conceptualised by music scholars and commentators in terms that construct the text as permanent and the performance as ephemeral (Shumway, 1999 p. 189). Cook also highlights how the notion of a 'musical work' has dominated studies of music. This leads to an emphasis on romantic studies of composers as individual geniuses, with the central object of analysis being the music and musical work rather than the different musical performances. Therefore, Cook stresses that contemporary studies of musical performance need to focus on *music as performance*, not simply the performance of music (Cook, 2003, p. 205). This is because to study the performance of music implies that we can somehow separate 'music' from 'performance' when this is often difficult to do. Cook also asserts that meaning is often constructed through the act of performance; therefore it is more fruitful to study music as performance. This approach, therefore, treats music as very much a social phenomenon with rich meanings that are not simply explained through studying the music 'text'. In fact, Cook goes further and argues that it is unhelpful to think of music as a text, but rather to think of it in theatrical terms as a *script* (ibid. p. 206). This is because music is not some 'thing' faithfully reproduced during a performance; rather it is *enacted* through a set of social interactions.

Cook's approach to performance is useful because of his insistence that the meanings of musical performing lie within social interactions (what people *do*) rather than within an abstracted and reified notion of 'the music' (Small, 1998, p.8). Philip Auslander (2006), however, builds upon and critiques Cook's approach to musical performance, taking issue with the use of the word 'script'. Auslander argues that to see music as a script is to suggest that the musical work "provides the design that underlies and...determines the performance" (Auslander, 2006, p. 101). For Auslander, to posit music as a script is to partly keep within the musicological tradition alluded to above that tends to abstract music from the people who make it and to reify music as the central maker of meaning. In contrast, Auslander proposes a method of performance analysis which is based on the idea that "to be a musician is to perform an identity in a social realm" (ibid. p. 101). Drawing on the sociologist Erving Goffman, Auslander argues that what musical performing involves is not the enactment of

scripts but the presentation of self. Therefore, as Auslander writes: "What musicians perform first and foremost is not music, but their own identities as musicians, their musical personae" (ibid. p. 102). Thus, Auslander's approach is what he calls "performer-centric"; he takes the presentations of the performer(s) as being the most important aspects to study when considering musical performing (ibid.).

Everyday Musical Performing

Unlike Auslander, the focal point of my study was not the live performing of professional musicians at concerts but the more haphazard, sometimes spontaneous, often momentary musical performing such as singing, humming, foot tapping and dancing that was presented by the people I observed primarily within a domestic setting. Therefore, while (in accordance with Auslander) it was crucial that I focused upon the presentations of the people performing, it was equally as important to consider the specificity of the domestic context of the household. As will be made apparent in Chapter 6 the boundaries between 'performer' and 'audience' are much less clearly defined when considering domestic musical performing in comparison to musical performing at a concert.

Consequently, whilst Auslander and Cook's debate concerning musical performing provided a useful starting point it was also necessary to conceptualise everyday musical performing. This was a considerable task because despite being an established part of British culture, musical activities such as singing, humming, clapping, foot-tapping and dancing are rarely theorised in connection with the secular, mundane contexts of daily life. Yet it is clear that these performances are not the sole territory of established recording artists and are not confined to particular designated performance spaces such as concert venues or night-clubs. Neither are they solely the confine of ceremonial or ritual spaces like churches. On the contrary, as William H. Kelly (1998) and Michael Pickering and Tony Green (1987) make clear, there is a long tradition of members of the general British public who do not have formal musical training singing popular songs in public places such as public houses and working men's clubs. Furthermore, musical activities such as singing, humming and dancing, whilst they may get taken for granted, are clearly considered by many people in Britain

to be part of the more mundane aspects of everyday life. They are recognised by many as common daily activities and have often been depicted as such by the mass media.

For instance, an on-going advertising campaign by Century FM, a major radio network that is broadcast in England and currently owned by GCap Media plc, features the slogan 'Radio You Just Have to Sing Along To'. Its television advertisements feature listeners singing along to popular British chart hits from the last three decades. For example, one of its most recent advertisements broadcast in a prime-time slot during <u>Coronation Street</u> (a soap opera that continues to be one of the most watched programmes by the British public) on 23rd April 2007 features a white couple aged approximately in their early thirties enthusiastically singing along to the song "Rio" that was written and recorded by Duran Duran (1982). Indeed the central image chosen to market Century FM is that of the fun-loving 'hairbrush diva' and their target listener is the imaginary 'Debbie' who GCap's website describes as: "a 25-44 main shopper who's grown up but not grown old!" (GCap Media plc, online, 29.4.07). 'Debbie' is a listener who, for Century's marketers, will appreciate their: "unique blend of the best, infectious 'grab your hairbrush' style music" (ibid.). The concept of the 'hairbrush diva', therefore, is one that this particular media company obviously feels will have resonance for sections of the British public. The idea of unashamedly singing along to popular hits from "the 80s, 90s and Now" whilst grasping a hairbrush or similar microphone substitutes is marketed as something that Century's target audience will identify with (ibid.).

The findings of Michael Bull's (2003) research on music use amongst British automobile drivers also suggest that singing along to music is a commonplace activity during daily car journeys. Many of the listeners Bull interviewed described how they found themselves talking, dancing or singing to the radio whilst driving their cars. The drivers indicate that they almost seem to 'lose themselves' within the space of the car and sometimes forget that other drivers could see them singing or dancing (Bull, 2003 p. 368). Thus, whilst Bull suggests that the car becomes a kind of privatised "free space" in which the driver can indulge their inhibitions, this space is conversely semi-public and therefore singing or other music-related activity could quickly become a source of embarrassment (ibid.). Once again, then, these research findings suggest that it

is imperative to consider the specificities of settings when analysing everyday musical activity. This is a theme that will be returned to both later in this chapter and in more depth during Chapter 5. However, presently it is necessary to consider other representations of mundane musical activity.

If we briefly consider an example from <u>Coronation Street</u> (Granada Television, 1960-present), the enduring popular British soap opera mentioned above, this will highlight how everyday instances of singing can have other purposes. One of the best loved characters in this soap opera was Hilda Ogden. The character was voted as the UK's favourite soap star in a recent survey published in 2005 (BBC News, online, 29.4.07). Hilda was a housewife and cleaner who was commonly depicted as singing to herself whilst she went about housework and cleaning duties. This type of performing seems radically different to the concert performances that Auslander discusses or even to the types of folk singing that are explored in Pickering and Green's edited collection. This is performing that is neither designed to be entertaining for an audience nor enacted in order to display a skill or competence. Rather this singing seems to have other functions; it is more akin to a sea shanty or work song in that it is an integral part of manual tasks such as polishing or vacuum cleaning.[7] Whilst it would be simplistic to argue that the character Hilda Ogden's actions were representative of those of the wider British population, it does seem that many people in certain situations do utilise music-related activity in a similar way. As DeNora suggests by drawing on in-depth qualitative research with a number of music users, music is used in domestic circumstances to "'compose' situations"; it is a resource that colours actions and settings (DeNora, 2000 p. 9). She uses the mundane personal example of thinking of the same piece of music every time she checks her e-mail and then tapping the enter key on the computer in time to the opening rhythm. This example illustrates how music-related activity can become part of everyday action.

When discussing performing during a telephone conversation, the writer and former professional folk musician Michael Brocken explained how he felt that this kind of mundane music related activity was far removed from

---

[7] Hugill (1961) makes clear that sea shanties were a vital part of the process of sailing on many ships. As he asserts: "To the seamen of America, Britain, and northern Europe a shanty was as much a part of the equipment as a sheath-knife and pannikin" (Hugill, 1961 p. 1).

performances on stage at a concert (personal communication, 21.4.07). Brocken talked about how he would often find himself humming the opening lines of the song "You've Lost that Loving Feeling" (1964) in an almost unwitting manner whilst he accomplished household tasks like washing dishes (ibid.). Clearly then, such 'performing' as activity needs to be carefully considered and it is important not to be too rigid when conceptualising it. It is also apparent from the examples referred to above that there may be a diversity of experiences involved with music-related performing in everyday situations.

What will become evident in Chapters 6 and 7 is that such experiences are irreducible and it is vital that their meanings are not 'closed-off' during analysis. It will also be demonstrated that in order to gain an insight into such performing it is imperative to consider individual action(s) and the situations in which these take place. During my ethnographic research, as has already been suggested, it also was necessary to consider many of these situations as *social* because they involved relationships between people in the home. Hence it is to the notion of social performing that the next segment of this section of the chapter turns.

Erving Goffman and Social Performing

As indicated in the introduction because my ethnography centred on social situations and interactions it was instructive to utilise the theories of the sociologist Erving Goffman. Throughout much of his writing Goffman asserts that performances are pervasive in Western societies. In addition, he develops a set of theoretical concepts to assist in the analysis of these performances. Some of these concepts will be applied to performing at 17 Orwell Street during Chapter 6. However, for now it is necessary to highlight the overall value of Goffman's approach for my ethnographic research.

Goffman provides a loose definition of the concept of performance in his seminal work The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life. He writes: "A 'performance' may be defined as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants" (Goffman, 1959 p. 26). This definition, though it appears remarkably open-ended, provides a telling insight into Goffman's treatment of performance. As

Marvin Carlson argues the definition does not specify a type of behaviour that constitutes 'performance' nor does it emphasise the "initiative of a subject" (Carlson, 2004 p. 35). Rather, Goffman's definition downplays human agency and therefore suggests that the "individual might quite possibly be engaged in performance without being aware of it" (ibid.). This issue of witting or unwitting 'performance' is an interesting one because, as has already been suggested, there were instances during my research when informants seemed to be performing for themselves. The notion of agency and intention will, therefore, be returned to at various points during this thesis when such performing will be explored through in-depth case studies. For now, however, it is pertinent to consider other implications of Goffman's definition.

By not specifying performance as a special mode of human behaviour Goffman places the onus on the social occasion and on the participants present during that occasion. In short, he stresses the importance of the audience and the social setting when considering the meanings of performances. In fact, as Carlson suggests, Goffman's interests lie not in the performer per se, but in: "how social performance is recognized by society, and how it functions in society" (ibid.). Thus, Goffman's focus in early texts such as The Presentation of Self... (1959) and Asylums (1961) is on exploring the significance of social performing.

What makes these texts especially relevant to my study of the musical activities of residents and staff at 17 Orwell Street is that they are also (partly) based upon ethnographic research. My research, like Goffman's, necessitated a close understanding of social situations and interactions in order to theorise 'performing'. However, unlike Goffman, my aims were not to construct an over-arching theory of social performance. Rather, as will be discussed later in this chapter and those following it, an ethnographic approach enabled me to examine the *actions* of the *performer* in more depth than Goffman. This examination raised a number of questions about the limits of performance and performing that are often neglected in Goffman's writings on the subject. In other words, close participant-observation of residents and staff at 17 Orwell Street laid bare questions concerning the extent to which musical activity (such as humming) can be interpreted as 'performing'. Such questions will be explored later through detailed case studies. At present, though, having tentatively raised some concerns

over Goffman's treatment of social performing, it is necessary to elaborate on the value of his methodology for my research area.

Particularly in <u>The Presentation of Self...</u> (1959), <u>Asylums</u> (1961) and <u>Stigma</u> (1963) Goffman explicates how people present their 'self' during social interactions. He focuses on a number of types of social performances and their various aspects, drawing on metaphors from theatre and drama to assist in their specification.[8] For Goffman, performing is central to the construction of identity and also to defining social situations and interactions. This is because according to his theory participants in any given interaction often work towards defining a social situation. They work towards an agreement or "working consensus" regarding the acceptable ways of being within this situation (Goffman, 1959 p. 21). Goffman expounds on how various types of social performing are crucial to establishing and sustaining this 'working consensus'. At the same time Goffman also asserts that social situations are precarious and that any 'working consensus' is both distinctive and liable to break down. As he states: "the working consensus established in one interaction setting will be quite different in content from the working consensus established in a different type of setting" (ibid.). He then goes on to argue that:

> Given the fact that the individual effectively projects a definition of the situation when he (sic) enters the presence of others, we can assume that events may occur within the interaction which contradict, discredit, or otherwise throw doubt upon this projection (ibid. p. 23)

Hence the various devices used in social performances by performer(s) and an audience can both define social situations and also undermine them. Consequently, Goffman's examination of the shaping of social situations brought home the importance of explicating musical performing in a similar way to social performing during my ethnographic research project. Within a distinctive social setting such as a supported living scheme, which often necessitates residents and staff members interacting at close quarters, any types of performing could influence social situations for better or worse.

The Vulnerability of Social Performing

Having established the significance of performing for defining social situations, Goffman then identifies a number of key elements of social performing. These various aspects influence how people present their 'selves' to others and assist in defining social roles, values and situations. For instance, Goffman discusses 'front' as being an integral aspect of social performing. He defines front as: "that part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance" (ibid. p. 32). Front, therefore, consists of the *settings* of regular social action; including the physical layout of the area, any furniture, decorations and background items. Goffman also identifies a person's *personal front* as being a vital part of an overall social front. A personal front consists of aspects relating to a person's appearance that provide clues to an identity such as styles of dress, hairstyle and so on. Personal front also consists of a person's manner which could be aggressive, polite, jovial, and so on. Whilst it may not necessarily be a person's intention, such aspects of physical appearance and manner will, as Goffman puts it: "warn us of the interaction role the performer will expect to play in the oncoming situation" (ibid. p. 35).

Fronts, Goffman points out, also involve routines. For instance, when a doctor performs their daily rounds in a hospital ward this occurs within a specific setting and involves particular codes of conduct and appearance. Furthermore, Goffman goes on to argue that:

> a given social front tends to become institutionalized in terms of the abstract stereotyped expectations to which it gives rise, and tends to take on a meaning and stability apart from the specific tasks which happen at the time to be performed in its name. The front becomes a 'collective representation' and a fact in its own right. (ibid. p. 37).

---

[8] In his use of metaphors of theatrical performance to explain social role-playing Goffman was by no means unique. As Carlson makes apparent, scholars such as Kenneth Burke utilised terms from drama in order to analyse socio-cultural behaviour (Carlson, 2004 p. 34).

Thus, certain fronts seem to become associated with specific values in certain societies or in certain professions. For example, Goffman refers to the ranking systems in the military or in the medical profession where there often exists the problem of assigning duties 'appropriate' to a person's 'status' (ibid. pp. 38-39). Yet whilst there are conventions and values that become established in relation to social fronts, importantly Goffman maintains that these are *abstract*. Therefore, in practice – during acts of performing, these fronts are far more prone to ambiguity or to breaking down altogether.

This *vulnerability* apparent during social action and interaction is a central theme that is suggested throughout Goffman's writing on performing. Hence he goes on to identify a number of aspects of performance that seek to control social situations such as 'dramatic realization', 'the maintenance of expressive control' and 'idealization'. It is not necessary at this stage to define such terms, rather the key point to emphasise is that, despite these various performance devices, Goffman suggests that social roles are always incomplete. Whilst we might strive to achieve an identity or role through performing, these are never complete and, to use Simon Frith's terms, they are always in a state of *becoming* (Frith, 1996 p. 109).

This conceptualisation of identities and social situations as vulnerable and subject to processes of becoming is an extremely useful one. What will be argued during this thesis is that musical activities often offered the people living and working at 17 Orwell Street precise and valuable ways of attempting to 'forge' identity and to control or cope with social situations (Walser, 1993 p. 136). Yet maintaining a sense of identities and social situations as fluid or 'in process' serves as a reminder that these musical activities, even though they often occurred within regular domestic daily routines, were never simply generalisable. They had to be appreciated *in practice* as fleeting, incomplete 'glimpses' of persona or social relationships *in process*.

Performing, Social Context and Power

As already indicated, these processes of identity formulation, whether relating to musical activity or not, cannot be separated from wider contexts. This is a point that Goffman also emphasizes in his writing on social performing. He links

performing to socio-cultural context and power relations. For instance, in Asylums Goffman explores the 'underlife' of a mental hospital. He argues that such an organization can be seen as: "a place for generating assumptions about identity" (Goffman, 1961 p. 170). Thus, an institution like a mental hospital, through its various systems will foster implied conceptions regarding how an individual should act. Goffman argues that these 'total institutions' feature systematic and non-intentional processes that *mortify* an individual's sense of 'self' (ibid. p. 24). One of his main interests in Asylums, therefore, is to explore the 'underlife' of such an institution. This is because focusing upon individuals making 'adjustments' within the constraints of this specific setting reveals how a sense of 'self' is formed through acceptance of and resistance to the social roles offered in such a place. For Goffman, therefore, these types of place are powerful. Furthermore, he argues that such power is not only exerted in obvious 'total' institutions. Conversely, as he suggests, demands on the 'self' are made in a variety of milieus, interactions and situations. Consequently, Goffman proposes that the 'self' may emerge "*against something*", it may be a "stance-taking entity, a something that takes up a position somewhere between identification with an organization and opposition to it" (ibid. p. 280).

Therefore, it becomes clear that Goffman's early writings on social performing posit a notion of 'identity' as vulnerable in a dual sense. The social roles that individuals attempt to perform during social situations are part of a process of becoming that is never complete. At the same time, this process of becoming is also subject to a variety of constraints and demands that impinge upon performing sometimes in very powerful ways. It is fruitful at this point to continue this discussion of the relations between performing and power by examining some of Goffman's writing on social conventions and expectations.

In Stigma (1963), a text that, as will be made evident in the next chapter, has influenced previous ethnographies focusing on people with learning difficulties, Goffman argues that the societal conventions of 'normalcy' are stifling. People expect social norms to be performed and issues of stigma occur when: "there is some expectation on all sides that those in a given social category should not only support a particular norm but also realize it" (Goffman, 1963 p. 17). Social roles are, therefore, expected to be realised through performance; they are not pre-existing or 'essential' to a person but are enacted in a variety of ways.

If people do not follow the expected ways of performing social roles in a particular society (regardless of whether they are able to do so or not) then Goffman argues that issues of stigmatisation will arise. Furthermore, stigmatisation is a process that individuals often have little control over because most people are ill-equipped to control and sustain societal 'norms'. As Goffman writes:

> Mere desire to abide by the norm – mere good will – is not enough, for in many cases the individual has no immediate control over his level of sustaining the norm. It is a question of the individual's condition, not his (sic) will; it is a question of conformance, not compliance (ibid. p. 153)

Goffman's theories, therefore, stress that social performing and the management of identity are fraught and contingent upon power relations even though these are often nebulous. As Goffman asserts, in a way that is concurrent with the writings of Michel Foucault on the workings of power, "The general identity-values of a society may be fully entrenched nowhere, and yet they can cast some kind of shadow on the encounters encountered everywhere in daily living" (ibid. p. 153; Foucault, 1975 p. 27). Consequently, in the face of generalised social conventions and values, social performing during even the most mundane of situations could have potentially powerful consequences.

This is an argument that is forcefully made by Judith Butler in Gender Trouble (1990) when she is conceptualising the performing of gender roles. Butler, in a similar way to Goffman, refutes the notion that identity is fixed or essential and maintains that the self is enacted. Commenting on gender and sexuality, Butler argues that whilst the ways human beings act through their bodies may suggest that they have an essential gender or sexual identity, a unitary identity is never revealed (Butler, 1990 p. 173). This means that although gender and sexuality are performed through a multiplicity of gestures, acts and so on that are repeated, they ultimately remain an 'act'. Thus, Butler stresses that we need to: "Consider gender as a *corporeal style*, an 'act', as it were, which is both intentional and performative, where *'performative'* suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning" (ibid. p. 177). Yet if this 'act' is not enacted and repeated in accordance with the socially established conventions in relation to gender and sexuality then Butler argues that the consequences could

be fatal. In this sense, then, the performing of gender can become a "strategy of survival" (ibid. p. 178). Extending this concept into the realm of general everyday social performing it might be proposed that certain instances of performing could also constitute survival strategies or at least *coping* strategies. The potential for musical performing to function as a coping device will be explored in the latter chapters of this thesis, partly by taking into account theoretical perspectives from music therapy.

As has been made clear through an in-depth examination of Goffman's theories on social performing, identity and interaction, his work has a number of areas of relevance for my ethnographic project. It was indicated that his theoretical concepts were instructive for research in a single household setting which warranted (like his early projects) a focus on social performing and interactions at close quarters. Yet, more importantly, Goffman's research emphasised the magnitude of analysing such aspects of social encounters. He demonstrated throughout the writings discussed above that, with social interactions and performing, the stakes are deceptively high. As he affirms:

> ...it seems that there is no interaction in which the participants
> do not take an appreciable chance of being slightly embarrassed
> or a slight chance of being deeply humiliated. Life may not be
> much of a gamble, but interaction is (Goffman, 1959 p. 236)

Thus, this perspective illustrates that interactions, no matter how seemingly inconsequential, could have profound social implications. Furthermore, Goffman's writing stresses the importance of taking into account the specificity of settings and general social conventions when explicating social action and interaction. The value of this approach became apparent during my research at 17 Orwell Street as I began to appreciate the powerful impact of social context and history and their influences on the actions and interactions of the people living there.

The Limits of Goffman's Analysis of Performing

While Goffman's theories helped to highlight the importance of considering performing in relation to social interaction, settings and power, they were not

without their limitations. Despite his consistent interest in social performing, Goffman paradoxically does not pay enough attention to the specific types of behaviour that occur during the everyday performing he professes to be focusing upon. Consequently, detailed ethnographic examples of what happens during social performing are often absent even in books such as Asylums that are based upon ethnographic research. Robert Prus (1996) points to the existence of these absences when discussing the following criticisms of Goffman's methodology:

> Despite Goffman's originality and prominence within the social sciences, the dramaturgical frame he presents suffers from its inattentiveness to the ways in which *the task or accomplishment aspects of action* are conducted on a day-to-day, moment-to-moment basis…once one moves beyond a consideration of the ways in which impression management ('looking good') is achieved in interpersonal contexts, Goffman's work is of limited value in appreciating how human activity is constituted in practice.
> (Prus, 1996 p. 81)

Prus' criticisms are somewhat harsh because Goffman does attend quite carefully to day-to-day practices particularly in Asylums in which, for instance, he specifies the minutiae of in-mate routines in order to develop theories of hospital 'underlife'. However, what Goffman often does neglect is not the day-to-day aspects of social action per se, but the specifics involved with this. Hence, Goffman often writes in a generalised manner and does not utilise in-depth descriptions or data from interviews or conversations with in-mates. This data would elucidate how performers present a sense of 'self' *in action* or how they made sense of those actions. These are issues that more recent writing on performing has begun to address through turning to the concept of reflexivity.

Although Goffman theorises the organisation of human experience in later works such as Frame Analysis (1974), when theorising performing in the books mentioned above he does not consider the importance of reflexivity in depth. This is in contrast to other scholars of performance such as Richard Schechner and Victor Turner. Schechner sees the notion of reflexivity as crucial in determining whether behaviour is classed as performing or not. As he argues: "the evidence is accumulating that the only difference between 'ordinary behaviour' and 'acting' is one of reflexivity: professional actors are aware that they are acting" (Schechner, 1990 p. 30). Thus, 'reflexivity' is a concept that is

used by Schechner to refer to human awareness of the 'self' and of 'self-activity' that may influence others.

Berger and Del Negro also assert that reflexivity is a vital concept when exploring musical performing and social interaction. They use the phrase "reflexive dimension of experiences of interaction" to refer to a performer's or audience's awareness of themselves as participants in an interaction but also their awareness of the attention of others (Berger and Del Negro, 2004 p. 111). Berger and Del Negro argue that issues concerning how people (intentionally or unintentionally) organise this reflexive dimension are integral to musical performing. Furthermore, they explicate how some musicians are particularly adept at managing these reflexive aspects of experience during performing. Management of these performance situations is achieved through what Berger and Del Negro call "metacommunicative signalling" - communicative devices that give the audience cues regarding how they should interpret the overall performance (ibid. p. 111; Bauman, 1977 p. 15). Therefore, as Berger and Del Negro demonstrate, during musical performing metacommunicative signalling might include intentional acts such as making eye contact with the audience but also unintentional acts such as blinking or yawning. While they suggest that such signalling may play a role in 'positioning' the audience, they also acknowledge that audiences may misinterpret signals or choose to ignore them.

The strength of Berger and Del Negro's theory lies in their development of a framework that can be adopted to analyse performing in action. While recognising (like Goffman and others) that performing is communicative and can be instrumental in managing 'identity', they suggest that the analysis of specific instances or utterances can enable us to gain more of an insight into how such processes take place. In addition, by maintaining that such moments relate to reflexivity, they remind analysts that performing and interaction may involve complex experiences that elide categorisation.

Thus, Berger and Del Negro's writing underlines the communicative power of musical performing. Musical activities are not only processes that are able to present a sense of self and to organise social situations; they are also processes that tell us about our self. Judith Lynne Hanna, a dance theorist who stresses the importance of examining moments of performing, also alludes to this reflexive function. She argues that: "Just as humans reflect upon themselves

through different forms of creativity – oral tales, written documents, sculptured forms, constructed edifices – they also reflect upon themselves through dance" (Hanna, 1987 p. 5). Whilst Hanna points out that dance can be viewed from a number of different perspectives (as physical, social, cultural behaviour and so on), she asserts that dance is profoundly communicative. She posits dance as: "an expressive form of thinking, sensing, feeling, and moving, which reflect or influence the individual and the society" (ibid.). This perspective on dance shares some similarities with various theories concerning performing from the disciplines of music studies, sociology and anthropology. Theorists such as Small (1998), Turner (1990), Schechner (1990) as well as Goffman all stress that performing is richly communicative. It can provide humans with a multitude of ways of exploring relationships, social situations and conventions, histories, moods and so on.

It has been necessary to outline and discuss at length a number of theoretical approaches to social and musical performing in order to consider the largely neglected area of everyday musical performing. Having mapped out the theoretical frameworks relevant to this area it is now possible to explicate this concept in relation to my ethnographic research in more depth. The various aspects highlighted at this point will then be expounded upon using ethnographic case studies in Chapters 6 and 7.

Firstly, in accordance with the theorists mentioned above, it is important to recognise that everyday musical performing (such as the instances of humming and singing that I observed at 17 Orwell Street) is *communicative*. Consequently, specific moments of performing, no matter how seemingly mundane, have to be accorded serious critical attention because they can provide rich information regarding 'identity' and social relationships. Secondly, these musical activities must be appreciated in *context*. They cannot be abstracted from the social settings in which they take place and they need to be considered in relation to wider social conventions as these may influence them in powerful ways. Also, related to this point, such everyday musical activities are *vulnerable*. They may have a considerable stake in defining and controlling social situations but they could conversely be ignored, fall flat or be prone to misinterpretation during such situations.

The term everyday musical 'performing' as opposed to 'performance' will mainly be used during this thesis even though my ethnographic account is dealing with past events. This is because the term 'performance' does not adequately denote the processes of *becoming* that are involved with such complex experiential musical activities. Rather, if I wrote about 'a performance' then this would imply that musical activities observed were 'complete' and 'stable' rather than shifting and fragmented. By maintaining the term 'performing' this reflects a contention I share with Richard Bauman, that performing has an *emergent* quality (Bauman, 1977 p. 38). It is this quality that makes performing a significant area of study for an ethnographer because, as Bauman argues, performing exists in a dialogue between past and present. Therefore, it is an area that enables the ethnographer to engage with "residual forms and items, contemporary practice, and emergent structures" (ibid. p. 48). As will be made clear in Chapter 6 everyday musical performing can provide telling insights into aspects of identity and social situations that are related to both past and present experiences.

Furthermore, as it was suggested earlier in this section of the chapter, the usage of the term 'performing' itself has to be treated with some caution when considering certain instances of behaviour. It was indicated above that specific everyday musical activities may have little congruence with established notions of musical performing with their emphases on the display of skill or on interaction with an audience. On the contrary, particular activities (whilst they could still be communicative) may be far more important as coping strategies that could be vital to an individual's psychological and affective well being. These issues will be the focus of ethnographic case studies featured in Chapters 6 and 7. However, in order to presage these issues it is relevant to outline some theories that deal with the therapeutic impact of musical activity. This will be accomplished by primarily turning to literature from the field of music therapy.

3. The Therapeutic Potential of Music Usage

It has already been suggested that my approach toward exploring the musical activities of a group of adults with learning difficulties (LD) is distinctly different to established approaches that deal with this subject matter. When the musical

activities of people with LD have been written about this is usually from the perspectives of music therapists (see for instance, Wood 1983; Hooper and Lindsey 1992; Ritchie 1993; Ockelford 1998; Hooper 2002; Darnley-Smith and Patey 2003). Aside from the field of music therapy there is an absence of academic accounts examining the musical activities of people with LD. This is despite the increasing participation of people with LD in public music-based arts performances organised through established companies like Heart 'n' Soul, a professional music-theatre company for people with LD. Although they have numerous merits that will be discussed shortly, music therapy accounts are primarily concerned with the practice of music therapy and therefore have some limitations when investigating the everyday experiences of people with LD. They are usually produced through reference to a narrow range of research methods such as experiments based in restricted settings (such as hospital day rooms) or else observations of specific music therapy sessions. Therefore such accounts are not well-equipped to consider the therapeutic potential of music usage outside of those specific contexts. Put simply, they are not able to explore the importance that musical experiences may have for people with LD within the other varied contexts of their daily lives.

On the other hand, the ethnographic research conducted for this thesis enabled exploration of musical activities within a range of everyday contexts. Furthermore, such ethnographic research required an in-depth and intimate study of four adults with various learning difficulties. This methodological approach, therefore, fostered a complex understanding of the residents of 17 Orwell Street as people, not as individuals defined through their impairments. The value of this approach will be explicated further in the next two chapters.

However, the field of music therapy is not being discounted during this thesis. Despite some of its methodological limitations, literature and theoretical perspectives concerning the study of music therapy can be valuable. Accounts from music therapy can provide insights into the affective and therapeutic potential of musical experiences in everyday life. Consequently, the remainder of this section will consider some of this material in more depth. After briefly outlining the field of music therapy as it is commonly practiced in Britain, the psychological and physiological benefits of music therapy will be focused upon.

Finally, the relevance of new approaches and theoretical perspectives fostered through community music therapy will be discussed.

The Practice of Music Therapy

Music therapy, particularly the improvisational music therapy that is widely practised in Britain today, provides us with a specific approach to the term 'therapy' and the notion of what is 'therapeutic'. Whilst the notion that music can have a general therapeutic impact has a long and varied history, the practice of what is now known as 'music therapy' in Britain only really flourished in the latter half of the 20th century. As Helen M. Tyler (2000) has outlined, music therapy gradually became a profession in the United States and Britain by refining a subject-specific ontology, epistemology and set of clinical practices throughout the 20th century. The set of assumptions that now underpin the discipline of improvisational music therapy in Britain have been shaped by various discourses relating to science, medicine, physiology, aesthetics, philosophy and psychology (Tyler, 2000 p. 375). Currently, the World Federation of Music Therapy (WFMT) defines music therapy as follows:

> Music therapy is the use of music and/or musical elements (sound, rhythm, melody and harmony) by a qualified music therapist, with a client or group, in a process designed to facilitate and promote communication, relationships, learning, mobilization, expression, organization, and other relevant therapeutic objectives, in order to meet physical, emotional, mental, social and cognitive needs.
> (WFMT cited in Darnley-Smith and Patey, 2003 p.7)

As Peregrine Horden has noted, what is striking about this official definition is that it is deliberately open-ended and he comments that the "discipline's nature and purpose have proved remarkably hard to specify" (Horden, 2000 p.14).

Whilst it might be difficult to provide a concrete definition of what music therapy is, we can nevertheless separate the general notion of 'music as therapeutic', from the practice of music therapy. As the above definition implies music therapy encompasses a series of therapeutic practices that are wide-ranging. This has proved beneficial to the people involved in the therapy because, as the WFMT definition also implies, music therapy clients may have a

diversity of complex needs. These needs are explored and supported within the music therapy session. Music therapy, therefore, offers no simple cures; rather it provides a setting within which a variety of problems (social, psychological, physiological, emotional etc.) could be addressed through a musical *relationship*. As Horden suggests: "children with learning disabilities…are not so much being treated as communicated with. The music is both symbol and vehicle of the wider transaction between therapist and client, a transaction that seems to embrace both disease and cure, and indeed frustrates any attempt to separate them" (ibid. p. 14).

Therefore, the relationship between therapist and client is of vital importance to the discipline of music therapy. The significance of building a relationship was emphasised by Juliette Alvin, one of the founding figures in contemporary British music therapy. Helen Tyler outlines how Alvin helped to establish two strong tenets of modern music therapy: the therapist/client relationship and the centrality of improvisation. During the 1960s and '70s pioneers such as Alvin, Mary Priestley and Paul Nordoff and Clive Robbins conducted therapeutic work with people who had learning difficulties and mental illnesses. Their research, based on their work in hospitals and similar clinical settings, was published in numerous books and articles. It is at this point where the discipline of improvisational music therapy as it is practised in Britain today was solidified. As Tyler summarises "The relationship between patient and therapist and the shared improvised music were now seen as integral parts of the therapeutic process" (Tyler, 2000 p. 385). It is now necessary to examine the actual practice of music therapy in order to elucidate how this therapeutic process occurs.

In addition to the centrality of building a relationship between client and therapist, Mary Clayton (a practising music therapist based in the North West of England) indicated during a short ten week 'Introduction to Music Therapy' course that a process of change and the development of a flexible set of aims and objectives is crucial to her work (Clayton, 2005, Introduction to Music Therapy seminar, University of Liverpool). Clayton, who has worked with various clients with a variety of difficulties and impairments, emphasised how music therapy is an on-going process. Aims may change to adapt to the needs of the client.

With the improvisational music therapy that Clayton and the majority of British music therapists practice there are a number of key processes that determine whether a person is suitable for therapy and the duration of the music therapy.[9] Once these processes have occurred the therapist provides or is given a setting that is basically a room filled with instruments. The therapist then meets the client and develops a relationship with them within this context. Clayton indicated that, above all, music therapy is *person centred* and the therapist has to be able to respond to the person undergoing therapy. They listen to the client(s) and watch what they do; they then act primarily through music. In other words they make music to match their client's mood, actions and activities (both musical and non-musical); reacting to what they do, rather than trying to explicitly impose upon the proceedings (Clayton, 2005, seminar). Nevertheless, as Clayton indicated during an e-mail discussion, during the process of therapy it may sometimes be appropriate for the therapist to 'intervene' musically. For instance, if a client has become 'stuck' in a particular way of playing such as repeating a rhythmic pattern and is unable to change this and move on then the therapist will try to remedy this (Clayton, 2008, personal communication). The duration of the music therapy can vary on a case by case scenario; some clients could be involved in therapy for a number of years whilst others might only attend sessions for a few weeks.

The Psychological and Physiological Impact of Music Therapy

According to many writers on the subject, the benefits of music therapy are manifold. In broad terms, however, the types of therapeutic outcomes associated with music therapy could be divided into two main categories: psychological benefits and physiological benefits. Firstly, focusing on the psychological impact of music therapy, certain writers have indicated how music therapy enables a particular kind of self-expression. For instance, Wendy Magee (2002) argues that participation in music therapy allows people to develop a different sense of 'self'. Magee makes clear how this is particularly important for people defined as

---

[9] Darnley-Smith and Patey (2003) discuss the significance of the framework involved in improvisational music therapy. They outline how clients are carefully assessed beforehand and

'disabled' because they may have a sense of identity that is 'damaged' or 'spoiled' (Magee, 2002 p. 180). As the likes of Goffman (1963) and some other writers from disability studies have argued 'spoiled identity' is not intrinsic to the actual person's physical or mental impairments but rather it is often shaped by social conditions.[10] Through participation in music therapy, Magee suggests that this therapy allows the individual to focus on what they are *able* to achieve, rather than what they cannot achieve – "ability rather than disability" as she puts it (ibid. p. 183). This is because music therapy privileges the client's musical actions and experiences, rather than aesthetic judgements about the music that is performed.

Similarly, Miriam Wood (1983) pointed out the unique way in which playing musical instruments can offer a form of self-expression for people with learning difficulties. Wood comments on the speech difficulties that people with 'mental handicap' face (Wood was writing in the 1980s so her language is outdated), and argues that: "Many mentally handicapped people have no speech or have speech which is difficult to understand. Playing an instrument can be used as a means of expressing their feelings by making sounds that they are usually incapable of making themselves" (Wood, 1983 p. 16). Therefore, the communication and self-expression that music therapy can offer could become very important to people with learning difficulties.

Music, as it is strategically utilised in music therapy, is to use Tia DeNora's sociological terminology, a resource for bodily "entrainment" (DeNora, 2000 p. 78). It can promote certain movements or dances and put the body into action by giving people certain cues through tempo, rhythm and other musical elements. This is something that Adam Ockelford makes clear in his study of children with visual impairments and learning difficulties. Although working within a classroom context, rather than the clinical setting of a music therapy session, Ockelford makes clear how music can provide an "auditory frame of reference for movement" for the children (Ockelford, 1998 p. 21). This

---

also how the structure of the overall course of therapy is crucial, with both the beginning and ending of therapy being of prime importance (Darnley-Smith and Patey, 2003 pp. 49-52).
[10] For example, John Borland and Paul Ramcharan (1997) point out how people with learning difficulties may develop 'excluded identities' due to their experiences of living in care environments away from the general public. As they argue: "If the conditions for experiencing everyday life are those in which the person is excluded, it is likely that a person will be socialised into an excluded self-concept and identity" (Borland and Ramcharan, 1997, p. 88).

is especially important for children with no vision; music can provide information relating to movement and space in a different way than speech. Music can give us ideas about the proximity of objects or people, for example when an instrument is played in a room we can locate its position when we hear it, we don't have to see it. In addition, music can provide environmental indicators, for instance, an ocean drum might signify rain or whistles could signify birdsong.

As well as being a resource for bodily entrainment and for putting the body into action, music can also be therapeutic in that it is used to calm bodily systems down. DeNora suggests that this usage of music can be particularly important when humans have to deal with stressful environmental factors. For example, she discusses the use of music in hospital intensive care units where music is a medium for "delineating a patterned and stable or predictable environment" (DeNora, 2000 p. 81). In such circumstances music is a valuable means of facilitating what DeNora calls "embodied security", it is a way of "synchronizing body with environment" (ibid. p. 85). These affective benefits of music use will be explored in more depth in Chapter 7. For now, however, it is fruitful to examine the therapeutic potential of music use in relation to bodily systems in a little more depth by considering the work of music therapist Dorita Berger.

Berger's compelling text <u>Music Therapy, Sensory Integration and the Autistic Child</u> (2002) provides an authoritative account of the potential for music usage to affect human physiology. Berger illustrates that autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) is a condition that can profoundly affect the human brain by altering its "decoding and interpretation systems" (Berger, 2002 p. 24). The impact of these difficulties with sensory functioning on the body's systems can have a range of implications for how an autistic person adapts to their environment and for how they behave (ibid. pp. 27-28). Berger argues that the therapeutic use of music constitutes a vital resource for people with ASD that can alleviate the stress involved with adapting to their environment and social situations. Furthermore, the therapeutic use of music can help to train their body systems to adapt to such situations by encouraging the modulation of their behaviour. For instance, when explicating the therapeutic importance of musical form Berger explains that because pieces of music often have a shape (a

beginning, middle and end) this facilitates anticipation of closure on the part of the music therapy participant. She writes:

> Since music form ultimately reaches conclusion, a participant in music therapy learns to bring an improvisation to some sort of conclusion rather than abandoning the task...Waiting for a tune to end stretches the ability of a participant to 'wait' until the end (ibid. p. 127).

Hence, the therapeutic use of music can help to train autistic children to be patient and to organise their attention in productive ways. In line with the other music therapists discussed above, Berger asserts that music can be used in very precise ways to achieve therapeutic ends. She contends: "It is not enough simply to say that 'music makes you feel good' or that it 'changes you', without fully understanding or discussing why it does what it does, and how it can be applied to do exactly those things" (ibid. p. 170). This is an attractive argument that, in some ways, underpins my earlier comments concerning the conceptualisation of everyday musical performing.

Berger's work provides a powerful reminder that it is important to discuss musical activities and experiences in a precise manner if we are to gain an insight into their affective impact on particular individuals in a specific place and time. However, whilst Berger and the writers mentioned above elucidate the potential therapeutic power of music, it is also necessary to acknowledge that most people (whatever impairments or difficulties they have) do not often encounter music in the controlled therapeutic contexts favoured by these therapists. Therefore, a key question, which was of clear relevance to my ethnographic research, is: can music usage still be therapeutic in the less-controlled 'worlds' that people inhabit during their everyday lives? Interestingly, it is still primarily writers from within the field of music therapy, and more specifically those conducting community music therapy, who are beginning to engage with this question.

The Therapeutic Potential of Everyday Music Use

Penelope Gouk (2000) suggests that music reception can be therapeutic in cultural contexts that are different to the clinical settings normally associated

with music therapy. As Gouk asserts: "...even just listening to music – for example in the concert hall, in the privacy of one's own home, or even in a hospital ward – is often experienced as therapeutic" (ibid. p. 11). Following Gouk, the notion that everyday musical activity can be 'therapeutic' will be explored during this thesis. Particularly during Chapter 7 it will be revealed that everyday music usage can have specific therapeutic benefits even though such usage is far less structured and controlled than in clinical music therapy sessions.

Indeed, this notion that music use can become therapeutic within the varied contexts of everyday life is one that music therapists have began to acknowledge. Therapists such as Mercédès Pavlicevic and Gary Ansdell (2004) have began to challenge the epistemological foundations of the field of music therapy which, they argue, has been "modelled on the private needs of the psychological individual" (Pavlicevic and Ansdell, 2004 p. 17). They identify an increased shift towards community music therapy, an approach that questions the hegemony of the improvisational model of clinical music therapy. The community music therapy model expounded by writers such as Ansdell (2002; 2004), Pavlicevic and Ansdell (2004) and Stige (2004) has proven somewhat controversial in the field of music therapy. It has been the subject of a number of debates concerning definitions of the concept (Ruud, 2004; Stige, 2004) and its relationship to music therapy and community music practice (Edwards, 2002; Maratos, 2002).

Nevertheless, the community music therapy approach is of value to scholars interested in the roles of music in everyday life because it is far more sensitive to the cultural and social contexts of therapy participants. It is also open to the potential benefits of musical performing in such contexts. In fact, community music therapists such as Pavlicevic and Oksana Zharinova describe themselves as 'music therapy ethnographers', casting their roles as similar to those of participant-observers. This is because these practitioners are intent on focusing on how their clients experience music – "how they play, what music means to them, how music can be shared" (Pavlicevic and Ansdell, 2004, p. 24). This ethnographic understanding of social and cultural context then informs how these music therapists approach their work. As Pavlicevic and Ansdell put it:

> From this sensitivity, music somehow leads them into the work
> that is needed, and into the appropriate role for both therapist and
> music in *that* situation, in *that* place. By taking a cultural view of
> the situation, both are able to mobilise the current resources music
> holds for their work to be effective and helpful (ibid. p. 24).

Not only are music therapists challenging the foundations of their field
and embracing methodologies from anthropology; they have also begun to take
in theoretical perspectives that have influenced the study of popular music. In
particular, the recent writing of Gary Ansdell (2004) has embraced significant
theoretical perspectives regarding the study of music's powers in everyday life.
Ansdell argues that recent theories from music studies have vital implications for
music therapists. The recognition of musical *performing* (as opposed to the
musical 'work') as a rich area of study by writers such as Christopher Small
(1998) and Nicholas Cook (1998, 2003) is an important development for
Ansdell. Likewise, DeNora's (2000) sociological account that, as we've seen,
stresses the significance of social context for understanding music use alongside
an appreciation of the affordances musical materials provide, is another text that
has influenced Ansdell. Inspired by these theories, he suggests that it is
imperative that music therapists pay attention to this "newly emerging map" that
positions 'music' as activity (or musicking, to use Small's terminology) that
cannot be abstracted from the various contexts that influence it (Ansdell, 2004 p.
88; Small, 1998). Yet whilst music therapists have began to take on board
theoretical perspectives from musicology, sociology and anthropology, I would
argue that conversely scholars interested in the uses of music in everyday life
have been less receptive to theories relating to music therapy. As will be
explicated in Chapter 7, some of the theories concerning the therapeutic potential
of music use particularly those adopted by Ansdell (2004) and Aldridge (1996,
2005) are extremely useful when exploring the affects of everyday musical
activity.

Conclusion

To conclude this literature review, it is important to re-affirm that, despite the
important contributions of the literature identified in this chapter, there are areas

of neglect relating to studies of music in everyday life. In particular, as demonstrated above, the everyday musical activities of people with learning difficulties have hardly been examined. On the whole, if such activities are only discussed in relation to music therapy and music making then this evades a number of crucial issues connected to social context, power, identity, performing, affective and therapeutic potential. As the next chapter will reveal, the ethnographic study this thesis is based upon, which focuses on musical activities in everyday contexts, can engage with these issues in particular ways. This study is not only required to address absences in research on music usage; it is also socially relevant on a number of levels.

Chapter 2

Researching People with Learning Difficulties

1. Why study the Everyday Musical Activities of People with Learning Difficulties?

It should now be apparent that this study centres on the everyday musical activities of four adults with learning difficulties (LD) who receive 24 hour staff support to live at 17 Orwell Street, Merseyside, North West England. I worked as a part-time support worker in this location for over six years and this gave me a unique opportunity to conduct iterative participant observation. The specifics of this ethnographic research will be considered in the next chapter, along with its limitations and ethical dimensions. This was an ethnographic approach that was conducive to exploring musical activity as it occurred within various everyday contexts. The value of this methodology has already been indicated in the previous chapter where it was argued that this approach is required to redress absences in existing research on everyday music usage. However, those arguments do not sufficiently justify my focus on the musical activities of a small group of people with LD. Consequently it needs to be acknowledged at this stage of the thesis that the residents of 17 Orwell Street were an *accessible* group of ethnographic research subjects (although, as will be made clear later, permission had to be sought).

My role as a support worker pre-existed my later role of ethnographic researcher and this meant that I already had a familiarity with the people who would become central to my research. As will be outlined later, this method of selecting people the researcher is already familiar with is one that has been used in other ethnographic studies. Yet clearly it is inadequate to justify examining a group of people with LD by merely pointing to factors of familiarity and convenience. Rather, it is essential to stress that there are a number of compelling reasons regarding why it is relevant to study the everyday musical activities of groups of people with LD.

The limited representation of people with learning difficulties in music therapy literature

Although a lot of literature from music therapy focuses on people with LD, this has tended to prioritise certain musical activities over others. Thus, whilst the work of authors such as Berger (2002), Darnley-Smith and Patey (2003), Ockelford (1998) provides valuable insights into the therapeutic potential of musical activities, it does so in relation to controlled environments. Despite recent developments in community music therapy, overall music therapy accounts have predominantly been interested in exploring their clients' musical activities in specific therapy sessions (whether these involve groups or individuals). Therefore, as Gary Ansdell (2004) has acknowledged, until very recently music therapists have not been particularly interested in investigating the therapeutic potential of music usage in more everyday contexts. Furthermore, certain therapists such as Miriam Wood (1983) have dismissed the suitability of popular music for fostering therapeutic outcomes for people with LD. Hence, despite their merits, music therapy accounts have traditionally not been well equipped to explore the significance of musical activity in the less controlled everyday domestic lives of people with LD. As will be elucidated shortly, this is a notable absence because there are a number of factors that suggest that the home is the most likely place where people with LD might engage with music on a regular basis.

Yet, before identifying these various factors, it is pertinent at this juncture to raise a further concern regarding music therapy accounts and the way they represent people with LD because this will presage the ethical debates that will be discussed later. As they are focusing on how music can be used to alleviate the symptoms of impairments and facilitate the development of skills then naturally music therapy case studies often emphasise the impairments and difficulties of their 'clients'. This then allows music therapists to demonstrate how musical activity can be used to achieve therapeutic ends. Ostensibly, there are few problems with this approach; it is vital for music therapists to be able to justify their methods with evidence of how music can be used to alleviate or

overcome difficulties associated with various impairments. Indeed, as Wigram (2005) points out, evidence based research is important for securing funding for the practice of music therapy and ensuring that people around the UK are able to access professional music therapists.

However, due to the paucity of accounts that discuss the non-music therapy based activities of people with LD, there is a danger that music therapy case studies might be seen by music scholars as the dominant sources for understanding the musical experiences of this often marginalised social group. This is a matter of some concern because by focusing primarily on impairments and difficulties many music therapy accounts (albeit with valid intentions) tend to represent people with learning difficulties as being *defined* by these factors. Therefore, music therapy case studies are rarely able to represent 'clients' with LD as complex people who may have various abilities and whose daily lives may already involve the regular reception of music outside of the therapy session. Despite their usefulness for illustrating the value of music therapy, in terms of representation certain accounts may unwittingly help to perpetuate the medical model of disability, a model that has been heavily criticised by writers from the area of disability studies.

The medical model is, as Michael Oliver and Colin Barnes (1998) argue, the dominant model influencing the various specialist health services designed to cater for the needs of disabled people. This model equates the concept of 'impairment' with 'disability' in an unproblematic way (Goodley, 2000 p. 30). Hence, when a person has difficulties with something or is unable to do something people adhering to the medical model would explain this 'disability' by solely referring to physical or mental impairments. This way of understanding the notions of 'disability' or 'learning difficulties', whilst fostering the impression that 'specialist' and 'expert' services are needed to deal with people categorised according to these terms, absolves wider society of any responsibility for disabling people (Oliver and Barnes, 1998; Boxall, 2002; Goodley, 2000). Consequently, writers and activists associated with disability studies have developed the concept of the social model of disability which is a model that basically argues that impairment is not synonymous with disability because there are numerous social barriers that disable people (Oliver and Barnes, 1998 p. 70).

Thus, music therapy literature that deals with people with LD, with its frequent emphasis on treating impairments and on specialist services, may inadvertently perpetuate this problematic medical model of disability. As John Buttimer and Edel Tierney argue when discussing the ways leisure provision for young people with LD is conceptualised by service providers:

> There is a risk that everyday activities become scrutinized and therefore become medicalized, e.g. art becomes art therapy, gardening becomes horticultural therapy and music becomes music therapy, thereby further reinforcing the medical/deficit model of disability. Service providers need to be aware that leisure activities are not particular to people with an intellectual disability, and focusing on such activities as forms of therapy could marginalize or exclude individuals with an intellectual disability further, as it implies that individuals offering support must have 'expert' knowledge or skills
> (Buttimer and Tierney, 2005 p. 36)

Debates relating to the social model of disability will be returned to at various stages in this chapter. For now, having made clear the limited scope that many music therapy accounts have for providing insights into the everyday musical activities of people with LD, it is necessary to return to considering other factors that underline the relevance of studying such activities in depth.

Barriers to accessing musical activities outside of the home

There is evidence to indicate that the main setting where people with LD engage in musical activities is the home. Frances Reynolds' (2002) survey, of 34 managers of homes for people with LD, indicated that out of all creative leisure opportunities, listening to music was the most accessible activity for service users. As Reynolds writes: "Almost all the community homes provided opportunities for listening to music" (Reynolds, 2002 p. 66). Those managers who returned surveys also revealed that the major venue for music listening was the home, with 94% of the total sample identifying the home as the usual setting for music listening (ibid. p. 66). Similarly, Roy McConkey, a writer who has spent considerable time researching into the opportunities that people with LD have for accessing leisure and developing friendships, maintained in a recent chapter that home-based activities such as watching television and listening to

music are: "the most commonly reported pastimes of people with learning disabilities" (McConkey, 2005 p. 483; see also McConkey and McGinley, 1990). Domestic musical activities take on added significance for people with LD and disabled people in general. Some of the major reasons for this are the variety of barriers in relation to accessing outside leisure facilities and the limitations in opportunities to participate in leisure activities.

Barriers that disabled people have to contend with when attempting to access facilities outside of the home have been identified by Barnes et al. (1999). They cite an inaccessible physical environment which includes key leisure venues such as cinemas, restaurants and concert venues. Although The Disability Discrimination Act (1995) requires providers of leisure facilities and services in the UK to ensure that disabled people have access, there is still evidence of widespread barriers. The sections of the Act relating to leisure accessibility only came into effect in October 2004 and it is apparent that there remain organisational deficiencies. For instance, a recent article for The Guardian newspaper identified the shortcomings with provision for disabled people at music events. Reporting the findings of the campaign group Attitude is Everything, Marc Leverton indicated that whilst some music festivals such as the Reading and Leeds festivals were highly rated for their accessibility, others were still lacking in this area (Leverton, 2007).

Returning specifically to a consideration of people with LD, the current British government also suggested that access to leisure was problematic in its White Paper Valuing People (2001). This ambitious document was created by a variety of stakeholders including people with LD and their carers and it was informed by research into a variety of aspects of the lives of people with LD (Fyson and Simons, 2003). Valuing People stressed the value of leisure for improving quality of life whilst acknowledging that: "People with learning disabilities often do not take part in ordinary leisure activities. Leisure is rarely built into individual or community care plans" (DoH, 2001 p. 80).

Thus, there are often daunting obstacles to overcome in order for people with LD to access leisure pursuits outside the home on an equal level with other members of society. This is not to imply that it is easy to generalise when discussing access to leisure. Clearly, irrespective of impairments, there are barriers in relation to leisure that effect many people in the UK. Although

common definitions of 'leisure' associate it with 'free-time' and contrast it with the 'world of work' there are problems with this. It is apparent to many people that leisure is rarely 'free'. Leisure activities are often costly both in terms of time and money. Our leisure choices are frequently dependent upon financial status and social class. Class considerations also extend beyond questions of economic capital, as there are often privileges and opportunities that are only available to those who are considered to have a certain social status.[11] However, in addition to these constraints, there are often a host of other obstacles that people with LD may have to contend with. In order to provide an insight into the possible difficulties it is instructive to provide a specific example from my fieldwork at this point.

Until I began researching and reflecting upon the experiences that I was part of whilst working at 17 Orwell Street, I never fully appreciated how much planning and organisation it can take to enable individuals with LD to become involved in leisure activities. In supported living environments leisure, hobbies and interests often have to be discussed on a similar level to items at a board meeting in a business establishment. The staff team at 17 Orwell Street had to consider staffing levels, shift durations, transport, medical concerns (for instance, medication may have needed to be taken during an outing), the physical accessibility of outside venues and places as well as the residents' interests.

Obviously there are many aspects of the social lives of people who are not considered to have learning difficulties that also need to be planned. For instance, anyone wishing to attend a particular showing at the cinema would need to find out what time the film starts. They would also need to make arrangements for travelling. Yet compare these preparation processes to the ones I went through when I took Christine to see a film at her local multiplex cinema.

Firstly, before finding out what time the film we wanted to see was showing, I had to make arrangements for a flexible working shift. This involved talking with my team leader and other members of staff who were working that day to make sure that it was possible to do this. It was necessary to do this in

---

[11] Pierre Bourdieu has made clear how social class is not merely linked to wealth but also to cultural capital, which is the tastes and knowledge that one may acquire, or be expected to possess as part of a particular social group. As Bourdieu puts it: "Taste classifies, and it classifies the classifier. Social subjects, marked by their classifications, distinguish themselves by the distinctions they make" (Bourdieu, 1998 p. 435).

case meetings had been planned, or appointments had been made and so on. Next I had to prepare for the journey to the cinema by packing the vehicle we were travelling in. Christine's mobility was limited by an accident in 2003 in which she broke her hip; therefore she relies a lot on a wheelchair. At the time the residents of 17 Orwell Street rented a saloon car so I needed to fold Christine's wheelchair up and put it into the car's trunk. Having been there before I knew that the cinema we were attending was accessible for wheelchair users but otherwise this would have been another factor to consider before travelling. Nevertheless, due to Christine's limited mobility we attended a daytime showing of the film and arrived early to ensure that we could get a seat near to the front rather than having to climb any stairs because there are no wheelchair ramps in the actual auditoriums.

As Christine is an epileptic it was vital that her emergency medication was taken with her in case she suffered a severe seizure. I also had to take the staff mobile phone with me so I could report any such incidents to fellow staff members or emergency services. As I was working a flexible shift there were two staff members who remained at 17 Orwell Street with the other residents. However, normally there are only two staff members per shift and if that was the case then I would have needed to leave the mobile phone switched on during the film in case I needed to be contacted. This contravenes the rules of cinemas across the country because they request that mobile phones are switched off during film screenings.

As Elspeth McLean (1990) has suggested, most households, whether they are supported living schemes or not, have a sustained level of planning and organisation at their heart. However, at the very least, I have found that being involved in supporting the everyday activities of residents at 17 Orwell Street foregrounds these processes of planning. Furthermore, as the short example above illustrates, the factors that needed to be considered before residents could become involved in certain leisure pursuits often made spontaneity seem like an alien concept.

So far it has been made evident that there are a large number of practical problems to contend with in order for many people with LD to enjoy leisure activities, particularly those outside of the home. These barriers call into question the definition of leisure as 'free time'. However, with the right procedures in

place, many of these obstacles can be removed. For instance, the British government has compelled providers of leisure services to make "reasonable adjustments" in order to enable disabled people to access their facilities (Disability Rights Commission, 2006 p. 41). The present government also set out in Valuing People that it expects local councils to review the accessibility of their leisure resources for people with LD (DoH, 2001 pp. 80-81). Whilst there remain problems with the implementation of policies and the removal of barriers for a number of disabled people when attempting to access leisure services, there are also different obstacles for people with LD to contend with. Issues concerning access to leisure do not simply centre on environmental and financial barriers, they are also *social* issues that impact upon notions of identity.

Social barriers – marginalisation and stigmatisation

Historical overviews reveal that groups and individuals with LD have almost always been positioned as a 'problem' and categorised in terms of 'otherness' (Digby, 1996; Atkinson et al., 1997; Race, 2002). For example, in Britain government legislation of recent centuries has used numerous definitions to label people the government now defines as 'learning disabled'; these include 'idiots', 'mentally deficient', 'feeble-minded' and 'mentally handicapped'. This process of labelling, as Ann Digby (1996) has pointed out, is one that has not (until very recently) included any input from the people being defined, rather such labels have been imposed 'from above' by politicians and 'experts'. Indeed, as Steve Dowson (1997) makes clear, even in recent years the government has only partially acquiesced to demands regarding acceptable defining terms that have been made by bodies that represent people with LD such as People First. The People First movement has a number of UK based and international groups each of which is ran by self-advocates with LD (Goodley, 2000).[12] For instance, Central England People First is organised by and for people with LD in that area. They prefer the term 'learning difficulties' when discussing how they are labelled. As their website states:

---

[12] The term 'self-advocate' is used to denote people who assert their rights as citizens. The concept of self-advocacy has had particular resonance for people with LD particularly since the

> In the past we used to be called labels like mentally handicapped, mentally retarded, intellectually handicapped or mentally subnormal.
>
> We didn't like these labels as they kept us down. We choose to use 'learning difficulties' ourselves. It is a label which doesn't hurt us as much as those above.
> (Central England People First, 13.6.07)

Historically, stigmatisation through labelling has enabled various powerful agencies in British society to locate people with LD at the centre of a number of wider debates concerning the 'state of society'. As the subjects of specific medical and political discourses, such groups and individuals have frequently had their lives shaped and mapped out by various organisations that decide what is 'good for them' as well as 'who they are'. Providing a summary of how we should understand the histories of people with LD from this institutional point of view Atkinson et al. write that:

> The history of learning disabilities has thus been part of much broader studies of eugenics and genetics, of the development of education and special education, of psychology and psychiatry, and of developments in the organisation and policies of the mental health services in general. (Atkinson et al. 1997 p. 5)

As Atkinson et al. go on to point out, only relatively recently has there been an interest in examining the histories of people with LD in depth through a focus on the social, medical and political contexts of care services (ibid.). Also, whilst there is a growing body of literature in this area, Atkinson et al. make clear that there remains an overall tendency to produce histories derived solely from official documents and accounts from doctors, politicians and practitioners (ibid.).

Thus, the views of staff and residents from establishments for people with LD have tended to be subordinated. Whilst this thesis is not designed primarily to contribute to the reconstruction of the history of people with LD through oral history (which is the central concern of Atkinson et al.), it does prioritise

---

1970s when more service users began to form groups to support each other and express their rights (Goodley, 2002 pp. 10-15).

observations of, and conversations with, staff and residents in one setting. In addition, the ethnographic research upon which this thesis is based took place during a period of time when community care had already been established as the dominant policy for services for people with LD in Britain. Hence, the thesis will, in a sense, provide an insight into this particular historical moment from the residents' point of view. Yet this synchronic analysis is, as has already been established, articulated through an examination of everyday, predominantly domestic, musical activities. Consequently, the life histories of the individuals living at 17 Orwell Street will not be reconstructed at length. Rather, the musical activities of the residents at 17 Orwell Street and the social relationships, settings and networks that relate to these will be explored.

What such an exploration will reveal is that the study of the seemingly mundane musical activities of a group of older adults with LD can lay bare the historical and social peculiarities of such people. This is because, as it will become clear in Chapter 4, these activities occur within a paradoxical socio-cultural milieu. 17 Orwell Street is a 'home' that is simultaneously a 'supported living scheme'. It is a house that is located in a wider 'community' that people with LD are primarily segregated from. Finally, it is a shared tenancy in which four individuals previously living with parents or else in large scale institutions have been relocated to a place where they must cope with living in close proximity to each other (not to mention acquaint themselves with a variety of staff and service personnel). Therefore, by focusing on the people in this setting using ethnographic methods, this study complements the project of reconstructing the often forgotten histories of people with LD exemplified by Atkinson et al. In a small way it will contribute to the emerging literature that seeks to illuminate the experiences of people with LD from their point of view.

Identity and people with learning difficulties

An ethnographic study of a small group of adults with LD that elucidates the connections between social interaction and musical activity on a micro-scale also complements existing research on identity. It was made clear in the previous chapter that studies of social interaction and associated performing can illuminate processes of self-identity within specific social situations. However, at this point

it is pertinent to point out that an ethnographic study investigating identity processes in relation to the people living at 17 Orwell Street has resonance with wider debates concerning identity and people with LD.

Existing literature that focuses on people with LD often highlights the devastating impact that the social marginalisation outlined above can have on the identities of people with LD. In his seminal study The Cloak Of Competence (1967) Robert Edgerton focuses on the lives of a number of 'mentally retarded' ex-patients from Pacific State Hospital in California, USA. Through ethnographic research Edgerton reveals how the stigmatisation of the ex-patients as 'retarded', which was exacerbated through their institutionalisation, had a profound impact upon their identity and social relationships. As Edgerton asserts: "the stigma of mental retardation dominates every feature of the lives of these former patients. Without an understanding of this point, there can be no understanding of their lives" (Edgerton, 1967 pp. 207-208). This stigmatisation motivated ex-patients to utilise two broad strategies that were attempts to alleviate its effects; Edgerton terms these 'passing' and 'denial'.

'Passing' is a concept used to discuss how ex-patients tried to adhere to the expectations of 'normalcy' as much as possible – to 'pass' as 'normal'. A particularly poignant example of this is Edgerton's discussion of how various ex-patients were motivated to find a partner who was from the 'outside' (rather than another ex-patient). This occurred to such an extent that Edgerton's informants intimated that they would try to avoid fellow ex-patients at all costs. The ultimate achievement for many of Edgerton's informants was to marry an 'outsider'. However, even when this was possible there were often formidable obstacles to achieving happiness that were tied to the legacy of their institutionalisation. For instance, almost all of the ex-patients had been sterilised, in many cases as a mandatory precondition of their release from the hospital. Therefore, there was no chance of having children and this led to a great deal of emotional trauma when ex-patients were embarking on loving relationships. Their sterilisation was not only an obstacle to procreation; it was also a signifier of their past life at the hospital, a life they were trying to hide.

The second strategy for dealing with stigmatisation among the ex-patients in Edgerton's study was 'denial'. Informants totally rejected the notion that they were 'mentally retarded'; attributing their difficulties in life to other factors such

as lack of adequate education and especially their institutionalisation. As Edgerton affirmed: "for the former patient, to be labelled as a mental retardate is the ultimate horror. They reject it with all their will" (ibid. pp. 205-206). Thus, drawing on Goffman's theories in <u>Stigma</u> (1963) Edgerton's account suggests that the management of 'spoiled identity' is a central concern in the everyday lives of people with LD. Furthermore, although Edgerton tends to define 'mental retardation' by mainly referring to biological impairments, he also suggests that the difficulties ex-patients faced were caused by social factors as well as biological ones. He makes clear that his informants' identities were powerfully shaped by their institutionalisation and societal conventions of 'normalcy'. Hence, implicitly Edgerton was suggesting that society was disabling in much the same way as advocates of the social model of disability discussed above.

Edgerton's study was highly influential and had an impact on policy development in relation to people with LD (Klotz, 2004 p. 96). Specifically, Edgerton's exposure of the damaging impact of institutionalisation and stigmatisation informed the writings of Bengt Nirje and Wolf Wolfensberger who developed the concept of 'normalisation' (ibid.). This concept has had a great influence on social policies devised for people with LD over the last few decades. Wolfensberger defined the principle of normalisation as: "the utilization of means which are as culturally normative as possible, in order to establish and/or maintain personal behaviours and characteristics which are as culturally normative as possible" (Wolfensberger cited in Emerson, 2005 p.116). This principle motivated the shift towards the de-institutionalisation of people with LD and towards the proliferation of community based care services. Proponents of normalisation espoused the belief that for people with LD to lead 'normal' lives they had to live in their local communities and participate in community life as far as possible (Cooke, 1997 p. 242). Furthermore, in relation to notions of identity, there was a desire on the part of policy-makers and practitioners to combat the damaging impact of stigmatisation and segregation through the development of positive *social roles*.[13]

For instance, Felce and Toogood's (1988) study of a community based home for people with LD provides an interesting case study of the particular

---

[13] Interestingly, Wolfensberger later re-named normalisation, changing it to 'social role valorisation' (Cooke, 1997 p. 242).

historical moment when principles of normalisation were beginning to be adopted by services in the UK. Written from the perspective of the service provider, it is telling that staff efforts were very much centred on developing standards of 'normalcy' in their service users. Consequently, staff members went to great lengths not only to establish a community presence for their service users, but also to support them to maintain 'appropriate standards' of appearance, comportment and deportment.

It is striking that these practices of normalisation that were becoming central to the routines of service providers for people with LD share close similarities with the recommendations made by Edgerton a decade earlier. Edgerton saw self-esteem as crucial for people with LD and he located personal front as one area where this could be boosted. Echoing the writing of Goffman in The Presentation Of Self... that was discussed in the previous chapter, Edgerton wrote that: "In seeking positive response from normal persons, much of the ex-patients' success depends upon appropriate grooming, dress, posture, facial expression, speech, and emotionality" (Edgerton, 1967 p. 214). Thus, it can be seen that the concept of normalisation is connected to raising social status and self-esteem as well as fostering a community presence for people with LD.

A number of criticisms have been made of both the principles and implementation of normalisation. For example, Oliver and Barnes (1998) argue that it is a principle based on the premise that people with LD need to change in order to 'fit into' society and as such it tends to disguise how societies often disable people. Dowson (1997) also views policies based on normalisation as problematic because in practice they mainly perpetuate segregated lifestyles for people with LD; merely shifting these lifestyles to smaller community based settings rather than large institutions. Yet, despite these valuable criticisms, it has been relevant for the purposes of this thesis to outline that identity politics have been a feature of the principles that have shaped policies affecting the lives of people with LD in the UK over recent decades.

The impact of social changes on the identities of people with LD and the importance of self-esteem has continued to be an area of interest for various writers. Identity remains a key issue partly because, as indicated above, despite normalisation principles and practices people with LD continue to live predominantly segregated lifestyles. This has led John Borland and Paul

Ramcharan (1997) to adopt the term 'excluded identities' in order to discuss the lives of people with LD. As they argue: "If the conditions for experiencing everyday life are those in which the person is excluded, it is likely that a person will be socialised into an excluded self-concept and identity" (Borland and Ramcharan, 1997 p. 88). It is instructive at this juncture to connect this point concerning 'excluded' self-identity with the recent work of music psychologists in order to explore connections between music and identity in more depth.

Previously it has been established that people with LD have been historically marginalised and their social experiences have often been characterised by stigmatisation and segregation which can have a detrimental impact on their identities. Now it is pertinent to briefly clarify this notion of 'identity' in order to consider the relations between musical activity and identity further. Like the sociologists discussed in the previous chapter, music psychologists Hargreaves et al. (2002) are interested in how the self is socially constructed. They see the self as "formed and developed continuously through conversation and interaction with others" (Hargreaves et al. 2002 p. 10). The "self-system" is never complete but is something that is in process; a becoming (ibid. p. 7).

Whilst, like Goffman, these authors are interested in how social roles and contexts influence identities, they are also concerned with elaborating on this self-system. Hargreaves et al. argue that an individual's identity is fragmented; that is they will have a number of "self-concepts" – ways of seeing their 'self' (ibid. pp. 7-8). These self-concepts will be *context-specific*; for example a person may see themselves as being shy or unable to cope with a particular working environment or social situation. Such self-concepts are also "domain-related" in that an individual may see their 'self' according to a social role or category such as 'musician' or 'disabled' and so on (ibid.). For Hargreaves et al. an individual's various self-concepts form their overall 'self-identity' which they define as: "the overall view that we have of ourselves" (ibid.). In addition, they point out that self-esteem is related to this self-identity because, as they write: "*Self-esteem* is the evaluative component of the self, and has both cognitive and emotional aspects: how worthy we think, and feel we are" (ibid.).

The above departure to consider definitions from music psychologists helps to clarify terms such as 'identity' and 'self-esteem' that have been used

(and will continue to be used) at various points in this account. It also further underlines the complexity of human social activities and interactions highlighted in the previous chapter, reminding us of the importance of examining people, actions and settings in-depth. Hence, whilst Borland and Ramcharan contend that people with LD are likely to develop 'excluded' self-concepts and identities, it is imperative that we do not glibly generalise that this is the case. Rather it is important to investigate the extent to which this is apparent. Various music psychologists as well as some of the music therapists mentioned earlier have began to do this by discussing the identities of people with LD in relation to musical activity (Wood, 1983; Ockelford, 1998; MacDonald and Miell, 2002; Magee, 2002). These writers all indicate that musical activity can be crucial for boosting self-esteem and fostering a positive self-identity for individuals with LD.

For instance, MacDonald and Miell (2002) explore how participation in music workshops affected the identities of adults with LD. Their qualitative interviews revealed how certain individuals were actively resisting "attempts to impose what are often seen as 'damaged' or 'spoiled' identities, defined by lack of ability more than anything else" (MacDonald and Miell, 2002 p. 169). Individual musicians who had participated in the workshop over a 10 year period articulated how they began to develop an identity as a professional musician with responsibilities, countering the expectations of those who initially defined them as 'disabled'. Music therapist Wendy Magee effectively sums up the value of participation in music-making in relation to self-identity when she writes that: "Active participation in the music therapy session provides opportunities for a different experience of 'self', in which the individual may experience feelings of success, developing skill and increased independence, i.e. feelings of ability rather than disability" (Magee, 2002 p. 183).

What all of the accounts mentioned above have in common is that they all focus upon the roles of music-making (in the sense of playing musical instruments) in order to explore the relationships between musical activity and the 'self'. Regrettably, there are few studies that examine such relationships through a consideration of the less obvious, but nevertheless pervasive, everyday domestic musical activities of people with LD such as listening to recorded music. This is a significant absence because, as it has already been established,

this type of home-based activity remains especially commonplace amongst people with LD. Hence, by focusing on such activity this thesis will not only contribute to existing research on musical activities and their relationships with the identities of people with LD, it will also shed light on an under-researched topic.

2. Why use Ethnographic Research when studying the Musical Activities of a group of People with Learning Difficulties?

The absence of studies that examine the everyday domestic musical activities of people with LD is compounded by a relative scarcity of ethnographic studies that focus on people with LD as research subjects. It was pointed out in the previous section that research concerning people with LD has very often been conducted without their contribution and has instead been produced from the perspective of service providers and 'experts' (Atkinson et al. 1997). As Coles (2001) makes clear, even with qualitative social research there is a dearth of studies that actively involve people with LD and the support workers who are involved with their day-to-day activities. Coles argues that: "The effect of this research bias has been to further hide the lives of people who already experience social exclusion" (Coles, 2001 p. 503). However, there are some notable exceptions that examine the experiences of people with LD from a qualitative perspective, often using ethnographic methods (see for instance, Edgerton, 1967; Brechin and Walmsley, 1989; Booth and Booth, 1993; Atkinson et al. 1997; Angrosino, 1998; MacDonald and Miell, 2002). What these accounts have in common is that they are predominantly based on interview data. Therefore, as with the studies of music in everyday life that were discussed in the previous chapter, whilst these texts provide significant insights they also privilege certain experiences over others.

For instance, as Klotz (2004) identifies, by relying primarily on interview data these studies are suitable for elucidating the social lives of people with mild LD who are often verbally articulate. However, Klotz goes on to point out that interviewing is a method that is: "generally inappropriate for people who have limited and seemingly incomprehensible forms of communication, and who do not readily understand or respond to questions that demand reflection upon their

experiences" (Klotz, 2004 p. 98). People with more profound LD or those who have additional impairments that effect verbal communication would be excluded from qualitative research that relies on interviews. This will be made clear throughout this thesis because, as Chapters 5, 6 and 7 in particular will reveal, it was only after repeated interaction with and observations of the residents of 17 Orwell Street that the complexity and importance of their musical activities began to be revealed. For example, John had quite limited conversational skills and often found it difficult to clearly express ideas and concepts. On the other hand, Andrew had no speech whatsoever; therefore his major means of communication were facial expression, body language and his actions. Both men will be discussed in much more detail in Chapter 4. However, it was necessary to outline their communication difficulties at this stage in order to emphasise the point that interview methods would be clearly inappropriate when researching these men.

Klotz also identifies another significant gap in the literature on the lives of people with LD. It has already been established that there has been much writing from disability studies that analyses how concepts such as 'disability' or 'learning difficulties' are socially constructed. Through the development of the social model of disability, scholars have emphasised that society often disables people as much as any physical or intellectual impairments. However, Klotz argues that whilst this type of work is very important, there is a dearth of research that provides insight into the social lives of people with LD, particularly those with more profound difficulties. As he writes: "In order to gain any insight into such people's lives, and to accept them as the authors or independent sustainers of mutual and meaningful relations with others, intellectually disabled people's particular actions and behaviours must be acknowledged and engaged with as legitimate, meaningful and purposeful" (ibid. p. 101). Thus, whilst it is essential to acknowledge that labels such as 'learning difficulties' are problematic, this should not prevent scholars from conducting qualitative research that treats the day-to-day experiences of people with various LD seriously. Hence, Klotz points to the value of the research work of John Gleason who was working with children with profound LD who, on the surface, seemed to have little communication skills. What Gleason found is that by paying close attention to what these children did, rather than trying to get them to behave in

'normal' ways (which is what their teachers were trying to do), he began to understand the 'logic' of their actions. They were communicating with each other through their various movements which to an outsider would have seemed erratic and meaningless (ibid. p. 100).

A similar study that has influenced my approach to ethnographic research at 17 Orwell Street is David Goode's 'The World Of The Congenitally Deaf-Blind' (1980). Goode was interested in how Christine, a nine year old deaf-blind girl with LD, communicated with him and the other staff who supported her. Rather than perceiving Christine's movements and actions as 'deficiencies', Goode sought to understand them from her point of view (Goode, 1980 p. 195). Therefore, he allowed her to organise the activities they did (Goode was working with her as a music therapist) and mimicked her behaviour in order to gain more of an understanding of how her experiences felt. This behaviour included 'self-stimulatory' behaviour like body rocking which is often deemed to be of little external value by service providers (Felce and Toogood, 1988 pp. 167-168). Through this participative research Goode gradually began to develop an insight into Christine's 'world' and he argues that he and Christine found productive "ways of being" around each other (Goode, 1980 p. 204). Goode defines these 'ways of being' as follows: "we progressively developed common schemes of communication, congruent practical relevancies, mutually defined things to do in the world, and so forth" (ibid. pp. 204-205).

The value of this approach to researching social experiences is that it fosters an understanding of human activities and relationships that is not reliant upon the spoken or written word. Goode learns from Christine *on her terms* through attentiveness to her sounds and actions together with a willingness to try and experience what she experiences. It has been argued that interviews, which require people to recollect and reflect on experiences, are only suitable for some people and may not elucidate the everyday importance of musical activity. Goode's ethnographic approach, with its emphasis on being sensitive to the multiplicity of ways in which people communicate with each other and to the complex ways in which individuals experience the world around them, provides a useful alternative. As will be revealed in the following chapters, such an approach is particularly productive for providing insight into the social lives of

people with various LD, who may not necessarily be able to clearly articulate their 'selves' through verbal communication.

The above sections have firmly established that an ethnographic study focusing on the musical activities of four adults with various LD living in their own home is valid and socially relevant for various reasons. It has been revealed that not only have people with LD often been peripheral to studies about 'them'; their social experiences have rarely been treated as complex and significant within existing research. This has been especially the case for people with more profound LD who may not be able to communicate effectively in interview situations. Furthermore, it has been made apparent that there is an absence of studies that examine the everyday domestic musical activities of people with LD. This is despite the commonplace view that home-based musical activity continues to be the most accessible leisure pursuit for people with LD in the UK.

Consequently, when embarking on the research for this thesis it was decided that ethnography would be a suitable methodology. This is because there were relatively few ethnographic accounts of the social lives of people with LD but also, as has been suggested in the above discussion, ethnography can explicate human activities in ways that illuminate their richness and complexity. Accordingly, in the next chapter the value of ethnographic methods when examining such activities will be emphasised. Moreover, since ethnography is a methodology that is used in different ways in a variety of academic disciplines, it will be imperative to identify the specific approach to ethnographic research taken during preparation for this thesis.

Chapter 3

Methodology

The purpose of this chapter is to expound on my specific approach to the research that has been conducted for this thesis and to elucidate the style in which the following chapters will be written. Accordingly the methodology of ethnography will be scrutinized, paying particular attention to the method of participant-observation, in order to establish the validity of my methods when studying my subject matter. Following on from this the specific methods used during this ethnographic research will be discussed, taking into account their limitations and ethical implications. Finally, my approach to the writing of this ethnographic study will be qualified through an exploration of debates regarding ethnographic literature.

1. Ethnography and Participant-observation

It was indicated in the introduction to this thesis that ethnographic research was utilised in order to attempt to explicate how musical activity was part of the everyday domestic lives of the residents of 17 Orwell Street. As it has been argued, through their reliance on verbal recollections many existing studies of everyday music usage are not adequately placed to address how musical activity becomes part of daily routines. Such accounts, despite their strengths, are not favourably positioned to elucidate musical activity that may not be readily recalled but may still be central to individuals' day-to-day lives. In addition, studies that solely draw upon verbal accounts to explore musical activity would exclude or marginalise the types of people who were at the centre of my research. Ethnographic research was, therefore, considered to be a methodology that would be suited to foregrounding the everyday musical *activities* of residents at 17 Orwell Street in ways that would address the above absences.

Yet there are many different ways in which ethnography has been utilised in previous studies of music usage and cultural activity. Therefore, it is necessary to provide some context for my approach. In this section the specifics of my approach to ethnographic research will be elaborated upon: this will include identifying issues of access; how I conducted fieldwork and the limitations with

my methods. First of all it is paramount to reiterate that my ethnographic research was founded upon *participant-observation*. As was indicated in the introduction, this method has been central to ethnography as it is practiced in anthropology especially since the seminal research work of Bronislaw Malinowski.

Malinowski, who is often cited as the founder of ethnography, promoted the idea that cultures can only be understood through the painstaking observation and documentation of daily life (Ruddock, 1998 p. 128). Thus, ethnography was adopted by anthropologists like Malinowski as a way of studying small social groups such as families or tribes. As Karen O'Reilly (2005) argues, Malinowski's work was important to establishing the central tenets of ethnography as it has been practiced in anthropology. Participant-observation was an integral aspect of the ethnographic research favoured by Malinowski and other anthropologists studying culture in the early part of the 20th century. This work emphasised that it was vital for the ethnographic researcher to spend a substantial amount of time gathering data within the everyday contexts of the people they were studying. Participant-observation remained a key aspect of ethnographic research even as researchers, particularly from the 1950s onwards, began to utilise ethnography to focus on more domestic cultures rather than the far away 'exotic' cultures that interested Malinowski.

As various writers have pointed out, ethnography has been the subject of a number of valuable debates and critiques since the formative work of Malinowski and his contemporaries. The notion that ethnography was an 'objective' scientific methodology that could straightforwardly reveal a specific 'culture' has been effectively challenged (O'Reilly, 2005 p. 17; Cohen, 1993a p. 124). Furthermore, the authority of anthropology to speak for 'other' cultures has been called into question, not least because of the colonialist discourses apparent in its traditions, and this has facilitated a number of vital discussions concerning ethnographic methods. These discussions are occurring across a variety of disciplines and thus it is necessary to conceptualise ethnography as James Clifford does as a "complex interdisciplinary area" (Clifford, 1986 p. 3). Hence, many studies within the areas of popular music studies and cultural studies now utilise ethnographic research in diverse ways. No longer is it considered a pre-

requisite to have to participate in and observe the socio-cultural practices of a small group of people when engaging in ethnographic research.

For instance, with popular music studies there are some ethnographic texts that maintain a relatively strong emphasis on the value of spending a lengthy period of time conducting participant-observation with small groups of informants in particular settings (see for instance, Taylor, 2003; Shank, 1993; Cohen, 1991; Finnegan, 1989). On the other hand, there is research by Cavicchi (1998) on Bruce Springsteen fandom, or DeNora's (2000) aforementioned study of music in everyday life, that utilises a number of ethnographic methods such as in-depth interviews and observations but does not rely upon iterative participant-observation in one locality. Thus, despite the primacy of participant-observation within formative ethnographic studies, it is clear that ethnography is not a methodology solely determined by methods alone. On the contrary, as some scholars have argued, to engage in ethnographic research is to adopt a particular position or perspective in relation to how knowledge is generated about human cultures and societies (Machin, 2002; Geertz, 1975). Moreover, there continues to be considerable debate concerning how we can come to 'know' about people through ethnography. These debates scrutinise the epistemological dimensions involved with ethnographic research as well as discussing the value of specific methods and modes of representation (see for instance, Ruddock, 1998; Titon, 1997; Van Maanen, 1995; Bourdieu, 1990; Clifford, 1986). It is not possible to thoroughly engage with these debates in this thesis, though some of them will be returned to later in this chapter as I expound upon my specific ethnographic approach.

The approach to ethnographic research at 17 Orwell Street had a number of parallels with the traditional anthropological approach alluded to above. My role as a support worker enabled me to develop strong, friendly relationships with Andrew, John, Charlotte and Christine (the residents of the house) as well as the support team who worked with them. Also my occupation dictated that I spent a considerable amount of time with this group of people; between the years 2000-2004 I consistently worked a minimum of 21 hours a week before reducing them to 17 hours a week from 2004 until 2006. Consequently, over a six year period I had regular contact with the people I was interested in studying. I was able to observe many of their daily activities (both music related and non-music

related) and I was an active participant in these (indeed my work duties often required that this was the case). Also the fact that I had a varied working rota enabled me to become familiar with individuals' routines during different days of the week and over weekends. Furthermore, because I worked regular morning shifts (7.30am-2.30pm), afternoon shifts (2.30pm-9.30pm) and night shifts (9.30pm-7.30am), this required me to develop an awareness of peoples' routines and preferences at 17 Orwell Street during different times of days in their entirety. Greater insight into my common experiences during a working shift will be provided in the next few chapters. For now, however, it is necessary to continue to focus on the participant-observation that I engaged in.

The activities that I observed and participated in at 17 Orwell Street were regularly recorded as data in a field diary that was maintained during the period indicated above. Therefore, ostensibly it could be argued that I was conducting participant-observation as it has been described in texts covering ethnographic methodology. For instance, Howard Becker describes the activities involved with participant-observation as follows:

> The participant observer gathers data by participating in the daily life of the group or organization he (sic) studies. He watches the people he is studying to see what situations they ordinarily meet and how they behave in them. He enters into conversation with some or all of the participants in these situations and discovers their interpretations of the events he has observed.
> (Becker in Burgess, 1984 p. 79)

These were all activities that I was repeatedly engaging in during the long period of time that I spent working at 17 Orwell Street. However, it is at this point where it is essential to clarify my problematic position during this 'field work'. It should be evident that I was not a participant-observer in any straightforward sense. This is because the residents and staff at 17 Orwell Street tended to view me first and foremost as a support worker, not as a researcher. There are two main reasons for this, one of which was alluded to earlier in this thesis.

Firstly, it was indicated earlier that I was appointed for the job of support worker at 17 Orwell Street several months before I began ethnographic research in this setting. In fact, at the time when I officially started employment at this setting (26th January 2000) I had no intention of conducting research there.

Although I had previously conducted ethnographic research examining the everyday musical activities of three young men with mild LD for an M.A dissertation, this had been completed in 1998. When I joined the staff team at Orwell Street I was somewhat removed from academia. Having previously worked at a major high street retailer as a temporary sales assistant over the busy Christmas 1999 period, my main motivation for seeking work at Orwell Street was to find more relaxing and rewarding employment. Since I had worked for a number of years as a part-time support worker whilst studying both as an undergraduate and postgraduate, I felt comfortable in a support worker's role. Hence my motivation for applying to work at Orwell Street was certainly not guided by my research interests.

Although the above autobiographical information may seem extraneous it was necessary to indicate how I first encountered the people in the setting that I would only later consider my 'field'. The residents of 17 Orwell Street and their staff developed relationships with me as a support worker. Likewise, I devoted time to develop suitable relationships with them in order to carry out my job effectively. Furthermore, the second reason why people at Orwell Street tended to view me as a support worker rather than a researcher was linked to my desire to maintain these working relationships. Whilst it was imperative that I sought permission from the residents and their families, my fellow staff members and the company I worked for prior to starting ethnographic research in October 2000, I did not want this research to hinder my existing job role. Therefore, after informing the residents and staff about what my aims were and after gaining permission (though as will be seen shortly this was a problematic process) I chose not to draw attention to the research being undertaken. Consequently, the majority of my field notes were made in a diary once I had finished a working shift and returned to my home. Clearly, there are limitations with this approach to ethnographic fieldwork and these, along with ethical considerations, will be explored shortly.

Yet at this stage it should be stressed that it was deemed expedient to play down my research interests for three main reasons. Firstly, as already mentioned, I did not want the onset of my ethnographic research to greatly change my relationships with the people living and working at 17 Orwell Street. Secondly, to present myself primarily as a researcher in this setting would have been

disingenuous; after all I was a support worker and was getting paid accordingly. Furthermore, to regularly emphasise that I was conducting research would have possibly confused the residents and perhaps would have prejudiced their views of me in comparison to other staff (though of course this is not to imply that residents simply had uniform views of the people supporting them).

Thus, my particular approach to participant-observation was guided by the requirements of my work setting. In some ways this approach closely matches the typical field role of "complete participant" that Robert Burgess discusses (Burgess, 1984 p. 81). The 'complete participant' adopts a field role in which they conceal the fact that they are observing other people. They participate in the activities of the people they are studying and engage in covert observation (ibid.). Although I did not conceal my intentions from the people I wished to study when I began the ethnographic research project, by then understating the fact that I was observing and writing about individuals' music-related activities it could be argued that my observations were covert.

Ruddock (1998) raises an important ethical question concerning this type of research approach. He suggests that in this sort of research situation data is produced in informal ways compared to other types of qualitative method (Ruddock, 1998 p. 159). For example, I utilised a range of conversations and observations of residents and staff during various situations to construct field notes, but this would not have been apparent to the people involved at the time. The concern with this type of approach is that there are questions that could be raised regarding "when the respondents are 'on' and when they are 'off'" (ibid.). In other words, with an ethnographic project like the one conducted at 17 Orwell Street it was potentially the case that people or situations I encountered as a support worker/ethnographer could become incorporated into my ethnographic account without the people involved being aware of it. This is a difficult issue for a researcher utilising participant-observation to avoid because, conversely, if I had consistently asked people if I could include something they said or did in my field notes then this would have severely hampered the flow of everyday events. Moreover, as I argued above, it would have restricted my relationships with the people at 17 Orwell Street; possibly encouraging them to be more wary of me or to act a certain way in situations involving musical activity because they wanted to impress me.

Nevertheless, considering this issue prompted me to have a strong awareness of my responsibilities as an ethnographic researcher. It reinforced the need to be guided by ethical principles when carrying out participant-observation because, as James Spradley points out:

> Participant observation represents a powerful tool for invading other people's way of life. It reveals information that can be used to *affirm* their rights, interests, and sensitivities or to *violate* them. All informants must have the protection of saying things 'off the record' that never find their way into the ethnographer's field notes (Spradley, 1980 p. 22).

Having identified my approach to participant-observation and the complexities involved with this, it is now pertinent to elaborate on how I sought to develop strategies for protecting the people I was studying. In the next section I will expound upon how my ethnographic research involved adopting different ethical principles at various stages of the research process. As it will become clear, the adoption of these principles addresses some of the problems with participant-observation discussed above.

2. Ethical Principles and Ethnographic Research Praxis

Permission and issues relating to informed consent

Once I had begun working at 17 Orwell Street it was several months before I started thinking about conducting ethnographic research there. Gradually, a number of factors contributed towards steering me in that direction. The most important of these was that as I became slowly familiar with everyday routines and occurrences in the household it struck me that musical activities were often central to these. Moreover, as will be elucidated in later chapters, my relationships with residents flourished partly through developing an awareness of their musical experiences; I began to learn about them as people by being attentive to their musical activities. Also some staff members, notably Ursula, the Team Leader at the time, began to take an interest in my academic background. During conversations with her the possibility of conducting similar ethnographic research to that which I had undertaken in the past in another (very different)

household was discussed. At this point I decided to make a formal enquiry to the General Manager of the charitable organisation I was employed by. Reminding him of the smaller research project that was carried out at another of their establishments, I set out a proposal to conduct ethnographic research at 17 Orwell Street. I also proposed to carry out research at 19 Orwell Street which houses three men with LD, as well as research at other homes in the local area. However, once I began research at 17 Orwell Street it gradually became apparent that I would need to spend a considerable amount of time with its residents in order to investigate the significance of their everyday musical activities and experiences. Therefore, after also taking into account practical factors regarding the available time to access the three men at number 19, I eventually adjusted my research objectives in order to purely focus upon 17 Orwell Street. As well as requesting to begin ethnographic research I also enquired about whether my company would be able to fund any of the costs involved with studying for a part-time PhD at The University of Liverpool.

The letter I received in reply to my proposal granted my request to undertake ethnographic research, although my company were unable to fund any of my studies (please see appendix I for a copy of this letter in full, although be aware that some words are omitted in order to maintain confidentiality).[14] As can be seen from appendix I, this letter advised me that: "Informed permission must be obtained from any service users potentially involved and the issues discussed with families and Care Manager where appropriate" (letter from General Manager, 10th October 2000). Having been given authorisation by the company, my next step was, therefore, to discuss my proposed research with the people who I intended to study and gain their informed consent. Before approaching the residents and my fellow support workers and telling them about my research aims, I began to keep a diary of musical activities that I had observed. To keep a field diary before I had gained consent may have seemed premature, but at this stage diary entries were necessary so that I could begin to reflect on music related experiences. Such reflection was requisite if I was going to be able to effectively communicate some initial aims to the people I proposed to study.

---

[14] Indeed each of the subsequent appendices referred to in this chapter have been edited in order to preserve the identities of my research subjects. Therefore, names, addresses and so on have been changed or omitted where appropriate.

Obviously if the people involved refused to consent to taking part in the research then the field diary I had begun would have been discarded.

Thankfully the response I received from the residents of 17 Orwell Street when the subject of ethnographic research was broached seemed to be positive. Prior to discussing the matter I had produced a letter of consent for residents to sign if they agreed to take part in the research (see appendix II for a copy of this letter). During December 2000 I spoke to each resident and tried to clearly explain what I intended to do, reading out the contents of the letter to them as well. Charlotte and Christine were informed of my intentions first, during the night of 14th December, when I was working the night-shift (only one member of staff is required for night-shifts so I was alone). As was usual John had gone to bed early so the lounge area was quiet with Charlotte and Christine sitting down to watch TV, free from many of the other distractions apparent during the daytime. When I initially told them that I wanted to talk to them about something Charlotte immediately said "Oh what have we done?" This defensive response was possibly an expression of insecurity on Charlotte's part because, as will be revealed later, she was somewhat emotionally insecure on various occasions. Nevertheless, during this moment I reassured both women that what I wanted to talk to them about was something positive. I explained that I was intent on starting a "music project" that I'd need their help with. I stressed that they could help me by talking to me about the music they liked but also by allowing me to write about their everyday musical activities. The letter of consent was then read out to both of them and they agreed to participate. Charlotte and Christine were both friendly and relaxed with my proposals and neither of them seemed to have any reservations about signing the letter of consent.

Explaining my research aims to John and Andrew was less straightforward. As will become clearer in the forthcoming chapters, John has more difficulties with cognitive understanding and has a relatively limited repertoire of conversational skills in comparison to Charlotte and Christine. Therefore, when I spoke to him about my intended research, even though I tried to communicate my aims in a simple and clear way, I could not be sure that he understood the implications of what I was saying. However, John was very positive when I raised the subject whilst he was sat in his bedroom relaxing. He enthusiastically said "yes!" when I was talking to him and this was indicative of

his general enjoyment of music-related activity as well as the trusting friendly relationship he had with me. Thus, John gladly marked the signature section of the consent letter (like Charlotte and Andrew, John could not write his name).

The challenge of obtaining 'informed permission' was compounded when I attempted to communicate my research aims to Andrew. As indicated earlier, he has no speech whatsoever and relies upon gesture, his actions and facial expressions to interact with the people around him. Consequently, Andrew is greatly reliant upon staff members familiarising themselves with these communication devices as well as his routines, likes, dislikes and so on. As I had already worked at 17 Orwell Street for nearly a year before beginning ethnographic research I was equipped to gauge Andrew's reactions when I talked to him at least to a certain extent. Choosing a moment when he was sat in his preferred chair in the kitchen area, I stood near to Andrew and began to calmly talk about my aims and then read the consent letter out to him. Nicky, a fellow part-time member of staff who was Andrew's key worker and had developed a strong friendly relationship with him was also in close attendance. Once I had read the letter to him, Nicky assisted Andrew to mark the signature section. During this period of time Andrew remained placid and he had a gentle smile on his face as he stayed sat in his chair. Yet, as with John, it remained unclear as to how far Andrew understood what I was talking about.

Thus, as Dorothy Atkinson (1989) found when conducting ethnographic interviews with people with LD, there were problems concerning the extent to which all four residents who were to be central to my ethnographic research *understood* the purposes of this research. Furthermore, people with LD may *perceive* research in a negative way due to previous experiences of segregation and stigmatisation (Atkinson, 1989 p. 65). For instance, it was interesting that Charlotte's initial response when I asked to speak to her and Christine was one of guilt. This may have been a symptom of previous negative experiences related to talking with care providers and feeling as if she was 'doing wrong' during discussions. Consequently it was important that I was able to reassure Charlotte and to clearly explain the aims of my research in a positive manner. However, it is clear that it was difficult to satisfactorily ensure that John, Andrew, Charlotte and Christine understood these research aims. Indeed, at this point, as is the case with much ethnographic research, there were no solid research objectives and my

aims were relatively general as is evident in the letter of consent (see appendix II).

It was necessary to contact the residents' next-of-kin to inform them of my research intentions so that they could act, to an extent, as "decision-making surrogate(s)" (Couser, 2004 p. 26). In line with company policy at the time regarding important decisions made by, or in some cases for, service users (such as expensive purchases like holidays) I felt that consultation with the residents' relatives was essential. Furthermore, I wanted their families to be aware of my research at an early stage as I actively sought their assistance with my studies. I sent each resident's next-of-kin (in Christine's case her father, but with the others their sister) a copy of the letter of consent that had been signed, as well as another letter outlining the value of the proposed research. With this second letter there was space provided for relatives to sign to indicate consent if they had no objections to their loved ones being involved in the research (see appendix III for a copy of this letter). Each of these letters was returned to me promptly and all of them were signed to indicate consent.

It has been necessary to discuss the processes involved with obtaining permission to carry out ethnographic research because they demonstrate the seriousness afforded to the principle of informed consent during this study. As Burgess (1984) and Couser (2004) affirm, issues relating to informed consent have been integral to social research since the end of the Second World War. Indeed the concept was explicated in the Nuremburg Code which states that:

> The voluntary consent of the human subject is absolutely essential.
> This means that the person involved should have legal capacity to
> give consent; should be so situated as to exercise free power of choice,
> without the intervention of any element of force, fraud, deceit, duress,
> over-reaching or any other ulterior form of constraint or coercion;
> and they should have sufficient knowledge and comprehension of the
> elements of the subject matter involved as to enable him (sic) to make
> an understanding and enlightened decision.
> (Nuremburg Code, 1949 cited in Burgess, 1984 p. 200)

As has been made clear, prior to beginning ethnographic research in earnest, efforts were made to adhere to this principle when seeking permission from the people who became the central subjects of my study. However, due to their various learning difficulties and the generalised nature of my aims during the

initial phase of ethnographic research, it is evident that these subjects were vulnerable and possibly prone to misunderstanding the purpose of the research. This is not to suggest in any simplistic way that Charlotte, Christine, John and Andrew had no autonomy or agency. It is rather to point out that their complex difficulties may have hindered them from fully *comprehending* my general research aims. After all, however problematic the term is, the individuals living at 17 Orwell Street were classed as 'vulnerable adults' and they each had risk assessment documentation designed to inform service personnel of their vulnerabilities relating to key everyday areas such as bathing or eating. Therefore, it was crucial to inform the residents' next-of-kin as well as the residents themselves in order to try and ameliorate the problematic issue of gaining informed consent.

One final point to consider in relation to the permission processes involved during my ethnographic research at 17 Orwell Street is that the procedures detailed above in some ways lay bare the *hierarchies* evident in services for people with LD. Burgess (1984) makes a similar point arguing that the "negotiation of access" that is often involved with ethnographic field work can reveal the "pattern of social relationships" in a particular setting (Burgess, 1984 p. 40). With my research it was clear that, as the residents of 17 Orwell Street were considered to be 'vulnerable adults', it was often the case that other people (whether this was service personnel or family members) had an interest in speaking 'on their behalf'. What the permission process revealed, therefore, was that the notions of agency and autonomy were particularly problematic when considering the lives of Charlotte, Christine, Andrew and John. This ethnographic account certainly will not counteract this in any simple way by glibly claiming to offer these residents 'a voice'. However, through explicating their everyday lives on a micro-level, it will highlight how labels such as 'vulnerable adult' are inadequate by illuminating the diverse ways in which musical activity related to strong individual agency and more equal social relationships.

Beneficence

Once permission was obtained from my company, the residents and their next-of-kin, then the entire staff team were informed of my research aims. This was initially accomplished on a somewhat less formal basis through a letter to all staff members that also asked for help with the research process (see appendix IV). Signed permission was not required from staff members but I ascertained whether they felt comfortable with my research through informal conversations. In addition, as will be elucidated shortly, staff members contributed to my research in various ways and they were also informed of my findings in a way that enabled them to give feedback and express any concerns. Yet, maintaining a focus on ethical considerations relating to research with the residents of 17 Orwell Street, it should be stressed that although I had been given permission this did not give me carte blanche to write about them as I saw fit. It was also important to respect the residents' privacy and to maintain their confidentiality. Thus, as I indicated to both the residents and the general manager of my company, one way that I aimed to achieve this was through the adoption of pseudonyms. These will continue to be used throughout this account when referring to the address and the names of residents. Although I was not explicitly required to adopt pseudonyms by my company it was decided that this would give the subjects of my research additional protection and would be the safest way of ensuring that I upheld the charitable organisation's policy of confidentiality.

These decisions were also influenced by the ethical concept of beneficence. This is an essential value in biomedical research and it literally means "doing or producing good" (The Penguin Dictionary, 2004 p. 123). However, Thomas Couser (2004) discusses how the concept can be a useful one for researchers who are writing about the lives of others. He suggests that whilst it might be very difficult and unrealistic to expect people who write about others to do them some good and be generous, they should at least do no harm (Couser, 2004 p. 28). Therefore, my insistence on using pseudonyms was motivated by the need to minimise the possibility of the research findings becoming harmful to the people I was studying.

Although it is concerned with a different medium (a television documentary, as opposed to written research findings) a recent legal case brought against the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) highlights the pitfalls of not taking due care in such matters. The Guardian newspaper reported that, as part of a forthcoming series of television programmes entitled Family Wanted, the BBC filmed footage of a young mother, known during the legal case as 'T', who a psychiatrist concluded was suffering from a "mental impairment and mental disorder" (Dyer, The Guardian, 23rd July 2007, p. 13). Despite the BBC's insistence to the contrary, a high court judge ruled in favour of an official solicitor agreeing that: "The broadcast itself would constitute quite simply a massive invasion of T's privacy and autonomy, and would undermine her dignity as a human being" (Mr Justice Eady cited in Dyer p. 13). The concerns raised by both the official solicitor and psychiatrist were in relation to how 'T' was represented in the documentary and, moreover, that she would be vulnerable to hostility in her neighbourhood if people recognised her once the programme had aired (ibid.). Coincidentally, the psychiatrist involved with this case had also judged that the young mother was unable to provide informed consent due to her impairments. Thus, this case encapsulates some of the key ethical issues central to my ethnographic research and it illustrates some of the potential negative ramifications of neglecting to adequately protect research subjects. By seemingly discounting the value of beneficence when representing a 'vulnerable adult', the BBC did not fully appreciate the potential harm that their programme's airing could cause. As I've suggested this is something that I sought to avoid as much as possible by adopting strategies to protect my research subjects.

Yet, exploring the value of beneficence in more depth, it was also necessary to consider how my research might be beneficial to the residents of 17 Orwell Street.[15] After reflection, this was a question that was less straightforward than it initially seemed. I have already justified my approach to this research by highlighting the absence of studies in this area and the social relevance of this topic. However, it is worthwhile to explore the value of this research for the particular individuals involved in a more critical manner. As Walmsley (2005)

---

[15] This is something that other researchers studying people with LD have sought to do; see for instance the work of Riddell et al. (2001) on the educational experiences of people with LD in Britain.

outlines, in recent decades scholars from disability studies and disability activists have urged researchers of disabled people to be far more self-reflexive regarding their work. Writers such as Michael Oliver (1999) have stressed that it is not enough for disabled people to be participants in research and have introduced the notion of emancipatory research. Oliver suggests that research with disabled people can contribute towards their emancipation and liberation; that it can be part of the process of changing society to enable disabled people to participate fully within it. With this type of research disabled people would control the agenda of research and the researcher has a role which is more akin to "expert adviser" (Walmsley, 2005 p. 734). These debates about emancipatory research have, therefore, placed more responsibility on the shoulders of scholars researching people with LD. Although it should already clearly be evident that my research aims were not commensurate with the lofty goal of emancipating the group of people who were my research subjects, it is pertinent to clarify the value of this research for this group.

The relevance of this research for the study of music in everyday life and of people with LD in general has already been expounded and the value of this work in these areas is linked to the benefits for my individual research subjects. Obviously, the research is of great importance to me on a personal level; after all it is hoped that this thesis will lead to a doctorate. However, by focusing on the diverse music related (and inevitably some non-music related) experiences of the residents of 17 Orwell Street, I maintain that this has value for these individuals (albeit that this is predominantly indirect). Whilst an experiential account of this nature may not explicitly align itself with the emancipatory research favoured by Oliver (1999), who actually criticises some ethnographic texts because of this, its strengths lie in the ways it can illuminate experiences. Furthermore, as was argued earlier, it is important to remember that the experiences of people with LD have often been neglected altogether. Moreover, as Boxall (2002) points out, studies that explicate the individual and group experiences of people with LD mirror the concerns of the early development of the social model of disability. This is because during this period there was, as Boxall writes, "considerable discussion of individual disabled people's experiences of both impairment and disability. It was through the sharing of these individual experiences that people became aware of their *collective experience* of disability" (Boxall, 2002 pp. 222-

223, my italics). An ethnographic study such as the one presented in this thesis, with its emphasis on elucidating the experiences of the residents of 17 Orwell Street in various ways, offers an opportunity (albeit indirectly) for them to contribute to this dialogue, this *sharing* of experiences. In addition, by concentrating on musical activities in everyday life, this study may highlight some of the common musical and cultural experiences that many people in the UK may encounter on a domestic level.

So far this sub-section of the chapter has identified how the ethical principle of beneficence was used to guide aspects of my ethnographic research praxis. In particular, it has been stressed that adoption of this principle helped to ensure that my research subjects' privacy and dignity was protected as far as possible. However, as was suggested earlier when discussing participant-observation, despite my efforts to gain informed consent and to maintain confidentiality, because my field work involved a degree of covert observation my research subjects had minimal control over the content of my field notes. This type of research approach places the ethnographic field worker in a powerful position and it is clear that there are ethical responsibilities attached to this. Adopting the principle of beneficence during research at 17 Orwell Street encouraged me to be mindful of the residents' privacy and dignity. Also, as I had become more familiar with each of the residents as people prior to starting my research, I had developed some ideas about aspects of their lives that they might be uncomfortable with me writing about. Regardless of this though, it is clear that my perceptions of what might be 'harmful' to the residents would be likely to diverge with their perceptions or those of other support workers. Hence, once I had compiled a substantial amount of field notes and had more concrete ideas concerning the main themes that would be evident in this thesis, I sought to communicate what I would be writing about to my research subjects. This would also enable residents and staff members to have the opportunity to give me feedback on my findings and to discuss any aspects they were uncomfortable with.

I chose to communicate my findings through an oral presentation that I delivered at 17 Orwell Street on 17th August 2005. Although there were similar limitations to those encountered when I attempted to convey my initial aims to the residents, it was felt that a presentation was appropriate for a number of

reasons. Firstly, with the exception of Christine none of the residents could read so to rely solely upon a written report would have severely curtailed the residents' access to my findings. Secondly, although Andrew and John in particular may have had great difficulty in understanding a verbal presentation and were limited in their opportunities to respond with feedback, staff members were in attendance who could advocate for them. Finally, by communicating my findings on a face-to-face level this enabled me to gauge reactions to what I was saying through the residents' and staff members' demeanour and facial expressions.

A full copy of the presentation script is included in this thesis (please see appendix V) although pseudonyms are featured in this script, obviously during the presentation I referred to people by their real names. It should be evident from referring to the presentation that I sought to make my ethnographic methods as transparent as possible. Therefore, I outlined in simple terms the types of material that was featured in my field notes to try and ensure that the residents (and their support staff) were aware of what I had been doing and what I would be writing about. In addition, a handout reiterating the rationale behind my ethnographic project (appendix VI) was given to each resident for them to keep. Whilst most of them would not have been able to read the handout, their key workers would have been able to refer to the handouts if necessary.

The presentation was given at the start of an afternoon shift. All four residents were in attendance, as well as three staff members: Nicky, Paul and Janet. Unfortunately none of the other staff members were able to attend but subsequently they were each given copies of the handout and advised to talk to me if they had any questions or concerns. Everyone was sat in the lounge area, with Andrew in his usual chair on the far left hand side of the room, which also adjoins the kitchen and is next to a set of patio doors leading to the back garden. The presentation seemed to be well received and the overall experience was a positive one. This is conveyed in the following extract from my field notes that reflects on the reactions to my presentation and describes proceedings:

I sat in the middle of the lounge so I could see everyone. Andrew stayed in his usual kitchen area but when I had given him his handouts he smiled and let me put them on the table next to his chair. John, Paul and Charlotte were sat facing

me on the sofa. Christine was sat slightly to my left and was very attentive; both looking at me and the handouts I'd given her.

As I talked (I mainly read from a script to ensure that I described things simply) everyone listened respectfully. Charlotte laughed a few times when I mentioned her name and also smiled when I used different examples. John was smiling and said "yes" a few times when I was talking about the music he liked and the things he did. (Field notes, 17.8.05)

Once the presentation was finished I asked if there was anything anyone wanted to ask me. The residents seemed content with the subject matter of the presentation and although there were no specific questions that they asked, the general enthusiasm that had been expressed when I initially outlined my aims was again in evidence. For instance, Christine, who is normally quiet and had been reticent on some occasions when I asked her questions about her musical activities, was clearly enthused by the presentation. Janet, her key worker, began asking her what her favourite type of music was and Christine cheerfully replied "The Sound of Music". She also continued by saying that she "loves Julie Andrews". The only comments directly about the presentation that I received were from Nicky, Andrew's key worker, who suggested that it was not necessary to interview any of Andrew's family members due to them hardly visiting him. She implied that they wouldn't be able to provide much insight into his everyday musical activities because of this. This feedback augmented the value of the presentation in that it clarified the importance of participant-observation when exploring Andrew's musical activities. Nicky's comments provided a reminder that my central sources when explicating Andrew's activities were my own observations and interactions with him, as well as testimonies from important people in Andrew's life such as Nicky herself.

The presentation, therefore, was a valuable vehicle for conveying to my research subjects what my ethnographic research had involved and the main topics that were likely to appear in the written account. Nevertheless, as has been explained, it was clear that there remained ambiguities concerning how far the residents understood the implications of this research. The strategies utilised during various stages of the research discussed above were attempts to communicate the pertinent aspects of the study to the people involved but also to protect them in accordance with ethical principles. It has been argued that it is

especially important to take care with this when research involves a great deal of participant-observation. However, moving away from ethical concerns, it is useful to consider other limitations apparent with my approach to participant-observation before moving on to discuss other methodological aspects of this ethnographic study.

3. The Limits of Participant-observation and the Adoption of Supplementary Methods

The Working Shift

It has become clear that my job role as a support worker enabled me to conduct iterative participant-observation over a substantial period of time. Yet conducting participant-observation in this work setting was a problematic enterprise that had specific disadvantages as well as benefits. On the one hand I was required to participate in what the staff members were doing, so I experienced duties in much the same way that they did. I also engaged in regular interactions with the residents of 17 Orwell Street in a similar way to how the other staff members did (albeit on a part-time basis). Therefore, I was able to gain a strong insight into what Malinowski called the "imponderabilia" of everyday life, through being involved with routines, conversations, interactions, jokes and so on (Malinowski cited in O'Reilly, 2005 p. 10). On the other hand, the framing of my research within a working shift would have clearly limited my perspective. I was not spending time at 17 Orwell Street 24 hours a day; neither was I actually living with the residents. Thus the working shift was a kind of lens through which my participant-observation was conducted. Accordingly, if I was having a 'good' shift and was feeling happy and alert then I would be more inclined to reflect on phenomena I had experienced and to record observations. Conversely, if I was having a 'bad' shift and feeling tired, harassed or stressed then I was less inclined to record observations at all and in any case often did not have time to do so.

Therefore, it is apparent that during my ethnographic field work the *selection* of phenomena to focus upon was dependent on my personal experiences during different working shifts. Consequently, my sampling strategies within the 'field'/workplace of 17 Orwell Street were hardly

systematic. Burgess (1984) argues that ethnographic researchers have to be aware of these selection processes during field work. That is, it is imperative to explicate "the principles by which they select some situations, events and people but reject others while working in the field" (Burgess, 1984 p. 53). As has been made clear, during participant-observation it was my intention to pay close attention to musical activities and experiences. However, it is also important to point out that, regardless of this (fairly loose) criterion, the *direction* of participant-observation remained dependent upon the course of events and my experiences during specific working shifts. In a sense, then, my ethnographic field work involved a type of "time sampling" (ibid. p. 61). Morning, afternoon, or night shifts at 17 Orwell Street enabled the monitoring of routines, events, interactions and so on during periods of time that were structured for staff and, indeed, for residents. Yet my monitoring and awareness of such phenomena was affected by the duties involved with these shifts as well as the time period itself. Hence, although I have maintained the term 'participant-observation' to denote the type of 'field work' I engaged in at this setting, it should now be apparent that this term simplifies the various processes involved with this research.

It should also be reiterated that I was not a 'participant-observer' in the traditional anthropological sense, but was primarily a support worker at 17 Orwell Street. This job role entailed a number of responsibilities to the people living and working in that establishment that had to be prioritised above my own research interests. Furthermore, this role necessitated the involvement in particular *power* relationships with the residents at 17 Orwell Street because they were reliant upon me supporting them with various everyday needs. Although I had developed friendly and trusting relationships with the four residents over a period of almost seven years, I remained someone who was employed to support them. Therefore, clearly this powerful role and the responsibilities that went with it would have influenced how the residents behaved around me. This, in turn, would have shaped the content of my field notes and the ensuing ethnographic account.

The power relationships evident when an ethnographer is also employed to work with the people who are their research subjects are suggested by Chris Richards (1998) in his study focusing on the potential for popular music studies in the school classroom. Richards, who was teaching media studies in a college

of further education whilst also conducting ethnographic research, argues that this kind of research entails particular relationships between the researcher and those researched. Similarly to the way I conceptualised my main research method, Richards sees his mode of enquiry as involving participant-observation but as he writes this is: "participation in the classroom as a teacher, not…participation with the students as some kind of friend or acquaintance" (Richards, 1998 p. 46). Thus, like Richards, I needed to be aware of how my role as support worker would impact upon my relationships in the field with those I wished to study.

However, in contrast to a school setting, a supported living environment such as 17 Orwell Street is one in which it is vital that support workers have very close relationships with the people they are paid to support. They facilitate daily routines and activities that are fundamental to the residents' well being such as bathing and the taking of medication. Yet they also regularly assist with, or are part of, leisure activities such as listening to music or watching television. Consequently, the dynamic between support worker and resident is often very different to that between other practitioners and their service users (for instance, between teacher and pupil). At 17 Orwell Street it was far more important to develop a friendly and trusting relationship between support worker and 'service user' because residents were often highly dependent on support staff to assist them with key aspects of their daily lives. Due to the fact that support workers are integral to many of these everyday aspects and due to the considerable length of time I spent in this capacity, I would argue that, despite the limitations outlined above, I was favourably positioned to conduct participant-observation. Whilst it has been vital to lay bare my approach to participant-observation and how this would have influenced my findings, this does not invalidate the strength of this position.

Field notes and the Recording of Data

Earlier it was made apparent that my field notes which were utilised to record observations and reflect upon experiences were kept in a field diary. It is now necessary to briefly expand upon this approach to data collection for the purposes of evaluation. The demands of my working shifts often made it difficult to find

time to write about phenomena I had observed whilst at 17 Orwell Street. On various occasions I was able to scribble down a few notes on a piece of paper and then when I returned home these were elaborated on in my actual field diary. On other occasions notes were taken outside of the 'field'; being directly entered into the field diary in the very different environment of my house. Regardless of where they were written, it is clear that such field note formation is reliant upon the ethnographer's memory and will be subject to processes of inclusion and exclusion. Whether field notes are written in a systematic way using pre-set forms such as those discussed by Burgess (1984) or whether they take the form of diary entries that describe music-related events or activities (as was the case with my approach), these factors will play a part. Therefore, although there have already been and will continue to be points during this thesis when field notes are utilised as evidence to assist in the description of activities and events, this is in no way an attempt to suggest that they constitute objective 'scientific' data. If another ethnographer undertook participant-observation at 17 Orwell Street it is likely that they would have a completely different set of field notes. Thus, it is clear that the standard criterion of reliability in social science is not applicable to ethnographic fieldwork of this nature (for a useful discussion of reliability see Ruddock, 2001 p. 18).

Yet this does not detract from the value of the regular recording of experiences through the usage of field notes. As writers such as Burgess (1984), Barz (1997) and O'Reilly (2005) indicate, the collection of field notes can have a number of important uses for the ethnographer. For instance, when developing a field diary over the period of time when I was conducting ethnographic research at 17 Orwell Street, my notes were not only used to describe events. They were also a vital medium for reflecting upon experiences and analysing key themes that were emerging. However, it is also essential to acknowledge that these field notes were not a straightforward translation of experiences in this 'field'. Taken on their own, field notes only provide rather inadequate 'snapshots' of experiences during participant-observation. On the contrary, as Barz argues, if field notes are seen as a *fulcrum* in that they are materials that *support* initial experiences and subsequent interpretations, this provides us with a more fruitful way of assessing their value (Barz, 1997 p. 54). With my study field notes were an important interface between experiences in the research setting and the written

ethnographic account provided in this thesis. Yet my experiences in this setting were not always easy, nor appropriate to reduce into field notes. As Barz asserts field notes are *part* of the "personal, ongoing process of interpretation and understanding" that is central to ethnographic research (ibid. p. 57). These notes are not, however, *constitutive* of this complex process of research.

Furthermore, as Barz also makes clear, knowledge of musical activities and experiences *as they occur* is not necessarily developed through the inscription of field notes. What he suggests through his own ethnographic fieldwork in East Africa is that it is more important for the ethnographer to be open to the experiences they're hearing and seeing, rather than to be too eager to turn to their notebook (ibid. p. 48). Therefore, throughout this written account interpretations of the significance of musical activities in the everyday lives of the people at 17 Orwell Street will be constructed through recourse to a variety of personal experiences as well as field note entries. The representation of these experiences in writing will be discussed in more depth shortly, but it should be emphasised at this point that this ethnographic account cannot be reduced to a set of field notes. As will be revealed in the forthcoming chapters, it was the accumulation of interpersonal experiences and the sustained engagement with routines and activities in my research setting that were crucial for illuminating the everyday importance of music.

Staff Diaries

From what has been written above it will be apparent that the construction of this written ethnographic account has been very much from my perspective. In addition, there will be no pretence in this account to distance myself from the proceedings in accordance with some traditional realist ethnographic accounts (see Van Maanen, 1995 for a critique of this realist approach). Rather, the following chapters will often feature me at the centre of the events and actions and this is an indicator of the potential impact that I had on the findings of this study. By foregrounding my roles in the 'field' this enabled me to adopt a self-reflexive approach to ethnography and to underline that this research project did not purport to be 'objective'. Clearly, then, this written account is often highly author-centric even though it is based upon iterative participant-observation and

'field' relationships that frequently involved dialogue and interaction. Couser (2004) touches upon these dilemmas ethnographers face when they move from fieldwork to having to translate their field experiences onto the page through writing in his discussion of life-writing. He suggests that field experiences are dialogical, intimate and involve movement, change and unpredictability. On the other hand, as I have found, an ethnographer's experiences whilst writing are vastly different; they are often monological and distant (Couser, 2004 p. 21).

Titon (2003) argues that one way of counteracting the dominance of the author in ethnographies is to include a variety of interpretations of the same event (or type of event) within the written ethnographic account. This then leads to the account being more "multivoiced", rather than having a singular authorial 'voice' (Titon, 2003 p. 176). In order to try to prevent my 'voice' being wholly dominant and to supplement my interpretations of musical activities at 17 Orwell Street I asked the staff team to complete their own diaries of musical events/activities. This request was made initially in the summer of 2001, several months after I had started keeping a field diary. I typed a letter asking for help from individual support workers and indicated that those interested in keeping a diary would be given a small notebook to write down their interpretations (see appendix VII for a copy of this letter in full). In addition, participating staff were given a list of prompting questions to orient them towards the types of information and musical activities I wanted them to try and note down (see appendix VIII).

Unfortunately, interest from staff members in maintaining diaries was minimal; with only two full-time personnel contributing. This, however, was understandable because the demands of shift work often allowed little time for breaks. Also support staff already had a welter of written communication to complete during every shift. This included reports on each individual resident, documentation of cash checks and completion of a diary entry to indicate what duties had been carried out and to relay any important messages to other staff. Consequently, I was grateful to Mel and Jay who both filled out a small number of entries in each of their notebooks. Whilst the information in these notebooks was fairly brief and entries were sporadic, they were useful because they supplemented my own interpretations. Furthermore, in Mel's case her interesting

diary entries were followed up during an interview where I was able to ask her to clarify some of the points she'd made.

During 2005 when I had solidified some of the key themes to have emerged from participant-observation, I again requested help from staff members by asking them to fill out diaries. By this time the staff team had changed somewhat and there were some new faces in comparison to when I initially began the research. Therefore, it was timely to raise awareness of my research interests and also to remind established staff members of these. Again, however, staff members had difficulty in finding time to fill out diaries. Consequently, it was suggested by some that there could be one central diary that staff could use to log musical activities and so on. This was a useful suggestion and it led to a series of diary entries, although once again these were fairly brief and it was not long before the diary began to be neglected. Nevertheless, in a small way the method of asking other support staff to maintain diary entries regarding musical activities counteracted the dominance of my 'voice' within field notes. Moreover, as will be seen in later chapters, some diary comments were particularly incisive and helped to reinforce some of the major themes that were emerging in my own field notes and experiences.

Qualitative Questionnaires

Once a full version of this thesis had been written, I sought feedback on my work from the staff team. Consequently, I visited 17 Orwell Street and distributed sections of Chapter 6 and 7 for staff members to read. The main purpose of this was to give the team an insight into the ways in which I was presenting the residents' everyday musical experiences. Reading the chapters would have also made staff members aware of how I was writing about their roles and experiences. To accompany these reading materials I distributed a qualitative questionnaire (see appendix XII) that gave support staff the opportunity to provide feedback on what they had read. As will be seen this feedback was then highly influential during my conclusion. The number of staff members who completed questionnaires and their responses are discussed at length during the conclusion and need not be outlined here. However, as with the staff diaries, it will become apparent that these questionnaires were another method that

counteracted the dominance of my 'voice' within this ethnography to a certain degree.

Interviews

It has already been argued that interviewing can only provide a limited insight into the types of everyday domestic music usage that were the focal point of this study. As has been made clear, this is particularly the case when exploring the usage of music by research subjects with profound LD. Consequently, interviews were very much a secondary method during this ethnographic project. However, in spite of the primacy of participant-observation, the interviews conducted during this study often provided valuable data. Furthermore, interviews with staff members, as with staff diaries, represented a way of tempering the dominance of my interpretations. This is because, as will be seen in the chapters that follow, support staff who agreed to be interviewed provided their own individual insights into musical activities and their value. This will become strongly evident when extracts from these interviews will be utilised at later stages in this thesis.

All interviews with staff members were conducted on a one-to-one basis in one of the resident's bedrooms at 17 Orwell Street where there were minimal distractions (permission was, of course, sought first). They were tape-recorded using a Dictaphone and then transcribed at my home. This was also the case with the two residents who were able to be interviewed in this way, Charlotte and Christine. Each resident was interviewed in her bedroom to ensure that the setting was comfortable, familiar and free from distractions. However, Christine was very reticent during the day of her tape recorded one-to-one interview. Consequently, these more structured open-ended interviews were supplemented by more informal conversational material gathered during participant-observation. This conversational material proved much more revealing, especially when considering Christine's uses of music.

The limitations apparent with such informal methods for data collection were alluded to earlier and it is necessary to acknowledge that recollections of conversations documented in field notes are far less reliable than tape recordings. Yet as writers such as Lewis (1991) and Atkinson (1989) point out, interview recordings and their transcripts have their limitations. They need to be placed

into context by the interviewer through taking into consideration non-verbal factors such as the setting and demeanour of the interviewee (Lewis, 1991 p. 93). Since I had already developed a rapport with the residents through time spent with them and as I was conducting participant-observation, these were factors that I was favourably positioned to explicate. My position enabled me to situate statements made in both formal interviews and informal conversations within a "wider discursive framework" (ibid.).

However, within the structured one-to-one interviews with Charlotte and Christine, the relationship dynamic between them and me seemed to change. Despite attempts to foster informality through choice of setting and through the types of questions asked, the situation felt awkward and seemed abstracted from the more relaxed flow of conversation that informed data in my field notes. Nevertheless, as will be made clear later, Charlotte's recorded interview was valuable and it reinforced interpretations derived from participant-observation. Furthermore, although she had some difficulty articulating her responses to my questions, what was striking about her interview was her positive outlook toward the situation. In a similar way to how Dorothy Atkinson's interviewees with LD responded to group interviews, Charlotte seemed to feel *valued* during the interview because I spent time taking an interest in her leisure activities and listening to her (Atkinson, 1989 p. 71).

Though each of the resident's families had granted me permission to undertake ethnographic research, there seemed to be a general reluctance to assist with my studies. As relatives who visited residents usually liked to be left alone it was decided not to pursue interviews with family members who didn't express an interest in the research I was conducting. Also Andrew and Charlotte's families rarely visited them so it was deemed inappropriate to involve them in research concerning the everyday significance of musical activity. The exceptions to this were John's sister and brother-in-law, Beryl and Roy. They were more affable and volunteered to discuss John's interests in music with me. Since I was John's key worker it was also fitting that I began to develop a more friendly relationship with Beryl and Roy because they liked to be informed of John's health and lifestyle on a regular basis. On two occasions I took John on the train to Lancashire to visit Beryl and Roy. Whilst at Beryl and Roy's home I was fortunate enough to be able to interview Beryl (with John in attendance) in

their kitchen. This recorded semi-structured interview was very important for providing further clarification of John's regular musical activities and it also gave additional insight into their historical context when Beryl discussed John's behaviour as a young man living with her mother and father.

Having expounded on my specific approach to ethnographic research in the above sections, the main methods used throughout this project should now be clear. In addition, it has been highlighted how it is vital to implement ethical principles during research of this nature. At this stage it is now relevant to discuss the writing style that is to be adopted throughout the remainder of this thesis. As has already been suggested when discussing field notes and the recording of participant-observation, issues relating to the writing of ethnography are as important as those of field work methods. Hence, the final section of this chapter will briefly explore issues pertinent to the writing of this ethnographic account.

4. Ethnographic Writing and the Representation of People with Learning Difficulties

It was emphasised in some of the above sections that if a researcher is writing about someone else's life experiences then this puts them in a tremendous position of power. This power is augmented if, as in my study, the people you are writing about are dependent on you to some extent and are vulnerable to exploitation. Couser conceptualises the relationship between the author and the person who is being written about as a *fiduciary* relationship (Couser, 2004 p. 17). A fiduciary is defined as someone who is entrusted to hold or manage property for another person (The Penguin Dictionary, 2004 p. 513). So, for Couser, the writer is, in effect, managing something that is the property of someone else because it is their activities, pleasures, habits, routines and so on that you are writing about. Consequently, it has been already stressed that I sought to protect this 'property' by adhering to certain ethical principles during field work and field note formation.

However, with the type of ethnographic research that I was involved with, the experiences being written about were also partly my own because I was a participant-observer. I was participating and contributing towards many of the

activities that I will be writing about. Therefore, when considering the writing style appropriate for the subsequent chapters in this thesis there were two main issues regarding modes of written representation. Firstly, there was the problem of how to represent my research subjects in ways that conveyed the richness and complexity of their musical activities but also presented them in a beneficent way that respected their 'property'. Secondly, there was the issue of how I represented my roles in the action that much of this written account is based around. This section discusses each of these issues together by referring to writers who have encountered such problems whilst researching people with LD.

The writers Tim Booth (1996) and Michael Angrosino (1998) have suggested that conventional ethnographic writing styles may not be suitable for adequately portraying the experiences of people with LD. This is because, as Angrosino puts it, the discourses of people with LD are often "'disordered' discourses" (Angrosino, 1998 p. 38). Thus, contrary to the emphasis in many ethnographies on representing peoples' experiences 'in their own terms', these writers suggest that this approach might be harmful to many people with LD who might have problems with verbal articulation. This is particularly the case with the representation of dialogue, for as Booth elaborates:

> Faithfully reproducing their spoken words as text may do a gross disservice to people with learning difficulties. Accuracy and the truth do not always go hand in hand. Freed from their contextual supports, loose words easily tumble into chaos. The result may be the false impression of illucidity or the loss of whatever original meaning they carried in conversation (Booth, 1996 p. 251).

Therefore, Booth argues that the words of people with LD must be adequately contextualised and placed into a form where the power of their messages and experiences can be effectively understood. Hence, what Booth and Angrosino both propose to accomplish this are narrative writing styles that can more powerfully represent the lives and experiences of people with LD who may have problems articulating themselves.

Angrosino's (1998) ethnographic work depicted in his book Opportunity House is particularly interesting. Having worked as a volunteer at a home for 'mentally retarded' adults in Tampa, Florida (U.S) for three years before engaging in participant-observation and in-depth interviews, his research has

some parallels with my own. However, after recording numerous conversations with residents at the home, Angrosino constructs a series of small stories based on what was said in these interviews. Opportunity House, therefore, is effectively a collection of stories written from the first-person perspective of the residents, although these are supplemented by interviews with Angrosino himself in which he elaborates on his methods. His justification for this approach is twofold. Firstly, following other scholars interested in ethnographic writing, Angrosino emphasises that ethnographic texts are a kind of *fiction* (see for instance, Taylor, 2003; Van Maanen, 1995; Clifford, 1986). As it has already been suggested, ethnographies are 'partial truths'; they are incomplete, biased and are, in many respects, the product of the ethnographer's interpretations/imagination (Clifford, 1986 p. 7). So, in a sense, Angrosino's narrative style foregrounds the fictional aspect of ethnography and the role of the ethnographer's imagination. Secondly, Angrosino argues that his writing style can help to convey the richness of the lives of the people he was studying. For, as he states:

> I hope that fiction can help me convey the truth as I experienced it:
> that people with mental retardation are a diverse lot with a full
> range of attitudes, values, and outlooks on life. I can *tell* you that,
> and it hangs in the air or sits on the page like so much 'data'. How
> much better to *show* you the diversity of how people react to
> situations drawn from, but that are not exactly photographic
> representations of, 'real life' (Angrosino, 1998 p. 101).

This is a bold approach to the representation of people with LD because what Angrosino is arguing is that stories based on their experiences are more effective than analytical accounts for articulating these experiences.

Booth (1996) also highlights the potential that narrative writing styles and devices can have for elucidating the experiences of people with LD. He argues that literary devices such as metaphors and characterisation can be useful tools for scholars. This is because narrative methods provide a different mode for accessing the perspectives and experiences of people with LD (Booth, 1996 p. 237). Stories about the lives of such often excluded groups of people that illuminate their specific terms and activities can be very powerful. Booth contrasts such accounts with conventional sociological scholarship which, he argues, is guilty of "subordinating the reality of people's lives in the quest for

generalisation" (ibid.). Therefore, he points out that scholars who can identify key metaphors in the lives of the people they are studying could provide salient insights into those lives for people reading their texts. For instance, as Booth suggests this approach could convey emotions and feelings through the writer interpreting fragments of dialogue that might initially seem innocuous to the reader and exposing the metaphorical power of this speech. Referring to his own qualitative research, Booth identifies how one of his informants used to repeatedly utter the question "Been good?" He argues that this short phrase was a "metaphor for a lifetime of repression" (ibid. p. 248). This is a very poignant example that illustrates the value of scholars adopting a narrative approach because it is a way of drawing the reader into the 'world' of a person with LD who may find it difficult to articulate their experiences in such a powerful way on their own.

The arguments of Booth and Angrosino are significant and provide a strong reminder of how vital ethnographic writing style can be for the representation of people with LD. Also, in relation to my ethnographic research, they illustrate the importance of choosing appropriate ways of communicating everyday musical experiences to my readership. Consequently, influenced to some extent by the work of the above authors, the chapters that follow utilise a variety of writing styles to convey the manifold ways in which musical experiences were often part of my research subjects' daily lives. In addition, these different styles will also be used to explicate the particularities of various settings within (and to a lesser extent outside) 17 Orwell Street, including elucidating specific social relationships and interactions.

Thus, a number of field diary extracts will be used in order to assist with the description of events and activities and to illustrate the conversations and experiences that were memorable at the time. The use of such extracts and also extracts from interview transcripts and staff diaries will also help to give the reader an insight into the terminology commonly used by residents and staff. These field diary entries are often written in the past tense, as personal recollections of music-related phenomena. Consequently, within these diary entries and within the commentaries that frame them there will often be some reflection on the importance of particular experiences. To counterbalance this approach there will also be a few sections that are written using a more narrative

style in that they portray the scenes and actions that I witnessed in the present tense. Whilst avoiding the reflexivity and analysis apparent in other sections, these passages will convey the intricacies of settings and events in more depth. They will also attempt to capture some of the dynamics of musical activities and the flow of daily occurrences. Clearly both these writing styles are often unavoidably framed around my personal experiences as a support worker/participant-observer. Consequently, it will be necessary to lay bare my roles in many of the situations that are featured in this writing both to portray these as accurately as possible, but also to acknowledge how I may have influenced proceedings.

However, unlike Angrosino, this account will maintain a relatively conventional overall 'academic' style that is appropriate for a doctoral thesis. Therefore, the chapters that follow, whilst they often utilise in-depth case studies based around a few individuals, will connect the issues these raise with some of the relevant scholarly literature, some of which has already been discussed. Furthermore, the theories alluded to earlier concerning everyday musical performing; the settings of music usage and the affective potential of musical activity will be applied further during these chapters. Yet, returning to consider the dangers of such critical exegesis that are raised by Booth, this is not to imply that what will follow will be a largely generalised account. On the contrary, as it has already been suggested, my approach fostered an appreciation of the *particularity* of musical experiences. Thus, it will still enable the exploration of key metaphors (including verbal, dramatic and musical) that became significant within the lives of the people in my study.

Moreover, because the ensuing written account was constructed through reference to regular participant-observation and interaction with these people, it will be more effectively placed to *contextualise* these utterances and actions. After all, although metaphors may be crucial to focus upon in order to enable readers to empathise with research subjects depicted in ethnographic texts, they may also have the detrimental effect of simplifying those subjects. As will be seen later, it is important to examine how phrases or ways of performing that are seemingly integral to individuals may change over time or shift within different situations. Human beings are complex; therefore writers like Angrosino need to

be careful that in translating ethnographic data into storylines they do not present the lives of subjects as one-dimensional.

Ultimately, my overall approach to writing up my ethnographic fieldwork has been to present musical activities and experiences in as much detail as possible. It has been to attempt to convey the richness and complexity of the ways in which the residents of 17 Orwell Street used music. Thus, I have attempted to describe what people did and said, when, where, how, why and with whom. As has been stressed above, this has involved imagination and interpretation. Notes that I scribbled down were a vain attempt to record moments that were fleeting and multi-layered. Iterative participant-observation which involved visiting and re-visiting my research subjects and their surroundings provided a solid foundation for ethnographic writing, but this writing inevitably involved the prioritisation and re-interpretation of events which may have had very different meanings for others.

Conclusion: Reflecting on the Value of this Ethnographic Approach

It has been made apparent that my approach to ethnographic fieldwork has a number of peculiarities. My roles in the 'field' were paradoxical in that I was ostensibly both a 'participant-observer' and support worker, although this was often unknown to those around me. Also my 'field' activities were unavoidably tied to my working activities and this could have benefits for my data collection but also disadvantages. In addition, the nature of this research work and its potential for exploiting as well as benefiting my subjects necessitated specific ethical practices and responsibilities, some of which were informed by existing principles and company procedures. Yet, despite these context specific research practices, it is also clear that in other ways my research approach was ethnographic in the traditional anthropological sense. It was founded upon regular participant-observation or, at the very least, sustained contact and interaction with the people I was interested in studying. Furthermore, this ethnographic research took place primarily within the main setting in which these people experienced everyday life; their home.

Musical activities and experiences were, therefore, mainly scrutinized in relation to this setting and analysed in relation to the various boundaries and

relationships within this place. Certain scholars have discussed the problematic aspects of such an approach; arguing that by identifying a field site as a "bounded physical space" this constructs a notion of 'culture' as something that is singular and distinctly delineated (Hine, 2000 p. 58; Silverstone, 1994). Roger Silverstone rightly points out that domestic spaces within households are unsettled and prone to change; thus we cannot conceptualise peoples' houses as sealed off from the rest of the world and providing a singular 'culture' to study (Silverstone, 1994 p. 25). This is certainly not the intention of this study; for I would argue in accordance with Steven Taylor that culture is "undelimitable" (Taylor, 2003 p. 12). As will be made evident in the following chapters, there was not a singular musical 'culture' at 17 Orwell Street but rather a number of quite distinct regular musical activities. Yet paradoxically, as Chapter 5 will elucidate, such activities often helped to foster an overall habitus in relation to musical action within certain areas of the household. Furthermore, despite being predominantly focused on a single setting and a small group of people, this chapter has already emphasised that the subject matter of this thesis encompasses a wide range of critical issues. This has enabled it to contribute to existing debates from subjects as diverse as disability studies and music therapy.

More than this, an ethnographic approach that prioritises the examination of often seemingly mundane musical activity as it occurs within the varied contexts of everyday life for the residents of 17 Orwell Street can reveal the complexity of such activity. Thus, by primarily basing this ethnographic research in a single setting this did not reduce such activity nor generalise it into a singular 'culture'. Rather, as I developed a familiarity with this setting and the people within it, it became increasingly apparent that everyday musical activities required sharp critical scrutiny in order to gain insights into their significance. Ethnography based around extensive participant-observation, with its potential for producing 'thick description' offered a unique way of accomplishing this (Geertz, 1975). It enabled me to become familiar with everyday musical activities such as humming and foot-tapping, yet conversely it led to the *challenging* of such familiarity; as it gradually became apparent that a "subtle and complex understanding" of such seemingly simple actions was required (Titon, 2003 p. 174).

Chapter 4

The 'Home' Paradox

Understanding 17 Orwell Street as a Domestic Context

*As I get nearer to the house I can see the large metallic blue people carrier
parked outside. This is one indicator that most people are in. The low red painted
metal gates are wide open and I begin to walk up the paved path. The path is
slightly raised and gently slopes upwards. On either side of the path that leads to
the front door is the neat front lawn. There are a few hanging baskets containing
fresh flowers above the doorway. As I walk up the path I'm acutely aware that
I'm in plain sight of the large front window and the likelihood is that people have
seen me coming.*

*As I reach the front door I can see that it is slightly ajar. Knocking lightly I enter.
"Come in! Who's this?" Charlotte's unmistakably loud voice welcomes me.
Saying nothing I calmly walk into the vestibule. It is slightly unusual in that to my
immediate left there is a fairly large locked wall cupboard. Underneath it is a
filing cabinet. On top of the filing cabinet are empty medicine cassette boxes. I
walk towards the dimly lit hallway which, despite the creamy white tastefully
patterned wallpaper, never manages to look particularly bright even in clear
daylight.*

*The intimacy of the bungalow becomes ever more apparent as I glance to my left
into the hallway which contains four bedrooms, a bathroom and separate toilet,
all in close proximity to each other. I then enter the living room where the four
people who live in this house greet me in their own distinctive ways. Charlotte,
who is sat on the left end seat of a large brown leather sofa that faces the
doorway, seems cheerful. "Hello Ned!" she exclaims. John, who is sat next to
Charlotte, is equally as enthusiastic, if not more so: "'Ello Yaz, put coat off!" he
urges. John pronounces my name as 'Yaz' due to his speech impediment. I find it
rather endearing and, in any case, previous attempts to try and teach John to
pronounce 'Ned' have proven difficult. Following his instructions I take my
jacket off and, walking about a metre to my left, I enter the dining area that joins
the lounge and hang the jacket on a wooden chair at the dining table.*

*The kitchen also joins the dining room so, in effect, the lounge, dining room and
kitchen constitute one large room.[16] Whereas the lounge is mainly creams and
browns in its colour scheme, the kitchen is a mix of blues and birchwood.
Directly opposite the kitchen at the far end of the dining area is Andrew. He is
sitting in a brown leather armchair that matches the sofa and smiles at me with
his familiar toothy grin as I look over at him and say "Hello Andrew". Sat a few
inches away from the patio doors that lead into the back garden, once his
attention shifts from me the likelihood is that he'll go for a walk in the garden.*

*Turning back to the immediate lounge area once I've hung up my jacket I greet
Christine who has been slightly more reserved than her housemates up to this*

---

[16] See appendix IX for a plan of this lounge/dining/kitchen area and appendix X for a plan of the
bungalow as a whole.

point. She is sat in another large brown armchair that is situated opposite to the sofa and angled in such a way that it is facing a large widescreen television which is showing a music video channel. However, Christine seems to be paying little attention to what's on the screen. She is focused on carefully making patterns on a small white plastic sewing tablet. Taking a few moments away from threading the plastic laces into the holes, Christine looks up at me and gently smiles. She then raises her lace-work into the air as if to say "look what I've done". I respond by complementing her pattern.

It is at this moment when John says: "Yaz, tea?" and thrusts an empty tea cup towards me. From this point onwards the ritual of making hot drinks that often seems so crucial to the whole running of the house begins.

The brief description above was written in 2006 whilst I had some spare time during a night-shift at 17 Orwell Street. It was designed to convey my common experiences upon entering the premises to begin an afternoon shift as well as to describe the interiors of the parts of the household that were most regularly populated. However, reflecting upon it away from the 'field' it is clear that the description belies this domestic setting; underplaying its complexity and the varied social relationships contained within it. Whilst the scene it depicts is relatively concurrent with those I faced each time I entered the house for an afternoon shift, although obviously staff members would have been amongst the residents, the impression of calm and 'homely' comfort is misleading.

Ostensibly, each resident often did seem content and 'at home' and they regularly chose to sit and relax on specific seats that they made their 'own' when they were in the house. Yet paradoxically this environment that sometimes appeared to be a model of 'homeliness' was frequently fraught with a number of tensions. After all, as was suggested in previous chapters, 17 Orwell Street was a peculiarly constructed 'home' setting. The people living there had neither familial links with each other nor with the staff members supporting them; they also had no ties to the people living in the housing estate that surrounded them. Without an awareness of these residential circumstances and an appreciation of how they came about, together with an explication of the various aspects that identify 17 Orwell Street as a unique domestic context, the significance of music usage in this setting cannot be understood. As will be seen throughout the remainder of this thesis, music reception and musical activities consistently had distinctive roles in shaping the domestic environment and the relationships within it. Yet, as this chapter will demonstrate, any consideration of these often

striking uses of music has to be dependent on a rigorous attention to context. Accordingly, the first stage of this chapter will outline how John, Andrew, Charlotte and Christine came to live at 17 Orwell Street. Furthermore, some background on the initial setting up of this building as a 'supported living scheme' will be provided because this, in many respects, laid down the conditions that determined how and why the subsequent residents would live at this establishment.

1. Background: Examining the Roots of and Routes to a Supported Living Scheme

Any attempt to trace the histories of how Andrew, John, Charlotte and Christine came to live at 17 Orwell Street has to be accompanied by a basic understanding of the political policies and the legislation that precipitated widespread changes in service provision for people with learning difficulties (LD) in Britain. Indeed, in many respects, the shifts over the last two decades in the lives of the four people central to my study are indicative of wider Political and social changes.

As was suggested in Chapter 2, for the majority of the 20th century people with LD who were not able to be cared for by their families were supported in large-scale institutions that segregated them from other people in British society. Various writers have highlighted that by the 1950s the efficacy of the long-term housing of people with LD in large institutions such as psychiatric hospitals was being questioned (Webb and Tossell, 1991; Oliver and Barnes, 1998). However there had been debates concerning whether such people could be more effectively supported in services based within their local communities rather than segregated from them since the 19th century (Digby, 1996 p. 15). Yet it was only during the late 1970s and early 1980s that political impetus began to drive moves towards community based care provision. For example, the Jay Committee into Mental Handicap and Care (1979) emphasised the rights of individuals with LD to live in the community and subsequently the Care in the Community Initiative (1981) was set up by the Conservative government of the time. Despite these developments, it was 1990 before the shift towards community care was

officially recognised on the British statute books with the National Health Service (NHS) and Community Care Act.[17]

The Act formalised legislative proposals that were first put forward in a government White Paper entitled <u>Caring for People – Community Care</u> (1989). The policies that indirectly influenced how Andrew, John, Charlotte and Christine were able to live at 17 Orwell Street with 24 hour staff support related to how the Act redefined the roles of local authorities. Whilst local authorities remained responsible for overseeing community based care, after 1990 they were required to work with private and voluntary organisations when delivering services for people with LD (Webb and Tossell, 1991 pp. 197-198). This meant that the roles of local authorities were significantly different; as Webb and Tossell put it they would become: "'enablers' of service provision, making assessments and managing care, and become co-ordinators of facilities owned by others" (ibid. p. 198; see also Oliver and Barnes, 1998 p. 40). Thus, local authority Social Service Departments have become more like administrators of care, rather than care providers since the Act (Webb and Tossell, 1991 p. 201).[18]

However, local authorities still have two important responsibilities that bear directly on how services will be delivered to a person with LD and on who will provide such services. Accordingly, it is pertinent to briefly outline these responsibilities here as it will provide an insight into the processes the residents at 17 Orwell Street would have been subject to. Firstly, authorities *assess* the needs of an individual; usually in consultation with the person involved, their families and also other relevant agencies such as health services. A 'care package' is then set out, detailing how these assessed needs are to be met and the levels of funding required. Secondly, local authorities will nominate a *care manager* after assessment is complete. This person will usually, though not automatically, be a Social Worker and they are responsible for reviewing the 'care package', ensuring that resources are used effectively and for providing a key point of contact for the individual 'service user' (ibid. pp. 198-199).

---

[17] Though, as Ryan and Thomas (1987) point out, whilst the Conservative governments of this period embraced community care, there was little discussion of what their definition of 'community' was.
[18] However, the current British government is investigating further ways of reforming the roles of Social Services in relation to adult social care. See for instance, the recent government Green Paper <u>Independence, Well-being and Choice: Our Vision for the Future of Social Care for Adults</u>

It is important to consider the policies identified above as they have reconfigured the roles and responsibilities of local authorities, as well as providing the framework that would determine how residents came to live at 17 Orwell Street and how services would be provided for them. Having outlined these broad trends in the policies affecting the placement of many people with LD in Britain, it is now appropriate to outline how Andrew, John, Charlotte and Christine first came to live at Orwell Street. Firstly, it is germane to focus on Andrew and John who have lived there since 1994 when it began as a supported living scheme, originally run by their local Social Services Department.

Prior to moving to 17 Orwell Street the two men lived communally amongst up to 30 other people with various LD at a hostel that was based in a completely different part of town. At this establishment they had their own bedrooms but shared the other living areas of the hostel with many other people. Opportunities for privacy would have been far more limited in this environment and daily life would have needed to be highly regimented. In the light of the Community Care Initiative which was later ratified by the NHS and Community Care Act these types of large-scale communal establishments were gradually phased out alongside long-stay hospitals. Many of these buildings are now closed and, eventually this was the case with the hostel lived in by Andrew and John.

In 1994, after the assessment procedures outlined earlier, Andrew and John, together with two women who had lived with them at the hostel, moved to 17 Orwell Street. In addition, another three people with LD, two young men and a young woman, who had all lived at a different hostel moved into 19 Orwell Street which is the neighbouring house. Unlike the hostel, which was differentiated from other houses around it due to its size, 17 and 19 Orwell Street are bungalows located on a cul-de-sac. They are, therefore, positioned in close proximity to other houses that are not supported living schemes. In fact many of the houses in the small housing estate that Orwell Street is part of typically contain families, rather than groups of people with LD who require 24 hour support.

In accordance with the Community Care Act, Social Services did not maintain responsibility for the delivery of services at 17 and 19 Orwell Street for

---

in England (Department of Health, March 2005) a consultation paper that raises questions about current assessment processes and the budgeting for social care.

very long. Having developed a 'care package' for the two houses (which were treated as one overall supported living scheme at this time) that would have identified staffing requirements and costs based on assessment of the individuals' needs, this 'package' was then put out to tender. That is, bids to take over the running of services at 17 and 19 Orwell Street were sought from private and voluntary organisations. The charitable organisation that I have been employed by whilst working at Orwell Street, which I will call Community Connections (CC), was successful in bidding to take over the running of this scheme.[19] Consequently, in February 1995 CC took over the delivery of services to people living at 17 and 19 Orwell Street. Initially the two houses were closely linked; with the six full time staff members and one part-time member working regularly in both settings. However, before I started working at 17 Orwell Street in the year 2000 this situation had changed and each house had its own separate staff team that worked exclusively with each group of residents.[20]

The initial set up at 17 Orwell Street was far from ideal. This was mainly because John and Andrew were not particularly suited to living together. John was, and to a lesser extent still is, frightened of Andrew who, as will be explicated in Chapter 7, has complex needs and sometimes displays aggression towards others. Conversely, Andrew occasionally becomes irritated by John who can be inappropriately noisy when Andrew is in his vicinity (mainly because of his fears). The fact that the two men were housed together demonstrates that Social Services' assessment procedures and the design of 'care packages' was not necessarily based around individual choice but around the allocation of resources and budgeting. Although both Andrew and John have had person-centred support plans that include 'Essential Lifestyle Plans' developed for them in accordance with their personal preferences by CC personnel, it is salient that both their plans still detail unresolved issues in relation to house-mates. For

---

[19] A pseudonym is used for my employer to provide further protection of the identities of the people involved in this study. Any resemblance to actual companies called 'Community Connections' is purely coincidental.
[20] Although there were opportunities for staff members to work at number 19 when picking up overtime.

instance, Andrew's Essential Lifestyle Plan that is based on his key worker's[21] perceptions of what he enjoys and dislikes contains the following statements:

> I have very little in common with my co-tenants, they can sometimes be very loud and cause me to become unsettled or upset.

> I would prefer to live with people who do not upset me, and somewhere I could have more space.
> (Andrew's Essential Lifestyle Plan, 2003)

These poignant short statements lay bare one of the many paradoxes apparent with 'home' life at 17 Orwell Street; even amongst residents who have lived together since the supported living scheme began there are deep-rooted social tensions that affect their daily lives. As will be seen below, though they are of a different nature, there were also tensions surrounding the placement of Charlotte and Christine in this setting.

Charlotte came to live at 17 Orwell Street in February 1998. One of the women who had lived at the house prior to her moving in had died in July of the previous year. This had left a spare room in the house and eventually after the other residents had been introduced to her, Charlotte moved in. Her route to Orwell Street was quite different to that of Andrew and John. Charlotte, who would have been 40 years old when she moved to the supported living scheme, had lived with her mother for all of her life up to that point. After her mother had died Charlotte was assessed by Social Services in consultation with her brothers and she was then relocated to 17 Orwell Street. Consequently, she had to get used to a residential situation in which she shared a house with three people whom she was not familiar with. Whereas the other residents living at the house were far more used to sharing accommodation with different people, Charlotte was not. Regardless, according to reports from the time she settled in at Orwell Street fairly well and when I first met her in January 2000 she seemed happy and content. In fact, because Charlotte was the most physically able and talkative of the residents, she tended to be the most dominant personality in the household. The other female resident who lived with Charlotte, John and Andrew at this

---

[21] 17 Orwell Street and Community Connections utilise a key worker system whereby specific staff members are assigned to take a special interest in an individual resident. Key workers are

time was suffering from a terminal illness and this severely impeded her physical and emotional health.

In September 2000, in the immediate period prior to when I sought permission to carry out ethnographic research, the other female resident of the house died. Within approximately two weeks Christine moved in to 17 Orwell Street. She had previously lived with her father who was elderly and becoming increasingly frail and unable to provide her with adequate support. Although Christine was in her late 50s and somewhat older, ostensibly she had a lot in common with Charlotte. She was physically mobile and verbally articulate and was capable of helping with a range of household chores without much difficulty. Also, like Charlotte, Christine had been displaced from her family home relatively abruptly in order to live with people she hardly knew. However, their relationship was hindered from the outset by the startling speed of Charlotte's arrival. The existing residents had barely had time to grieve for their recently deceased housemate when Christine moved in. This factor augmented the tension that was inevitable when a new resident arrived in an already small house in the midst of other residents who had already established their own preferred routines and rituals in that setting. Charlotte, in particular, had a difficult time accepting Christine as a house-mate and this was an issue that was never effectively resolved during the period in which I conducted research.[22]

Hence, it is apparent that there were a number of underlying tensions that influenced social relationships between residents at 17 Orwell Street. These tensions also affected staff members' relations with residents as they often had to deal with their consequences. Also what should now be clearly evident is that 17 Orwell Street is, as was proposed earlier, a highly *constructed* domestic place of dwelling. Its development as a supported living scheme was determined by a series of political policies and organisational processes. Moreover, the people who came to live there had very little control over their emplacement. Most families or groups of friends in Britain who move house are fortunate enough to have some agency when buying or renting a house and subsequently making it a 'home' (especially when choosing who to live with and how to live). Yet, in

---

determined by taking into account staff relationships with residents.

stark contrast, the residents of 17 Orwell Street were essentially displaced individuals who found that they had to cope with living with people they barely knew.

However, although the tensions fostered by their relocation to 17 Orwell Street continued to have residual influences on their day-to-day lives, the residents dealt with their domestic environment and the various social relationships that this entailed in a number of ways. As will be seen in the remaining chapters, a variety of musical activities constituted a consistently useful resource when negotiating various aspects of daily life in this environment for both the residents and the staff who supported them. Before moving on with an exploration of the specificity of 17 Orwell Street as a domestic setting and then examining the main routines in this environment, it is necessary to clarify the value of the current section.

Whilst this background section may seem solely to be an exercise in 'setting the scene' prior to an examination of domestic musical activities in the next chapter, it is important to emphasise that this is not the case. In order to appreciate the complexity of domestic activities, whether these are music-related or otherwise, it is vital to explicate the roots of and routes to a particular place as they relate to the people involved. As it was argued in Chapter 1, previous studies of everyday music usage have tended to neglect these specific contextual aspects. Yet, in this case it is clear that these roots and routes continue to have some bearing on how Andrew, John, Charlotte and Christine live at 17 Orwell Street. Thus with this study it was imperative that everyday domestic activities were not divorced from wider historical elements.

This is a point that other writers on domestic space such as Silverstone (1994), Keightley (1996), Moy (2006) and Moran (2006) have acknowledged. For instance, in his discussion of the uses of audio architecture in contemporary British society, Ron Moy emphasises that the domestic uses of stereo systems have to be connected to wider societal changes in house design, family planning and leisure pursuits (Moy, 2006 p. 202). Yet, as with the other writers mentioned, Moy does not illustrate his point by examining a specific household or family. As

---

[22] In fact, in recent years Charlotte increasingly began to express her dissatisfaction with living at 17 Orwell Street, with her relationship with Christine being a major underlying factor with this. This culminated in her moving to a different house with another charitable organisation.

will be seen, my ethnographic research in a single household clarifies the significance of historical changes by illuminating how such factors affected the ways in which actual people could encounter music. At 17 Orwell Street residents were able to use music in certain ways partly because of the particular constellation of historical factors that led them to that place at that specific time. Historical shifts provide opportunities for different engagements with musical materials. For example, because John and Andrew had moved from a large-scale hostel to a small bungalow this then provided them with more scope for privatised, uninterrupted listening to music in different domestic areas. Furthermore, the sonic environment of their current living area is likely to be significantly different to that of the much larger communal lounges of a hostel. Nevertheless, as will be revealed in the next chapter, the residents' musical activities were also constrained and influenced in specific ways due to the more intimate environment of 17 Orwell Street. Sharing living spaces with four individuals and a variety of staff members in a small bungalow facilitates particular listening experiences and musical activities whilst it limits access to others.

2. Paradoxical Aspects of Domestic 'Home' Life

17 Orwell Street has a Mission Statement that is informed by the ethos of Community Connections as a service provider. At the top of the 'Aims and Objectives' section of this statement (see appendix XI) the initial aim is as follows:

> To ensure that 17 Orwell Street is recognised by the service users as their home. Staff will support them to create and to enjoy a friendly and safe home environment.
> (17 Orwell Street, current 'Aims and Objectives')

The terms used in this policy statement affirm my earlier assertion that 17 Orwell Street can be characterised as a highly constructed 'home' environment. 'Home' in this context is a requisite *ideal* and its recognition has to be ensured by staff members. It is also an ideal that should be *created jointly* by staff and 'service users'. Furthermore, this ideal is desirable because, as the document implies,

'home' should be associated with friendship and safety. Although they are not usually formalised into documented aims and objectives, such 'home' values are commonplace in British society. They are exemplified in popular sayings such as 'there's no place like home' or 'home is where the heart is' that convey the notion that 'homeliness' is an ideal that many people seek. Indeed, the concept of 'home' as an ideal has been explored by various writers, with scholars such as Morley (2005) and Douglas (1991) suggesting that this ideal is centred on *togetherness*, often being associated with familial bonding. However, as it has already been suggested above, the individual histories of the people who came to live at 17 Orwell Street and the organisation of this supported living scheme complicate efforts to seek a 'home' ideal in this setting.

In this section of the chapter the tensions between the 'home' ideal espoused in Orwell Street's Mission Statement and the everyday activities and features that were characteristic of this place will be examined further. A discussion of various routines and organisational practices at the house will serve to highlight these tensions. During this discussion both temporal and spatial aspects of domestic 'everyday' life at 17 Orwell Street will be examined.

Joe Moran argues that: "Houses are, above all, spaces for everyday, routine activities" (Moran, 2006 p. 38). 17 Orwell Street is an environment that certainly supports this contention. In many respects, activities in this house were regimented, particularly during week days. One of the main reasons for this was that Charlotte, John and Christine attended different day centres or activities based in community settings that were ran by day centre services on specific days of the week. Charlotte attended every day because of her age and physical ability, whereas, because they were older and more prone to tiredness, John and Christine attended on fewer week days (Christine went four days a week and John twice). Often the residents who were going to day centre activities were picked up outside of their house by a bus organised by Social Services. Pick-up times were often early in the morning; sometimes being as early as 8.15am. As morning staff only began their shifts at 7.30am this meant that there was limited time for staff members to support residents to get ready in time to catch their bus. Charlotte, John and Christine usually had to wake up early and begin preparing to go out before morning staff arrived. Consequently, it was frequently the individual staff member working on the night-shift who had to be responsible for

assisting residents to wake up and to get their breakfasts, take their medication and so on.

In addition to routines that were motivated by day service attendance, various activities at 17 Orwell Street were heavily dependent upon routine. Obviously, many of these would have been similar to those of other individuals in households across Britain. For instance, all residents preferred to have a hot drink when they first woke up in the morning and would usually have their breakfast before going for a shower. This is not to suggest that such activities are self-evident for, as Dickinson et al. (2001) point out and this thesis will make clear, such seemingly simple routines often consist of a diversity of complex practices. For example, Andrew had a very specific showering routine that was motivated by concerns to minimise the anxiety he often experienced during the showering process. Therefore, this routine involved staff members establishing and maintaining a rigid sequence of events for Andrew both prior to and during him having a shower. The significance of this routine in relation to Andrew's autistic tendencies will be discussed in more depth in Chapter 7 but at this point it is a clear example of how seemingly taken-for-granted aspects of daily life can be highly complex.

17 Orwell Street was a domestic environment that had particular "time rhythms" (Douglas, 1991 p. 294). As indicated above, certain mornings were especially busy; with time becoming a precious commodity that had to be used wisely if residents were to be ready for day service activities. This was also the case when residents had doctors appointments and so on; periods of time became intensified and often the house seemed to be a hive of activity. There were also weekly tasks that the residents had to accomplish with staff support, these included such diverse activities as food shopping; collection of Disability Living Allowance and the payment of bills and rent. All such activities were formalised in that they were, by necessity, marked in a communication diary so that support staff could firstly be informed that they needed completing on a specific day and secondly so that staff could document that they had been done. Indeed, as well as this communication diary that was completed during each shift there was an abundance of other paperwork that was required to be filled in before working shifts had ended. This included the aforementioned medication charts; daily notes on each resident and checks of each resident's finances. Consequently, the

filling out of requisite documentation was a regular part of the daily time flows at 17 Orwell Street; impacting on both staff members and residents since it demanded periods of time be spent in particular ways which otherwise could have been spent differently.

Whereas certain time periods could be characterised as bordering on the frenetic, others were calmer and afforded moments of leisure and relaxation. Meal times were daily periods that all residents usually looked forward to. Andrew, in particular, would often derive great pleasure from the anticipation of his lunch or evening meal. When he saw that staff members or other residents were preparing food he would often watch with great interest from his armchair in the dining area and would frequently chuckle with excitement. Other time periods were also usually characterised by routines that were associated with pleasure and relaxation. For example, during evenings Charlotte and Christine would avidly watch the popular soap operas <u>Emmerdale</u>, <u>Coronation Street</u> and <u>East Enders</u>. Andrew routinely went for walks in the garden throughout the day and once a week he would be supported to go out for a pub lunch and/or a walk in one of the local parks during the summer. When John was not attending a day service activity he regularly enjoyed looking through books especially ones featuring pictures of trains or other forms of public transport.

The roles of music usage in relation to these and other domestic routines will be focused upon in the next chapter in particular. For now, what the above paragraphs have outlined is that 17 Orwell Street was, in many ways, a place of regularity. This domestic environment was witness to a multiplicity of daily routines but also time rhythms that altered in pace depending on the time of day. The existence of such regular routines and rhythms are, for Douglas, distinctive aspects that are indicative of a 'home' "system" (ibid. p. 301). As she argues, "The home makes its time rhythms in response to outside pressures", hence Tuesday mornings at 17 Orwell Street were exceptionally busy because Charlotte, John and Christine all needed to get ready to go to their respective day centre ran activities (ibid. p. 294).

The notion of *daily* routine and its association with regularity is, however, used with some caution in this account. As Hesmondhalgh (2002) rightly points out, it is misleading to over-emphasise day-to-day activities when examining domestic practices. The examples discussed above illustrate that 'daily life' is not

monolithic but that different days have variable time rhythms. Also, there were clearly times when routines at 17 Orwell Street were subject to change. For instance, Andrew's rigid showering routine was itself partly the product of specialist staff training by an NHS Behaviour Unit in 2003. Furthermore, on weekends time rhythms and routines were slightly more relaxed. Residents tended to devote more time to relaxation and leisure activities, but also in some cases to housework. During weekends Charlotte regularly liked to contribute to housework that she did not have time for during the week because of her day service attendance. Hence, she was enthusiastic about cleaning the bathroom and the small staff toilet on weekend mornings, whereas during the week staff members had to attend to this task.

The importance of meals also increased on weekends. For most Saturdays throughout the year residents and staff ate a takeaway meal for their dinner. This was usually purchased from a local Chinese takeaway who delivered the meal directly to 17 Orwell Street. Having "a Chinese" was something that Charlotte especially looked forward to each week and if there were any circumstances that threatened the occurrence of this ritual then she would become anxious. The main meal on Sundays was also a central weekly ritual at the house. Residents all liked to eat a traditional Sunday dinner consisting of a joint of meat together with an assortment of vegetables. In order for this to occur it was often Sunday morning staff members who were responsible for preparing the ingredients and, in some cases, beginning the cooking of the meal which was normally served at around 4.00pm.

John and Christine both had a Catholic upbringing and consequently they liked to attend church every Sunday morning. Particularly during 2000-2001 they both went to a local Catholic church regularly. Their church attendance in the years after this became more sporadic due to a variety of reasons. Firstly, Catherine, a staff member who attended the same church and could therefore provide additional support to the individual accompanying John and Christine, had to leave Community Connections due to ill health. In addition, Christine's mobility was severely hampered after breaking her hip following a fall at the day centre she attended and subsequently she needed a hip replacement. This meant that it became very difficult for an individual staff member to take both John and Christine to church at the same time because Christine needed a lot more

physical support and the use of a wheelchair. Furthermore, as will be explicated in later chapters, John was often mischievous and would frequently give staff members the impression he wanted to go to church only to adamantly refuse to go once the time came to set off. All these factors, combined with increased Sunday morning duties for staff members (such as organising paperwork relating to weekly budgets in preparation for the coming week), were obstacles to church attendance.

As well as the weekly rituals identified above, residents at 17 Orwell Street also enjoyed rituals associated with specific occasions and festivals. Christmas was the most obvious example of this and all residents were supported to participate in Christmas-related activities. These included customs such as exchanging gifts and Christmas cards; having a Christmas meal and displaying a decorated Christmas tree. For Charlotte, John and Christine the Christmas period was also a time when they would visit their families more often. On the other hand, Andrew's family tended to come to visit him instead and to exchange gifts at his house. Going out for a Christmas meal together with the entire staff team was something that all the residents found pleasurable. John, in particular, looked forward to this occasion to such an extent that he would often ask about going for a Christmas meal throughout the year even during spring and summer. In accordance with familiar customs in Britain, there were also other celebrations to commemorate events affecting people living at or involved with 17 Orwell Street. These included events such as birthdays, staff members leaving, family or staff members' weddings and so on. Further insight into such occasions will be provided in later chapters when the musical performing evident at these gatherings will be focused upon.

Thus, the above descriptions indicate that the residents of 17 Orwell Street were involved in a number of different routines and rituals that were influenced by various temporal factors. These factors included the specific time of day, with some times such as early weekday mornings having distinctively busy time rhythms, but they also included weekly and seasonal time variations. Mary Douglas contends that: "In a home there is no need to look for someone: it should be possible to work out where everyone is at any given time, that is, if it is functioning well" (ibid. p. 301). The above section supports this statement to an extent because it has shown that requisite activity for residents of 17 Orwell

Street such as getting up, getting washed, eating, attending day services and relaxing tended to occur at regular times. However, as will be seen shortly, this environment was, in certain respects, the antithesis of the home Douglas describes. Nevertheless, as was hinted at in the initial description that opened this chapter, there were many times when residents occupied specific places in the house and, as will be seen below, this also concurs with Douglas' definition of a 'home'.

It has already been indicated that residents preferred to sit in particular places in their house. This was most evident with Andrew who liked to maintain a distance from his housemates and was wary of anyone entering his personal space. The locus of this personal space was his armchair in the dining area. As can be seen from appendix IX, this armchair was located away from the lounge area where the other housemates usually sat. Indeed Andrew did not like to sit in the lounge at all and only rarely entered into the lounge area other than to walk through it into the hallway and to access his bedroom or the bathroom. Conversely, whilst Andrew tolerated people entering the dining and kitchen areas, he was often uncomfortable with staff members or housemates getting close to him whilst he was sat in his armchair or whilst he walked around. However, Andrew was more tolerant of people he knew well, especially if he was feeling relaxed. For example, Charlotte was sometimes affectionate with him; saying to him: "Where's my kiss?" On many of these occasions Andrew would be more affable and would allow Charlotte to kiss him on the cheek, even encouraging this by standing still and inclining his head to one side. Similarly, certain staff members that Andrew knew very well could sometimes sit next to him on the arm of his chair and hold his hand for a few moments. If he was feeling relaxed Andrew would tolerate this before gently pushing their hand away. Yet on other occasions and with certain individuals he did not know or staff members such as Jay who he seemed to dislike, Andrew would more forcefully push people away. Moreover, there were times when Andrew was clearly intolerant of anyone approaching the personal space in front of his armchair and he would react aggressively by kicking out or pushing at them.

These practices that relate to the defending of physical space have some coherence with those found in ethnographic studies of nursing homes. For instance, Gillian McColgan (2005) found that the elderly women with dementia

in her study of a nursing home in Scotland were fiercely protective of seating areas that they deemed their 'own'. The women adopted what McColgan terms "resistance strategies" in order to defend the seating areas that they had claimed (McColgan, 2005 p. 420). In this study McColgan adopts the concept of "defensible space" in order to discuss how the women made "private space in a public place" (ibid. p. 412). Although it cannot be straightforwardly categorised as a public place, Andrew's actions at 17 Orwell Street can partly be seen as ways of creating defensible space. Though he could not tell people to "go away" Andrew exerted some control over the physical space around him by the actions outlined above. Yet, as has been suggested and will be explored further in Chapter 7, Andrew's behaviour was more complex. Firstly this is because it was motivated by his autistic tendencies that affected his social interaction with others. Secondly, this personal space had more porous boundaries; as we have seen Andrew did tolerate people entering this space under certain conditions. During Chapter 7 these boundaries will be investigated further and musical activities will be revealed as an important resource in relation to this negotiation of personal space.

To a lesser extent, other residents in the house also preferred to occupy particular seating places. As was suggested in the initial description that began this chapter, Christine liked to sit in a single armchair that was facing the television. Charlotte, on the other hand, liked to sit on the end of the sofa facing the hallway especially during the day. This seemed to be because she could glance at what was going on in the rest of the house whilst also watching television. John preferred to sit at the other end of the sofa and furthest away from the dining area. This decision was informed by John's fears of Andrew that were alluded to earlier. When all residents were in the house staff members had to content themselves with either sitting in between John and Charlotte on the sofa or else on a large leather stool that was also in the lounge.

The lounge and dining area were central to life at 17 Orwell Street and over the next few chapters this environment and the people within it will be expounded on by examining musical activities. In contrast to my previous research with three young brothers with mild learning difficulties who were supported to live in their own house, the residents of 17 Orwell Street rarely sought privacy in their bedrooms (Hassan, 1998 unpublished M.A dissertation).

Bedrooms were mainly used only for sleeping in and getting dressed by all residents. Hence, as the next chapter will reveal, the lounge and dining areas were a crucial site for social interaction and music reception. However, subsequent chapters will also illustrate that even though less time was spent in bedrooms, they were also important sites of different kinds of musical activity, particularly for John and Christine. Consequently, it is not necessary to dwell on bedrooms as spaces for routines here because these will be the subject of scrutiny in parts of later chapters.

As it has been illustrated above, in certain respects 17 Orwell Street conformed to the notion of the 'home' system discussed by Mary Douglas. Residents and staff had developed routines characterised by varying time rhythms and organised the spaces in the house in specific ways that were influenced by outside pressures (such as day centre timetables) but also by personal histories and emotions (such as John and Andrew's awkward relationship). Yet, paradoxically the above paragraphs have also suggested that these routines and the general environment at 17 Orwell Street were antithetical to the 'home' ideal that was seen as desirable in the house's mission statement. The main reason for this is that the house was run by CC personnel as a supported living scheme. Therefore, the overall organisation of this house and the presence of staff members complicated the notion of 17 Orwell Street as a 'home'.

Firstly, this was because the house contained individual tenants who, as we have seen, had no familial bonds with each other and, in some respects, limited bonds of friendship. Individual tenants paid their own rent to a housing trust that was responsible for maintaining the structural integrity of the house. Also individuals all financially contributed equally to a household budget for food and other daily expenses and to a bank account that was set up in order to pay household bills. In relation to staffing levels, it has already been made apparent that the residents of 17 Orwell Street had had their needs assessed individually by Social Services. Staff levels and hours were, therefore, based on these initial assessments and funding was provided to CC to run the supported living scheme according to these. Consequently, the home manager of 17 Orwell Street had to adhere to a rigid staffing budget. Indeed, the managers who I worked for during the time I was employed by CC had to take great care not to

overspend by making sure staff only worked their contracted hours (though overtime was often available due to staff holidays or sickness) and ensuring that staff from agencies were hardly used as they were more expensive.

Thus, in some respects, 17 Orwell Street had similarities with the establishment that Douglas sees as the antithesis of the 'home' – the hotel. This is because each resident ultimately paid for everything related to their accommodation individually. Even support provided to them by staff members and day services was, at least on paper, paid for or funded by Social Services on an individual basis. Such a system in which all expenditures have to be accounted for is radically different from the more family-oriented one discussed by Douglas. Whereas the family 'home' she conceptualises features a system that is often dependent upon idiosyncratic rules that are negotiated and sometimes waived for the "collective good", specific rules at Orwell Street could not be bypassed (Douglas, 1991 p. 298). Every grocery purchased and every hour spent in the house by a member of staff had to be accounted for.

To compound the rigidity of this individualised system, as it was previously mentioned, documentation that needed to be maintained at 17 Orwell Street was mainly based upon each individual resident. Daily notes were filled in by staff members about each individual resident during every working shift. In fact, the plethora of paperwork devoted to each resident such as Essential Lifestyle Plans, epilepsy charts, medication sheets and so on also put 17 Orwell Street in line with another type of establishment antithetical to the notion of 'home' discussed above – the medical institution. As in the "total institutions" discussed by Goffman (1961) the "passage of information" at the house was mainly controlled by staff members (Goffman, 1961 p. 19). Though to a lesser extent than the asylum studied by Goffman, this staff control perpetuated a kind of surveillance culture because many aspects of the residents' daily lives were being monitored and written about during each shift. What became clear about this written discourse was that it was likely that it was associated with power by residents. For instance, on the odd occasion Charlotte, who often viewed herself as more able than her housemates, was observed with a notebook pretending to write even though she was illiterate. For her, it seemed that the act of writing itself was associated with power and control. Although if they wished residents could request to have the contents of documentation read to them, the fact that

staff members were required to write about individuals on a regular basis no doubt perpetuated an underlying sense of inequality between staff and residents.

The final tension that complicates the conceptualisation of 17 Orwell Street as a 'home' relates not to the organisation of the house, but again to the individuals who came to live there. It was explicated earlier in this chapter that Andrew, John, Charlotte and Christine were all effectively displaced and found themselves having to tolerate each other in a domestic setting and wider neighbourhood that they were previously unfamiliar with. Despite this, over time most of the residents began to conceive of 17 Orwell Street as their 'home'. This was clearly the case with John who would consistently refer to the house as his "home" and would often look forward to returning there if he was out. Likewise Andrew, in spite of the difficulties he had in establishing relationships with his fellow house-mates, seemed to enjoy living at 17 Orwell Street. He was frequently very content upon returning to the house and was glad to occupy the spaces that he had made his 'own' that were referred to earlier.

Charlotte had a rather more ambivalent relationship with the house. She often seemed very happy with her living situation, but there were times, particularly after Christine moved in, when she was dissatisfied. Charlotte found it difficult to accept Christine as a housemate and there were occasions when the two women clashed. For instance, especially when Christine first moved in she was eager to assist with housework but this often irritated Charlotte who enjoyed being solely responsible for helping with tasks such as washing dishes. Over a number of years Charlotte gradually became more disillusioned with the living arrangements at 17 Orwell Street and she expressed a desire to move out. Alongside this Charlotte had a strong emotional attachment to the previous area she had lived in with her mother, which was a few miles away. In fact one of her motivations for choosing to move to the house she eventually went to in early 2007 was that it was much nearer to this area. Christine herself was often far more unambiguous in expressing that she did not consider 17 Orwell Street her 'home'. As she gradually realised that she would not be going back to live with her father she would regularly wake up at night and protest that she wanted to "go home". She would frequently talk about how she missed her father and become very upset over the death of her mother (even though her mother had died when Christine was a young woman).

Consequently, it would be misleading to state that Charlotte and Christine felt 'at home' living at 17 Orwell Street. This is because as David Chaney crucially points out: "what counts as home for anyone is defined by emotional affiliation ('home is where the heart is') and is therefore an *arbitrary attribution*" (Chaney, 2002 p. 59, my italics). Thus, bearing in mind this point that what individuals conceptualise as 'home' is based on arbitrary processes that are informed by emotions, it is more apt to assert that for Charlotte and Christine, 17 Orwell Street was not necessarily considered to be their 'home'. Both women felt at times that their 'home' was truly located in their past and associated with houses and people who they either no longer saw or lived with.

Yet paradoxically, in line with Chaney's definition that suggests that notions of 'home' are subject to change, it is also my contention that there were times when the house could become like a 'home' for all individuals in the house. That is, there were experiences that fostered the 'home' ideal associated with togetherness and security that was mentioned at the beginning of this section. In this sense, Chaney's definition is relevant to the domestic context of 17 Orwell Street because the above tensions that have been identified illustrate that 'home' is an ideal that is never fully achieved. Homes are *made*, but as we have seen with the descriptions of the roots, routes and routines that shaped the peculiar environment that was the site of my ethnographic research they are not *only* made through emotional affiliation. Rather, they were determined by a series of organisational, social and political factors; many of which were out of the control of the people who occupied the 'home'. However, in the remaining chapters it will be revealed that music reception and associated activities could alleviate the tensions specific to 17 Orwell Street that were identified above. Furthermore, it will be argued that these musical materials and activities constituted positive ways of making this house seem more like a 'home'.

Chapter 5

Musically Making a Place like 'Home'?
Music Reception and the Domestic Environment at 17 Orwell Street

Various writers have made clear that control over sound is a formidable element of social power (see for instance, Schafer, 1977; Tagg, 1994; DeNora, 2000). Ergo, it is clear that control over music is also related to social power. This is something that many music scholars have acknowledged. For instance, Martin Cloonan and Bruce Johnson (2002) have pointed out how music has been used as a weapon of state power, particularly during acts of torture. Hence, it is apparent that music usage can have a negative or damaging impact on people and their behaviour.

This also applies to uses of music within establishments set up to care for people. For example, the following description of the sonic environment of a lounge in a nursing home by the ethnographer Gillian McColgan illustrates that music can have a negative impact in such a setting:

> For most of the day, from early morning before breakfast to late evening when few residents were not yet in bed, there was music playing on the hi-fi unit. Quite a number of the residents in the Grange had some degree of hearing impairment, yet the volume was low. The result was that to many of the residents, the music was just a competing noise they strained to distinguish. Other competing noises were the vacuum cleaner, the telephone, and care workers' shouting across the room to each other. The music was also sometimes used to drown out another noise, such as a restless or upset resident or one being interviewed as part of my research.
> Far from creating a relaxing ambient environment, the music was an annoyance to most people most of the time. Rather than a selection of various music to suit differing tastes, one radio station playing contemporary popular music was usually selected by care assistants and remained on for the day. (McColgan, 2005 p. 48)

This lengthy description is striking in that it highlights how low, seemingly 'background' music that might be interpreted by some as relatively innocuous (certainly in comparison to more obvious harmful uses of music such as during torture) can have a number of negative consequences. The mediation of

music in this setting is a source of irritation firstly because it contributes to an overall sonic environment that is cluttered and experienced as bewildering for many residents. Secondly, the selection of music is problematic because the people who spend the majority of time in the lounge (the residents) have no control over the choice of radio station being mediated to them. Thus, McColgan's account of a single lounge in a nursing home demonstrates that there are considerable issues in relation to social power that can be laid bare when focusing on seemingly 'sedate', 'home' environments.

Taking such issues into account this chapter will examine 17 Orwell Street as a sonic environment; explicating issues that relate to social power and the mediation of music in this setting. In line with many groups of people with learning difficulties, the residents of this house predominantly listened to music at 'home'. Therefore, because it was the main setting for music reception, it was vital that this setting was focused upon in depth. Furthermore, as it was suggested in Chapter 1 and will become clearer here, previous studies of domestic music reception have underplayed the significance of the domestic context. In contrast to these studies, this chapter will demonstrate that a rigorous analysis of a single setting is required in order to elucidate the complex relations between place and musical action. For, as writers such as Feld (1996) and Casey (1996) suggest, peoples' social and musical actions affect particular places in ways that are unique to that place. In addition, these experiences and practices are fundamentally affected by the specific place in question. Accordingly, this chapter will expound an approach that enables the investigation of these dialectical relationships between place, musical and social action.

To accomplish this, the chapter is divided into a number of sections. The first section focuses upon processes that are often taken for granted – those relating to how music is 'put on'. By examining such processes at 17 Orwell Street it will be contended that they reveal important issues concerning access and agency that have hitherto been neglected in previous studies of domestic music reception. This section will also utilise the concept of mediation to assist in the explanation of the processes relating to how music is 'put on'. The implications of the mediation of music are then elaborated on in Section 2 where the main living areas of 17 Orwell Street are analysed as a domestic soundscape through drawing on the theories of Murray Schafer (1977). This analysis will

enable a more thorough contextualisation of the place of music within the overall domestic setting. Such analysis also provides the foundation for Section 3 in which the impact of the mediation of music at 17 Orwell Street is examined by exploring the types of companionship that music offered residents and staff members. This focus on the impact of mediation is then developed further in Section 4 where, building on the work of Judith Becker (2001), it will be proposed that Pierre Bourdieu's concept of the 'habitus' offers a fruitful method for assessing the connections between musical actions and domestic environments.

1. 'Putting music on': Issues of Access and Agency

Recent years have witnessed an increased interest in research that focuses on domestic uses of popular music. In particular, much of the published work has concentrated on how music is utilised to structure, claim, re-claim or transform domestic spaces (see for instance, Keightley, 1996; DeNora, 2000; Hennion, 2001; Williams, 2001; Lincoln, 2005; Moy, 2006). Through analysing ethnographic interviews writers such as DeNora, Lincoln, Williams and Hennion have effectively revealed that in domestic settings the "act of listening is…centred around the inventive use of personal space" (Hennion, 2001 p. 6). Therefore, some of the interviewees in these accounts indicate that they use music as a resource to *create* personalised spaces in rooms such as bedrooms and lounges. For example, in the work of Lincoln (2005) and Williams (2001) that centres on teenagers' bedroom culture there is a strong sense that interviewees were 'claiming' bedrooms as 'their' spaces through uses of music.

The notion of 'claiming' space suggests that the individuals discussed in the above texts had a great deal of control over their domestic settings. However, writers such as Lincoln, Williams and DeNora do not exaggerate this and suggest that people are not free to use music as they please. Especially in DeNora's work on music in everyday life social agency is revealed as integral when considering how music is used as a resource (DeNora, 2000 p. 20). Thus, returning to Lincoln and Williams' research on bedroom culture for illustrative purposes, both writers acknowledge that the teenagers' musical activities are constrained by factors such as their age, limited disposable income and school work. Hence, these

accounts imply that agency in relation to domestic musical activity is not free but restricted. Yet, as was argued in Chapter 1, the fact that the aforementioned studies rely heavily on interview data means that certain questions regarding how agency is affected within specific domestic contexts are not able to be addressed.

Nevertheless, the use of interviews in these studies is important because it enables informants to expound on how they use music. Indeed, for Hennion and DeNora, it is vital that the interviewer actively encourages people to discuss their different ways of using music, rather than why they like certain songs and so on (DeNora, 2000 p. 121; Hennion, 2001 p. 6). Such an approach is fruitful because it places an emphasis on how music is incorporated into social action which is an area that has often been under-researched (DeNora, 2000 p. ix). However, despite the merits of this method, it is ill-placed to explicate aspects of social agency that are equally important. Simply put, there is one question that is left largely unexplored in the studies of domestic music usage mentioned so far – what are the factors that enable these uses of music to occur? As will be seen throughout this chapter, this question brings with it a corollary of other questions regarding the domestic context(s) involved, access to music-related materials and agency.

Whilst the texts mentioned above suggest that people are not free to do whatever they want with musical materials, they tend to feature an underlying assumption that the act of 'putting music on' is an unproblematic process. In other words, it is taken for granted that individuals are all *able* to operate musical hardware and therefore could listen to music through their own volition. This section will make this assumption problematic through an examination of social agency at 17 Orwell Street. Therefore, the emphasis in this section and much of this chapter will be placed on the *specific* factors that influenced how my research subjects could receive and use musical materials in their domestic environment.

Whilst, as we have seen, other writers have identified the importance of contextual factors when discussing domestic musical activity, they tend to do so through a consideration of general wider determinants (Keightley, 1996; Hennion, 2001; Moy, 2006). In contrast, my approach to ethnographic research over a number of years has been to build on these previous studies by elucidating more micro-contextual aspects that shape domestic musical activity. This

interrogation of micro aspects can also shed further light on how music usage is related to domestic spaces. For instance, a previous small scale ethnographic research project I undertook in 1996 was concurrent with the hitherto mentioned work of Lincoln, Williams and others in that it revealed how three brothers sharing a house used music as a resource to help them to 'claim' domestic spaces (Hassan, unpublished MA dissertation, 1998). However, as it was based on regular participant-observation this study was able to reveal more about how domestic musical activities are often developed in the face of social relations in a specific house.

Whilst the three brothers used musical activities to structure time and to mark or transform domestic places and routines, these activities were frequently instigated as part of social bonding (with each other or with staff members supporting them). Alternatively, these activities were used to ameliorate conflicts or tensions amongst each other. Thus, although the brothers sometimes used music to 'claim' an area of the house (such as a bedroom) as their territory, regular participant-observation revealed such 'claiming' attempts as fragile and prone to failure. For example, one of the brothers, Karle, was a keen gardener and he liked to have music playing whilst he carried out tasks in the back garden. To enable this he utilised an electricity socket in the garden shed into which he plugged a radio/cassette player. However, this area was disrupted by his two brothers, Sam and Darren, who became enthusiastic about mountain bike riding and began to store their bikes in the shed. Consequently, the garden shed quickly became a source of conflict and Karle ultimately had to re-negotiate the space he had claimed for playing music in the back garden by enabling his radio/cassette to be plugged into a smaller tool shed he had erected on the opposite side of the garden (ibid. p. 38).

Living arrangements and the social relations within a specific domestic setting can, therefore, both influence the ways in which music is used and how it is able to be heard in the first place. At 17 Orwell Street the ways in which issues of access could influence domestic music reception were in the foreground to a much larger extent than with my previous ethnographic research project. The first and most obvious issue in relation to access was that certain residents found it difficult to actually operate musical hardware. However, as will be seen, a consideration of these difficulties also involves examining further aspects that

relate to accessibility, most notably the roles of staff members in facilitating music reception.

Although Andrew sat next to the hi-fi system that was situated in a cabinet in the dining area, he showed little aptitude for opening the cabinet and operating the system. Unlike the children with learning difficulties in Ockelford's (1998) study, Andrew had not learned how to indicate that he wanted to listen to music through sign language or the use of icons. He also did not seem to recognise that when I held up a CD case this equated with the playing of music. Instead, as will become much clearer in Chapter 7, staff members gauged whether Andrew was enjoying listening to music through taking into account his body language, facial expressions, physical actions and movements. Yet, due to his lack of speech there would have been occasions when Andrew would not have been able to express displeasure at music being played through the hi-fi or television. Conversely, there would have been occasions when he may have wanted to listen to music but had no means of communicating this. Such communication difficulties were unfortunate because, as will be revealed in Chapter 7, Andrew often derived great pleasure from music listening and musical activities were important in helping him to develop social bonds with the people around him.

The other three residents were also reliant on staff members with the operating of musical hardware, though to varying degrees. John consistently requested music particularly during different stages of his morning routine. When he was sat at the dining table waiting for his breakfast he would often urge me or other staff members to "put music on". Frequently, John would request specific artists whom he liked such as Boney M or Jim Reeves when talking to me. As with many other aspects of his daily life such as washing, dressing, making drinks and cooking, John relied on staff members to facilitate his music reception. This reliance was not solely attributable to his physical or mental impairments. Rather, John had grown accustomed to assuming that staff members would do things for him, consequently he was often reluctant to carry out tasks himself. For instance, John enjoyed looking at books particularly ones featuring trains or other types of public transport and he was physically capable of picking one up from the magazine rack in the lounge or from the shelf in his bedroom. Yet invariably he would say to a member of staff "pass book";

indicating that he wanted them to get one for him. Thus, John's reliance on other people had become routine and this attitude influenced his access to musical materials and other leisure activities.

To counteract John's over-reliance on support staff one of the daily goals that was influenced by his Essential Lifestyle Plan and documented in his daily notes file was to "promote independence". Therefore, staff members encouraged John to help with basic daily tasks such as washing himself and making a cup of tea, although support was provided to assist him with these tasks. With the playing of music in his bedroom there were occasions when I encouraged him to try to operate his stereo system. This was something that I had observed Jay (who was John's key worker for a number of years before eventually becoming Team Leader) trying to accomplish. John, however, found the operation of his small hi-fi system difficult. If I guided his hand and told him where the 'on' switch was he could eventually press this switch. Playing a CD was much more difficult though because the buttons were smaller for 'play' and 'stop' and John had difficulty with the fine motor skills required to successfully press these buttons. Furthermore, he could not read so he found it difficult to understand which button corresponded with the different functions.

Thus, whilst John was not reticent when it came to requesting to listen to his CDs, ultimately he was heavily reliant upon the good will of staff members when it came to the execution of his wishes. In a different way Christine was also heavily reliant upon staff members when accessing musical materials. Of all of the residents it was Christine who displayed the least interest in listening to music, at least on a daily basis. Whereas, as will be identified shortly, listening to music was frequently a desired part of daily routines, especially for John and Charlotte, Christine showed less inclination. As Nicky, one of the most experienced staff members at 17 Orwell Street, pointed out in her interview Christine "very occasionally, asked for music on" (interview, 3.11.05). Nicky's view was concurrent with many of my own observations of Christine as she engaged in her regular daily activities. She rarely seemed to specifically ask to listen to music whether she was situated in the lounge, kitchen or her bedroom. However, as will be seen shortly, she was rarely hostile to the fact that music was regularly mediated in the lounge/dining/kitchen area through the TV or stereo

system. Moreover, there were occasions when Christine clearly benefited from listening to music and when she engaged in valuable musical activities.

Nevertheless, Christine rarely accessed music through her own agency. This partly stemmed from her general lack of confidence and tendency to be quiet which was evident from when she first moved to 17 Orwell Street. Christine could be quite talkative on occasions, especially when she first moved into the house and when staff members engaged her in conversation. She would usually respond clearly to questions from fellow residents or staff members especially when she first moved in and was developing friendships with others. For example, when I was getting to know Christine I often asked her questions about her favourite TV programmes or songs. During the very first entry in my field diary I documented that Christine had been talking about some of the films that she liked. I discovered that she enjoyed watching musicals as the following segment illustrates:

Christine also talked...about some of her favourite films; she mentioned The Sound of Music (1965) first and when I listed some other musicals such as Fiddler on the Roof (1971), Annie (1982) and Oliver (1968) she smiled and indicated that she knew them. (Field notes 7.10.00)

Although this field diary extract is not particularly detailed it is revealing in that it illustrates how Christine was somewhat taciturn when it came to expressing preferences. I had to list other musicals I thought she might have liked and when I did this Christine showed approval, but prior to this she had been fairly reserved; only uttering a few words.

Indeed, this example was indicative of many of Christine's interactions in the lounge area of the house, particularly at this time. She rarely asked staff members for anything, perhaps due to shyness or politeness. Whereas her fellow housemates were proactive in enquiring about daily concerns such as meal times or asking for drinks and so on (even Andrew would effectively request a cup of tea by bringing his mug to people), Christine was often hesitant. Consequently, it was frequently down to staff members or fellow residents to approach her and enquire whether she needed anything or to engage her in conversation.

Often Christine did not seem to feel 'at home' at 17 Orwell Street. Therefore her general tentativeness when conducting herself in front of other

people in the house was likely to be symptomatic of this. However, when she was given attention on a more individual basis, particularly within her bedroom, Christine sometimes became more proactive. For instance, whilst Christine's long-time key worker, Mel, acknowledged in her interview that Christine "rarely" asked for music when sat in the lounge, she went on to point out that Christine would request specific CDs such as her Julie Andrews compilation whilst in her bedroom (interview with Mel, 26.4.04). Yet, as with John and Andrew, Mel also pointed out that Christine would tend to rely on staff "because she can't put her music on" (ibid.).

It is also pertinent to point out here that Christine's confidence and social agency in relation to musical activity were connected to the social relationships she developed with individuals. On the whole she had a very friendly relationship with Mel and her trust in Mel perhaps gave her the confidence to be more independent with her leisure activities. This connection between the development of trusting social relationships and Christine's agency in relation to musical activity was also demonstrated by her interactions with her subsequent key worker. When Mel had left during late 2004 it was not too long before Janet, a new member of staff who quickly became friendly with Christine, was assigned as her key worker. During a few morning shifts in this period I was surprised to discover that Christine had began attempting to play a recorder she had kept in her bedside drawer. She had started this whilst Janet was assisting her to dry her hair; Christine had reached for the recorder and whimsically started attempting to play it. When I had knocked on Christine's door and peered in to view her playing it was clear that she was enjoying being playful and mischievous during this musical activity. Christine's developing friendship with Janet had given her the confidence to try playing a musical instrument that she owned but had previously hardly shown anyone else in the house. The significance of musical activities for establishing social relationships, enabling residents to articulate self-identities and to develop self-esteem will be elaborated on in subsequent chapters. Yet what the above example affirms at this point is that residents' social agency in relation to musical activity remained largely contingent upon their relations with staff members.

A further factor that influenced how Christine could access music in the house was her limited physical mobility. When she first moved to 17 Orwell

Street Christine could walk around the house without staff support or the use of any mobility aids. Also when outside she could walk comfortably for short distances as long as she had a staff member linking her arm to support her when negotiating uneven pavements and so on (in fact, all the other residents preferred to be supported in this way when walking). Unfortunately, due to a number of accidents Christine's mobility soon decreased. Firstly, during 2000 she broke a couple of toes during a fall and for a few weeks this meant that she had to rely on using a wheelchair when going out. A second and more serious accident occurred in 2001 when Christine fell and broke her hip whilst attending the day centre. This accident resulted in her having a prolonged stay in hospital whilst she had a hip replacement operation.

After returning to 17 Orwell Street and receiving regular support from a physiotherapist and the normal team of support staff Christine was able to maintain limited mobility. Since this time she has tended to rely upon walking aids such as a walking frame and hand rails, as well as staff support, to enable her to manoeuvre around the house. Outside of the house she is now wholly reliant upon people pushing her in a wheelchair. This limited mobility had consequences for how Christine could access leisure activities in the house. This is because if she wanted to move from one room to another she relied upon staff support even if this was simply to pass her the walking frame. Therefore, if Christine wanted to go to her bedroom to pick up a book or to listen to music on her own, she was heavily reliant upon other people to make this possible. Hence, in contrast to my previous ethnographic research findings on the three brothers and some of the literature discussed earlier, Christine's restricted access to music-related materials curtailed the ways in which she could use music to 'claim' personal space. As it has been argued previously, it is these specific issues relating to inequality of access that have often been underplayed in existing studies of domestic music reception.

Charlotte was the most physically able of the four residents. She was the youngest person living at the house and the liveliest. Unlike Christine, Charlotte was bubbly and often garrulous. She also clearly knew how to operate musical hardware, whereas as we have seen her fellow housemates either didn't have the requisite skills or the inclination to do so. Charlotte had a small CD/tape player

in her bedroom and during most mornings her CDs and tapes could be heard playing whilst she was in there getting ready.

Although she needed no assistance to operate the stereo located in her room, Charlotte seemed to be more circumspect when it came to the stereo system in the main living area of the house. Ostensibly this was Andrew's system, yet as it was located within the lounge/dining area it had become a sort of shared resource for residents and staff alike. Indeed, as the next section of this chapter will illustrate, this system was often pivotal to the entire lounge, dining and kitchen areas; providing a means of mediating music amidst a range of domestic activities and sounds. There were times when Charlotte operated this system on her own particularly when Andrew still had an older system during the year 2000 and for the majority of 2001. This stereo system had the capacity to play single CDs and tapes as well as having a radio function. Instead of playing individual CDs the stereo system was frequently used for its radio. Consequently, Charlotte knew that if she pressed the 'on' switch on the stereo, the radio would come on. Yet Charlotte had a sense that this was a 'shared' system and it was interesting that she often qualified her usage of it. For instance, in two field diary passages within the space of a week in 2001, it was noted that Charlotte had justified switching the stereo system on by taking account of the interests of others:

Charlotte asked John if he wanted the "wireless on". She knew where the 'on' button was – 'Key 103' was the channel [that came] on. (Field notes, 5.11.01)

After her breakfast Charlotte said "I'll put music on for Andrew" and she switched the radio on in the kitchen area. (Field notes 10.11.01)

In addition, similarly to John, Charlotte would often ask a staff member to put the stereo system on. This was especially the case once Andrew had been supported to purchase a new stereo system with a multi-load CD function on it at Christmas time in 2001. Once Andrew had this multi-load function on his stereo system this meant that, provided more than one CD had been inserted into the disc holders, as soon as one CD had finished playing another one would start automatically. Due to this function it became more common practice amongst staff members to pre-load a number of CDs into the system according to their

own tastes and their knowledge of residents' tastes, rather than to put radio stations on. Consequently, because the radio did not usually come on with the switching on of the system, this may have deterred Charlotte from trying to put music on herself.

Nevertheless, as with the other residents, she seemed to accept this usage of the 'shared' stereo system. As Mel explained in her interview, Charlotte would sometimes bring one of her CDs from her bedroom into the lounge and ask a staff member if they could put it on (ibid.). The most common time of day when Charlotte tended to request to have the stereo system on was in the morning. Whilst she was preparing her breakfast she would often ask: "can we have the wireless on?"[23] Charlotte enjoyed listening to a variety of CDs and wasn't usually concerned whether these were her own or those of others such as Andrew or John. Likewise, she didn't seem to mind whether a radio station was put on instead. This provides further illustration of the pervasive reliance on staff agency in relation to accessing music that was evident when discussing the other residents. Even though Charlotte was capable of operating the stereo system in the dining area, she seemed to prefer that staff had control over this and did not seem interested in learning about its various functions.

Therefore, as it has been explicated in this section, the notion of 'putting music on' was far from self-evident in a domestic environment like that of 17 Orwell Street. Residents' access to music was heavily contingent upon staff members who often acted as facilitators to the *mediation* of music. Moreover, the above discussion that centred on how social relations in the house influenced access to music illustrates Negus' (1996) contention that the concept of mediation is:

> a way of starting to think about the range of processes,
> movements, relationships and power struggles that occur
> *between* and *across* the production and consumption of
> popular music (Negus, 1996 p. 70).

---

[23] As Moores (2000) illustrates in his research with elderly people from the UK, 'the wireless' was a term that was commonly used to refer to the radio during the 1920s and 1930s. Thus, Charlotte's usage of this term must have been strongly influenced by her mother who was from this generation.

This is because the above consideration of access to musical materials suggested, as Negus does, that the contexts of reception and the activities associated with music technologies such as stereo systems will mediate both the meanings of these technologies and the music played through them. Staff members' actions, as well as social relations within the house, provided important *intermediary* factors that influenced how music could be accessed. Whilst Negus theorises music video reception by pointing out the importance of examining how contexts of reception mediate music use, he does not refer to specific empirical examples to explain how this occurs. Consequently, issues of access are underplayed in his theoretical discussion.

This section has shown the value of focusing upon ethnographic data when exploring mediation because it has revealed how complex intermediary factors can be within a single household. The next section will continue this process by moving away from issues of access and agency in order to discuss the specific soundscape at 17 Orwell Street. In particular, it will reveal that the mediation of music in this domestic sonic environment affected how musical materials were engaged with, especially in the lounge/kitchen/dining area. Hence, it will provide further insight into how the contexts of domestic music reception are crucial to consider when exploring the mediation of music.

2. The Domestic Soundscape

By locating 17 Orwell Street as a "soundscape" I am delineating it, in accordance with Murray Schafer's definition, as an "acoustic field of study" (Schafer, 1977 p. 7). Thus, the domestic setting that constituted my ethnographic field was also investigated in terms of its sonic characteristics. Yet, as Schafer asserts, studying the sonic environment of a setting is a perilous task. Whilst I have identified the constant physical aspects of 17 Orwell Street by providing a plan of the house and the main living area (see appendix IX and X), and also describing various features of the bungalow as a place, it is more difficult to specify constant sonic features. This is because in contemporary urban areas such as the town in Merseyside where Orwell Street was located, it is problematic to pin-point

constant "soundmarks" in the same way as landmarks (ibid. p. 10).[24]
Nevertheless, after spending a considerable amount of time at the house it
became evident that it was necessary to study it as a soundscape, particularly the
aforementioned lounge/kitchen/dining area. This would then enable a
consideration of the position of mediated music amidst the other regular sonic
features of this area.

However, unlike Schafer, my methods for considering the soundscape of
17 Orwell Street did not include systematic audio recording. I did not record the
sonic environment of the setting using audio-equipment for two main reasons.
Firstly, because ethical principles governed this project it was decided that the
consistent recording that would have been required to explicate the varied sonic
features of the house would have potentially been invasive. Secondly, if it had
been declared to the residents and staff members that I was recording the lounge
area then this would have undoubtedly affected their actions and interactions in
this area; possibly changing the entire mood of the setting.

Accordingly the discussion of aspects of the domestic soundscape that
follows is based primarily on my experiences within this sonic environment,
many of which were documented in field notes. Obviously there were limitations
with this approach to analysis. Most notably due to the lack of an audio recording
that could be re-played, it was not possible to accurately delineate the multitude
of sounds that were evident in the varied settings of the house. However, to
accomplish this in any case would have required the careful arrangement of
sophisticated recording equipment and the use of such equipment was irrelevant
for an ethnographic study of this nature as it would have entirely changed the
setting. Furthermore, as I spent a lengthy period of time at 17 Orwell Street this
enabled me to become familiar with the regular sonic features of this place to the
extent that I was not only able to identify common sounds, but to gain an insight
into how they felt.

This insight was valuable for, as Steven Feld suggests, perception is
multi-sensory and sounds "change contextually with bodily emplacement" (Feld,
1996 p. 96). Therefore, whilst sounds may be electronically recorded and their

---

[24] Schafer defines a 'soundmark' as a term that: "refers to a community sound which is unique or
possesses qualities which make it specially regarded or noticed by the people in that community"
(Schafer, 1977 p. 10).

properties analysed, this would not reveal how sonic features are felt and embodied within a specific place. Furthermore, the ethnographic methods adopted in this study were able to shed light on how sonic features relate to social action. Sonic features at 17 Orwell Street (specifically music) were largely mediated through the agency of staff members. Yet during the later sections of this chapter it will be revealed that this mediation of music also afforded particular kinds of social action and interaction (DeNora, 2000).

The auditory features of a specific setting can have a profound impact on social action and interaction and the auditory in general is a vital area of study in social research. This is made abundantly clear through the research work of Schafer (1977), Tagg (1994), Feld (1996) and Bull (2000, 2003, 2005). While these texts underline the significance of examining auditory experiences within everyday life which have been traditionally underplayed (see Moy, 2000), other authors have stressed that such examination is valuable when exploring cultural change. For instance, Crisell (1994), Stockfelt (1997), Kassabian (1999, 2002) and Moy (2006) demonstrate that social and technological changes have a number of implications for human auditory experiences in Western societies. The above studies are significant not least because they suggest in accordance with theorists such as Adorno (1990) and Attali (1985) that the mediation of music in such societies can reveal a great deal about social relations and power.

Yet, micro studies that focus on a single setting such as the one expounded during this thesis can complement the existing literature mentioned above. This is because sonic aspects enable people to make sense of the specific places they inhabit (Feld, 1996 p. 97). Such sense-making as it relates to particular places is complex and requires careful examination. Feld calls such examination "acoustemology", which entails: "an exploration of sonic sensibilities, specifically of ways in which sound is central to making sense, to knowing, to experiential truth" (ibid.). This type of study is useful when considering a place like 17 Orwell Street which, as has been suggested, is a setting that was subject to socio-cultural processes that attempted to make the house a 'home'. Sound, as Feld indicates, is integral to "making place" in ways that are complex and diverse (ibid.). This is a point that will be borne out throughout the remainder of this chapter section.

'Making place': The "working house"

When asked in an interview to describe the "general sound environment" at 17 Orwell Street Mel, a young woman who had worked at the house for a number of years, offered the following description:

> You normally hear the kettle every 10 minutes...telly is on probably all day and the radio is on all day. Hoover will come on...the telephone will ring, doors will be shut, toilets will be flushed, windows will be shut...washing machine and tumble drier, chairs moving in the kitchen, drawers – just the general sound of a working house really. (Interview with Mel, 26.4.04)

This description, whilst it may seem simple, is strikingly revealing. What Mel articulated in this part of her interview was firstly the dominant sonic features that were resonant in the overall domestic soundscape (or "field" to utilise Schafer's term to define all the sounds in a given place) (Schafer, 1977 p. 152). Crucially, and in accordance with my experiences of this 'field', technological mediation of music and other sounds from the radio or TV were perceived as *dominant* sonic features by Mel. Adopting Schafer's terms once again, I would argue (though with a degree of hesitation) that these mediated sounds could almost be characterised as "keynote sounds" (ibid. p. 9). This is because especially during the day they constituted part of the "anchor or fundamental tone" of this domestic environment; they were the "ground" upon which other sounds were predicated (ibid.).

In fact, it was commonplace for the TV to be switched on all day and night because night staff would often leave the TV on (at a low volume) throughout the night. This was because staff members frequently watched TV whilst ironing and doing other night duties such as polishing and tidying. Hence, there was the potential for music to be mediated throughout the day and night. For even if there were no CDs being played or music channels on the TV, there was often an abundance of music featured during TV programmes or advertisements. Moreover, there was a strong inclination amongst the majority of the people living and working at 17 Orwell Street to specifically have music as a feature of the domestic soundscape. For instance, John and Charlotte would regularly request musical materials; whether this was specific artists or merely

requesting the "wireless" or "music". At the same time various staff members also liked to have mediated music as part of the domestic soundscape. It was frequently the case that when I arrived for a morning shift there was a music channel already on the TV that had been put on by the person working on the night shift. Channels varied according to staff tastes; for instance Paul preferred Classic FM TV, whilst women such as Nicky, Natalie, Marie and Catherine tended to have channels that played a variety of contemporary chart hits on them. Of these channels The Box was the one that was most often documented in my field notes as being on the TV when I entered 17 Orwell Street for a morning shift.

During informal conversations with Catherine and Marie (who have since left) they intimated that they "ended up" putting music channels on the TV because the other programmes available during the night did not interest them. This suggests that watching music channels during the night for these individuals was partly a way of alleviating boredom. However, as will be seen shortly, participant-observation and interview data revealed that the mediation of music had more significant roles within this domestic environment that accorded serious consideration.

Alongside mediated music and sounds there were other consistent features that could be identified as keynote sounds within the overall soundscape (field) of 17 Orwell Street's main living area. These included the rumbling of the washing machine and tumble drier that also seemed ubiquitous, particularly during the period between mid-morning and late afternoon (depending on the volume of washing). Although lower in tone, the humming of the fridge-freezer, the cooker (during cooking), an extractor fan (during and after cooking) and a ceiling fan (during hot weather) can be included in these consistent keynote sounds.

In relation to such keynote sounds Schafer argues that: "Even though keynote sounds may not always be heard consciously, the fact that they are ubiquitously there suggests the possibility of a deep and pervasive influence on our behavior and moods" (ibid.) Whilst it is inaccurate to suggest that the sounds identified above were ubiquitous because there were times when they were switched off, the fact that these sounds were dominant for significant periods of each day at 17 Orwell Street necessitates the serious exploration of Schafer's

point in relation to this setting. Furthermore, because mediated music was a regular feature of these keynote sounds it is imperative to explore its influence on the people within the house. Consequently, the impact of the pervasive mediation of music on the people living and working at 17 Orwell Street will be explored throughout the remainder of this chapter. This will be accomplished by focusing on the relations between music usage, social context and social actions/interactions.

However, Mel's description also highlights another aspect relevant to the study of 17 Orwell Street as a domestic soundscape. This is because she characterised the house as a place of movement – sounds were made by people moving and acting in this domestic environment. Thus, the kettle was regularly switched on; the vacuum cleaner was used; doors were opened and shut and so on. This is an obvious point, but it illustrates the *purposive* nature of a domestic soundscape like that of 17 Orwell Street. Regular sounds were not random; they occurred for various reasons and, as Mel suggested, often these were dictated by the demands of a 'working house' – the daily duties that needed to be carried out. This also reminds us that, although domestic soundscapes may have dominant sonic features, these are not constant; they change emphasis as factors such as housework routines vary. For instance, it has already been made clear in the previous chapter that routines at 17 Orwell Street varied on weekends when certain sounds could become temporarily absent (for example, because of the lack of use of the cooker on Saturdays due to the ritual of a takeaway dinner) or intensified (prolonged use of the cooker on Sundays to prepare a larger dinner).

Mel's description of a purpose-oriented sonic environment also points to another key factor to accommodate when examining the relations between domestic soundscape and music reception. Namely that the 'keynote sounds' will often be experienced in such a 'working house' whilst *on the move*. This point justifies my previous reluctance to claim that music and sounds were *uniformly* experienced as keynote sounds at 17 Orwell Street. Whether a sound is recognised as "figure" (a primary sound "signal" that is immediately listened to as the focus of interest) or "ground" (the ambient keynote sounds that have been discussed above which may be pervasive but not necessarily actively listened to) will be influenced by various factors (ibid. p. 152; Van Leeuwen, 1999 p. 16). These factors include the cultural practices established in a given place, the

moods of individuals experiencing the soundscape of the place and the individuals' relations to the "field" (whether they consider themselves an insider or outsider). In connection to cultural practices (what Schafer terms "habits") at 17 Orwell Street we can now be more specific and add in the physical movements that are involved with these practices. Thus, whilst maintaining my earlier argument (influenced by Schafer) that the pervasive mediation of music has a profound impact upon people within a given setting, it is important not to generalise about this. Rather, it is essential to explore particular cultural practices within a specific setting in order to gain an insight into the physical movements, social actions and relationships that may influence how such mediation is experienced.

3. Mediated music and 'background' companionship

17 Orwell Street was a specific 'working house' with variable time rhythms and manifold routines. Unsurprisingly, then, since mediated music was often pervasive during busy time periods it was frequently the case that music seemed to accompany peoples' actions without being explicitly listened to. The following field diary extract illustrates how music often seemed to be a 'background' soundtrack to other activities in the house:

In the lounge Nicky [who had been working the night shift] had The Box music channel on the television on a low volume. Throughout the morning as me, Mel and the student nurses were sat there it seemed that the channel was just on. It was something to gaze at and listen to in a somewhat uninvolved manner. It was a background to several conversations, phone calls, tea breaks etc.
(Field notes 15.6.01)

Interestingly, my interpretations in this field diary entry from the early stages of the fieldwork are somewhat ambiguous when discussing music reception. Music *seemed* to be "just on" – a background, but yet it was *listened to* in an "uninvolved manner" (ibid.). However, as the research progressed it became clear that it was inadequate to straightforwardly suggest that music was simply in the 'background'. Music, whether mediated through radio, TV, discs and so on, was never 'just on' or 'there'; it had a variety of functions in this specific setting.

The most obvious of these that was made evident during my ethnographic research was that music accompanied domestic chores and routines. During her interview Charlotte offered an insight into the value of the companionship that music can offer during domestic chores. As the following excerpt reveals, when asked about what happened when she cleaned her bedroom, Charlotte emphasised the centrality of music to the task:

> NH: So...tell me about what happens when you clean your room then.
> Charlotte: Yeah, in me room, put wireless on (laughing).
> NH: Yeah, you put the wireless on first do you? And then you start?
> Charlotte: Yeah, yeah.
> NH: So it's always on. Is it better?
> Charlotte: *Yeah*, better.
> NH: When you've got the wireless on?
> Charlotte: Yeah.
> NH: So if you didn't have the wireless on would it not be as good cleaning up?
> Charlotte: Cleaning up.
> NH: No?
> Charlotte: No.
> NH: How come?
> Charlotte: Because (long pause to think) quiet.
> NH: Too quiet?
> Charlotte: Yeah (fairly quietly).
> (Interview, 27.3.04)

Thus, when prompted to reflect on why it was better to have "the wireless" on whilst cleaning her bedroom, Charlotte suggested that she disliked it if the room was too "quiet" (ibid.). Furthermore, music seemed to be a vital component of cleaning up because, as she suggested, she always put music on first.

This usage of music has to be understood within the context of Charlotte's feelings in relation to the activity of cleaning her bedroom. This is because of all the domestic chores that she engaged in, cleaning her room caused Charlotte the most consternation. Whereas she would enthusiastically volunteer to wash dishes, vacuum clean the lounge/hall and put washed clothing away, tidying her bedroom was an activity she disliked. Consequently, staff members usually had to remind her about this each week. Due to this, the act of 'doing her room' became a source of tension between Charlotte and the staff team supporting her. Since it was an activity that she often found stressful, her statement during the same interview that music made her *"feel* nice" when

cleaning her room became more significant (ibid.). Charlotte suggested that by having music as an accompaniment instead of "quiet" this enabled her to cope with a potentially stressful activity and actually make it a more aesthetic experience (ibid.).

In addition, having music playing to accompany her in her bedroom enabled Charlotte to create a space within the house where she could find refuge during periods of anxiety. During one of her diary entries and her subsequent interview Mel indicated that this usage of music involved an 'escape' for Charlotte. This notion of escape is elaborated on during the following interview passage:

> NH: So, you also suggest [in your diary] that music is like 'an escape' for Charlotte...In what ways do you think music is an escape for her?
> Mel: Erm, sometimes when she is annoyed maybe with staff or other service users she'll just go into her room and put it on and listen to it...sometimes she'll do this for two hours and you'll knock on her door to see if she's alright and she says 'yeah, I'm just listening to music'. Sometimes when she's polishing her room she'll be listening to it but...maybe mumbling about stuff which you can't hear about. Yeah...I just think it is...once she puts it on she can just take herself maybe to another part of the world, y' know like 'cause she thinks that nobody can hear her, then nobody is quite there only her.
> NH: Mmm, like a safe zone?
> Mel: Yeah.
> (Interview with Mel, 26.4.04)

Therefore, the companionship that the playing of music in her room offered to Charlotte not only helped her to alleviate stress but also to create a space where she could articulate feelings of frustration. In addition, the act of listening to music in her bedroom constituted a means of 'escaping' from other people in the house. This example reinforces John Fiske's (1987) point in relation to the consumption of popular culture as a form of 'escapism'. Fiske contends that 'escapism' cannot be easily dismissed and that it is important to consider the "vital questions of *what* is escaped from, *why* escape is necessary, and *what* is escaped to" (Fiske, 1987 p. 317). When connected to uses of music, Fiske's point provides a clear reminder that it is essential to examine such uses in context. Charlotte's playing of music in her bedroom was not 'mere escapism' but the utilisation of an available and (in her case) accessible resource for helping

her to stay calm and to control an aspect of her private life. This was vital in a small bungalow where, if it wasn't for music playing, staff members in particular might have heard her if she was "mumbling" to herself (as was often the case when she was frustrated or annoyed) (Interview with Mel, 26.4.04). Time spent in her room was time she could control and accompanying music aided her claiming of a private space within an otherwise shared domestic social environment that sometimes became a source of anxiety for her.

Of course such uses of music have been examined by previous theorists of music and media reception who have also highlighted the significance of using music during domestic activities. For instance, Dorothy Hobson's (1980) ethnographic research with housewives revealed that radio reception occurred whilst the women were attending to other activities such as housework and child care. Significantly, the notion of the radio being 'in the background' is one that is articulated throughout Hobson's account of her research findings. Although the notion of music being used as a 'background' soundtrack has been discussed and debated by a variety of scholars (see for instance, Lanza, 1995; Stockfelt, 2004; Kassabian, 1999, 2002), Hobson's study was particularly instructive for my research because of her careful attention to the contexts of the people she was studying. By examining the personal circumstances and life histories of the housewives, Hobson is able to explore the functions of radio as it was received by the women 'on the move'. Hence, she concludes her arguments by stating that:

> The chatter of the disc jockey may appear inane and trivial,
> but the popularity of radio, both in national and local terms
> and in the responses of the women in this study, would
> appear to suggest that it fulfils certain functions in providing
> music to keep them 'happy and on the move' (Hobson, 1980 p. 109).

Radio reception, therefore, (including the music mediated through the radio) offered the women a particular kind of *companionship*. Although other writers such as Bull (2000) and Kassabian (2002) have discussed a similar use of music being used as a companion to help keep people 'on track' or 'on the move' after considering the responses of their interviewees, Hobson's study is enriched by her in-depth interviews and observations. These were valuable because they

enabled her to discuss some of the specifics of the companionship radio offered and how it related to her informants' daily lives. For example, she insists that radio usage had to be understood in relation to the isolation that many of the women felt as young mothers having to cope with childcare duties and housework duties on their own.

Thus, Hobson takes seriously the notion that radio reception is affected by both the practicalities of the women's everyday life (housework and childcare) and their wider personal histories that would affect their feelings about their lives. It should now be plainly evident after considering the previous chapter and the examples discussed above that this was an approach that was fostered during the ethnographic fieldwork I conducted at 17 Orwell Street. However, in contrast to Hobson's work, because my research was founded upon extensive participant-observation over a number of years, it was able to explicate the varied types of companionship that mediated music offered my research subjects in more detail. Therefore, in the next main section of this chapter and in the subsequent chapter on everyday musical performing, the actions and interactions that music affords as a companion to people engaging in domestic activities will be focused upon.

Interlude: Problems with the concept of 'Background Listening'

Prior to this, however, it is necessary to dwell for a few moments on the concept of mediated music as a 'background' companion. This is a concept that is used by Hobson in a relatively uncritical manner. Yet, as was suggested earlier, it is problematic to straightforwardly characterise music as a 'background' to other domestic activities. Hobson rightly suggests that it is unclear as to whether the housewives in her study actively *listened* to the chatter of DJs like Tony Blackburn on BBC Radio 1. This implies that there were moments when some portions of radio programmes were experienced in the 'foreground' ('listened to') and some parts of programmes were in the 'background' ('heard' but not 'listened' to). Indeed, as Andrew Crisell points out, with radio a whole series of auditory experiences are afforded, "from hearing through 'over-hearing' to listening, from those who want unobtrusive background noise – 'acoustic wallpaper' – to those who seek an object of concentration" (Crisell, 1994 p. 15).

This neatly returns us to the discussion of domestic soundscape and the work of Murray Schafer that was utilised above. For, whether a sound was actively listened to in a given soundscape (became "figure" rather than "ground") was dependent upon intangible factors such as the moods of individuals and their habits or cultural practices (Schafer, 1977 p. 152). Furthermore, as Stockfelt suggests, music listening in an environment like 17 Orwell Street, where for significant portions of the day there is a lot of activity and movement, "makes continuous reflexive consciousness impossible" (Stockfelt, 2004 p. 92). In other words, it becomes extremely difficult to ascertain when music is in the 'background' and when it is in the 'foreground' or when hearing becomes listening. Moreover, as Anahid Kassabian suggested during a recent postgraduate colloquium keynote address (Kassabian, 17th May 2006) such distinctions may ultimately be misleading.

Therefore, rather than trying to develop our "reflexive consciousness and competence" when experiencing everyday soundscapes in order to distinguish modes of listening (Stockfelt, 2004 p. 93), I would argue that a more valid approach to studying everyday reception relates to examining context. By elucidating a specific soundscape, this enables scholars to provide an insight into how modes of reception develop and the impacts that these have for human actions and relationships, without having to adhere to rigid distinctions between hearing and listening. The following section continues the explication of the domestic soundscape at 17 Orwell Street and utilises theories that are productive for extending the exploration of the relations between mediation, domestic environment and social action that was begun above.

4. 17 Orwell Street as a Habitus of Musical Action

Whilst the previous chapter section provided some insight into the importance that the mediation of music had for individuals at 17 Orwell Street, there are still significant issues relating to the impact of such mediation that need to be addressed. Maintaining my previous assertion that the pervasive mediation of music had a deep impact upon the people living and working in this milieu, it is now necessary to explicate this impact in more depth. In order to accomplish this it is now vital to return to a consideration of music reception in this setting. Thus

in this section further examination of the ways in which music was received at 17 Orwell Street, particularly within the lounge/dining/kitchen area will be focused upon. This is because this was an area that was, in many respects, the focal point of the house both in terms of social action but also mediation.

In relation to music reception in this communal area of the house it is useful to adopt a theoretical approach that focuses upon the relations between peoples' lived experiences and their social environment. Judith Becker's appropriation of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the "habitus" will therefore be drawn upon in order to shed further light on music reception at 17 Orwell Street (Bourdieu, 1990 p. 56; Becker, 2001). Becker asserts that types of music listening have to be appreciated in connection to a range of contextual factors; such as a person's history and 'self-identity'. Furthermore, she argues that:

> A given community will foster a particular comportment to listening; a comportment not only of attitude, affect and expectation, but also bodily gesture. Emotional responses to music do not occur spontaneously, nor 'naturally', but rather, take place within complex systems of thought and behaviour concerning what music means, what it is for, how it is to be perceived, and what might be appropriate kinds of expressive responses (Becker, 2001 p. 137).

This point is extremely valuable for the exploration of domestic music reception that has been the focal point of this chapter. Becker affirms that types of music listening are not inevitable or merely a product of musical structures; rather they develop amongst social groups amidst a diversity of contextual factors. However, Becker goes on to posit an approach that enables researchers to examine how modes of music reception develop in more depth. She does this through recourse to the theories of Pierre Bourdieu in relation to the habitus.

The notion of habitus is expounded by Bourdieu in order to explain the relationship between individual/group practices and what he calls the "objective structures" in society (Bourdieu, 1977 p. 83). For Bourdieu, human acts and interactions take place within a habitus – a "system of dispositions" involving ways of being and acting (ibid. p. 82). A particular habitus will therefore be shaped by various structures within a given social context and this will influence the people within this context to develop certain dispositions in relation to moving, thinking and being (ibid. p. 214). However, the practices that are

enacted within a social context will, in turn, influence its structures because they provide models for the people in that context. As Thomas Turino puts it: "the *habitus* operates in a dialectical relation to the external conditions because the practices that it generates are externalized in forms and behavior that once again become part of the 'objective conditions' and thus reciprocally become models for shaping the internalized dispositions" (Turino, 1990 p. 400). Thus, Bourdieu's theory of habitus is very useful when considering musical practice because it stresses the complexity of the "practice/structure dialectic" and reminds music scholars to pay attention to the dynamics of what people do with music (ibid. p. 407).

Accordingly, in applying this theory to music listening Becker explores how listening practices are shaped by a "habitus of listening" (Becker, 2001 p. 138). In other words, Becker argues that people develop dispositions in relation to how they listen to music within a given social context but that such dispositions tend to be taken for granted. As Becker writes: "Our habitus of listening is tacit, unexamined, seemingly completely 'natural'. We listen in a *particular* way without thinking about it, and without realizing that it even is a particular way of listening" (ibid. p. 138). By utilising the notion of the habitus to theorise listening Becker is stressing that the ways people listen to music are influenced by varied factors such as the mediation of musical materials, where we live, those around us and so on. However, she also stresses that there are no strict rules concerning *how* we listen. She writes:

> A habitus of listening suggests, not a necessity or a rule, but
> an inclination, a disposition to listen with a particular kind of
> focus, to expect to experience particular kinds of emotion, to
> move with certain stylized gestures, and to interpret the meaning
> of the sounds and one's emotional responses to the musical
> event in somewhat (never totally) predictable ways (ibid. p. 138).

Thus, Becker's usage of a habitus of listening is valuable because it avoids a teleological approach to music reception by proposing that people are *inclined* to listen in particular ways in a specific environment. They are not compelled to respond to music in particular ways despite the preponderance of the various contextual factors that influence the system of dispositions of a social group or individual. This theory, then, allows for some unpredictability of

response when considering music reception in a social environment. However, it maintains a strong emphasis on the notion that social settings and customs have a distinct impact upon music reception and adopts a sophisticated approach to considering the complexity of social context.

In contrast to my research, Becker examines the habitus of listening during three different religious ceremonies that feature music as an "essential element" (ibid. p. 145). The musical events that occur during such ceremonies are specifically framed as part of religious occasions (Goffman, 1974). They involve: "a scripted sequence of actions, emotions, and interpretations" (Becker, 2001 p. 150). Put simply, then, musical events are primary to these ceremonies. However, Becker's frequent usage of the term 'listening' when considering the habitus apparent during the music-centred events that she examines is somewhat restrictive. To solely explicate a habitus of listening can yield interesting findings in relation to how people develop dispositions toward music listening in specific settings. Yet the mediation of music in a social field like 17 Orwell Street fostered what I will term a *habitus of musical action*. As in Chapter 1 the term 'musical' is being used here in a general sense to mean "of or relating to music" rather than to refer to specific musical skills (The Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1991 p. 781). The term 'action', which has been used already in this chapter, is adopted to indicate a general "process of doing or acting" that involves the expenditure of energy (ibid. p. 12). Therefore, to focus on a habitus of musical action at 17 Orwell Street entails considering how that setting fosters, not only ways of listening to music, but also modes of performing, thinking and talking.

17 Orwell Street as a Social Field and Habitus

I would argue that the complex system of social and organisational rules apparent at this house that were influenced by the policies of Community Connections but also by the needs of the people living there (as well as the staff team supporting them), was commensurate with Bourdieu's notion of a 'social field'. This is because for Bourdieu, as Richard Jenkins affirms, "A field…is a structured system of social positions – occupied either by individuals or institutions – the nature of which defines the situation for their occupants" (Jenkins, 1992 p. 85). 17 Orwell Street 'housed' a specific system of social positions. Although

ostensibly it was John, Andrew, Christine and Charlotte's 'home', it was also a 'supported living scheme'. As such it was organised to a large extent by a team of staff, these were led by a Team Leader who was answerable to a Locality Manager (who was responsible for overseeing various schemes in that particular area of Merseyside). The residents, who were also 'service users' according to company discourse, were often distinctly aware of the power relations apparent in this social field. This was evidenced in a previous section of this chapter when it was made apparent that the majority of residents were reliant to a large extent upon staff members putting music on for them.

The habitus apparent in a setting has a dialectical relationship with the overall social field (Jenkins, 1992 p. 84). This point reminds researchers examining a domestic setting from this perspective that any consideration of a particular habitus of musical action amongst people within that setting cannot be divorced from an appreciation of the various social relations in that field. Once I became involved in the social field at 17 Orwell Street (both as a support worker and ethnographer) then this entailed becoming 'part' of this field and developing what Bourdieu calls a "feel for the game" (Bourdieu, 1990 p. 66). In other words, through experiences of working in the house, participating in various routines and activities, as well as observing others' activities and relationships, the systems of this setting became 'logical' to me. As Bourdieu puts it:

> ...native membership in a field implies a feel for the game in the sense of a capacity for practical anticipation of the 'upcoming' future contained in the present, everything that takes place in it seems *sensible*: full of sense and objectively directed in a judicious direction (ibid.).

This enabled me to anticipate practical problems; for instance, as mentioned earlier, it became clear that if John wasn't ready to leave the house by 8.30am on Tuesdays there was a strong chance he would miss the bus that took him to the day centre.

However, this 'feel for the game' also involved developing more subtle knowledge of individuals' moods, physical boundaries and social relationships. For example, as will be elucidated in Chapter 7, Andrew had distinctive boundaries relating to his personal space and tolerance to touch that had to be learnt by the people around him. Yet some staff members were aware that

musical activity was a felicitous resource that sometimes afforded the temporary erosion of these boundaries and enabled closer social relations between Andrew and the people supporting him. Indeed, as will be seen later, staff members developed ways of moving and being near to Andrew during these musical activities. This kind of knowledge illustrates a central aspect of Bourdieu's theorising of the relations between the social field and the habitus. Namely that, as Bourdieu asserts, *practical belief* that is *embodied* is an integral part in the development of a 'feel for the game' that is required when people feel a sense of 'belonging' to a specific field and develop trust in the people within that field.

To varying degrees people living and working at 17 Orwell Street developed *faith* in the system of rules in the house. For instance, staff members had to get used to the 'logic' of the various systems for documenting a plethora of events; from the taking of medication to the purchasing of a pint of milk. This is despite the fact that such a system would have been distinctly different from those of their own households or even those of a traditional nursing home where care staff are usually only responsible for 'hands on' care such as bathing, rather than accounting for medication and spending. Residents also had to put their faith in such systems and get used to support staff regularly coming into their 'home' and not only supporting them with various aspects of their daily lives but also documenting many of those aspects.

However, as Bourdieu makes clear, fostering this faith involves not simply the development of a 'state of mind' but a "state of the body" (ibid. p. 68). It is in relation to this point where the strong connection between the social field and the habitus of a specific setting like 17 Orwell Street becomes clear. Developing knowledge of this particular place involved becoming cognisant with its everyday systems and rules, but this was only one way of knowing about this milieu. Of equal importance was the development of *embodied knowledge* – the developing of dispositions towards certain caring practices and domestic routines but, above all, towards *people* (Gouk, 2000). The practical beliefs that were part of the development of a 'feel for the game' involved developing dispositions in relation to the other social actors in this setting. Therefore, this development of dispositions partly involved knowing how to *act*, but also knowing how others acted and reacted to certain situations, people and aspects of their environment.

Thus, it is now apparent that any examination of 17 Orwell Street as a habitus of musical action has to be guided by an appreciation of that setting as a social field. Also such an inquiry has to involve an understanding of the setting's domestic soundscape and the contextual factors that structure this soundscape (such as those concerning access and agency referred to above). Having carefully contextualised and theorised 17 Orwell Street as a distinctive social and sonic field, it is now possible to explore the habitus of musical action in the main living areas of the house.

Aspects of the Habitus of Musical Action: Case Studies

Whilst music was frequently mediated in the lounge/dining/kitchen area, music reception occurred amidst a range of competing sounds. Reception also frequently accompanied other daily activities such as eating breakfast, washing dishes, tidying laundry and so on. The following field diary extract illustrates that the mediation of music through the TV in the lounge afforded responses from both Christine, who was sat in the lounge in front of the TV, and Charlotte who was attending to washing dishes in the kitchen:

After tea, John and Charlotte volunteered to help with the dishes. Vicky also helped them tidy up. John tends to stand there rubbing one dish with the tea towel for quite a while, whilst staring out of the window and smiling.

Whilst the others were tending to the dishes Christine relaxed in the lounge with me watching VH1. She was quietly humming along to many of the songs played. For instance, Phil Collins and Phillip Bailey's song 'Easy Lover' (1985) was one that I particularly remember Christine responding to. While this video was playing Charlotte was also listening from the kitchen whilst drying dishes. She was also humming and singing to parts of the song.
(Field notes, 5.3.01)

These small instances of relatively mundane musical performing were common occurrences at 17 Orwell Street. Such performing will be explored further in the next chapter, where its impact upon social interaction and relationships will be examined in more depth. For now, what is crucial to reiterate is that these types of situations where the mediation of music afforded performing were commonplace. Mediated music seemed to be a 'logical'

companion to a variety of domestic activities and momentary performing such as singing or humming seemed to be an appropriate way of acting.

Furthermore, there were often moments in the living room/dining area when the reception of one type of mass media (TV) was also accompanied by the mediation of music from the radio, discs or tapes. Such a moment is described in the following field diary extract:

Andrew has had the radio put on for him throughout much of the afternoon. He was listening to the Rock FM chart and then 'old school' dance requests. Andrew was laughing and smiling whilst Nicky and I made his tea [evening meal], perhaps the dance music added to his pleasure.

Whilst the radio was on Charlotte, John and Christine were in the lounge. At first they were watching a film (children's fantasy) on Sky Movies, after this I put Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves *(1991) on for them to watch until the darts final came on. Whilst watching TV it was interesting to note that Charlotte was also listening to the songs on the radio. She was humming and singing along to various parts of songs. One memorable incident occurred when Baha Men's 'Who Let the Dogs Out?' (2000) came on. Charlotte and Nicky were singing along to this which, in turn, encouraged John. When Nicky and Charlotte sang "Who let the dogs out?" John sang "Whoo, whoo!" [Whilst] smiling away.* (Field notes, 14.1.01).

In this situation (which was not uncommon) the activity of watching TV for Nicky, Charlotte and John was sidelined by playful musical performing. This performing was afforded by the mediation of music from the stereo system in another part of the room. Moreover, this bout of collective singing was presaged by Charlotte's consistent, (though less noticeable due to her voice being quieter), humming and singing to segments of popular songs. It seemed that she was able to watch TV and listen to Rock FM at the same time; partially attending to the film but also listening for parts of songs that she liked. Therefore, in addition to the notion that mediated music was an accompanying feature of various domestic activities that afforded certain types of performing, this example illustrates another feature of the habitus of musical action at 17 Orwell Street. Namely that it became commonplace for there to be variations in peoples' attentiveness to mediated music. Music listening seemed to be an activity that was not perceived as primary in the lounge/dining/kitchen area; it was not the case that staff or residents expressed a desire to sit down and listen to music as a solitary activity. However, it seemed to become normative for there to be moments when musical

action became central to social action and interaction. During such moments musical activities became a focal point even though they occurred amidst various domestic routines.

The pervasive mediation of music in the main living areas of 17 Orwell Street did not only afford instances of musical performing such as those mentioned above. It also facilitated conversations about aspects relating to the songs, artists or music videos being played. For instance, the following extract from my field diary describes an instance when the watching of a music video precipitated a conversation involving residents and staff members:

Shortly after this time (approx 4.50pm) I began to pre-heat the oven and prepare the tea. Whilst I was doing this Paul had been flicking through the Sky channels and had put the Chart Show TV video jukebox channel on. One video was by an all-girl pop combo and was quite provocative; featuring the girls in short dresses in parts of the video. As I walked towards the lounge area I heard Paul discussing the video with Charlotte. He was joking saying that they "shouldn't be allowed" to show that kind of video or wear those clothes. However, Charlotte disagreed saying something along the lines of "What's wrong with it? They're nice dresses" Paul then turned to Christine and asked her what she thought of it, he may have said something like: "That's terrible isn't it?" Christine's reply was in agreement with him and she summed up her thoughts succinctly by replying: "shocking" By this time I'd began to take an interest in the video and, joining in the conversation, said to John "That's a good video that one isn't it?" and made a joke that looking at that is better than looking at the catalogue he was flicking through. Paul and I laughed, although in actuality John didn't seem to be paying much attention to the television
(Field notes, 13.8.04).

When I wrote those field notes in the different context of my house I reflected on my interpretations of this event. As I wrote at the time:

This was an interesting moment that I reflected upon immediately afterwards in my private thoughts as I prepared the tea in the kitchen. It had enabled a light-hearted conversation that each person sitting within the lounge area could be a part of. In this sense it enabled staff and service users to find a brief shared interest through the viewing of a music video. Furthermore, the light-hearted discussion also centred around gender and sexuality, with both Charlotte and Christine being able to express views. In Charlotte's case she was defending the women in the video and their sexually provocative styles of dress. In contrast, this seemed too much for Christine whose description of it as "shocking" summed up her attitude very well (ibid.).

Thus, whilst such conversations that were facilitated by music reception were fleeting, they were significant on a number of levels. Firstly, as I reflected at the time, they provided moments of connection between fellow residents (in this case Charlotte and Christine) and between residents and staff. The video provided a focal point; a topic of discussion upon which the two women could take a stance. The watching of the video also provided an opportunity for Paul to interact with Charlotte and Christine in a jovial manner. Such opportunities for interaction fostered friendly social relations between the people involved in the conversation. This factor should not be underplayed because Charlotte and Christine's relationship was often fraught with tensions. Furthermore, situations like the one described above revealed insights into the self-identities of the two women. It was established earlier that Christine was often taciturn and it often seemed that she wanted to 'withdraw' from social interaction by focusing on the TV or on making sewing patterns using laces on a plastic sewing tablet. However, during this moment her unequivocal response to Paul's question was a clear expression of her views on the representation of the women in the music video and it gave a small insight into her moral values. In contrast, Charlotte's response was indicative of a more liberal attitude to sexualised display.

It is not the intention to over-emphasise this single conversation that was based on a sole music video. Yet, the point that such examples illustrate is that seemingly mundane and fleeting moments of music reception had the potential to foster stronger social relationships and to provide individuals with distinct opportunities for self-presentation. This is a point that will become far clearer in the remaining two chapters.

Thus, the roles of music and the ways of responding to musical materials are not natural or inevitable. Rather domestic activities such as those described in the above field diary extracts were related to a habitus of musical action; a system of dispositions. In other words, the people living and working at 17 Orwell Street were *inclined* to adopt ways of thinking and talking about the roles of music and to adopt ways of acting in relation to that music. These roles and ways of acting became a significant part of the 'logic' of this social field and seemed to become a normative aspect of domestic life. Indeed, the pervasive mediation of music seemed normative to the extent that it was sometimes underplayed in my field notes; music seemed to be 'just on' and 'in the

background'. However, this chapter has made this concept problematic because it has maintained that such pervasive mediation has an impact on peoples' social actions and interactions; albeit in ways that are subtle and diverse.

Conclusion: The Significance of the Habitus of Musical Action

To conclude this chapter it is necessary to reflect upon the value of the above analysis that identified various aspects of the habitus of musical action within the social field of 17 Orwell Street. To accomplish this it is instructive to start by considering further staff members' comments on the roles of music in the house. During interviews and within their diary entries various staff members expressed that the mediation of music assisted in the construction of a 'good atmosphere' at 17 Orwell Street. For instance, the following diary entry made by Jay (who was the Team Leader at the time) articulates this idea (Jay's entry was largely written as notes and they are reproduced here verbatim to help to convey his thoughts):

Music channels on again, not sure which one, pop music '90s stuff, Charlotte dancing and singing along. Very happy look on her face as she was doing her dance moves. This made John involved; singing along, nodding his head. It brought a good atmosphere to the house, except for Christine who just ignored what was going on around her. (Jay's diary, 29.7.03)

In this instance, Jay interprets a "good atmosphere" as involving John and Charlotte enjoying music videos together; Charlotte's performing inspires John to become involved. Although Christine chose to ignore the music videos and the performing they inspired in this situation, there were other times when she participated in performing that was facilitated by mediation. This was illustrated in one of the case studies discussed above where Christine was humming to music videos. However, in one of her diary entries Mel described another situation when Christine was far more active in her performing to music:

Charlotte was listening to music in the kitchen. I asked Christine to dance with me and Christine nearly jumped up and started moving quite quickly. Christine was really enjoying herself. She had a big smile on her face and was moving with the old jiving moves. Everyone was enjoying themselves. After when we all sat down, Christine said "That was good".

Even though the two clients don't get on, I feel music does bring them a little closer when both clients really get into it. (Mel's diary, 28.10.01)

Therefore, both Jay and Mel's diary entries suggest that music was extremely valuable in this social setting because it facilitated social connections between the residents. Such entries, combined with the case studies mentioned in earlier sections, provide evidence of the positive impact of the habitus of musical action that was identified above. Although this habitus did not always foster social connections, for, as has been made clear, peoples' attentiveness within it varied, many staff members and residents seemed to believe that the regular mediation of music had a positive impact.

Nicky's interview, in particular, was striking because of the affective power she ascribed to music at 17 Orwell Street. The following interview extract indicates that music positively affected the moods of the people living in the house. Moreover, it is significant that Nicky thought of this affective power as something that assisted her role as a support worker:

> NH: In what other ways do you think music becomes important either for your relationships with service users or for the service users as individuals?
> Nicky: (Pauses) well…like I said before, my relationship is to support them and to be friends with them as such. If I can't assist someone 'cause they're in a mood in the morning, if I put music on it's helped us both because they're getting ready and then I can do what I need to do within the house…With relationships, I don't know, I'm a very friendly person, so is everyone here and music seems to be…a good thing within the house; everyone enjoys it, everyone sings along with it and so do the residents. I think it's just a good all round…entertainment as such, for everyone. I don't know a good relationship I think…Once someone starts singing everyone seems to sing which is a positive because everyone's…in good moods as such. (Interview with Nicky, 3.11.05)

Nicky's comments here are crucial because they provide a timely reminder of the importance of social agency in relation to the mediation of music. She indicates that the playing of music was a resource that she used to help her to manage the moods of the residents she was supporting. Hence, as has been stressed above, although the habitus of listening at 17 Orwell Street may have seemed 'natural' or 'inevitable', Nicky's comments again alert us to the

problems with such a notion. Furthermore, other staff members' actions also reinforced the importance of social agency when considering the house as a habitus of listening. For example, in a joint diary that was filled out by various staff members during their working shifts Joanne suggested that she had deliberately put music on during her night shift to attempt to brighten Christine's mood:

4.4.05 6.00am
Christine woke in a distressed mood, shouting and screaming. Christine sat herself down and ignored all my requests for breakfast and tea. The television was already off, so I put on a CD, 'Tony Christie', and within three minutes Christine came through for her breakfast.

Therefore, although conceptualising 17 Orwell Street as a habitus of musical action emphasises that various dispositions (inclinations towards moving, thinking and feeling) in relation to music reception had developed in this setting, this should not be separated from issues of social agency. Joanne and Nicky may have been used to a particular habitus of musical action but they both seemed keenly aware of their roles in constructing this.

Thus, the utilisation of Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and social field enable researchers to explicate the *agencies* of individuals without discounting wider contextual factors. In this chapter and the one preceding it the various nuances of the social context at 17 Orwell Street have been identified. This involved a consideration of macro-contextual factors that strongly influenced the formation and structure of 17 Orwell Street's social field. These included British government legislation; the policies and procedures of the agencies (Community Connections and Social Services) responsible for the house and the social changes that affected the personal histories of the residents in the house. It also involved a consideration of micro-contextual factors that influenced music reception in this social field and these included: issues of access to music; the domestic soundscape and the pervasive mediation of music.

However, the utilisation of the concept of the habitus of musical action when studying this setting enabled the avoidance of functionalist or over-deterministic models when exploring music usage. Although the various macro and micro-contextual factors were highly influential in shaping a habitus of

musical action, we have seen that they did not prescribe actions. In addition, the adoption of the concept of the habitus has facilitated the analysis of the variations that occur with musical actions at 17 Orwell Street. Staff members and residents had different agencies in relation to musical action in this social field; it was not simply the case that music could be 'put on'. Rather, the various power relations apparent in this field, though they seemed to become naturalised, were a strong influence on how music could be accessed and used in the first place.

Therefore, this chapter has adopted an approach that addresses issues that are often marginalised in existing studies of domestic music usage. Previous methodological approaches to domestic music reception do not often reveal how uses of music are able (or unable) to occur at specific times and places. David Hesmondhalgh (2002) argues that such issues are vital for scholars investigating music's roles in everyday life. Whilst he recognises that there is an urgent need to study "ordinary, banal musical experience" as opposed to more visible youth subcultures, Hesmondhalgh warns us that:

> ...if we lose sight of the historical circumstances in which we experience music and in which we live our everyday lives, then there is a risk of evading questions concerning history, power and meaning.
> (Hesmondhalgh, 2002 p. 128)

Albeit by focusing upon a single house, this chapter has expounded a contextual approach to the study of music in everyday domestic life that attempts to meet Hesmondhalgh's challenge. It has revealed that wider contextual factors have to be considered in relation to the immediacies of specific social fields (with their associated habituses) if we are to gain a telling insight into how everyday musical action becomes powerful and meaningful for people.

Chapter 6
<u>Musical Performing and Everyday Life</u>

In the previous chapter it was suggested that the pervasive mediation of music at 17 Orwell Street through media technologies such as the stereo system was a significant factor that fostered musical performing such as singing and humming. Ostensibly this finding concurs with the arguments of Nicolas Abercrombie and Brian Longhurst (1998) when they theorise the experiences of contemporary audiences in media-saturated societies. They argue that the notion of performance is vital for scholars trying to understand media audiences in such societies. Also they suggest that people living in these societies are more "performative" because of pervasive mass mediation, which provides "an important resource for everyday performance" (Abercrombie and Longhurst, 1998 p. 74).[25] The importance of this type of argument has been underlined in the previous chapter, yet, as this chapter will reveal, social and musical performing is a significant resource within everyday life that cannot be adequately explained by solely examining mass mediation.

As was also made clear in the last chapter, it was not possible to generalise about 17 Orwell Street's social field and the habitus of musical action in which that performing was situated. This field and habitus were peculiar to this milieu, which was shaped by various distinctive factors. Therefore, although like other writers (Keightley, 1996; Moy, 2006) Abercrombie and Longhurst remind us that the mediation of music is a historically specific phenomenon that needs to be treated seriously, ultimately their general theorising of 'everyday performance' offers little insight into how such performance is situated within peoples' everyday lives. Everyday musical performing cannot be appreciated without a detailed explication of the everyday context in question.[26] Though, as has been made clear, macro-contextual factors such as political changes are important to appreciate when studying uses of music in everyday life, they have to be accompanied by an analysis of micro-contextual factors such as the domestic soundscape of the individuals involved. This was demonstrated at

---

[25] In fact Abercrombie and Longhurst suggest that being a member of a media audience is "constitutive of everyday life" in modern societies (ibid. pp. 68-69).

length during the last chapter by focusing on 17 Orwell Street as a domestic context. However, whilst the explication of these contextual factors provided some explanations for the *propensity* for musical performing amongst many of the people living and working in that setting, on their own they did not adequately account for the *significance* of such performing. Consequently, reinforcing the value of the micro-contextual approach adopted so far, this chapter will examine the significance of various aspects of musical performing by people at 17 Orwell Street in depth.

1. The Working Consensus at 17 Orwell Street

The significance of the social and musical performing mentioned in the case studies featured in the last chapter was (albeit through necessity) underplayed. However, having elucidated the complex relations between music reception, musical activity and place at 17 Orwell Street, it is now possible to conceptualise that setting in another way. The key to this lies in the term mentioned in Chapter 1 – the "working consensus" (Goffman, 1959 p. 21). As we have seen, this is a concept used by the sociologist Erving Goffman to refer to the agreed ways of acting that are adopted by people within a specific *"interaction setting"* (ibid. my italics). Applying this concept when considering peoples' activities in a domestic dwelling like 17 Orwell Street is instructive. This is because studying the house as an interaction setting in which residents and staff members adopt a working consensus involves paying close attention to social interaction and performing. Such an approach is valuable because, as Goffman suggests, social interactions and performing in a specific setting provide vital cues for the people there. For, as Goffman also points out, individuals or teams "project" definitions of social situations during performing and interacting (ibid. p. 24). These projections help to define social situations by providing cues for what are appropriate ways of acting and treating others.

Projections at paradoxical 'home' settings like 17 Orwell Street are interesting to study from this perspective because they traverse distinctive

---

[26] The use of the term 'performing' rather than 'performance' is maintained throughout this chapter because, as explained in Chapter 1, it more effectively conveys the notion that musical performing is part of a process that is never wholly complete.

dichotomies. For staff members the setting is a place of work, but it is also the residents' 'home' and the staff are obliged to help them feel 'at home'. For residents 17 Orwell Street is the place where they live (and where they variably feel 'at home'), but it is also a place where they are supported (a supported living scheme). At a basic level this support entails having to interact with a changeable staff team and deal with new members of this team. In addition, as was indicated earlier other personnel employed by Community Connections, such as Locality Managers and bank staff, also enter the house from time to time. Ethnographic fieldwork made clear that this somewhat variable interaction setting led to some tense relations amongst residents and between residents and staff. Consequently, the development of a working consensus regarding ways of interacting and performing in this setting was a particularly important area of study. As we have seen, many staff members were aware of the value of fostering aspects of a 'home' ideal (indeed this was also expressed in the Mission Statement for 17 Orwell Street). In other words, these staff members saw social actions and interactions that encouraged solidarity and bonding as a positive feature of 'home life'. However, so far only certain aspects of the varied actions and interactions in the house have been covered and these have usually involved music usage. Yet in order to appreciate the value of such uses of music it is firstly necessary to provide an overview of the general aspects of the working consensus at 17 Orwell Street.

Given that there were at least five different members of the staff team working shifts each day, it seemed appropriate that the working consensus adopted in the house tended to minimise any anxiety associated with these shift patterns. When I first began working at 17 Orwell Street I was struck by how friendly and welcoming residents were, especially Charlotte and John. Any unease at starting a new job was alleviated by John imploring me to "put [your] coat off" and Charlotte urging me to "come in!" rather than ring the door bell. Even Andrew quickly began to adjust to having me in his house and he soon trusted me enough to bring me his mug to indicate that he wanted a drink of tea. Furthermore, he would pass me a box he kept on the floor next to his armchair that was filled with building bricks; indicating to me that he wanted something built for him. These were acts and gestures that fostered goodwill and cordial relations.

Likewise, support staff often adopted ways of acting and talking that facilitated friendly relations. Upon entering the house they usually exchanged pleasantries with both residents and fellow staff members; asking typical questions such as "how are you?" Such social action and interaction may seem all too obvious but it is pertinent to identify that these common greetings took place. This is because other care-centred environments such as nursing homes have very different systems of working. For instance, in the nursing home that I worked in as a care assistant during 1993 it was established practice to 'sign in' at the reception desk to indicate that you had arrived for work. It was also expected that you would seek out the nurse in charge who would then brief you on your duties. Thus, the set up there was far more formal and task-driven and this influenced staff interactions with each other and with residents. This did not mean that care assistants were not courteous, polite and friendly towards residents but it did mean that the social situations in which they interacted were far more geared around essential care routines such as washing, toileting and so on.

In contrast, being within a far more intimate environment, the working consensus between staff members and residents at 17 Orwell Street was more informal. Although, of course, as was suggested in the previous chapter, actions and interactions were also frequently purpose-driven. For example, staff members' activities were motivated by the support requirements and requests of residents, therefore such activities involved helping with personal hygiene but also cooking, cleaning and so on. In addition, it has been made evident that staff members engaged in more administrative duties such as ordering prescriptions for medication, paying bills and writing daily reports.

Likewise, the residents were also aware of the exigencies of household tasks. Charlotte in particular adopted a keen work ethic in this area and was eager to help with washing dishes, tidying laundry and other tasks. Although to a more limited extent, John and Christine also assisted in housework duties. John often requested to "dust room" (meaning to polish the surfaces in his bedroom) and Christine was also willing to assist with chores such as drying the dishes or wiping the kitchen table. Though Andrew seemed less willing to help with housework, he was encouraged to complete specific tasks by certain staff members in order to help develop his independence. For instance, he was

occasionally asked to help with putting full bin bags from the kitchen into the outside 'wheelie' bin located at the side of the back garden. Sometimes he would become irritated at this request and dump the bag in the middle of the back garden. However, usually Andrew would place the bag in the correct place after a bit of gentle coaxing.

The working consensus in the house also featured many of the regular leisure activities identified earlier. It was made clear in previous chapters that listening to music was a domestic pastime that the residents enjoyed in various areas of the house. It was also indicated that other common activities included looking at books (for John and Christine), sewing (Christine), watching TV (Charlotte and Christine in particular) and going for walks in the garden (Andrew). In addition to these individual domestic leisure pursuits, it was occasionally the case that residents engaged in joint leisure activities in the house (other than listening to music and watching TV). For example, it was sometimes the case that residents played games together. Bingo was the most popular of these because John had an electronic bingo set. With staff members' assistance Charlotte and Christine would play bingo together with support staff. John occasionally joined in as well but usually he declined invitations to play.

These fairly short descriptions of aspects of the working consensus obviously do not represent the richness of social actions and interactions at 17 Orwell Street. They are merely there to provide an overview of common ways of acting that were adopted in this setting and should not be interpreted as homogenous. To return to Goffman's theoretical framework, they are the regular projections that were used by both residents and staff members to aid in defining the varied social situations that they were part of. The importance of such projections will become clearer shortly when examining various instances of musical performing. However, prior to this it is necessary to identify another type of social performing that had implications for the working consensus in the house and helps to shed light on the value of musical performing.

Playful Performing

As indicated in Chapter 1, Goffman highlights the vulnerability of performing. Definitions of social situations are prone to being disrupted or to breaking down

altogether despite the projections of individuals or groups. Yet Goffman also argues that disruptions to social situations are often very important to social groups. He writes: "an intense interest in these disruptions comes to play a significant role in the social life of the group" (Goffman, 1959 p. 25). Ethnographic findings from 17 Orwell Street revealed that there was a noticeable interest in what, following Goffman, might be hesitantly called 'disruptions' to various social situations. These 'disruptions' took many forms but, as suggested from some of the case studies featured in the previous chapter, they generally involved playful, mischievous and jovial behaviour. Thus, whilst there was a working consensus of friendliness amongst staff and residents in the lounge area, this was frequently counterbalanced by good-natured teasing and joking.

John, in particular, was fond of such activity and he would often make fun of others or of past events. For example, if Christine had been ill John would inform staff members of this by saying "Christine been sick" and then proceed to mimic the action of her vomiting (complete with sound effects). Likewise, if Charlotte had been upset John would remind everyone of this by saying "Charlotte crying" and pretending to weep. John was exceptionally mischievous, though there was no malice in his performing. Instead he seemed to want to amuse the people around him. He also took great delight in encouraging others to participate in his mimicry. For instance, he would sometimes urge Charlotte to pretend to weep, saying "Charlotte cry" and she would usually indulge him by engaging in a bout of mock crying. John also regularly directed such mischievous behaviour towards staff members. One of his favourite tactics was to try and fool his support workers by pretending that a serious incident had occurred. For example, he would often proclaim that: "Andrew kicked me!" If a member of staff enquired "when?" John would reply "years ago!" indicating that he was trying to fool that person. Of course, as established in Chapter 4, John's claims did have some relation to actual events because Andrew could occasionally become aggressive towards him. Consequently, staff members had to clarify the veracity of John's claim amongst each other.

Playful social situations were sometimes the topic of conversations amongst staff members or between staff and residents. For example, Charlotte often liked to recount stories of humorous incidents that had happened to her or other people in the house. During such moments she would often become excited

as she recalled events and would start laughing before she had finished her story. Sometimes, struggling to articulate a story verbally, she would utilise body language and gesture to try and communicate events. For instance, one afternoon Charlotte was telling me about how she had enjoyed a relaxing bath on holiday in Blackpool and how the staff supporting her had teased her because she was being pampered. As the following field diary extract makes clear, Charlotte used performing to enhance her story telling:

Janet suggested to Christine and Charlotte that they could relax and have a foot spa and a massage later in the evening. They both seemed pleased with this idea. This also prompted Charlotte to tell me about how she'd had a relaxing bath on her recent holiday in Blackpool. She talked about the experience by confirming things/events with Janet (who was sat next to her). Charlotte indicated how she'd relaxed with a glass of wine by performing the action – i.e. pretending to have a glass of wine in her hand. She said something like "And there's me!" and then explained how the other staff had said "Look at her" Charlotte laughed as she was explaining this. Janet clarified what Charlotte's words didn't articulate – that she had candles lit around the bath as she was relaxing in it.
(Field notes, 22.10.05)

Therefore, although she had to rely on a support worker to clarify parts of her story, Charlotte effectively gave her impression of the event by both miming the actions that took place and recounting some of the words that were uttered.

There were many other instances where residents and various staff members would discuss or engage in playful behaviour. Such practices will be expounded upon in some of the sections that follow by concentrating on events involving musical performing. However, the important point to consider in relation to these practices here is that they were commonplace at 17 Orwell Street. Therefore, in some ways the categorisation of the activities discussed above as 'disruptions' is inadequate. This is because these playful activities were not always seen as disruptions to the working consensus in the house. Rather they seemed to become part of this working consensus. In other words, they became an aspect of the accepted ways of acting and interacting at 17 Orwell Street.

The above identification of the general aspects of the working consensus at 17 Orwell Street serves as a precursor to the more in-depth exegesis of musical performing in the house that follows. Yet, more importantly, it augments the

explication of the relations between social action, interacting and place laid out in the previous chapter. It was argued there that various factors, most notably the social agency of residents and staff members, helped towards the forging of social bonding and togetherness integral to the notion of a 'home' ideal. By locating 17 Orwell Street as an interaction setting in which a working consensus was fostered, this has revealed that everyday social actions and interactions are also central to this process of creating a 'home-like' environment. Yet as was established earlier, the house was at the same time somewhat fraught with tensions. Therefore, developing modes of social performing that enabled the people living and working in this setting to relate to one another and comfortably inhabit this domestic setting together was of fundamental significance.

However, the notion that 17 Orwell Street featured a working consensus amongst residents and staff members should not be overstated. As was affirmed in Chapter 1, social performing is precarious. In accordance with Goffman (1959), I have suggested that social actions and interactions in the house were vulnerable. Moreover, I have argued that the stakes relating to social interaction and performing in this setting were high. This is something that Goffman also recognises, but the ethnographic approach adopted during research at 17 Orwell Street enabled the varied aspects of these stakes to be laid bare.[27] Relationships at the house could become strained if communication through talk or action was misunderstood. In addition, if residents and staff members did not find suitable ways of acting around each other then the consequences could be damaging. For instance, it was established earlier that if people approached Andrew without knowledge of his preferences for personal space then he could become agitated and aggressive.

Consequently, social performing and interaction with people in this setting could potentially break down and have negative repercussions. Interestingly, the importance of maintaining what Goffman terms "expressive control" in relation to social manners was, in some respects, acknowledged during a 'Prevention of Challenging Behaviour' staff training course that I attended during 2003 (Goffman, 1959 p. 59). The course stressed that maintaining control of personal expressions during interactions with someone

---

[27] As was argued in Chapter 1, Goffman's work, despite its strengths, tends to neglect the specifics of what happens during social performing.

who was beginning to show signs of agitation was important. The course leader advised that ensuring consistent eye contact and a calm demeanour could help to forestall a challenging situation. Thus, what this underlines is that even the smallest nuance of movement or facial expression during social performing and interaction can have a critical impact upon the management of social situations.

Therefore, what has been suggested so far is that performing by individuals or groups living or working at 17 Orwell Street was *instrumental* for defining social situations. Establishing the importance of various modes of social performing serves to highlight the importance of musical performing in relation to my research subjects. As musical performing was an accessible and flexible resource for both the residents (particularly John and Charlotte) and staff members, it follows that such performing warrants in-depth study. As will be made clear, although each of the residents had some difficulties with expressing themselves verbally, musical performing provided a rich medium for communication. However, what will also become apparent is that, regardless of an individual's communicative competence, this performing (though it might often be seen as mundane) constitutes a key resource for the articulation of self-identity. In addition, as a distinctively flexible expressive resource musical performing can provide crucial insights into an individual's mood and self-esteem.

Other aspects of this performing will also be revealed to show that musical performing was not simply utilised to present a sense of self or a person's feelings; it was also used to *negotiate* social situations and interactions. Following DeNora, it will be illustrated below that musical performing is used as a "touchstone" during social situations (DeNora, 2000 p. 127). That is, performing was used by people at the house as part of the "project of knowing what to say, how to move, how to feel" (ibid. p. 129). Moreover, musical performing will be revealed as a way of coping with uncomfortable social situations where individuals may not know what to say, do, or feel, or where they may want to repress 'inappropriate' words, feelings or actions.

These points will be illustrated through specific ethnographic examples. This approach provides a productive way of building upon Goffman's (1959) methodology by explicating how particular individuals and groups present their 'selves' in action. In what follows instances of musical performing that occurred

during fieldwork or were discussed during interviews will be described and analysed, taking into consideration the contextual factors that have already been elucidated in previous chapters. In the main, the sections below will concentrate on musical performing that took place within the house, especially the main living areas that were discussed earlier. However, to enhance this study of domestic performing, musical performing in public places will also be considered.

Finally, prior to the beginning of this analysis, it is important to provide further clarification on the usage of the term 'performing'. When exploring the kinds of 'everyday' musical activity observed during ethnographic research in a domestic setting like 17 Orwell Street it is important not to be rigid when conceptualising music use. So far throughout this chapter the term 'performing' has been used but, as was suggested in Chapter 1, my usage of this term does not necessarily accord with the ways the term is used in music studies. The musical activities described do not always easily conform to standard definitions of 'musical performing' that emphasise the display of a skill or the interaction with an audience. Performing such as humming, singing and foot-tapping were not necessarily enacted with any audience in mind or with the intention of displaying a skill or competence. Nevertheless, they occurred in the presence of other people and had the potential to have an impact on those people and provide cues for defining a social situation.

Therefore, it is my contention that Goffman's open-ended definition of 'performance' is still valuable when exploring this kind of performing. As identified earlier, Goffman stated his definition as follows: "A 'performance' may be defined as all the activity of a given participant on a given occasion which serves to influence in any way any of the other participants" (Goffman, 1959 p. 26). Whilst wishing to avoid repetition, it is important to reaffirm, in accordance with Carlson (2004) that this open-ended definition allows those studying performance to consider that performing could be *witting* or *unwitting*. The implications of this point will become clearer during the discussion that follows.

2. Musical Performing and the Management of Everyday Routines and Situations

During Chapter 1 it was made apparent that musical performing such as singing, dancing, humming or whistling is considered socially acceptable practice in many everyday situations. It is often represented in the British mass media as being a pleasurable and mundane activity. The notion that musical performing can enhance or enliven mundane everyday situations is a commonly held one and there are numerous examples of this in TV and radio programmes (the BBC comedy hit The Royle Family (1993-2000) is a particularly useful recent example that features various instances of this performing).

Furthermore, as already indicated, this is supported by research carried out by Bull (2003) who found that the car drivers he interviewed commonly sang along to the songs they were listening to on their stereos during everyday car journeys. Yet strangely there is a dearth of studies that investigate the significance of this type of everyday musical performing. It seems that this type of activity is implicitly accepted as part of British cultural practice and taken for granted. By focusing on musical performing during everyday routines and situations at 17 Orwell Street, the rest of this chapter will provide some specific insights into the value of this performing.

To an extent it has already been identified that certain domestic routines at 17 Orwell Street regularly involved musical performing. In the previous chapter it was made clear that John and Charlotte would often request music in the morning during breakfast. For instance, once John had purchased his Boney M The Best Of (1997) album in 2001 he would usually ask me to put this on whilst sat at the kitchen table having breakfast. When he heard a song he recognised, such as 'Rivers of Babylon' (1978) or 'Brown girl in the ring' (1978), he would usually begin singing along enthusiastically for a few moments. Generally his singing would not last for long and he would content himself with listening to the remainder of the songs as he drank a cup of tea and ate his breakfast. John's singing was not only evident during breakfast but during other meal times as well. For example, the following field diary extract describes how John wholeheartedly began singing during his lunch (again the music that afforded this was by Boney M).

*When most people had finished and Charlotte and Andrew had left the table,
John asked me to "put music on" whilst he and Christine were still at the table. I
asked him what he wanted and he said "Sugar in plum, plum" – meaning 'Brown
girl in the ring'. I put this track on for John immediately from his Boney M CD.
Once the track began, immediately starting with the chorus, John began
enthusiastically singing along fairly loudly in his high-pitched voice. He was
smiling widely and clearly enjoying himself., He kept up with most of the simple
lyrics – singing "Show me emotion" and "wash my clothes" during the last few
lines. In the lounge I turned to see Jay laughing quietly and he said to me "He's
a case, isn't he?" I nodded in agreement and stayed in the kitchen tidying a few
dishes as I listened to John.*
(Field notes, 12.9.04)

This type of performing is significant on a number of levels. Firstly, such
acts of joyously singing along to music during a daily communal domestic
situation affect that situation. Meal times were a ritual when each of the residents
was in close proximity to one another. Consequently, because relations between
residents were sometimes strained (for reasons explored earlier) there were
underlying tensions that occasionally surfaced whilst everyone was sat at the
kitchen table. For instance, Charlotte would sometimes attempt to adopt an
authoritative role in relation to the other residents, particularly John and Christine
(whom she often resented). She would do this by prompting them to eat food that
they had left on their plates. Staff members sometimes had to dissuade Charlotte
from doing this by reminding her that the other residents were free to leave food
as they pleased. Since meal times had the potential to be awkward social
situations, it was interesting that John often requested music and chose to sing or
dance to songs whilst sat at the table. Such musical performing may have been
partly an attempt to project a sense of fun and joviality into a social situation that
was prone to tensions.

However, clearly John's performing in such domestic situations cannot be
solely linked to an attempt to positively influence those situations. John's singing
was also connected to the articulation of self-identity; he was providing cues
regarding his self and his mood through this musical performing. Furthermore, it
was important that in such domestic situations John was acutely aware of an
audience and often enjoyed being the focus of others' attention. Moreover, in the
instance detailed above John was not performing 'Brown girl in the ring' in front
of just anyone. He was singing near to me, the person who had discovered his

preference for Boney M and supported him to purchase the CD. Consequently, the music-related social relationship that John had developed with me must also be taken into consideration when examining this specific moment. Therefore, at this juncture it is plain that by only focusing upon one moment of domestic musical performing a whole series of issues regarding the significance of this performing are raised.

Musical performing such as singing could thus play a central role in helping to define and enhance domestic situations and routines at 17 Orwell Street. This sheds further light on the argument made in the last chapter that music provided companionship for people in the house. As was illustrated in that chapter, staff members Nicky and Mel discussed music listening as a positive force that enhanced residents' moods in specific situations. For example, it was suggested that Charlotte could 'escape' through listening to music whilst cleaning her bedroom and that this could alleviate the anxieties she held in relation to this activity. Examining this activity further, it was telling that during her interview Charlotte made clear that she also liked to sing whilst listening to music and cleaning her room. When asked about how she felt when singing during cleaning she replied by saying "Oh, nice and...keep easy" (Interview with Charlotte, 27.3.04). The phrase "keep easy" is an evocative one that provided a striking insight into her feelings. As was the case during many daily conversations, throughout the interview Charlotte often found it difficult to put her thoughts and feelings into words. Given her difficulties with verbal articulation it was significant that she chose the phrase "keep easy" to describe how she felt whilst singing and carrying out her most uncomfortable domestic chore. It implies that it assisted her to relax and remain calm.

Interestingly, later in the interview she intimated that listening to music during car journeys made the journey better because it enabled her to experience a more relaxed sense of time. At this moment in the interview, through both words and gesture, Charlotte evoked the idea of 'keeping easy' that she had alluded to earlier. Describing music's value on car journeys she said that: "You take your *time* going up y' know, going that way mmm, y' know" (ibid.) At the same time as uttering these words she performed a slow, calm movement bringing one of her arms out gradually from her chest in a straight line as if to imitate a slow moving car. Thus, through her words and actions Charlotte

implied that music listening and performing helped her to feel relaxed during everyday situations. This discussion of Charlotte's singing whilst cleaning her room reveals that musical performing was potentially a resource for coping with domestic situations as well as a resource for influencing other people. These issues will now be expanded upon in more depth by considering two case studies of what I will call 'personal songs' that were enacted during different domestic situations and routines at 17 Orwell Street.

Tic, tac, too

Musical performing was also enacted during domestic routines and situations when music was not necessarily mediated through stereo systems or the TV. For instance, John regularly sang a rhyme either during his bathing routine, whilst getting dressed in his bedroom or when getting ready for bed at night. The following field diary extract conveys how this rhyme was often enacted as John was getting ready for bed in the bathroom:

Standing in the middle of the grey lino flooring near to the sink John clasped his hands together with a mischievous smile on his face. Even though his eyes were almost shutting with tiredness John began to sing: "Tic, tac, too – this is school" I asked John to "wait there" whilst I got him some clean pyjamas from his bedroom.

When I returned to the bathroom John had moved towards the shower and had picked up the shower head. With a smirk on his face he said: "give me shower" "You don't need one" I replied, asking him to come to the sink. John once again sang "Tic, tac, too – this is school!" clapping his hands in time to the beat.
(Field notes, 9.8.05)

The rhyme "Tic, tac, too" was sang by John on a regular basis and seemed to have personal significance for him. The reference to "school" suggests that this was a rhyme that he learnt at the special school he attended when he was younger. However, it was difficult to be certain about this because John still referred to the day centre he attended whilst living at 17 Orwell Street as "school". Whilst it was not possible to pinpoint the exact meaning of John's performing of the "Tic, tac, too", the manner in which the rhyme was enacted and the domestic routines it was often part of provided valuable indicators.

The rhyme was almost always performed with exuberance. John would invariably clap his hands in time with the words which would be sung loudly with the emphasis being placed on the last words of each line, "too" and "school". Alternatively, if John was near to an object such as the bathroom sink or his bed he would often beat this object with his right hand in time with the beat of the rhyme. What was striking about this performing was how much energy and force John frequently used as he clapped or beat out the rhyme's metre. He would clap or beat his hand using surprisingly violent force for a man of slight stature. Hence, although John's posture was stooped and he would remain standing in one place, his enacting of "Tic, tac, too" frequently projected a sense of energy and excitement.

The fact that this performing occurred during domestic routines when John was given one-to-one attention from a support worker was also interesting. It seemed that John wanted to convey his excitement at the possibility of going to "school" to the person solely devoting attention to him. After all, John seemed to really enjoy attending the day centre for the most part, so the idea of going to bed ready for "school" in the morning, or getting washed to be ready for "school" would have been appealing. Yet, the performing of "Tic, tac, too" also had to be considered in the light of his frequently mischievous behaviour that was outlined earlier. As will be seen later, John was extremely playful whilst getting dressed in his bedroom and the performing of this rhyme may have been another example of this. Furthermore, the singing of "Tic, tac, too" needs to be considered as an instance of self-presentation. By performing this rhyme John, whether deliberately or not, was telling those in attendance something about his 'self-identity' and his past. Although John was only offering a fragment of his 'self' and his personal history by performing this rhyme it nevertheless provided those around him with a brief insight into this history.

However, what was also interesting about John's performing of this song was that its personal value for him altered over time. This is because John began to associate the song with Paul, his key support worker in 2005. Whilst joking with John, Paul had began imitating John's singing of "Tic, tac, too", just as John often imitated other peoples' common expressions. Consequently, when Paul and I supported John to go on holiday to Torquay in the summer of 2005 it was made apparent to me that part of the pleasure John associated with the rhyme was his

anticipation of Paul's mimicking. For example, during several evenings before going to bed John sang "Tic, tac, too" whilst beating the bed in the hotel room we were sharing. John then proceeded to urge Paul to do the same and when Paul obliged John began laughing. Therefore, after studying John's performing of a song that seemed deeply personal to him over several years, it became clear that the significance of such songs shift over time. Though it was a personal song, because it was performed in the distinctive social context of 17 Orwell Street, the meanings of "Tic, tac, too" changed along with different social relationships. Thus, it is clear that John's singing of a simple rhyme had to be understood on a number of levels in order to begin to appreciate its significance. However brief, musical performing can have great communicative value particularly for people who have limited skills of verbal communication. The next case study will provide more insight into how musical performing can enhance domestic situations and routines.

Love Me Tonight

It has been made apparent that Charlotte frequently liked to sing along or hum to music mediated through stereo systems, the TV or radio whilst undertaking housework. What was also striking about her musical performing during household tasks was that she would sing or hum in ways that were not dependent upon music playing. Soon after beginning to work at 17 Orwell Street it became apparent that Charlotte consistently liked to sing a specific phrase as she went about domestic routines or was faced with certain situations. The phrase that she could often be heard singing was "Love me tonight". Other staff members I had contact with noticed the regularity of Charlotte's singing of this phrase. As Natalie commented during a conversation that I was part of, "I sometimes go home singing that song, 'Love me tonight'". Likewise, Mel commented in one of her diary entries that: "Charlotte will just burst into a lyric e.g. 'Love me tonight' whenever she can" (Mel's diary, 13.10.01). However, noting the frequency of this does not provide much insight into its importance. Once again, it is necessary to consider the manner in which this personal song was performed and the everyday activities and situations of which it was often part.

Firstly, it is vital to point out that Charlotte's singing of "Love me tonight" did not seem to refer to a specific song. This is not to imply that there are not popular songs that feature that lyric. For instance, there are two singles entitled 'Love me tonight' that have featured in the British pop charts since they began to be compiled in 1952.[28] Although it may have been influenced by these or other songs featuring similar lyrics, Charlotte's singing could not clearly be traced to an individual song. This is because the manner in which she sang "Love me tonight" often varied. For instance, I observed Charlotte singing this phrase in a gentle paced, somewhat wistful manner as she went about chores such as tidying laundry or during a quiet moment such as when she was waiting for a bus to collect her and take her to the day centre. Yet I also witnessed the phrase being sung in a far more bright and lively manner with a quicker rhythm during similar domestic routines and situations. These variations in metre, pitch, melody and tone made pinpointing the source for Charlotte's song difficult, and this problem was exacerbated by the fact that she would sometimes add different lyrics to the end of the phrase. For example, on some occasions I heard her singing "Love me tonight, love me today" with a gentle melody and somewhat wistful tone. Conversely, there were times when she sang "Love me tonight, la, la, la" in a more upbeat tone and with greater pace.

Furthermore, Charlotte did not seem to know if her singing of "Love me tonight" was derived from a particular song or artist. This is made clear from the following field diary extract:

At this time when Charlotte and John were sat together in the lounge (Charlotte was sat on the arm of John's chair at one point) Christine was in the shower and getting ready. The TV was on with the ITV morning programme on...

As I was sat in the lounge area I heard Charlotte singing "love me tonight, la, la, la" in an upbeat manner as she was walking around and looking out of the window. There was no music on to prompt this singing. I told Charlotte "that's a nice song" and started singing it to John who was sat having his drink. I asked her "who sings it?" She said "love me tonight?" Then, after pausing she said "erm Cliff Richard, no, I don't know". I then asked Charlotte if that was a song she had in her bedroom but she replied "no". I didn't draw attention to the song any further but Charlotte began singing it again, perhaps pleased that I had commented on it. (Field notes, 20.4.04)

---

[28] These were by performed by Tom Jones (1969) and by Trevor Walters (1981) (Guinness World Records, 2002 p. 581).

Although I had been conducting ethnographic research for almost four years up to the moment described above, this was the first time that I had directly asked Charlotte about her singing of "Love me tonight". This was because drawing attention to her singing in this way from the outset would have meant that I was greatly influencing her activity and it may have changed how she behaved in front of me or other staff. Her performing of this phrase seemed to be a very personal activity because, unlike some of the times when she was singing along or dancing to music playing on the stereo or TV, Charlotte did not look to other people to gauge their reactions or to see if they were joining in. These more shared moments of musical performing will be discussed later, but when singing "Love me tonight" it always seemed that Charlotte was performing to her 'self' rather than for other people.

Although it focuses on uses of recorded music rather than singing, Tia DeNora's theorising of music as a resource for "self-regulation" and "self-modulation" is useful to consider here (DeNora, 2000 p. 53). DeNora argues by referring to extensive ethnographic interviews that people choose music to regulate their moods and bodily energy (e.g. to calm down if they are feeling uptight) or to modulate and structure these aspects of 'self' (e.g. by putting a certain type of music on to 'get in the mood' for a night out) (ibid. pp. 53-54). As DeNora puts it, her respondents use music's "specific properties…as referents or representations of where they wish to be or go, emotionally, physically and so on" (ibid. p. 53). If, as has been argued, musical performing such as singing can help Charlotte to "keep easy", then it follows that one way of interpreting her singing of "Love me tonight" was as a resource for self-regulation. It seemed to be a way of maintaining a relaxed mood as she was faced with domestic routines and situations. Also the performing of this phrase can be related to self-modulation in that the singing of "Love me tonight" may have consoled Charlotte during certain routines or situations if she felt vulnerable or lonely. As has been explained, the phrase was sometimes sang in a wistful, longing manner, suggesting that, as the lyric implies, Charlotte was yearning to feel loved.

This notion of "Love me tonight" providing Charlotte with a sense of 'comfort' by enabling her to put her 'self' into a certain mood (self-modulation)

was suggested by Mel during her interview. The following interview segment

conveys Mel's interpretation of Charlotte's singing of the phrase:

> NH: Going onto some of the things that you mentioned in the diary which
> I thought were really interesting, you talked about how, for Charlotte,
> music is like 'a comfort' and I just wondered what you meant by that?
> Mel: I just believe that because Charlotte speaks about, well y' know
> wanting a boyfriend and maybe experiencing more than...She always
> asks people how their partners are and sometimes a bit too personal
> questions...That line that she continually sings, "Love me tonight", I feel
> that it is her way of being comforted by *saying* that but not actually
> having, having feelings of love.
> NH: Right.
> Mel: I think, me personally, that that's why she says it so much, because
> she wants it so much that she can actually sing about it but can't actually
> experience it and it's a bit of a comfort for her.
> (Interview with Mel, 26.4.04)

Mel's comments shed further light on the value of singing as a resource for

Charlotte to articulate her feelings, and the value of musical performing in

domestic situations. As has been argued, singing is a socially

acceptable mode of musical performing within many domestic situations.

Charlotte's singing of "Love me tonight" is therefore a relatively safe avenue for

her to express her sense of 'self' and her feelings amongst staff and residents at

17 Orwell Street. As Mel suggested in her interview, one of the main pleasures

afforded by the singing of this phrase could have been related to consolation.

"Love me tonight" seemed to be a strangely comforting phrase in that it appeared

(certainly to Mel) to be a phrase that soothed Charlotte's yearning for love,

whilst providing her with a way of expressing it. This links in with DeNora's

discussion of music usage as a form of 'venting' one's feelings. DeNora argues

that "music is both an instigator and a container of feeling" when examining how

her respondents select music to manage their moods (DeNora, 2000 p. 58). Yet

with this example it is apparent that this process of mood management can be

achieved through everyday musical performing as well as music listening.

Mel's interpretation of Charlotte's singing of "Love me tonight" implies

that this singing was a powerful metaphor that provided a unique insight into

Charlotte's life history and domestic situation. This is an argument with some

credibility because, as we have seen, in many respects Charlotte was dislocated

from the area she called 'home'. Whilst her brothers had married and made their own families, after her mother's death and her move to Orwell Street, Charlotte was increasingly on the periphery of her previous family circle. At the same time she was situated in a social environment where all of the staff supporting her had partners and, in many cases, families of their own. Combined with the fact that Charlotte had to contend with sharing a house with three other residents who were somewhat older and had different support requirements to her, interacting with these staff members may have increased her feelings of isolation. It may have been that her interactions with staff reminded her of a life that she was precluded from having due to the myriad of social factors that were mentioned earlier, many of which were out of her control. Assessed in the context of these circumstances, the singing of "Love me tonight" takes on added poignancy and it could be argued that the phrase was powerfully evocative of Charlotte's feelings.

However, whilst much data derived from participant-observation supported this conclusion, it is vital to be cautious when considering the phrase "Love me tonight" as a metaphor for understanding Charlotte's life. Although researchers like Tim Booth (1996) have suggested that methods that analyse research subjects' comments for their metaphorical value are useful when studying the lives of people with learning difficulties, there is a danger that such methods could simplify the lives of the people they are trying to understand. What is important to consider with "Love me tonight" is that Charlotte sang this phrase in a variety of ways in different situations. In some situations, such as the one described in field notes above, the song seemed to constitute a way for Charlotte to pleasantly pass the time whilst waiting for her bus, rather than a way of articulating her feelings.

Moreover, her singing of this phrase, like John's singing of "Tic, tac, too", changed over time. During 2005 Charlotte began a romantic relationship with Karle, a younger man with mild learning difficulties similar to her. During this relationship it was striking that the lyrics of "Love me tonight" altered. The following short field diary extract reveals this difference:

Slightly later whilst Charlotte was in the kitchen putting her pyjamas in the washing machine I overheard her singing to herself as I was in the lounge. In a bright and breezy manner Charlotte sang "Love you tonight", which is a variation on a song "Love me tonight" that I've often heard her sing.

(Field notes, 3.11.05)

At this time in her life whilst she was in a relationship with Karle, it is highly significant that this personal song changed. Charlotte may have felt in love with Karle and it was likely that she sang the phrase "Love you tonight" whilst carrying out domestic activities in order to express her feelings. No longer a phrase suggesting a yearning for love, "Love you tonight" seemed to be an affirmation of love for another person but also perhaps an expression of 'self' confidence and security.

It is apparent, therefore, that personal songs such as "Tic, tac, too" and "Love me tonight" are rich resources for the articulation of self-identity. Despite both John and Charlotte's difficulties with verbal communication, their small instances of musical performing could potentially convey a range of meanings regarding personal history, relationships and emotions. This performing also helped both individuals to structure their regular domestic activities in a way that gave such activities more of an aesthetic, pleasurable dimension. Yet this performing of these personal songs was not necessarily enacted with an audience in mind, particularly with Charlotte's singing of "Love me tonight". Rather than being "meta-communicative" and soliciting attention from others to indicate that 'this is performing', the singing discussed above is *supra-communicative* (Babcock, 1977 p. 68; Bauman, 1977 p. 16). This is because such singing is not primarily produced to display a skill or to convey a message to an audience by drawing attention to the 'performer'. It is instigated in order to *cope* with everyday situations and routines and the complex thoughts and emotions that an individual may have in the midst of them.

In this sense everyday musical performing can, in some instances, have much in common with work songs and sea shanties. Describing the work songs of African-Americans, Alan Lomax wrote that:

> These songs are full of love for people, they are lonely for people
> and they are full of hunger for gentleness and kindness in this
> world...These songs rose up out of these people without their
> having to think about it, because they were lonesome for more
> kindness and goodness and richness than they could find in life
> right where they were (Lomax, 2003 p. 76).

Although Charlotte and John's songs were not performed in contexts of slavery or hard labour, the above quote has some resonance with the singing discussed above. Musical performing that is a resource for coping with everyday life does not necessarily have a straightforward referent; it is enacted by people without thinking about it. A familiarity with the daily contexts and personal histories of those concerned can enable an ethnographic researcher to gain some insight into how such songs might 'rise up' in people, but it cannot capture the affective power involved when performing such songs. However, while providing some clues to the significance of these songs, the ethnographic case studies featured above also underline that everyday songs are never static. Personal songs, phrases or rhymes may emerge from particular social conditions but they also shift as those conditions change. Thus, ethnographic research that focused upon 17 Orwell Street as an interaction setting and privileged data from participant-observation was able to explicate musical performing in that setting as complex and dynamic. This approach will be continued in the next section where the emphasis will be placed more firmly upon musical performing and social interaction.

3. Musical Performing and the Management of Social Interactions and Relationships

It has been argued up to now that small instances of musical performing were central to social life at 17 Orwell Street. Generally such performing had a dual role: it was a useful resource for defining and managing social situations and routines and it was also a resource for self-management; fostering fruitful ways of being during these varied situations and routines. However, as was stressed at the beginning of this chapter, 17 Orwell Street had to be examined as an interaction setting in order to provide greater insight into the significance of domestic musical performing. Consequently, this section of the chapter will explore how musical performing could shape social interactions within everyday situations and how it could be a key resource for forging social relationships.

Humming, Self-management and Social Interaction

Although a working consensus of friendliness was developed at 17 Orwell Street, it has also been made evident that there were conflicts and tensions; not only amongst residents but also between staff members and residents. As has been suggested already, music was a useful resource that could be incorporated into efforts to ameliorate tensions and foster positive moods. For instance, the previous chapter revealed that staff members such as Nicky were very aware of this and it was argued that music was sometimes mediated with the specific intention of changing an individual's mood. However, musical performing was also a resource that was often central to such processes. Moreover, as it was a distinctly flexible medium of self-presentation, this performing was capable of enabling certain individuals in 17 Orwell Street to influence tension-prone social situations and interactions in a multitude of ways.

In order to illustrate this point it is pertinent to consider the daily routine of washing the dishes in the house. Though it may seem to be a mundane activity, 'doing the washing-up' after meals involved certain power struggles. The first of these involved Charlotte's relationship with Christine. When she first moved to 17 Orwell Street Christine was eager to assist with housework because she had been used to this from living with her father. However, because Charlotte had been the most willing and physically able person to assist with dish-washing up to the point when Christine moved in, she adopted the role of an incumbent when it came to this duty. Consequently, she often tried to assert her authority in relation to this role by preventing Christine from helping with the task. She accomplished this by using strategies such as starting the dishes before Christine had finished her meal (Christine ate far more slowly than Charlotte did). In the interests of fairness staff members encouraged Charlotte to share dish-washing responsibilities but she found it difficult to accept this. Therefore, the household task was often fraught with tension as staff members consistently had to intervene to prevent Charlotte from dominating Christine or becoming aggressive towards her.

Furthermore, whilst Christine became increasingly less inclined to want to assist with household chores such as dish-washing during the years after she initially moved in, there were other tensions evident during this task. As

Charlotte did not always take adequate care when washing dishes, staff members regularly assisted her, usually by drying the dishes whilst she washed. This enabled staff members to point out to Charlotte if she had left any food on any items (which was frequently the case). Unsurprisingly, such situations regularly caused Charlotte to become agitated and support staff often had to be very tactful with their actions to avoid upsetting her. Having music playing from the stereo system in the kitchen area would sometimes temper these potentially stressful situations and make washing the dishes more pleasurable. For example, Mel stated in her interview that: "If I'm washing [and] she's drying we'll sort of mess about y' know...shake our bums and stuff like that to the music" (Interview with Mel, 26.4.04). Thus, it was sometimes the case that playful performing to music could prevent Charlotte from harbouring resentment towards staff assistance during 'washing-up'.

Yet this was not always the case and there were times when Charlotte clearly became irritated during the dish-washing process if Christine or staff members were assisting her. What was striking during such moments was that Charlotte would often adopt musical performing in order to deal with such situations. This was made clearly evident to me when I began helping her with the dishes on regular occasions. Charlotte tended to insist on washing the dishes so I would stand next to her and dry them with a tea towel. To ensure that each item was clean after she had washed it I began to routinely rinse dishes in clean water when she had passed them to me for drying. Though I thought that this was a tactful way of checking that dishes she washed were clean, it was clear that Charlotte still did not like this. She consistently began to watch what I was doing and would sometimes shake her head disapprovingly. However, during these interactions Charlotte did not lose her temper. Instead she would often begin to hum: "la, la, la, dee, dee, dee" in an upbeat manner, looking straight ahead and carrying on with washing (though intermittently glancing at my actions). Charlotte's performing seemed to partly constitute an attempt to conceal her frustration. This is because her humming seemed to be a way of projecting an air of pleasantry into the social situation. Charlotte seemed to want to convey to me the notion that she was happily attending to her routine, even though my actions were obviously irritating her.

Such instances provided a powerful illustration of the potential of everyday musical performing to influence social interactions and situations. Charlotte's use of humming in these moments was close to the type of performing that Goffman refers to as "misrepresentation" (Goffman, 1959 p. 65). She adopted a pleasant social front through the use of humming, whilst her mood during these moments was actually somewhat agitated and unpleasant. Humming was, therefore, a useful device for what Berger and Del Negro term "meta-communicative signalling" (Berger and Del Negro, 2004 p. 111). In other words, Charlotte's upbeat humming and her deportment (looking ahead and focusing on washing dishes) provided social cues regarding the behaviour she displayed. She seemed to be attempting to signify through her actions that she was carrying out 'business as usual' in a carefree manner.

However, as well as being a reflexive strategy that was enacted to mask displeasure and project an unflustered social front, other dimensions to Charlotte's humming need to be considered. Musical performing is a flexible resource that can be used for coping with social situations in a number of ways. Therefore, while humming was used by Charlotte as a coping device to neutralise tensions between her and other people during 'washing up', it is also likely that it was instigated as a means of "self-regulation" (DeNora, 2000 p. 53). After all, humming is self-presentation that is relatively safe and it has been made clear that it was a socially acceptable, commonplace activity at 17 Orwell Street. Thus, Charlotte's humming can also be seen as a way of presenting herself in a way that enabled her to deal with an uncomfortable situation in a productive way. In order to clarify this point it is instructive to examine a specific example when humming was used by Charlotte during a different social situation.

Charlotte did not only utilise musical performing in the ways discussed above during dish washing or during housework duties; she also used it as a coping device when faced with other social situations and interactions that she found awkward. In the following description from my field notes it becomes apparent that even when sat together watching TV tensions between Charlotte and Christine could quickly surface over seemingly innocuous comments. Although I was in attendance to defuse any potential conflicts it was interesting that, similar to events discussed above, Charlotte attempted to manage the situation through humming:

I sat in between Charlotte and John on the sofa watching TV. <u>You've Been Framed</u> was on ITV. One of the compilations of video clips featured a theme of people dancing in an amusing manner. For instance, there was a large woman shaking her bottom provocatively. There were also clips of young children and toddlers shaking their hips whilst wearing nappies. Charlotte and I laughed at various points although John seemed more interested in looking at his book.

The montage on <u>You've Been Framed</u> was accompanied by the song 'I See You Baby' (Groove Armada, 1999). During the sequence Christine interjected with the comment "It's disgusting". She was half-watching the TV and half-threading [her sewing tablet] as she spoke. I looked up and asked her what she'd said, she clarified that she thought the programme or possibly the sequence was "disgusting". I asked her why she thought this was the case. She didn't really elaborate but at this point Charlotte sat up and turned to Christine. Charlotte said that it wasn't disgusting and that "it's dancing" and went on to say that "you do it sometimes". Christine's reply was somewhat indignant; she adamantly stated "I don't". At this point the two of them seemed to be about to continue arguing; with Christine's demeanour a little stern and Charlotte's face even more obviously stern. The two of them went silent after I'd said something along the lines of "ok Christine, never mind", intending to calm the situation. I then sat back with the intention of watching more of the programme. However, Charlotte continued to sit up and her stare lingered on Christine, a look of mild irritation seemed to be expressed in her features and her eyes were wide, suggesting annoyance. Politely I asked Charlotte to sit back and watch the rest of the programme, trying to calm the situation. Charlotte responded by rather awkwardly moving back and moments later she began briefly humming to herself "la, la, la" in a quiet fashion, possibly to hide her impatience or discomfort. Christine continued to do some threading and put her head down slightly to focus on that. (Field notes, 22.10.05)

Charlotte was clearly irritated during this social interaction because she disagreed with Christine's view on dancing being depicted on a TV programme. Unable to pursue the issue (partly through my intervention) she seemed to be frustrated but instead of showing her anger it was interesting that she began softly humming. Once again this type of musical performing seemed to be a flexible resource in this domestic situation. It was used by Charlotte in a seemingly deliberate manner to influence both the social situation she was faced with and to address her feelings. Her humming was a meta-communicative signal that seemed to imply that she was unperturbed and that she was carrying on watching the TV in a pleasant manner. In addition, this musical performing again constituted a way of attempting to keep her self 'in check' and not to disclose her emotions in a negative way.

That such self-management could be achieved through musical performing was important for Charlotte because there were other occasions when she had a lot of emotional difficulties. For instance, when something was worrying her and she was trying to tell people about an issue she would often become agitated and encounter great difficulties with verbal communication. In such situations Charlotte was prone to becoming upset and the staff member(s) she was talking to had to take great care when trying to understand what she was saying. Yet in the case studies discussed above it was clear that everyday musical performing such as humming was a unique coping device that Charlotte could utilise to both control and express her emotions. Thus, although Charlotte was uncomfortable in the situations described above, ultimately this performing helped her to maintain a relatively calm bodily state. The affective potential of everyday music use at 17 Orwell Street will be explored further in the next chapter. For now, moving away from considerations of musical performing as a resource for coping with uncomfortable social interactions and situations, it will be revealed that this performing was also central to the development of social connections and relationships.

Musical Performing as Attention-seeking

It was argued in Chapter 1 that the notion of self-identity should be understood as a complex process of becoming; it is never stable or complete; nor is it essential to an individual. Rather as sociologists such as Goffman (1959, 1961, 1963) and music psychologists such as Hargreaves et al. (2002) have stressed, the self is continually forged during social interactions and performing. So far in this chapter it has been made clear that the study of everyday musical performing in a single house offers an insight into how self-identity is developed in manifold ways during domestic interactions and situations. In particular, many of the case studies featured above have explicated how musical performing is integral to processes of self-presentation and self-management that occur within tense or potentially uncomfortable circumstances. However, moving away from a consideration of instances of tension or potential conflict, musical performing during more relaxed and relatively convivial domestic situations and interactions at 17 Orwell Street will be focused upon.

As suggested during the initial discussion of John's singing along to Boney M tracks at the beginning of this overall section, musical performing has to be considered as a way of seeking attention from other people. During everyday domestic situations at 17 Orwell Street performing such as singing or dancing was a useful way for individuals to influence others but also to convey a sense of self. It has been made apparent that John was particularly interested in captivating those around him through playful performing. Musical performing was a productive resource that could help him to accomplish this. This was something that became abundantly clear when I first met him and there were numerous examples of everyday incidents in which John instigated musical performing in order to draw attention from others throughout the research period. For example, the following short excerpt from my very first field diary entry describes a situation where John's spontaneous performing elicited attention from those around him:

When I switched the television over to watch the England football match, John suddenly started singing along with the national anthem. He was also swaying and moving his arms as if he was conducting an orchestra. I found this amusing and smiled. Ursula and Jay [staff members] paused to look and smile, before carrying on talking. When the anthem had finished John and Charlotte cheered and clapped, I joined in with them. (Field notes, 7.10.00)

When John enacted such performing he often seemed to be acutely aware that he was becoming the focus of attention and this prompted him to grin widely. He also seemed to thrive upon others' reactions and feed off them. For instance, during one of the last times that I worked at 17 Orwell Street he began mimicking the singing of his new housemate, a woman who cannot be discussed in any detail because she was not living there when I obtained permission to begin research. When I began laughing at this mimicking it spurred him on and his singing became more vocal.

The extent of John's attention-seeking through musical performing is thrown more sharply into focus when considering his actions in public. For instance, the following field diary extract describes how John began performing whilst waiting in the queue at his local Co-operative convenience store:

After greeting people in the queue John decided to dance to the music on the radio. He held his hands up to his chest and starting bobbing up and down, sinking lower and then rising by bending and straightening his legs. He was smiling and moving his head from side to side whilst turning his body. John seemed to be amused with himself. He certainly caused great amusement amongst the shop assistants who were laughing at him. One woman at the till spoke warmly to him saying "are you dancing? I don't blame you love". The woman next to her also commented "look at John Travolta here". I found the whole experience very funny, John was also laughing to himself as well. I think he enjoyed being the centre of attention. Once we were served the shop assistants and cashiers were very friendly; they all said "goodbye" to us both.
(Field notes, 20.1.01)

This occurrence reinforces that John welcomed attention and that musical performing was a suitable resource for him to gain this. There were numerous instances of this type of performing in public places. John often liked to dance in shops or supermarkets, yet he also displayed musical performing at more framed occasions such as church masses and parties.

It has been made clear that one of the main pleasures that John associated with everyday musical performing was being looked at; he would often be delighted that he was the centre of attention. This may seem like a simple point but it is far from inconsequential. This is because, despite the examples discussed above, there were also times when John would sit passively in the lounge flicking through books and not joining in conversations (partly because on many occasions he did not fully understand what was being talked about). Though he had limited cognitive skills for engaging in conversations, it has been demonstrated that musical performing offered John a felicitous way of influencing others, sometimes in quite powerful ways.

Though not as ostentatious as John, other people living and working at 17 Orwell Street seemed to consider musical performing a socially acceptable way of attracting attention and influencing others. Amongst certain staff members, for instance, it was commonplace to engage in musical performing that was playful or exaggerated. For example, the following field diary extract describes this type of performing that occurred when I was visiting the house before Christmas in 2006:

Natalie offered me a drink and made everyone a hot drink with assistance from Vicky. Meanwhile The Box began to show more contemporary chart hits as part

of another programme. Whilst Take That's 'Patience' was on I heard Natalie
singing along to the chorus in an exaggerated, loud manner whilst she was in the
kitchen. This was possibly to make the task of making drinks more pleasurable
and provoke humour and an atmosphere of fun. (Field notes, 23.12.06)

During her interview Nicky suggested that this type of performing was prevalent
at 17 Orwell Street. This is illustrated in the following interview segment:

> NH: That was something else I was going to ask you about...about
> people singing and dancing. Would you say that that seems to be
> something that's quite common? People performing in a way to music?
> Nicky: (Laughing) Yes! Badly!
> (Both of us laugh at this point)
> But, yes, because that's what happens when I go out socially, that's what
> happens when I'm at home and it seems, I don't know if it's just me in
> here, but I don't know because Charlotte and John will get up dancing, so
> yeah I think so. (Inaudible) it brightens everything doesn't it? Because
> they might look daft but people laugh at people being daft or funny or
> whatever. I don't know I just think it lightens peoples' spirits. If there's a
> dance involved then they'll join in the performance.
> (Interview with Nicky, 3.11.05)

Thus, as Nicky hinted, musical performing was attention seeking activity that
was an important dimension of the working consensus evident at the house. It
was a central aspect of the playful, mischievous performing outlined earlier.
Performing such as singing and dancing drew attention to the performer but, as
Nicky intimated, it also encouraged others to participate. The potential for
everyday musical performing to foster social connections will be expanded upon
shortly. However, firstly it is necessary to consider other aspects of musical
performing as attention-seeking activity.

The value of Charlotte's musical performing within certain domestic
situations also needs to be considered in relation to the pleasures involved with
being looked at. Like John, she also seemed to enjoy being the focus of the
attention of other people during performing. Furthermore, Charlotte sometimes
used musical performing to explicitly claim attention; diverting it from other
residents. For example, in the following field diary extract she seemed to make a
strong effort to demand attention through musical performing from other people
in the house:

As I was making everyone their cup of tea I noticed that Christine was walking towards the lounge using her walking frame dressed in her night dress. She'd decided to get changed after she'd come out of the bathroom and spent a little time in her bedroom [with Janet supporting her]. Charlotte walked down the hallway to Janet and Christine. I heard her say "hello tilly-mint" (this is an affectionate name that Janet sometimes calls Christine). Christine replied tersely that "my name is Christine". Checking herself Charlotte said "Christine darling", she was then asking Christine to come to the lounge with her.

Meanwhile one of the performers featured on [ITV programme] X Factor began singing 'The Way You Make Me Feel' (originally performed by Michael Jackson, 1987). As Christine was walking towards her Charlotte began dancing in the doorway between the hallway and the lounge. I could hear her clapping and singing so I moved into a position in the kitchen area where I could see her. Charlotte was singing with a smile on her face, her voice sounded fairly confident and even though she didn't sing all of the lyrics correctly she certainly knew the tune. Charlotte continued to intermittently clap her hands and was dancing by shaking her hips as Christine came into the lounge and steered her Zimmer frame into a position where she could sit down on the armchair she commonly uses. Charlotte was looking at Christine and smiling as she danced as if she was performing for her. Janet walked behind Christine and then momentarily joined in with the singing of the chorus.

When Christine sat on her chair she rested the back of her head on it and closed her eyes. It was almost as if she didn't want to look at Charlotte dancing. Charlotte continued her dancing until the song had finished and then she went to sit down on the sofa. As she did so she said to John "do you like me dancing John?" John seemed tired and didn't respond, preferring to turn the pages of his book on railway history. Consequently, Charlotte prompted him again with the same question saying rather insistently "yes?" to him. John quietly indicated his approval with a rather grunted "yes". (Field notes, 22.10.05)

With this example it was clear that Charlotte was striving for attention from others. Her motivation for this was likely to have been connected to the fact that Christine had been spending time with Janet in her bedroom immediately prior to the events described in the field notes above. Charlotte often became jealous of Christine when she was receiving attention from other staff members. Hence her dancing to the song she was listening to was probably her way of trying to re-establish a kind of dominance within the immediate domestic context. She attempted to accomplish this firstly by musical performing, which, as has been argued, was an acceptable way of providing social cues to other people in order to effectively state: 'look at me'. Charlotte then sought clarification from John that he appreciated her dancing and, indeed, that he had been watching. Thus, in these domestic circumstances small instances of

seemingly spontaneous musical performing could have a number of uses for Charlotte. Performing could constitute a way of tacitly asserting social power and influence over others. Yet in the example described above Charlotte's performing was also connected to the boosting of her self-esteem. This is because she may have wanted to feel valued; therefore she sought praise and attention from others.

Charlotte also utilised musical performing to gain other peoples' attention in more subtle ways. The following field diary extract provides an illustration of this. It describes a situation at night when only Charlotte and Christine were still in the lounge watching TV. This time of night was sometimes prone to tension because Charlotte did not like to go to bed before Christine. Consequently, even if she was tired Charlotte usually preferred to stay up and observe what Christine was doing. Furthermore, there were some instances when Charlotte would try and persuade Christine to go to bed, even though staff members would try and discourage this rather domineering behaviour. In the light of these factors, the extract below is particularly interesting:

After I'd made everyone a drink and sat down with Charlotte and Christine I noticed that the Royal Remembrance Service was on the TV. At first Christine was more intent on doing lacing [on her sewing tablet]. Charlotte said to her "aren't you watching this Christine?" But Christine was content to continue her lacing. I noticed how Charlotte was almost trying to coax Christine into engaging with the music or at least to pay attention to her rather than to lacing. Charlotte accomplished this 'coaxing' through musical performance; she'd hum along to the tunes of the brass bands but then turn towards Christine from where she was sat on the sofa.
(Field notes, 12.11.05)

Charlotte seemed to be trying to negotiate with Christine through her uses of humming in this instance. By turning towards Christine whilst humming she seemed to want to both elicit and gauge responses from her. This type of activity continued during the same night as a later section of the field diary reveals:

Once she'd completed her lacing Christine took more interest in the Remembrance Service as it moved into the more formal religious service. She watched intently as hymns were sung and prayers were said. Charlotte hummed softly to sections of the hymns and later sang along softly to the national anthem, her voice becoming ever so slightly high pitched at times. Charlotte was also frequently turning to Christine to watch her reactions/engagement with the on-

screen performance. It was getting late and it was highly likely that Charlotte was waiting for Christine to go to bed. However, she was also coaxing Christine to sing, saying "go on Christine sing". Christine, however, was content to watch the service and watched intently and without much of an expression on her face. (ibid.)

Therefore, musical performing of this kind can represent a form of negotiation. Charlotte's humming and singing was part of a process of coaxing Christine into paying attention to her and the programme. Furthermore, this performing was also a subtle way of gauging Christine's affective agency in relation to the programme; she was trying to ascertain the extent to which Christine was interested in the programme or whether she was becoming tired.

This sub-section has revealed that the notion of musical performing as 'attention-seeking' is far from straightforward. The various kinds of performing featured above were enacted for a multitude of purposes. These included the exertion of social power and negotiation of social relations as well as to experience the pleasures involved with self-presentation in the presence of others. Having explored how musical performing could be adopted to gain attention from others, it is necessary to examine how this performing could foster stronger social bonds.

Everyday Musical Performing and Social Connections

It has been established that Nicky, an experienced staff member and key informant during my research, viewed musical performing as activity that 'brightened' daily life at 17 Orwell Street. She suggested that one of the main reasons for this is that such performing can encourage participation; as she put it people can "join in" (interview with Nicky, 3.11.05). Nicky was not the only staff member to pick up on the positive aspects of residents and support staff participating in musical performing. Within the diaries they kept to jot down occurrences involving music it was interesting that both Jay and Mel chose to write about domestic events when residents were performing together. For example Mel made the following entry in her diary that outlines how John and Charlotte began singing and dancing together as they watched the film Sister Act (1992):

John was watching <u>Sister Act</u>. He was singing along to 'Oh Marie'. He was kicking his leg and moving his head. He had a very big smile.

Charlotte was watching <u>Sister Act</u>. She sang along with John and was tapping her thigh. Charlotte put her arm around John and they were swaying together.
(Mel's diary, 26.8.01)

Other such instances where music mediated through the TV or stereo system facilitated performing of this nature were outlined in the previous chapter. The important point to emphasise here though is that musical performing fostered togetherness between Charlotte and John. This was something that was evident both whilst they were sat near to each other but also during different domestic situations. For example consider the following field diary entry that depicts John and Charlotte engaging in musical performing together as John was on his to go to get washed in the bathroom one morning:

As he was making his way from the kitchen into the adjoining lounge area, 'Brown girl in the ring' came on the stereo. John began singing along with the opening chorus. At that moment Charlotte also began walking into the lounge area carrying a Tupperware tub full of bird seed [to feed her budgie]. She almost immediately began singing along with John and smiling. Charlotte also began shaking the tub, using it as a musical instrument whilst she sang. John stopped walking and began to bob his head up and down and smile. Laughing and saying "come on John" Charlotte began to dance up the corridor in a conga type fashion leading the way for John to go to the bathroom. I went behind John guiding him down the hallway until we reached the bathroom.
(Field notes, 4.12.02)

In this instance, initially inspired once again by 'Brown girl in the ring' (1978), John's singing encouraged Charlotte to engage in dancing and singing. Their collective musical performing projected a strong sense of fun and joviality during what would have otherwise been a mundane everyday event. Therefore, such performing could become a powerful resource for the development of these two individuals' social relationship. Although they were quite different people both in terms of personality and cognitive ability, they participated in musical performing on an equal footing and this helped to strengthen their friendship.

Although Charlotte and Christine had a rather strained social relationship, it was significant that during certain instances of domestic musical performing

this was temporarily overcome. This was indicated in the previous chapter when an entry from Mel's diary in which described how she had assisted Christine to dance with Charlotte was discussed. Mel intimated in this diary entry how she felt that "music" brought the two women "a little closer" together (Mel's diary, 28.10.01). However, as has been suggested throughout much of this thesis, 'music' cannot be isolated and reified as separate from processes of mediation that involve human activity (Small, 1998). By analysing what happens during musical performing it is possible to explore what specific processes foster participation and social cohesion. In order to elucidate this it is pertinent to examine another field diary extract. The following entry details a moment when Charlotte and Christine were dancing together:

I went back into the kitchen area to find Natalie and Charlotte starting to dance. The music had now switched from Tony Christie to Boney M (due to the automatic CD loader). I asked Christine if she wanted to dance and helped her up from her kitchen chair to stand by the stereo and dance with me. I held her hands initially as Christine shook her hips; she had a content smile on her face. I then asked her if she could dance without holding my hands. She managed this easily and stood on the spot swaying and shaking her bottom and hips as 'Mary's Boy Child' (1978) was playing. I asked Charlotte to come and join us and moved to the side so that she could dance next to me and opposite to Christine. Charlotte's face was flushed with enjoyment as she energetically danced by moving her arms, hips and bottom. As Charlotte looked round and saw Paul (in fact I think she said "he's coming") she began to dance with more vigour; shaking her bottom in a more pronounced way. It seemed that this performance was partly for Paul's benefit, possibly with the intention of impressing him. (Field notes, 29.3.05)

As was argued in relation to the development of a habitus of musical action in the previous chapter, social agency was an important aspect that helped to facilitate Christine and Charlotte's dancing together. Natalie and Charlotte were already dancing and this prompted me to encourage Christine to join in. The fact that two staff members were participating undoubtedly influenced both Christine and Charlotte's actions. The social situation was defined as one in which it was 'safe' to dance and this would have affected how the women acted in each other's company. In addition, the field diary extract also made clear that Charlotte's awareness of who was watching was also a considerable factor. Not only was this dancing taking place with me and Natalie as participants but also Paul, a relatively new staff member at this time, was in the vicinity. As suggested

in the field notes above, this seemed to encourage Charlotte to become more energetic with her movements in an effort to impress Paul in particular.

During social occasions that were more explicitly framed as times when people could dance and celebrate it was significant that Charlotte and Christine displayed more obvious signs of social bonding. For instance, during a Christmas party that all the residents and many staff members attended in 2002 it was striking how affectionate the two women were with each other. The following field diary extract illustrates both their bonding during musical performing and my surprise at their actions at the time:

Once on the dance floor Christine held my hands and danced by utilising a twisting motion and shaking her hips. She rarely moved her feet and seemed to copy off me by swivelling her hips quite vigorously...Charlotte soon joined us. She said to Christine "are you dancing?" and smiled. Christine responded by kissing Charlotte and being very affectionate towards her. This was somewhat surprising given that the two had been clashing on previous days and that there has been consistent tension between the two women. The environment seemed to foster an act of friendship and togetherness that is often missing in their daily domestic relationship. (Field notes, 13.12.02)

Conviviality and affection between the two women was also evident at similar occasions. For example at Natalie's engagement party which was held at a local social club in 2005 Charlotte and Christine were sat opposite to each other and they began to dance and sway to Tony Christie's hit '(Is This The Way To) Amarillo' (1971, re-released in 2005). As they did so they were consistently smiling at each other. Later in the night Charlotte went over to Christine and gave her a hug.

It would be too simplistic to conclude from such examples featured above that musical performing was a positive force that helped to bring the two women closer together. As Jane Cowan argues, dance centred occasions are strongly framed events and as such they are "conceptually set apart from the activities of everyday life" (Cowan, 1990 p. 18). Consequently, social expectations and cultural conventions at such occasions are somewhat different from those within the domestic context of 17 Orwell Street discussed above. People are expected to perform in a more sociable and convivial manner during these types of celebration. Hence, adherence to such expectations may have prompted both women to make an effort to be friendly and affectionate to one another. For, as

Cowan also argues, dance-centred occasions are a type of context in which people are more aware of their own bodies and what others are doing around them (ibid. p. 24).

However, whilst it has been argued at various points throughout this thesis that a consideration of wider contextual factors is vital, it is inadequate to explain Charlotte and Christine's bonding solely by referring to social context. Although socio-cultural conventions may prescribe appropriate ways of acting at dance centred events, they do not totally dictate how musical performing takes place during the event. Whilst they were no doubt influenced by the presence of staff members supporting them and celebrating with them, it was nevertheless significant that Charlotte and Christine made connections with each other through dancing. As with some of the examples above, musical performing was a resource that facilitated social interaction on an equal basis. Unlike during many of their daily domestic interactions that could be prone to tension, dancing together did not feature unequal power relations.

Conclusion: The Significance of Musical Performing at 17 Orwell Street

Overall, this chapter has affirmed the value of an ethnographic approach that focuses upon actions as well as words. Despite their insights, previous studies of everyday music use have not been able to explicate the roles of musical performing due to their methodological constraints. Returning to the challenge laid down by David Riesman that was referred to in the introduction to this thesis, it has become clear that it is vital to engage with musical experiences that are not necessarily self-conscious (Riesman, 1990 p. 6) Yet rather than finding a suitable vocabulary to talk to people about these musical experiences, this chapter has indicated that a more fruitful way of meeting this challenge lies in interrogating musical activities *within* social action and interaction. As has become clear, this task involves paying attention to data derived from participant-observation that enables the researcher both to observe actions and engage in interactions with the people they are interested in studying.

The powers of musical activity, as DeNora argues, have to be situated within ethnographic contexts in order for us to learn about how they have an impact on a socio-cultural level (DeNora, 2000 pp. 18-19). As asserted from the

outset of this thesis, everyday musical experiences such as the performing explicated during this chapter are *momentary*. Unlike musical performing at highly framed events such as concerts or dance centred settings such as night-clubs, the domestic musical performing of the type focused upon above is not often enacted with the same degree of reflexive consciousness. Rather it seems to become naturalised and taken for granted as an aspect of daily life; a 'mundane' occurrence, rather than a special event. However, as this chapter has revealed, the seemingly smooth way in which this performing meshes into everyday activities and situations should not obscure its fundamental importance to these activities and situations.

Whilst musical performing within everyday life may be momentary, it is also instrumental on a number of levels. As this chapter has made clear, within an interaction setting like 17 Orwell Street, in which residents and support staff worked to maintain a working consensus, musical performing was a crucial resource. It was an accessible, flexible mode of communication that affected social situations and routines. Also musical performing was a distinctive resource for the articulation of self-identity amongst many people in the house. Thus, this performing was a creative way for individuals with various learning difficulties to influence other people and make a mark on 'their world' – effectively stating that 'this is me' within their social milieu. This simple point is powerful because it provides a reminder to social researchers that it is vital not to generalise about people with learning difficulties as having 'excluded' or 'spoiled' identities during every circumstance of their everyday lives (Goffman, 1963; Edgerton, 1967; Borland and Ramcharan, 1997). By focusing upon instances of musical performing in the various sections above the identities of John and Charlotte in particular were revealed as complex and subject to processes of becoming. Therefore, the study of musical performing at 17 Orwell Street provided a useful way of exploring the dynamics of identity construction.

Furthermore, as well as constituting a significant resource for self-presentation, this chapter has also demonstrated that musical performing is strongly related to self-management. It provides a productive way of dealing with domestic situations (such as chores that one may find uncomfortable), but also a way of gauging and coping with social interactions where the person is not quite sure of their self or how they should act or feel. As has been made clear, musical

performing becomes integral to these socio-cultural processes to such an extent that it is sometimes difficult to ascertain how far the person involved is conscious of their actions and their influence on others. The musical activities seem to become part of the body's retinue for coping with everyday situations to the degree that they become intrinsic to those situations. Such issues that relate to the affective dimensions of everyday musical activity will be explored further in the final chapter of this thesis.

Chapter 7

When Words are not enough:
Embodiment and the Therapeutic Potential of Everyday Musical Activity

It has been established that the examination of everyday instances of musical performing at 17 Orwell Street can provide a number of insights into social interactions and relationships in the house. Furthermore, it has been argued that such performing was a valuable resource for self-presentation and self-management during various domestic situations and routines. Musical performing has been revealed as *affective* on a number of levels; to utilise Lawrence Grossberg's terms when discussing the concept of affect, it was central to the residents' "moods, feelings, desires and enervation" (Grossberg, 1992 p. 164). This final chapter will explore the affective power of everyday musical activity further by focusing in particular on its embodied aspects.

Various researchers utilising ethnographic methods have commented upon the relationship between music and the human body (see for instance, Cowan, 1990; Cohen, 1995; DeNora, 2000; Tacchi, 2003). However, the music therapist and theorist David Aldridge has developed an interesting theoretical perspective on this relationship that has resonance with my ethnographic findings regarding performing at 17 Orwell Street. Aldridge invokes the concept of performance in a similar way to how it has been utilised during this thesis. This is because, like Goffman, he tends to posit performing as activity that can influence other people, regardless of whether this influence is intended or not (Goffman, 1959 pp. 26-27). Aldridge stresses that rudimentary body actions such as gestures, utterances and movements are vital, not only for enabling people to live their everyday lives, but also for enabling *understanding*. As he writes:

> Everyday skills are the basis of the knowledge that we need to perform our lives. Knowledge is done. It is based on interaction with others and is the background from which we achieve understanding of what others are doing (Aldridge, 2005 p. 33).

Therefore, as has been emphasised during this thesis, Aldridge indicates that the *observation* of others' activities (as well as an awareness of our own) is integral to fostering an increased understanding of everyday life.

Moreover, Aldridge uses the metaphor of musical performing in order to discuss body action and its centrality to everyday life. As he puts it: "The body is the canvas upon which our various identities are painted, the stage upon which our various dramas performed or...the music that we perform" (Aldridge, 1996 p. 107). For Aldridge, the body, like musical performing, moves through time and is multi-layered; having harmonic and melodic contours because its experiences are manifold and involve energy and emotions (ibid.). Also like musical performing the body is *social* (body actions often occur in front of others); its movements and gestures are recognised as having *cultural* meaning and "body work" like musical performing is frequently *aesthetic*; involving various pleasures (ibid.). This is a striking conceptualisation of embodied action as musical performing. It evokes the dynamism that was a feature of the everyday musical performing discussed in the previous chapter as well as the complexity of the body actions involved, which have to be carefully assessed no matter how apparently mundane.

Aldridge's work is mentioned here rather than in the previous chapter because of its emphasis on the performing of the body in connection to therapeutic outcomes. Indeed he utilises the metaphor of musical performing in order to explain embodiment and to explicate the roles that therapeutic approaches can have. Aldridge suggests that people with impairments such as learning difficulties (LD) or neurodegenerative diseases often have their ways of performing restricted by these impairments. When people experience these difficulties that are related to health conditions, Aldridge argues that it is important that they find ways of 'performing themselves' back into the world (Aldridge, 2005 p. 28). Therapists can play an important role in facilitating this process for, as he puts it: "Patients perform their lives before us. How we come to realize that potential as enhancing, as aesthetic, is the task of the creative arts therapist. Demonstrating the benefit that that performance may have for people in their daily lives is the task of creative arts therapy research" (Aldridge, 1996 p. 111).

It was suggested in Chapter 2 that this type of music therapy based account has to be treated with some caution because it could inadvertently promote the notion that the everyday musical activities of people with LD are solely attributable to their impairments. Aldridge's argument also privileges the

roles of professionals involved with creative arts therapy when considering how people with impairments 'perform themselves' back into the world. Yet as this thesis has demonstrated by focusing upon 17 Orwell Street, on an everyday level musical activity has many potential benefits for people with impairments. These benefits were not 'realised' within therapeutic contexts by creative arts therapists, rather they developed within a particular domestic setting that housed a number of variable social practices and relationships. Such practices and relationships were central to the day-to-day welfare of the residents and support staff living and working at 17 Orwell Street. Therefore the benefits discussed earlier were not fostered through ancillary activities (such as music therapy sessions) but within activities that were often integral to peoples' daily lives.

However, despite these differences in perspective, Aldridge's approach remains of value to this ethnographic study. This is because he stresses the importance of the study of the body actions of specific individuals. His theorising of body action as akin to musical performing serves as a powerful reminder of the need to carefully examine such dynamic action as it is enacted within particular everyday situations. Awareness of embodied experience is vital if we are to gain insights into the affective power of musical activity within everyday life (ibid. p. 109). For, as Aldridge asserts: "We have to understand how people 'do' their lives, not simply what they think and say about their lives" (ibid. p. 111).

The importance of considering embodied experiences in relation to musical activity at 17 Orwell Street was illustrated to an extent in the previous chapter. By illuminating the gestures and utterances involved with everyday musical performing, the communicative potential of such performing was revealed. Yet the musical activities of Andrew, the person living at the house who (due to his lack of speech) relied almost entirely upon gestures, movements and facial expressions when interacting with others, were not discussed. Andrew's engagements in musical activity were, in many respects, somewhat different from those of his house-mates. Consequently, building upon the methodological approach adopted so far, this chapter will focus upon his musical activities in some depth. Concentrating in particular on Andrew's interactions and relationships with staff members, it will be argued that a consideration of his

embodied experiences can explicate both the social and therapeutic value that musical activity had for him.

1. Andrew's Specific Learning Difficulties and Autistic Tendencies

It has already been made apparent that the activities Andrew and his house-mates engaged in and the difficulties they encountered were not solely attributable to their impairments. Rather, as was made clear in Chapter 4, these were shaped by a variety of socio-cultural, historical, political and economic factors. Nevertheless, in order to provide an insight into the significance of Andrew's musical activities it is necessary to discuss his learning difficulties and autistic tendencies in more depth. This is not a straightforward task because, as was indicated earlier, he had no speech. Consequently, it was not always clear how far Andrew understood various concepts and activities. The people who lived with him and those who supported him had to rely on non-verbal cues such as body language, Andrew's actual behaviour, his actions and facial expressions. The only sounds he made were quiet grunts, wails (when he became distressed) and laughter or chuckles. Interpretations of Andrew's body language, movements and demeanour will be discussed in more depth shortly by considering their connections to musical activity. However, first it is important to examine his everyday behaviour and how this related to his autistic tendencies.

As Phoebe Caldwell makes clear, autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) is a complex neurological condition and its causes remain unspecified and the subject of scientific (and mass media) debate (Caldwell, 2006 pp. 155-156). Since it is a spectrum disorder it affects different individuals to varying degrees; some people with ASD are highly intelligent and articulate whereas others (sometimes termed 'low functioning') have profound LD and no speech (ibid. p. 21). When I first met Andrew I was informed by the Team Leader that he had autistic tendencies together with LD, yet it was only after spending a considerable amount of time with him that I began to gain some understanding of these. Andrew displayed many of the general behavioural characteristics that are often associated with ASD (see Berger, 2002 p. 27 for an outline of these). His autistic tendencies manifested themselves in specific ways in relation to social interactions,

communication difficulties, desire for routines and stereotyped, repetitive behaviours.

Within his domestic environment Andrew displayed characteristics of autistic 'aloneness' (ibid.). As was outlined in Chapter 4, he tended to sit as far away from the other people he lived with as possible (given their relatively small living area). Whereas his house-mates tended to sit in the lounge, he sat in the kitchen/dining area. Though as was explained earlier, the lounge, dining room and kitchen were all effectively one room, it was still apparent that Andrew did not settle in the area where the rest of the residents sat (see appendix IX). The cushioned armchair he always chose to sit on was located next to the patio doors that overlook the back garden and alongside his stereo cabinet. Andrew did not tolerate other people entering this personal space for very long and often reacted in a hostile manner if people were too close to his chair. He also frequently reacted in an agitated manner to touch; displaying the "tactile defensiveness" that Dorita Berger identifies as a characteristic behaviour trait evident with some people with ASD (ibid. p. 70). For example, Andrew would often push people away if they shook his hand; only enduring the touch of another person for a few seconds. This tactile defensiveness and anxiety when people were too close to him was often strongly evident when Andrew was being supported to have a shower. Of all of his daily routines this was the one that he regularly found most stressful and it was also difficult for the staff members supporting him. This is because he would frequently and sometimes abruptly become agitated and strike out by kicking, pushing or roughly grabbing the person trying to support him. Such aggression usually occurred when Andrew was being supported to have a shave or his hair washed.

Yet his degree of tolerance to touch varied according to a number of factors such as how well he knew the person or how he was feeling (which was often difficult to judge because he could not articulate his feelings through verbal means). In addition, when he was walking outside Andrew would often willingly take the hand of a member of support staff. Furthermore, as will be explained later, musical interactions offered Andrew and staff members opportunities to negotiate quite close tactile relationships that extended his boundaries of tolerance towards human contact.

Andrew's communication difficulties were not simply connected to his lack of speech. He seemed to experience what Berger calls "disturbed or inappropriate affect", which is connected to the neurological problems associated with ASD (ibid. p. 27). People with ASD can experience various difficulties processing sensory information (such as the sound of a person talking to them) and this can result in them responding emotionally to what they are sensing (ibid. p. 37). Berger makes clear that these sensory problems can precipitate 'fight-or-flight' responses in individuals because they interpret a lot of sensory stimuli as threatening (ibid. p. 40). Andrew often seemed tense especially during social interactions and would sometimes react in an unpredictable manner to simple requests. For instance, sometimes he would concur with common requests such as: "could you shut the door please?" without hesitation. However on other occasions he might react angrily to such requests; becoming flushed and slamming the door or aggressively gesturing towards the person who made the request by pushing his hand out towards them as if to push them away. On the other hand, Andrew also developed his own communication practices when expressing what he wanted. For example, he would bring his mug to staff members when he wanted a cup of tea, or he would take a staff member by the hand or arm and guide them towards the patio doors to indicate that he wanted them unlocked so that he could go for a walk in the garden. As will be explored later, Andrew also interacted with staff in more indirect and oblique ways that involved facial expression and body language.

Routines and order were important to Andrew's everyday life. As he spent a lot of time in the kitchen area he liked this environment to have a particular order. If objects such as crockery were out of place or left on kitchen surfaces then he often became unsettled. Walking around the kitchen he would persistently move such objects, pushing them against the kitchen wall. Such behaviour would continue until the objects had been returned to their usual place or put away. This concurs with the experiences of other people with ASD, who frequently become distressed when even slight changes occur during their daily routines and within their environment. The writer and poet Wendy Lawson discusses her experiences as a person with ASD on her website (Lawson, 2008). She describes how unsettling it is for her if she does not have clear routines and order within her daily life because she finds it difficult to deal with variable

circumstances (ibid.). Berger makes clear that this difficulty to deal with change is often acute for people with ASD due to problems with sensory integration that complicate how their bodily systems adapt to new or uncertain situations, unfamiliar people and environments (Berger, 2002 pp. 51-54).

Andrew's efforts to maintain order within his domestic environment and his anxieties regarding changes in this setting were compounded by the cluttered soundscape that was a strong feature of the social field at 17 Orwell Street (see Chapter 5 for a detailed outline of this). This sonic environment may have been experienced as unsettling on many occasions because of the plethora of sounds emanating from the washing machine, tumble dryer, kettle, TV and so on. Writers and healthcare practitioners Adam Ockelford (1998) and Susan Mazer and Dallas Smith (1999) indicate that people with impairments such as ASD and LD need to encounter music in highly controlled environments in order for the music to have therapeutic impacts. They suggest that soundscapes have to be carefully constructed in order to promote relaxation and other therapeutic goals for people with complex needs like Andrew. It should be clear from Chapter 5 that the domestic environment at 17 Orwell Street was the antithesis of the type of stable auditory environment favoured by Ockelford and Mazer and Smith. However, as Temple Grandin makes clear, people with ASD may hear music in a different way than those without sensory difficulties (Grandin, 2006). She discusses how she is able to "shut down" her hearing, screening out undesirable or bewildering noises. This 'shutting down' then has implications for how she listens to music because she finds herself missing sections of her favourite songs. Thus, in the sections that follow shortly, whilst it will be argued that music listening was an important activity for Andrew even within his rather cluttered domestic soundscape, it is necessary to underline that it was difficult to state with any certainty how he was hearing the music being played.

Andrew also regularly engaged in repetitive, self-stimulatory behaviour on numerous occasions both in 17 Orwell Street and elsewhere. As writers such as Felce and Toogood (1988), Caldwell (2006) and Berger (2002) make clear such 'stimming' is common amongst people with profound LD and ASD. Caldwell usefully defines this self-stimulatory behaviour as:

> Non-verbal utterances and gestures which are used purposefully
> and directed to self. These are part of the brain-body conversation
> through which the person self-stimulates when the brain cannot
> make sense of the world outside and attends to the feedback it is
> getting from the body. This brain-body language is how they talk
> to themselves. (Caldwell, 2006 p. 108)

The most common form of self-stimulatory behaviour that Andrew displayed
was body rocking. Whilst sat in his armchair he would gently rock forwards and
back, although sometimes this rocking would occur with more pace. Body
rocking seemed to be an activity that Andrew could derive immense pleasure
from and there were times when he seemed to be totally engrossed in stimulating
his body system in this way. The following field diary extract provides some
insight into this. It describes an occasion when Andrew had to go to hospital
following an accident he had whilst sat at the dining table. As he was eating his
evening meal Andrew suddenly had an epileptic seizure that caused his body to
go limp and he fell on his right side, hitting his shoulder and head on the hard
kitchen floor. Consequently, Sheryl and I escorted him to the accident and
emergency department of the local hospital to check the extent of his injuries
(ultimately the doctor diagnosed him with bruising but told us to maintain
consistent observation of him over the 24 hours that followed). The extract that
follows describes Andrew's behaviour in the accident and emergency waiting
area:

*When inside the building we had to take a ticket and then sat Andrew down. The
seats were in rows next to each other. They were soft green plastic seats, but
were fairly uncomfortable after a while. The rest of the waiting area was a shiny
creamy white colour. In two corners of the room there were small televisions
mounted on the wall. They were broadcasting the Live 8 event from Hyde Park.
Once Andrew had been assessed by the triage nurse, we sat back down. From
where Andrew was sitting he could see people sat opposite to him and he would
have been able to see the television. The volume of the music on the TV was
fairly loud but not obtrusive. Initially I sat on one side of Andrew and Sheryl sat
on the other. A bit later I sat on the opposite side so I had a better view of the TV
that was behind us.*

*Shortly after he'd settled into his chair Andrew began smiling broadly and
rocking forward and back with his hands clasped together in front of him. This
continued whilst artists such as The Killers, Scissor Sisters and Velvet Revolver
could be heard on the TV. However, even when the bands had finished Andrew*

*maintained this rocking to and fro. Sheryl and I commented on how happy
Andrew seemed and smiled at him.*

*Andrew eventually was asked to go to see a doctor after two hours of waiting. He
let the doctor examine him and was quite tolerant; not really becoming agitated
as the doctor looked in his eyes, ears etc. The doctor took a blood test from
Andrew and then we had to wait another hour for the results. Whilst waiting we
stayed in the treatment room. Andrew was sat in a harder plastic chair this time.
However, after a short while Andrew began to settle into the familiar pattern of
rocking that he'd displayed earlier. He rocked forwards and back in his chair
looking at me and Sheryl with a smile, but also seemingly in his 'own world'. It
was as if Andrew was rocking to a regular internal rhythm – a slow and steady
one-two motion. The implications of this are complex. It is possible that, post-
seizure, Andrew's system is regulated to a harmonious rhythm i.e. he feels
relaxed and not distracted by other stimuli therefore he can retreat 'into himself'
and find a rhythm that he likes. On the other hand it is possible that his repeated
rocking is a kind of defence mechanism, a way of calming his system (or
maintaining a calm system) by adopting a consistent pulse.*
(Field notes, 2.7.05)

The above description provides a striking insight into the value of

Andrew's self-stimulatory behaviour. His body rocking seemed to be a felicitous

resource of self-regulation and modulation; it could help him to relax but also

foster a state of happiness irrespective of the potentially stressful situation he

found himself in. Once again, then, the notion of bodily action as a coping device

that was mentioned in the previous chapter is raised here. However, as the above

field notes make clear, although music could be heard in the hospital waiting

room, Andrew's body rocking was not necessarily afforded by this music. His

actions did not constitute 'musical performing' in accordance with the normative

definitions of the concept mentioned earlier or indeed in accordance with the

performing discussed in the previous chapter. Yet, taking into consideration

Aldridge's theories concerning body action mentioned above, it is important that

his movements were considered as dynamic, meaningful behaviour akin to

musical performing. They seemed aesthetic and were clearly pleasurable and

sensuous for Andrew. They were also cultural in the sense that rocking was

tacitly understood by me and Sheryl as pleasurable cultural activity (after all, it is

common for children to play on rocking horses or to be rocked by their parents).

In addition, Andrew's body action was social in the sense that whilst he seemed

in his 'own world' we ascertained from his movements that he was happy and

relaxed.

Caldwell usefully conceptualises such self-stimulatory behaviour like that described above as the "inner world" language of people (Caldwell, 2006 p. 20). Andrew's body rocking seemed to be a powerfully affective way for him to communicate with his 'self'. Furthermore, as Caldwell argues, it is essential to pay close attention to this type of inner world language because it provides cues to help us gain an insight into how those with LD and ASD are feeling. Yet of course Andrew lived in a domestic environment where he had to interact with other people on a daily basis. Consequently, despite the difficulties he experienced in relation to communication and his domestic environment that were mentioned above, his "outer world" interactions and encounters with those who lived and worked with him were highly significant (ibid.). In the sections that follow it will be revealed that musical activities and interactions involving Andrew and his support staff could provide moments of social connection that bridged both his inner and outer world experiences. It will also be argued that an understanding of Andrew's body actions based on observation was a vital factor that facilitated these activities and interactions to a large extent.

2. Conceptualising Andrew's Body Actions: Embodied Awareness, Security and Knowledge

Taking into account the various difficulties that Andrew encountered it was crucial that he developed suitable ways of acting and being around the other people in his household. Likewise the other residents in his house and the staff also developed ways of acting and being around him that he was fairly comfortable with. It is now necessary to conceptualise these embodied processes in some depth in order to provide a framework for understanding how domestic musical practices could facilitate the development of the social bonds that were crucial to the domestic environment at 17 Orwell Street.

Tia DeNora conceptualises the aspect of human behaviour where we acclimatise ourselves to our immediate environment as "embodied awareness" (DeNora, 2000, p. 84). This refers to the non-cognitive 'common sense' ways in which we organise our bodies in relation to the different environments around us; for example DeNora refers to how if we're walking down a slippery slope we adjust our body's balance to compensate for this (ibid.). DeNora suggests that

these are non-cognitive decisions and that we don't necessarily think about them (ibid.). In the context of Andrew's daily life it could be suggested that something similar happened in that he adopted a particular space (a seat in the dining area) in an attempt to maintain distance from others around him (see appendix IX). He also adopted particular routines such as going for walks in the garden and ordering the kitchen area by moving specific objects. These ways of being and moving helped Andrew to develop a calm bodily state. To utilise DeNora's theories once again, they fostered a sense of "embodied security" for him (ibid. p. 85). In other words, Andrew was using his body in certain ways in order to synchronise it with his environment (ibid. p. 85). However, as they were located within a variable social field, these synchronisation processes were never complete and could become a source of tension. This was the same for staff members and the other residents; they had to develop an embodied awareness and security in relation to Andrew, adopting ways of moving around him that wouldn't unsettle him and maintaining a physical distance that he was comfortable with. Again bearing in mind the dynamics of a living room area that was shared by up to six people at a time such processes could often be a source of tension.

As was mentioned earlier, Andrew could become aggressive on occasions when people were touching him or were in close proximity to him. Consequently, in 2004 the entire staff team received training in the control and prevention of challenging behaviour due to the incidents of aggression that were occurring. In addition to this Andrew was assessed by a specialist behavioural team from the local branch of the National Health Service (NHS). Their recommendations concerned establishing consistency of communication and behaviour when staff members were supporting Andrew and interacting with him. This was especially the case with those parts of daily routines that Andrew was uncomfortable with such as showering. In addition to this the staff team received training in a basic sign language system known as Makaton in order to try and improve communication with Andrew. However, as Andrew did not appear to have learned such a system in the past, and because his own routines and ways of communicating were already established, it proved exceptionally difficult to teach him to use the signing system. What these events made clear is that the continued development of a sense of embodied awareness along with a

concomitant system of communication was essential for the health and safety of both Andrew and those around him.

Therefore, whilst developing a sense of embodied awareness and security it was also imperative that both Andrew and the people who shared his domestic environment developed knowledge regarding non-verbal communication. This can be related to the concept of 'embodied knowledge' that was mentioned earlier when discussing the theories of David Aldridge. Various writers have invoked this concept in order to discuss interactions based upon non-verbal communication (Goode, 1980; Aldridge, 1996, 2005; Gouk, 2000; Caldwell, 2006). In a similar way to Aldridge, Penelope Gouk (2000) utilises the concept in order to discuss connections between music and healing. As she argues: "the only viable way of grasping the connection between music and healing is through embodied knowledge; that is, a way of knowing expressed through bodily actions rather than discursive speech" (Gouk, 2000, p. 22). Relationships between Andrew and the people around him were often enhanced precisely because of a familiarity with a kind of embodied knowledge. As people talked to Andrew or observed him they developed an informal system for understanding what his body actions signified. In order to clarify how this system worked it is important to focus upon how staff members gauged Andrew's reactions to music through awareness of aspects of embodied knowledge.

3. Embodiment and Andrew's Music Reception

It was established in Chapter 5 that music was often prevalent in the lounge/kitchen/dining area. Also it has been made clear that the mediation of music was largely contingent upon the agency of staff members. This was particularly the case for Andrew who, unlike Charlotte, Christine and John, could not verbally express a preference. Furthermore, unlike his house-mates, Andrew did not have a collection of records from his past through which staff could ascertain what he might have listened to when he was younger. Consequently, Andrew's small collection of CDs was shaped by staff members' perceptions of what he liked and their own tastes. In the following extract from my field diary it is clear that the decision to put music on and the choice of genre were mine, yet my actions were also influenced by my perceptions of Andrew's mood and

musical preferences. This section of field notes was written in the present tense in order to try and convey musical activities and interactions as they unfolded:

(11.30am)
Whilst the kettle is boiling I ask Andrew if he wants some music on. He smiles gently, flashing me a mainly toothless grin. This is possibly due more to the fact that he's getting a drink of tea than the anticipation of hearing music. Nevertheless Andrew stands by the patio doors and seems content as I reach behind the large wooden stereo cabinet...and switch on the stereo system's plug socket. I then bend down and open the wooden cabinet before pressing the power button on the stereo. Next I turn to Andrew's wooden CD tower and open the top drawer. I pick out his Rock Godz CD basing this decision on my personal taste and also knowledge of what Andrew has seemed to enjoy listening to in the past.

Kiss' 'God Gave Rock and Roll to You' is the first track on the first CD of this double album. It builds slowly with acoustic guitar strumming and the volume is initially low. Meanwhile Andrew gazes out of the patio doors into the garden. As I then start to prepare our drinks of tea Andrew sits down in his large brown leather armchair that's directly next to the stereo cabinet. The acoustic sound of the guitar on the Kiss track quickly becomes electric and the bass guitars and drums 'kick in'. Andrew seems to stare into space as the opening chorus and verses are sung by Paul Stanley and Gene Simmons.

During the first half of the song Andrew appears to be largely oblivious to the music. He stares at his left hand, raising it up in front of his eyes as if it contains something profoundly interesting. I turn and look at Andrew as I'm straining his tea bag in the mug. He breaks from his almost trance-like state and smiles at me. He then begins to rock gently forwards and backwards as 'God Gave...' builds to a climax. The chorus...is repeated numerous times as the rock anthem draws to a close. Andrew smiles again as I finish pouring a drop of milk into his mug and place it next to him on the small coffee table that is beside him.
(Field notes, 8.12.05).

Whilst taking into account the aforementioned difficulties with declaring unequivocally that Andrew was listening to the music in the same way that I was, the above description suggests that he found music to be a felicitous part of the situation depicted. He seemed to react to the rock music that was playing once the song's volume had built up and this reaction was inferred as pleasurable due to my interpretation of his body language in this situation. His gentle body rocking seemed to be an expression of relaxation and his persistent smiling reinforced the sense that this was a pleasant experience for Andrew.

The above example, although it may seem mundane, is significant when considered in relation to the relatively unstable social field of 17 Orwell Street

and when coupled with the difficulties Andrew often experienced. Moreover, in the immediate context of that particular morning his calm demeanour and pleasurable actions were important because his mood had been much different prior to this. Less than 30 minutes before the experiences detailed in the above field note I had been kicked by Andrew who had become very agitated as I attempted to support him to have a shave in the bathroom. The playing of music together with the act of awaiting and receiving a mug of tea from me was greeted with a far more composed and positive response from Andrew. My interpretations of the above occurrences were recorded in the lounge at 17 Orwell Street approximately 15 minutes after they had taken place. As I was writing I regularly glanced over to Andrew in the dining area and observed that he had remained in his chair apparently enjoying listening to various rock anthems such as Free's 'All Right Now' (1970). He seemed to respond positively each time I looked over at him because when I later recorded our interactions in my field diary I wrote that:

Each time I peered up at Andrew he turned to his left and looked at me. Sat in his leather armchair Andrew smiled at me when I looked over. It was a lovely relaxed smile and as he smiled Andrew began to rock gently forward and back in his chair. His rocking continued at a gentle pace as he sat there apparently listening to the rock anthems (Field notes, 8.12.05)

These interactions were clearly important as they enabled me and Andrew to re-establish a secure and friendly relationship in the wake of his anxiety and aggression during his shaving process.

Although other staff members could not be certain about Andrew's musical tastes, they also built a picture of what he liked and disliked based on their interactions with him and observations of his behaviour. Nicky, Andrew's key worker for over six years discussed with me how she thought he liked loud rock music bands such as Queen and Bon Jovi. She based her thoughts on the duration of his smiles and laughter. Nicky also described to me how she gauged the acceptable levels of volume for such rock music when taking Andrew out for a drive in the people carrier that he co-rents with the other residents. She indicated that as she turned the volume up she got "more smiles" and she

contrasted this positive facial expression with what she called Andrew's "unpleasant look" or his "frowning look" (interview with Nicky, 3.11.05).

When I asked her to tell me about other ways she could tell if Andrew was enjoying music, she talked about his body language and categorised it in a particular way. She indicated that if Andrew was not enjoying a particular experience such as listening to music he would jerk his body by suddenly thrusting his stomach forwards or as Nicky eloquently put it "belly bouncing" (ibid.). This kind of activity was observed on numerous occasions when he found a situation uncomfortable. For instance Andrew would enact this jerking movement if he was startled or if he was becoming irritated by someone entering his personal space. However, for Nicky, the self-stimulatory body rocking that was discussed earlier and featured in the above field note seemed to indicate pleasure. The following interview segment indicates the difference between Andrew's body jerking referred to above and his gentler, seemingly aesthetic, body action that took place during body rocking:

> NH: And when he does 'body rock' when music's on and smiling at the same time?
> Nicky: There's a difference in his body rocking. There's, I'd say more of a sway rock which is usually with a smile which I would put his body language in a good mood. But there's the more...how do you put it, maybe *one* (mimics the action) jolt through the stomach which to me is more he doesn't want to carry on or whatever.
> NH: That's a good way of putting it.
> Nicky: But if he continues just moving along, as it appears, *to* the music...I see that as his good mood. (ibid.)

Nicky suggested that Andrew's body rocking or, as she put it, "swaying" appeared to be *to* the music in situations such as the one described above. Thus, Nicky's interpretations of Andrew's movements to music were similar to my own; both of us identified comportment, actions and demeanour as vital for developing an understanding of his reception of music. Shortly, the communicative value of paying attention to these non-verbal embodied aspects during social (and musical) interactions will be explored further. Firstly, it is necessary to consider other implications of Andrew's musical activity.

Whilst it was difficult to know about how his body movements felt and whether they were definitely afforded by the music playing, it seemed apparent to many of those around him that Andrew found situations such as the one described in the field note above as pleasurable. As suggested in Chapter 5, various staff members considered that music could foster a more positive domestic environment for all of the residents. In her interview and in her diary Mel indicated that she believed that Andrew felt more relaxed when music was on. As she said: "it's quite hard because obviously he doesn't have any communication but I would say from observations when his music is on next to him...he does tend to be a lot calmer" (interview with Mel, 26.4.04). Those experienced staff members who interpreted music reception as relaxing and pleasurable for Andrew also acted upon this assumption in order to develop closer social relations with him.

As they had developed knowledge concerning Andrew's body actions by observing and interacting with him, staff members occasionally engaged in musical interactions with him that challenged or extended his boundaries of touch that were identified earlier. For instance, during her interview Nicky also talked about how she had asked Andrew to dance when they were attending a cabaret show on holiday. She told me that he had stood up and took her hand and then tolerated her dancing around him. Likewise, I observed a similar interaction in the lounge area at 17 Orwell Street. In the previous chapter a situation where Christine and Charlotte were dancing with me and Natalie to the music of Boney M in front of Andrew's stereo system (and therefore near to his chair) was described. It was striking that during this dancing Natalie later asked Andrew to dance with her as the following field diary extract makes clear:

Natalie also went over to Andrew and said to him something along the lines of "are you going to dance Andrew?" She took his hand and Andrew stood up, allowing Natalie to sway his arms and dance. Andrew stood there awkwardly but crucially he wasn't aggressive; he tolerated this for about 20-30 seconds before letting go of Natalie's hand and sitting back down. (Field notes, 29.3.05)

Such occasions provided a stark contrast to moments when Andrew wouldn't even tolerate someone shaking his hand for longer than a few seconds. Thus, in such situations it does appear that, in a similar way to Berger's findings using

music therapy, musical activity can combat the tactile defensiveness common to individuals with ASD (Berger, 2002 p. 70). However, crucially the instance I described above cannot simply be explained as a function of 'the music'. Rather, it occurred within a specific context and involved people who were aware of Andrew's body movements and boundaries. As with the musical performing discussed in the previous chapter, domestic musical activity in this instance was a useful resource for Natalie to *negotiate* a social relationship with Andrew. It was a way of making contact with him in a way that he seemed to interpret as unthreatening and friendly. Yet this contact was predicated on embodied knowledge; Natalie had a strong understanding of Andrew's mood and tolerance in this situation because she had observed his body language. In the final section of this chapter the focus on embodied knowledge will continue as its implications for communication and social bonding will be explored further.

4. Beyond Words? Musical Activity and Shared Experience

As I worked with him for a considerable amount of time I felt that Andrew and I had developed significant social bonds. One of the things that we had in common was our appreciation of cups of tea. Whenever I would go to the kettle that was on the kitchen worktop directly opposite to Andrew's chair, he would usually bring his mug to me with a broad smile on his face, indicating that he'd like another cup of tea. Another bond that I felt we shared, although this was something that was more intangible, was an appreciation of listening to music. This was something that became apparent quite early once my ethnographic study began in earnest and I started making field notes based on observations of Andrew's music-related activities. For example, the following field diary extract from December 2000 indicates that I had begun to notice the potential for making social connections with Andrew during music listening:

Throughout the morning music was put on the radio and the television for John and Andrew. Despite being slightly upset whilst being showered, Andrew loved listening to music once he was sat in the kitchen chair. He was visibly and audibly laughing during the various songs played on Rock Fm's 'Top 10 at 10' (month was February 1985) and rocking in time to the music. Later, Neil turned the music up and there were moments when Andrew seemed to love this. One thing I noticed was how Andrew seems to like it when I look at him whilst he is

enjoying music. If I smile at him whilst he is rocking himself he will often smile back (smile of appreciation, because of sharing musical moment?) or laugh. (Field notes, 4.12.00)

This type of part-descriptive, part-reflective field note helped with the development of initial interpretations of Andrew's music reception and of our interactions involving music.[29] As our relationship developed over the years and I became more familiar with his body actions during certain situations, this enabled opportunities to reflect in more depth upon these types of musical experiences. These interactions involving music seemed to be a positive aspect of our social relationship. Yet they remained difficult to convey within field notes as the following extract from much later in the research process suggests:

12.35pm
The kitchen was clean and tidy. Andrew had just had lunch. He'd gently grabbed my arm and led me toward the kettle. I put the kettle on for him. Then a few minutes later I made everyone a drink. Whilst I was stood at the kettle I was directly opposite to Andrew. His music system was playing but the tumble dryer was also on. 'I'm Still Standing' (1983) by Elton John came on as I was looking at Andrew. I began dancing a bit by swaying. Andrew looked at me, a gentle smile on his face. He began to very slowly rock his head. Then, bursting into a broad smile Andrew began rocking his whole upper body in earnest and laughing. He clasped his hands together and his rocking began to have more pace (possibly to match the pace of the music)...The moment...felt like a connection. There was a sense of sharing an experience without words. That we could communicate without words but through listening, facial expression and body action. (Field notes, 6.7.05)

I found it difficult to translate such experiences into words both at the time of writing the field notes and subsequently whilst writing this thesis. This is possibly because I was trying to explicate precisely what it was that made these musical interactions so important and what was happening during them. However, due to Andrew's lack of verbal communication it was not possible to ask him what these interactions meant to him. I could only try and describe what he was *doing* during such situations, not what he thought about them. Yet it was this endeavour that was at the heart of the methodology adopted during research for this thesis. For, as has been argued in previous chapters, the types of everyday domestic musical activities that were focused upon during ethnographic

---

[29] See Chapter 3 for a discussion of the value of such field notes.

research at 17 Orwell Street were often momentary. They were not necessarily consciously reflected upon but enacted within the fleeting routines and situations (such as making a mug of tea) that were central to daily life in the house. Therefore, paying attention to embodied knowledge – to what we *feel* that we know during specific moments – is important when exploring the significance of the roles of musical activity *within* everyday life. Words are clearly inadequate when exploring situations such as the ones depicted above or indeed many of those considered in previous chapters. This inadequacy is emphasised by the music therapist Fiona Ritchie who writes about how she shared musical interactions with a client who has LD and challenging behaviour. Ritchie writes that: "We feel that it has meaning for both of us, but words and intellectualising are not enough. The feelings which one is left with are all important" (Ritchie, 1993 p. 101).

Conclusion

This chapter has made apparent that musical interactions based on embodied knowledge offer the potential for shared emotional experiences that are based, not only in clinical music therapy settings, but in domestic settings as well. Summarising the promise of recent theoretical perspectives on music's power in relation to everyday life, the music therapist Gary Ansdell suggests that writing by the likes of DeNora (2000) and Small (1998) provides fertile ground for music therapists to work from. He argues that this is because such literature positions music as part of an ecology. Ansdell defines ecology as a "balance of interlinking forms and processes in a context that sustains them and guarantees diversity" (Ansdell, 1997 cited in Ansdell, 2004 p. 74). To consider music as part of an ecology, therefore, compels scholars to assess musical events and activities within the complex and frequently variable social networks, settings and relationships that people interpret as 'everyday life'. Such an approach also presents challenges and opportunities for music therapists because it entails moving beyond the "traditional therapeutic dyad" to consider 'clients' as profoundly social beings (irrespective of their impairments) rather than as isolated individuals (ibid. p. 83). As Ansdell also suggests, community music therapists have begun to pose interesting questions about the therapeutic aspects

of music in everyday situations such as: "is music therapy actually nearer to the 'music of everyday life' than has been previously suggested?" (ibid. p. 86).

The ethnographic examples explicated above illustrate the relevance of such questions but they also challenge established notions of music therapy. Andrew's interactions with music did not take place within a traditional therapeutic setting, nor were they framed as 'therapy' by participants and they were not instigated by trained music therapists. Yet in the light of the challenges Andrew faced (and to some extent presented) on a regular basis, musical interactions and the social relationships that they were both influencing and influenced by had a number of therapeutic values. These interactions and relationships fostered communication, social bonds, modes of expression, and a sense of well being and pleasure for Andrew, all of which are commonly defined as goals of music therapy (Darnley-Smith and Patey, 2003). Thus, it has been made clear in this chapter that it is imperative that scholars and people working with those who have LD or ASD do not underestimate the therapeutic potential of domestic musical activity.

<u>Conclusion: Towards the Uncovering of Hidden Musical Lives</u>

During this thesis it has become clear that an ethnographic approach that privileged domestic situations, actions and interactions at 17 Orwell Street revealed a great deal about the everyday roles of musical activity in that setting. Even when considering Andrew, who on the surface had very limited communication skills, careful attention to specific situations and embodied actions/interactions provided a strong insight into the value of musical activity for him. Small instances of musical performing such as humming or dancing (whether witting or unwitting) were integral to the processes of self-management and self-presentation that were frequently vital to residents' daily lives. Furthermore, these musical activities were a significant influence on social situations; often helping to foster a sense of place – a habitus of musical action – that was convivial and 'home-like'. Such micro-contextual factors were far from trivial because 17 Orwell Street was a peculiarly fraught social field that 'housed' a number of power relations. It was a paradoxical 'home' setting for four essentially displaced individuals who had to cope with not only living with each other but also sharing their house with an array of support personnel. Everyday musical activity was an accessible and flexible resource for these residents and their staff members. It became a significant part of their retinue of ways of coping, acting and being around each other. In the sections that follow the implications of these findings will be expanded upon by considering their relationship to the study of music in everyday life, the wider study of cultural practice, the practice of music therapy and care practices within services for people with learning difficulties.

The Study of Music in Everyday Life

Although 17 Orwell Street was a specific setting that had to be examined in depth, the findings of this study have wider implications. Firstly, in terms of methodology, although it has been established that there were limitations with ethnography of this nature, such an approach had distinct advantages and raised a number of issues regarding current studies of music in everyday life. As has been argued at various stages of this thesis, everyday musical activities such as the

instances of musical performing evident at 17 Orwell Street are momentary. They often occur during relatively mundane domestic activities such as housework or routines such as watching TV. Consequently, they are not necessarily enacted with a reflexive consciousness and are not necessarily memorable (Riesman, 1990 p. 6; Sloboda and O'Neill, 2001 p. 417). Therefore, research that attempts to investigate such activities via a strong reliance on interviews is hindered because interviewees may forget or filter out more mundane occurrences (Sloboda and O'Neill, 2001 p. 417). Furthermore, interviewees may find it difficult to articulate the significance of musical activities in their everyday lives partly because, as they occur, they may be taken for granted.

Despite these methodological difficulties involved with articulating the value of everyday musical activity, this thesis has made apparent that many existing qualitative studies of everyday music usage rely heavily upon interviews. This is particularly the case with research into domestic music usage. Whilst these studies have provided some fascinating insights into the powers that domestic musical activities have for certain individuals, their reliance on verbal accounts has led to the marginalisation of the types of mundane activities and experiences discussed in this thesis. In addition, a reliance on interviews also excludes people who have difficulties with verbal communication such as the people with learning difficulties (LD) focused upon in this study. This is a telling absence because generally, as was established in Chapter 2, people with LD tend to have more access to music in domestic settings in comparison with other leisure activities. We have also seen that historically, stories of their everyday lives, especially stories of those people with more profound physical and mental impairments, have been marginalised and excluded from academic accounts.

Furthermore, it is significant that the majority of interview based studies of everyday musical activity assessed during this thesis are inadequately placed to elucidate how domestic musical activities become integral to *social* situations and relationships. As Frith suggests, there is a dearth of research from within the interdisciplinary fields of popular music studies and cultural studies that study musical activity as a "means of communication and as a form of sociability in everyday life" (Frith, 2003 p. 100). Dependent on the verbal recollections of

individuals, many existing academic accounts are restricted in how they can examine the social impact of domestic musical activities.

These accounts are also limited when analysing the embodied aspects of domestic musical activities which, as has been made clear, can have great importance for communication and social relationships. Victor Turner highlighted the dominance of the cognitive in ethnographic research and argued that accounts that focus exclusively on what people *think* about culture may marginalise a sense of how culture is *experienced* (Turner, 1987 pp. 139-140). As has been argued here, this cognitive dominance has often been evident in studies of everyday music use (and studies of the experiences of people with LD). Verbal accounts of what people *say* they do with music have taken prominence over accounts that try to explicate what people *do in practice*. At the very least, this thesis has made clear that this cognitive dominance needs to be called into question. Whilst researchers from various academic fields have recently begun to examine domestic musical activities in more depth, the study of such activities is still in its infancy. What is now urgently required is a set of methodological debates that capitalise on this scholarship; drawing together the approaches from popular music studies, sociology, human geography and music therapy discussed earlier in order to start to meet some of the challenges this thesis has identified.

The Study of Cultural Practice

Moving away from a specific focus on studies of the significance of music in everyday life, it is clear that this thesis also highlights wider problems that are involved with the study of popular culture as it has often been practiced in cultural studies. Whilst cultural studies is an interdisciplinary academic field in which many scholars have engaged with "the margins of society...primarily in order to demonstrate the larger social significance of those margins", it is striking that those engaging in such research have often seemed uncomfortable with focusing on individual cultural practices (Schwoch and White, 2006 p. 14). Couldry argues that cultural studies accounts have often tended "to study culture on the scale of wider cultural formations", extrapolating cultural practices into debates concerning class, gender, ethnicity and so on (Couldry, 2000 p. 45). Of

course, such extrapolation is crucial because, as it was illustrated in Chapter 5, individual cultural practices are influenced by a range of wider contextual factors and to suggest otherwise would be to slip into cultural relativism. However, Couldry goes on to argue that an emphasis on such wider cultural formations has meant that "cultural studies has provided relatively few insights into how individuals are formed, and how they act, 'inside' cultures" (ibid.). Thus, it is often individual experiences that have not been afforded enough serious scrutiny prior to a consideration of wider contextual factors. Within this thesis the limitations of such neglect have been revealed because it was only after in-depth analysis of micro-contextual factors (specific settings, social relationships and individual actions) together with macro-contextual factors (social and political change) that some insights into the musical lives of a particular group of people at a particular time could emerge.

One of the strengths of the methodological approach adopted during my study of 17 Orwell Street was its potential for explicating the *complexity* of cultural activities and experiences (in this case the focus was on musical activities but this approach could equally have revealed much about other cultural phenomena, for example watching TV). By locating musical activities and experiences within a specific social field and by striving to appreciate the "complexity of action and talk", seemingly mundane occurrences could be revealed as ambivalent and contradictory (ibid. p. 62). Examining such specific momentary cultural activities may not enable the analyst to establish homologies between style, social class and cultural practice, which was one of the central goals that preoccupied early cultural studies scholars interested in audiences (see for instance, Hebdige, 1979). However, exploring the complexities of cultural activities within everyday life is, nevertheless, a task that engages with issues of cultural power.

For instance, in some respects it was made apparent that the personal song 'Love me tonight' was performed by Charlotte in a domestic context in which she had limited socio-cultural power. She was not able to have much control over whom she lived with, nor over who entered her house (a house that she did not always see as a 'home'). Furthermore, her life history could be seen as being determined by social, economic and political events that were largely outside of her control. Given such a context, it was argued that 'Love me tonight'

could be interpreted as a song that 'deals' with this situation; articulating a yearning for love whilst paradoxically soothing such a feeling. Yet this song, which may have been a by-product of an unsatisfactory domestic lived experience, also appeared to be a vehicle for the confident articulation of a sense of self for Charlotte and also a productive way of alleviating the monotony of domestic routines.

Elucidating these complexities of performing provides support for Mark Slobin's argument that "Hegemony begins at home" (Slobin, 1993 p. 75). What the example of 'Love me tonight' provides is a striking case study of struggle – a struggle that seemed to involve both Charlotte's interior and exterior socio-cultural life. 'Love me tonight' may have on occasions articulated her dissatisfaction with the working consensus of the domestic context she was situated within, but it could also be utilised to (at least temporarily) resolve the anxieties partly produced by this context. Furthermore, as was made clear when examining Charlotte's musical practices during washing dishes, everyday musical activities can 'give off' an impression of acceptance of a social situation, whilst simultaneously expressing displeasure with it. Therefore, this approach to studying everyday cultural activities such as those depicted in this thesis highlights how hegemonic struggle permeates areas of quotidian life we may take for granted. Moreover, such an approach can expose the ambiguities of overarching theories like that of hegemony because, as this study has revealed, it is insufficient to conceptualise cultural events solely in terms of resistance or consent, particularly when dealing with actions like humming or singing that may or may not be enacted with reflexive consciousness. Consequently, cultural theorists need to take great care when considering individual experiences and actions, taking into account issues of agency and intentionality before extrapolating them within debates regarding wider cultural formations.

Music Therapy

In seeking to illuminate the significance of everyday domestic musical activities and experiences at 17 Orwell Street, this thesis has also highlighted that music therapy is a rich subject area (both in terms of theory and practice) that can enhance the study of music's relationship to daily life. The exploration of the

affective and therapeutic potential of individual or social musical experiences that is a central concern of music therapy theorists and practitioners provides scholars from popular music studies and cultural studies with a strong reminder that such experiences are *irreducible*. Thus, music therapy reminds us that the powers of musical experiences that exist even within apparently mundane moments of everyday life cannot be 'closed off' or discounted from scholarly attention. On the contrary, as this thesis has shown, these often personal musical experiences can reveal much about issues of identity politics, social power and resistance that have often been the central areas of sociological inquiry into popular music audiences (Frith and Goodwin, 1990 p. 1; Negus, 1996; Anderson, 2006 p. 294). Moreover, the study of these more personal musical experiences can also explicate issues of agency, access, affect and therapeutic potential that are less frequently the subjects of such inquiry. Therefore, this thesis has clearly illustrated that the incorporation of perspectives from music therapy has the potential to offer fresh insights into the importance of music in everyday life.

However, this thesis has also posed some challenges for the practice of music therapy. As was made particularly evident in Chapters 6 and 7, musical activities involving engagement with recorded popular music have the potential to foster many of the therapeutic goals that music therapists seek to achieve during more formal therapy sessions. Whilst music therapists, particularly the community music therapists discussed earlier, have begun to acknowledge this, it remains the case that the various roles of recorded popular music in everyday life are under-utilised in music therapy practice.[30] Despite increased recognition of the importance of their clients' socio-cultural contexts, there are a lack of studies within the field of music therapy that examine how clients engage with popular music in their everyday lives outside of music therapy sessions. This absence needs to be addressed if practitioners are to learn more about the potential impact of their work outside of the immediate therapeutic context. Clients' pre-existing modes of engagement with music may facilitate therapeutic goals or, conversely,

---

[30] Although there are some exceptions to this such as the work documented by Lia Rejane Mendes Barcellos (2006) that discusses how the mothers of premature babies based in a hospital in Brazil engaged with recorded popular songs in order to "sing their dreams in relationship to their futures and their babies' futures" (Barcellos, 2006). The team of music therapists working with these mothers recognised their appropriation of recorded popular songs and worked with their preferences whilst also incorporating the use of lullabies).

may hinder them. Yet without a careful consideration of what these modes of engagement are the work of music therapists could be made more complicated.

The Implications of this study for Care Practice

If music therapists are to gain more knowledge of the roles of musical activity in the everyday lives of many of their clients, then it is clear that policies and practices from within the caring profession can support this process. This factor will now become more apparent because in the paragraphs that follow the implications of my research findings for the policies and practices of supported living schemes catering for people with learning difficulties (LD) will be focused upon in some detail. This discussion of implications will concentrate on three main areas: the value of the in-depth knowledge of residents' musical lives for support workers; the issues involved with documenting such knowledge and finally factors relating to choice and agency within supported living schemes. The discussion is also informed by feedback on this ethnography received from the support team at 17 Orwell Street and it is this data that will be focused upon first of all.

In order to assist me when reflecting on the value of my ethnographic findings I sought feedback on my writing from the current staff team working at 17 Orwell Street. Giving them samples from Chapter 6 and 7 to read, I then asked the team leader and support workers to fill in qualitative feedback questionnaires that prompted them to reflect upon what they had read (see appendix XII for a blank copy of the distributed questionnaire). Four out of the seven support staff employed at 17 Orwell Street completed questionnaires, Natalie (the team leader), Paul (full-time), Vicky (full-time) and Joanne (part-time). In addition, a member of staff from the support team working in the neighbouring supported living scheme based at 19 Orwell Street also filled in a questionnaire. All respondents had considerable experience of working at 17 Orwell Street (with the exception of the respondent from number 19). The most experienced support worker to complete a questionnaire, Joanne, has known some of the residents since the scheme was first established in 1995. Vicky, the least experienced support worker to complete a questionnaire, still had three and a half years of full-time experience working at the house and a total of seven

years experience of working in care-based establishments. Although the respondent from 19 Orwell Street did not work at number 17, she had a total of 13 years experience in support work.

Taking into account the significant experience of the support personnel who filled in the questionnaires, it was encouraging that the feedback featured within them was positive.[31] All the respondents expressed the view that the ethnographic findings presented in this thesis could be valuable for helping support workers to recognise and understand the significant roles that music could have in the lives of the residents. Indeed, as will be revealed below, some of their comments were instructive when reflecting upon the usefulness of the knowledge produced through this ethnography.

Firstly, it is important to point out that each of the support workers who returned questionnaires responded to my initial question by agreeing that my written account provided an accurate portrayal of the roles of music in everyday life at 17 Orwell Street. Paul's response, in particular, concurs with my assertion throughout this thesis that musical engagement was pervasive at 17 Orwell Street. He wrote that:

> The articles...present an accurate portrayal of the role of music in the everyday life at Orwell Street. Music is a constant in Orwell Street, whether in the residents' own rooms or in the communal living areas. Music appearing to provide a source of stimulation and enjoyment to all the residents with them singing along to the music, clapping or smiling. (Paul's feedback questionnaire, August 2008)

Whilst it was acknowledged in Chapter 3 that ethnographies are always 'partial truths' and though it was suggested that readers should be careful when assessing the "knowledge claims" of ethnographers, statements like Paul's provide a certain amount of evidence that my findings were interpreted as valid by the people involved with my research (Clifford, 1986 p. 7; Hammersley, 1990 p. 61).

---

[31] Obviously, there are certain limitations with this type of questionnaire based research. Not only was I unable to follow up on some of their comments in interview but it is also possible that, because the majority of the support staff are former colleagues of mine, they may have been more inclined to provide positive responses.

Moreover, as well as considering the findings as valid, the support workers interpreted the ethnographic data revealed in the chapters they read as both relevant and useful. For instance, in responding to the second question about the value of my findings, Joanne suggested that the research findings could facilitate support workers' "understanding of how music plays a therapeutic role" (Joanne's feedback questionnaire, August 2008). Likewise, Natalie and Paul stated that the findings could assist support workers to recognise the importance of music in the lives of their service users. Therefore, after reflection on my writing it was evident that these support workers considered such literature to be useful for educating fellow workers on music's potential roles.

However, in addition to this, certain respondents such as Paul and Joanne recognised the practical implications of these roles. For example, Joanne wrote that musical activity had the potential to "alter mood" amongst the residents she supports (ibid.). Paul went further, suggesting that my ethnographic findings could help support staff, not only to "recognise" the importance of musical activity but also to "reinforce" this importance (Paul's feedback questionnaire, August 2008). He went on to suggest that ethnographic writing that depicts residents' musical lives "will help staff to recognise the significance music plays in their lives and therefore ensure that staff support residents to access and enjoy music" (ibid.). Thus, Paul and Joanne in particular, hinted at the practical as well as educational relevance of ethnographic accounts that elucidate the everyday roles of music for people with LD who live in supported living schemes. As the above questionnaire responses demonstrate, such accounts have the potential to encourage support workers to think reflexively about the importance of residents' musical activities and how these might enhance key elements of their lives such as communication, social relationships and self-esteem. Finally, although this wasn't mentioned in the questionnaire responses I received, it is likely that the type of ethnographic writing detailed in this thesis could encourage support staff to think carefully about the various contextual factors that have shaped the lives of the people they support. Whilst support workers cannot experience the world in the same way as the people they are supporting, reading about their personal histories might encourage empathy, greater tolerance and understanding.

It should also be clear that my ethnographic research illustrated the importance of communication between support staff and residents at a supported

living scheme like 17 Orwell Street. Various chapters in this thesis revealed that individuals living in this setting had a variety of modes of communication; some of which were not necessarily verbal and some that were enhanced through musical activity. At 17 Orwell Street it became apparent that it was important for support staff to recognise these different modes in order to interact effectively with the residents. Particularly for Andrew, staff sensitivity to his forms of communication (often articulated through embodiment or gesture) was crucial for helping him to feel secure within his domestic environment. Although Andrew's Essential Lifestyle Plan and other documentation stored at his house featured information about many aspects of his daily life, as has been made apparent it was sometimes difficult to translate the rich information gained through experience of interacting with him into written words. This is a factor that needs to be recognised by organisations providing services for people with LD who may have a variety of complex needs, both in terms of their basic welfare and leisure interests. As it has been suggested, these services are laden with an abundance of written documentation. Whilst such documentation is pivotal to the organisation of supported living schemes, it cannot be expected to account for the variegated lived experiences of the person it is depicting. For instance, the musical activities and experiences discussed in this thesis cannot be easily distilled into a written account, especially into some sort of care plan that has to be clear and concise enough for support workers and possibly residents to read.

Taking the factors mentioned above into consideration, it is evident that person-centred care planning in services for people with LD both has to be flexible and to acknowledge its limitations. As Plimley indicates, strategies for constructing service plans need to be creative and incorporate a variety of methods (Plimley, 2007 p. 210). These could include some of those utilised during this study such as observations of everyday activities and the recording of residents' and staff members' oral testimonies. In any case, such person-centred plans should be "evolving documents" that take into account the multiple and shifting life trajectories of the individuals they are attempting to depict (Thurman, Jones and Tarleton, 2005 p. 88). Moreover, the roles of such plans should not be over-emphasised at the expense of the day to day practices of support staff. As Forbat suggests, encouraging staff discussions and reflexive

thinking regarding ways of understanding residents' actions and experiences that (where possible) may incorporate residents' views could also be a productive working practice (Forbat, 2006 p. 25). This thesis has revealed that a consideration of the roles of musical activity (for instance, in aiding communication or enhancing moods) should also be part of these dialogues.

Finally, maintaining a focus on the implications of this study of the roles of music in everyday life for care practice, it should be evident that, although music reception and activity have many potential benefits in care settings, they also have the potential for harm. As was indicated in Chapter 5, issues of choice and agency were sometimes problematic at 17 Orwell Street and the act of 'putting music on' was one that was subject to unequal power relations. Thus, the potential for music to become a source of irritation and even a contributor to disempowerment was evident even in a setting like 17 Orwell Street where the staff and residents enjoyed mainly friendly relationships. Consequently, music's potentially negative roles within such settings where residents may not have sufficient agency or the required skills to put on or turn off music need to be recognised by service providers. Again, flexible person-centred planning that considers residents' musical preferences within their domestic environment, together with dialogues amongst staff and between staff and residents that incorporate reflexive thinking about the impact of musical actions would be recommended to minimise such risks of harm.

Yet conversely the positive aspects of residents being able to make musical choices should also be recognised by service providers. For, as this study has made clear, musical activities afford people with LD (who have historically had limited input into key decisions made about their lives) manifold ways of expressing preferences. The residents of 17 Orwell Street were able to express their musical tastes to support staff in a number of ways and it was important for staff to recognise these. Furthermore, musical activity enabled residents to have a high level of agency in certain situations. For instance, musical activity enabled John and Charlotte to be spontaneous and to articulate a sense of self-identity in rich and complex ways. This was significant given that other avenues of 'world making' were often denied to them for the various physical, intellectual, socio-cultural, political and historical reasons provided during this thesis.

Final Thoughts

Despite the difficulties involved with carrying out research in domestic settings that other writers have pointed to (see for instance, Dickinson et al. 2001), as a support worker at 17 Orwell Street I was advantageously emplaced to carry out the long-term intensive participant-observation based ethnography detailed in this thesis. Yet, it would be unfair and unrealistic to contend that scholars interested in the further study of music's roles in everyday life should entirely replicate the type of ethnographic project expounded here. Such research is highly labour-intensive and involves the researcher building a strong level of rapport and trust with their subjects that needs to be developed gradually over a lengthy period of time. Otherwise researchers could greatly affect their field and infringe upon the privacy of their research subjects.

However, despite such difficulties, prominent writers interested in the social significance of music in everyday life have continued to assert the need to situate accounts of music usage within ethnographic contexts (DeNora, 2000 p. 18; Frith, 2003 p. 101). The value of such a task, not only for the study of music in everyday life from within various academic fields but also for care practice, has been highlighted by this thesis. Although there may be future research work that is unable to engage in long-term ethnographic study like that expounded here, it is important that the methodological and social implications of this work are heeded. Some peoples' everyday musical lives remain hidden and their histories, like those of many people with LD, are marginalised and forgotten (Finnegan, 1989; Atkinson, Jackson and Walmsley, 1997). As this thesis has demonstrated, one of the immediate tasks facing academic research on music in everyday life is to remedy this situation.

Bibliography

Abercrombie, Nicholas and Brian Longhurst (1998)
Audiences: A Sociological Theory of Performance and Imagination,
Sage Publications, London.

Adorno, Theodor W. (1990) [1941] "On Popular Music" in Frith, Simon and
Andrew Goodwin (eds.) (1990), On Record: Rock, Pop and the Written Word,
Routledge, London, pp. 301-314.

Aldridge, David (1996) "The Body, Its Politics, Posture and Poetics",
The Arts in Psychotherapy, vol. 23, no. 2, pp. 105-112.

Aldridge, David (2005) "Gesture and Dialogue: Music Therapy as Praxis
Aesthetic and Embodied Hermeneutic" in Aldridge, David (ed.) (2005),
Music Therapy and Neurological Rehabilitation: Performing Health,
Jessica Kingsley, London.

Allen, R.E (ed.) (1991) The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Current English
(eighth edition), Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Allen, Robert (ed.) (2003) The Penguin Dictionary (second edition),
Penguin Books Ltd, London.

Anderson, Tim (2006) "For the Record: Interdisciplinarity, Cultural Studies, and
the Search for Method in Popular Music Studies" in White, Mimi and James
Schwoch (2006), Questions of Method in Cultural Studies, Blackwell Publishing,
Oxford, pp. 285-307.

Ang, Ien (1985) Watching Dallas,
Routledge, London.

Angrosino, Michael V. (1998) Opportunity House: Ethnographic Stories of
Mental Retardation, Alta Mira Press, Walnut Creek, California.

Ansdell, Gary (2002) "Community Music Therapy & The Winds of Change",
Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy, [online], vol. 2, no. 2,
http://www.voices.no/mainissues/voices2(2)ansdell.html
[accessed on 22.3.08].

Ansdell, Gary (2004) "Rethinking Music and Community: Theoretical
Perspectives in Support of Community Music Therapy" in Pavlicevic, Mercédès
and Gary Ansdell (eds.) (2004), Community Music Therapy,
Jessica Kingsley, London, pp. 65-90.

Atkinson, Dorothy (1989) "Research interviews with people with mental
handicaps" in Brechin, Ann and Walmsley, Jan (eds.) (1989), Making
Connections: Reflecting on the Lives and Experiences of People with Learning
Difficulties, Hodder and Stoughton in association with The Open University,
Milton Keynes.

Atkinson, Dorothy, Mark Jackson and Jan Walmsley (eds.) (1997) Forgotten
Lives: Exploring the History of Learning Disability, BILD Publications,
Kidderminster.

Attali, Jacques (1985) Noise: The Political Economy of Music,
Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Auslander, Philip (2006) "Musical Personae",
The Drama Review, vol. 50, no. 1, pp. 100-119.

Babcock, Barbara A. (1977) "The Story in the Story: Metanarration in Folk
Narrative", supplementary essay in Bauman, Richard (1977), pp. 61-79.

Barcellos, Lia Rejane Mendes (2006) "Familiarity, Comfortableness and Predictability of Song as 'Holding Environment' for Mothers of Premature Babies", <u>Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy</u>, [online], vol. 6, no. 1, http://www.voices.no/mainissues/mi40006000205.html [accessed on October 4, 2008].

Barnes, Colin, Geoff Mercer and Tom Shakespeare (1999) <u>Exploring Disability</u>, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Barz, Gregory F. (1997) "Confronting the Field(Note) In and Out of the Field: Music, Voices, Text, and Experiences in Dialogue" in Barz, Gregory F. and Timothy J. Cooley (eds.) (1997), <u>Shadows in the Field: New Perspectives for Fieldwork in Ethnomusicology</u>, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 45-62.

Bauman, Richard (1977) <u>Verbal Art as Performance</u>, Waveland Press, Illinois.

BBC News (September 2005) "Hilda Ogden wins soap star vote" [online], http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/1/hi/entertainment/tv_and_radio/4261778.stm [accessed on 29.4.07]

Beart, Suzie, Debbie Hawkins, Biza Stenfert Kroese, Paul Smithson and Inigo Tolosa (2001) "Barriers to accessing leisure opportunities for people with learning disabilities", <u>British Journal of Learning Disabilities</u>, vol. 29, no. 4 pp. 133-138.

Becker, Judith (2001) "Anthropological Perspectives on Music and Emotion", in Juslin, Patrik N. and John A. Sloboda (eds.) (2001), <u>Music and Emotion: Theory and Research</u>, Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 135-160.

Berger, Dorita S. (2002) <u>Music Therapy, Sensory Integration and the Autistic Child</u>, Jessica Kingsley, London.

Berger, Harris M. and Giovanna Del Negro (2004) Identity and Everyday Life: Essays in the Study of Folklore, Music, and Popular Culture, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut.

Booth, Wendy and Tim Booth (1993) 'Accentuate the Positive: a personal profile of a parent with learning difficulties' in Disability, Handicap & Society, vol. 8, no. 4, pp. 377-392.

Booth, Tim (1996) "Sounds of still voices: issues in the use of narrative methods with people who have learning difficulties" in Barton, Len (ed.) Disability and Society: Emerging Issues and Insights, Addison Wesley Longman Ltd, London, pp. 237-255.

Borland, John and Paul Ramcharan (1997) "Empowerment in Informal Settings: The Themes" in Ramcharan, Paul, Gwyneth Roberts, Gordon Grant and John Borland (1997), Empowerment in Everyday Life: Learning Disability, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London, pp. 88-97.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1977) Outline of a Theory of Practice, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1990) The Logic of Practice, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Bourdieu, Pierre (1998) "Distinction & The Aristocracy of Culture" in Storey, John (ed.) (1998) Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader (second edition), Prentice Hall, Hemel Hempstead, pp. 431-441.

Boxall, Kathy (2002) "Individual and social models of disability and the experiences of people with learning difficulties" in Race, David G. (ed.) (2002), Learning Disability – A Social Approach, Routledge, London, pp. 209-226.

Brechin, Ann and Jan Walmsley (1989) <u>Making Connections: Reflecting on the Lives and Experiences of People with Learning Difficulties</u>, Hodder and Stoughton, London.

Bull, Michael (2000) <u>Sounding out the City: Personal Stereos and the Management of Everyday Life</u>,
Berg, Oxford.

Bull, Michael (2003) "Soundscapes of the Car: A Critical Study of Automobile Habitation" in Bull, Michael and Les Back (eds.) (2003),
<u>The Auditory Culture Reader</u>,
Berg, Oxford, pp. 357-374.

Bull, Michael (2005) "No Dead Air! The iPod and the Culture of Mobile Listening", <u>Leisure Studies</u>, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 343-355.

Burgess, Robert G. (1984) <u>In the Field: An Introduction to Field Research</u>, George Allen & Unwin, London.

Buttimer, John and Edel Tierney (2005) "Patterns of leisure participation among adults with a mild intellectual disability", <u>Journal of Intellectual Disabilities</u>, vol. 9, no.1, pp. 25-42.

Butler, Judith (1990) <u>Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity</u>, Routledge, London.

Caldwell, Phoebe (2006) <u>Finding You Finding Me: Using Intensive Interaction to get in touch with people whose severe learning disabilities are combined with autistic spectrum disorder</u>, Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London.

Carlson, Marvin (2004) <u>Performance: A critical introduction</u> (second edition), Routledge, London.

Casey, Edward S. (1996) "How to Get from Space to Place in a Fairly Short Stretch of Time: Phenomenological Prolegomena" in Feld, Steven and Keith H. Basso (1996) <u>Senses of Place</u>, School of American Research Press, Santa Fe, New Mexico, pp. 13-52.

Cavicchi, Daniel (1998) <u>Tramps Like Us: Music and Meaning Among Springsteen Fans</u>, Oxford University Press, New York.

Cavicchi, Daniel (2002) "From the Bottom Up: Thinking About Tia DeNora's Music in Everyday Life", <u>Action, Criticism & Theory for Music Education</u>, [online], vol. 1, no. 2, 15 pages, <u>http://mas-siue.edu/ACT/v1/Cavicchi02.pdf</u> [accessed on 9.12.04].

Central England People First (2007) "Who are we?" [online], <u>http://www.peoplefirst.org.uk/whoarewe.html</u> [accessed on 13.6.07].

Chaney, David (2002) <u>Cultural Change and Everyday Life</u>, Palgrave, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire.

Clarke, Eric F. (2003) "Music and Psychology", in Clayton et al. (eds.) (2003) pp. 113-123.

Clifford, James (1986) 'Introduction: Partial Truths' in Clifford, James and George E. Marcus (1986) <u>Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography</u>, University of California Press, Berkeley, California, pp. 1-26.

Cloonan, Martin and Bruce Johnson (2002) "Killing me softly with his song: an initial investigation into the use of popular music as a tool of oppression", <u>Popular Music</u>, vol. 21, no. 1, pp. 27-39.

Crafts, Susan D., Daniel Cavicchi and Charles Keil (1993) <u>My Music</u>, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut.

Cohen, Sara (1991) Rock culture in Liverpool: popular music in the making, Clarendon Press, London.

Cohen, Sara (1993a) "Ethnography and Popular Music Studies", Popular Music, vol. 12, no. 2, pp. 123-138.

Cohen, Sara (1993b) "Men Making a Scene: Rock music and the production of gender" in Whiteley, Sheila (ed.) Sexing the Groove: Popular Music and Gender, Routledge, London.

Cohen, Sara (1995) "Sounding out the City: Music and the Sensuous Production of Place", Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, vol. 20, winter, pp. 433-446.

Coles, Jonathan (2001) "The Social Model of Disability: what does it mean for practice in services for people with learning difficulties?", Disability & Society, vol. 16, no. 4, pp. 501-510.

Cook, Nicholas (1998) Music: A Very Short Introduction, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Cook, Nicholas (2003) "Music as Performance" in Clayton et al. (eds.) (2003), pp. 204-214.

Cooke, Peggy (1997) "Learning Disability" in Skidmore, David (ed.) (1997), Community Care: Initial Training and Beyond, Arnold, London, pp. 237-257.

Couldry, Nick (2000) Inside Culture: re-imagining the method of cultural studies, Sage Publications, London.

Couser, G. Thomas (2004) Vulnerable Subjects: Ethics and Life Writing, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, New York.

Cowan, Jane K. (1990) Dance and the Body Politic in Northern Greece, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey.

Crafts, Susan D., Daniel Cavicchi and Charles Keil (1993) My Music, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut.

Crisell, Andrew (1994) Understanding Radio (second edition), Routledge, London.

Darnley-Smith, Rachel and Helen M. Patey (2003) Music Therapy, Sage, London.

DeNora, Tia (2000) Music in everyday Life, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

DeNora, Tia and Sophie Belcher (2000) "'When you're trying something on you picture yourself in a place where they are playing this kind of music' – musically sponsored agency in the British clothing retail sector", The Sociological Review, vol. 48, no. 1, pp. 80-101.

Department of Health (2001) Valuing People: a New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century, Stationary Office, London.

Department of Health (2005) Independence, Well-being and Choice: Our Vision for the Future of Social Care for Adults in England, Green Paper, Stationary Office, London.

Dickinson, Roger, Ann Murcott, Jane Eldridge and Simon Leader (2001) "Breakfast, Time, and 'Breakfast Time': Television, Food, and the Household Organization of Consumption", Television & New Media, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 235-256.

240

Digby, Ann (1996) "Contexts and Perspectives" in Wright, David and Ann
Digby (eds.) (1996) From Idiocy to Mental Deficiency, Routledge, London, pp.
1-22.

Disability Rights Commission (2006) Code of Practice, Rights of Access:
services to the public, public authority functions, private clubs and premises,
The Stationery Office, London.

Douglas, Mary (1991) "The Idea of a Home: A Kind of Space",
Social Research, vol. 58, no. 1, pp. 287-307.

Dowson, Steve (1997) "Empowerment Within Services: A Comfortable
Delusion" in Ramcharan et al. (eds.) pp. 101-120.

Dyer, Clare (2007) "Judge Halts BBC programme featuring mother with IQ of
63", The Guardian, 23 July 2007, p. 13.

Edgerton, Robert B. (1967) The Cloak Of Competence: Stigma In The Lives Of
The Mentally Retarded, University of California Press, Berkeley, California.

Edwards, Jane (2002) Untitled discussion response to Ansdell (2002),
Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy, [online]
Moderated Discussion, August 6, 2002,
http://www.voices.no/discussions/discm4_02.html [accessed on 22.3.08].

Emerson, Eric (2005) "Models of service delivery" in Grant, Gordon, Peter
Goward, Malcolm Richardson and Paul Ramcharan (eds.) (2005), Learning
Disability: A Life Cycle approach to Valuing People,
Open University Press, Maidenhead, pp. 108-127.

Felce, David and Sandy Toogood (1988) Close To Home: a local housing service
and its impact on the lives of nine adults with severe and profound mental
handicaps, BIMH Publications, Kidderminster.

Feld, Steven (1996) "Waterfalls of Song: An Acoustemology of Place Resounding in Bosavi, Papua New Guinea" in Feld and Basso (eds.) (1996), pp. 91-135.

Finnegan, Ruth (1989) The Hidden Musicians: music making in an English town, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Fiske, John (1987) Television Culture,
Routledge, London.

Foucault, Michel (1975) Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison,
Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Forbat, Liz (2006) "Valuing People: hopes and dreams for the future",
British Journal of Learning Disabilities, vol. 34, no. 1, pp. 20-27.

Frith, Simon and Andrew Goodwin (eds.) (1990) On Record: Rock, Pop And The Written Word, Routledge, London.

Frith, Simon (1996) "Music and Identity",
in Hall, Stuart and Paul du Gay (eds.) (1996), Questions of Cultural Identity,
Sage Publications Ltd, London, pp. 108-127.

Frith, Simon (2003) "Music and Everyday Life",
in Clayton, Martin, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton (eds.) (2003),
The Cultural Study of Music: a critical introduction,
Routledge, London, pp. 92-101.

Fyson, Rachel and Ken Simons (2003) "Strategies for change: making Valuing People a reality", British Journal of Learning Disabilities, vol. 31, no. 4, pp. 153-158.

GCap Media Plc (2007) [online] Century FM website
http://commercial.gcapmedia.com/index.php?id=34 [accessed on 29.4.07].

Geertz, Clifford (1975) The Interpretation of Cultures, Hutchinson and Co. Ltd., London.

Geertz, Clifford (1988) Works and Lives: the anthropologist as author, Polity Press, Cambridge.

Goffman, Erving (1959) The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Goffman, Erving (1961) Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Goffman, Erving (1963) Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity, Penguin Books Ltd, Harmondsworth, Middlesex.

Goffman, Erving (1974) Frame Analysis: An Essay on the Organization of Experience, Northeastern University Press, Boston.

Goode, David A. (1980) "The World Of The Congenitally Deaf-Blind: Towards The Grounds For Achieving Human Understanding" in Jacobs, Jerry (ed.) (1980), Mental Retardation: A Phenomenological Approach, Charles C Thomas, Springfield, Illinois, pp. 187-207.

Goodley, Dan (2000) Self-Advocacy in the Lives of People with Learning Difficulties, Open University Press, Buckingham.

Gouk, Penelope (2000) "Introduction" in Gouk, Penelope (ed.) (2000), Musical Healing in Cultural Contexts, Ashgate, Aldershot, pp. 1-25.

Grandin, Temple (2006) "An Inside View of Autism" [online], http://www.autism.org/temple/inside/html [accessed on 12.10.06].

243

Grossberg, Lawrence (1992) "Rock and Roll in Search of an Audience"
in Lull, James (ed.) (1992), Popular Music and Communication,
Sage Publications, London, pp. 152-175.

Hall, Stuart and Tony Jefferson (eds.) (1975)
Resistance through Rituals: Youth Subcultures in Post War Britain,
Hutchinson, London.

Hall, Stuart (1980) "Cultural Studies and the Centre: some problematics and
problems" in Hall, Stuart, Dorothy Hobson, Andrew Lowe and Paul Willis (eds.)
(1980), Culture, Media, Language, Hutchinson, London, pp. 15-47.

Hammersley, Martyn (1990) Reading Ethnographic Research: a critical guide,
Longman, London.

Hanna, Judith Lynne (1987) To Dance is Human: A Theory of Nonverbal
Communication (revised edition),
Chicago University Press, Chicago.

Hargreaves, David J., Dorothy Miell and Raymond A.R. MacDonald (2002)
"What are musical identities, and why are they important?" in MacDonald,
Raymond A. R, David J. Hargreaves and Dorothy Miell (eds.) (2002), Musical
Identities, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Hassan, Nedim (1998) Exploring the Significance of Popular Music in relation to
the Everyday Lives of three brothers with 'Learning Disabilities',
Unpublished M.A. dissertation, University of Liverpool.

Hassan, Nedim (2006) "He'll Have to Go: Exploring everyday listening and
performing", unpublished conference paper, Sounds of the Overground: A
postgraduate colloquium on ubiquitous music and music in everyday life
University of Liverpool, May 17th 2006.

Heart 'n' Soul website (2008) [online],
http://www.heartnsoul.co.uk
[accessed on 23.3.08].

Hebdige, Dick (1979) Subculture: the meaning of style,
Methuen, London.

Hennion, Antoine (2001) "Music Lovers: Taste as Performance",
Theory, Culture & Society, vol. 18, no. 5, pp. 1-22.

Hermes, Joke (1995) Reading Women's Magazines,
Polity Press, Cambridge.

Hesmondhalgh, David (2002) "Popular music audiences and everyday life"
in Hesmondhalgh, David and Keith Negus (eds.) (2002), Popular Music Studies,
Arnold, London, pp. 117-129.

Hesmondhalgh, David and Keith Negus (2002) "Popular music studies: meaning,
power and value" in Hesmondhalgh and Negus (2002), pp. 1-10.

Hine, Christine (2000) Virtual Ethnography,
Sage Publications, London.

Hobson, Dorothy (1980) "Housewives and the mass media" in Hall et al. (eds.)
(1980), pp. 105-114.

Hooper, Jeff and Bill Lindsay (1992) "Improving the Quality of Life through
Music: A Case Study", Mental Handicap, vol. 20, no. 1, pp. 27-30.

Hooper, Jeff (2002) "Using music to develop peer interaction: an examination of
the response of two subjects with a learning disability",
British Journal of Learning Disabilities, vol. 30, no. 4, pp. 166-170.

245

Horden, Peregrine (2000) "Musical Solutions: Past and Present in Music Therapy", in Horden, Peregrine (ed.) (2000), <u>Music as Medicine: The History of Music Therapy since Antiquity</u>, Ashgate, Aldershot, pp. 4-40.

Hugill, Stan (1961) <u>Shanties from the Seven Seas: Ship based work-songs and songs used as work-songs from the great days of sail</u>, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.

Jenkins, Richard (1992) <u>Pierre Bourdieu</u>, Routledge, London.

Kassabian, Anahid (1999) "Popular", in Horner, Bruce and Thomas Swiss (eds.) (1999) <u>Key Terms in Popular Music and Culture</u>, Blackwell Publishers, Oxford, pp. 113-123.

Kassabian, Anahid (2002) "Ubiquitous Listening" in Hesmondhalgh and Negus (eds.) (2002), pp. 131-142.

Kassabian, Anahid (2006) "Keynote address", unpublished conference paper, <u>Sounds of the Overground: A postgraduate colloquium on ubiquitous music and music in everyday life</u>, University of Liverpool, May 17 2006.

Keightley, Keir (1996) "'Turn it down!' she shrieked: gender, domestic space, and high fidelity, 1948-59", <u>Popular Music</u> vol. 15 no. 2, pp. 149-177.

Kelly, William H. (1998) "The Adaptability of Karaoke in the United Kingdom", in Mitsui, Tóru and Hosokawa Shúhei (eds.) (1998), <u>Karaoke Around the World: Global technology, local singing</u>, Routledge, London, pp. 83-101.

Klotz, Jani (2004) "Sociocultural study of intellectual disability: moving beyond labelling and social constructionist perspectives", <u>British Journal of Learning Disabilities</u>, vol. 32, no. 2, pp. 93-104.

Lanza, Joseph (1995) Elevator Music
Quartet Books Ltd, London.

Lawson, Wendy (2008) website [online]
http://www.mugsy.org/wendy
[accessed on 20.2.08].

Leverton, Marc (2007) "Access all areas" [online] Society Guardian, 1 June
2007, http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2007/jun/01/disability.socialcare
[accessed on 1.8.07]

Lewis, Justin (1991) The Ideological Octopus: An Exploration of Television and
its Audiences, Routledge, London.

Lincoln, Sian (2005) "Feeling the Noise: Teenagers, Bedrooms and Music",
Leisure Studies, vol. 24, no. 4, pp. 399-414.

Lomax, Alan (2003) "Reels and Work Songs" in Cohen, Ronald D. (ed.) (2003),
Alan Lomax: Selected Writings 1934-1997, Routledge, London, pp. 69-76.

Machin, David (2002) Ethnographic Research For Media Studies,
Arnold, London.

MacDonald, Raymond A.R and Dorothy Miell (2002) "Music for individuals
with special needs: a catalyst for developments in identity, communication, and
musical ability" in MacDonald et al. (eds.) (2002), pp. 163-178.

Magee, Wendy L. (2002) "Disability and Identity in music therapy",
in Macdonald, Raymond A. R. et al. (eds.) (2002), pp. 179-197.

Maratos, Anna (2002) "Response to Discussion Paper on Community Music Therapy", <u>Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy</u>, [online], Moderated Discussion, July 16, 2002, http://www.voices.no/discussions/discm4_01.html [accessed on 22.3.08].

Martin, Peter J. (1995) <u>Sounds and Society: Themes in the sociology of music</u>, Manchester University Press, Manchester.

Mazer, Susan and Smith, Dallas (1999) <u>Sound Choices: Using Music to Design the Environments in Which You Live, Work and Heal</u>, Hay House, Carlsbad, California.

McColgan, Gillian (2005) "A Place to Sit: Resistance Strategies Used to Create Privacy and Home by People with Dementia", <u>Journal of Contemporary Ethnography</u>, vol. 34, no. 4, pp. 410-433.

McConkey, Roy and Patrick McGinley (eds.) (1990) <u>Innovations in Leisure and Recreation for People with a Mental Handicap</u>, Brothers of Charity Services, Lisieux Hall, Chorley.

McConkey, Roy (2005) "Promoting friendships and developing social networks" in Grant, Gordon et al. (eds.) (2005), pp. 468-490.

McNeill, William H. (1995) <u>Keeping Together In Time: Dance and Drill in Human History</u>, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.

McLean, Elspeth (1990) "Things to do – people to see…leisure, young people with mental handicaps, and the community", <u>Mental Handicap</u>, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 169-171.

Middleton, Richard (1990) <u>Studying Popular Music</u>, Open University Press, Buckingham.

248

Moores, Shaun (2000) <u>Media and Everyday Life in Modern Society</u>,
Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh.

Moran, Joe (2006) "Houses, Habit and Memory" in Smyth, Gerry and Jo Croft
(eds.) (2006), <u>Our House: The Representation of Domestic Space in Modern
Culture</u>, Rodopi, Amsterdam, pp. 27-42.

Morley, David (1986) <u>Family Television: Cultural Power and Domestic Leisure</u>,
Comedia Publishing Group, London.

Morley, David (2000) <u>Home Territories: Media, Mobility and Identity</u>,
Routledge, London.

Morton, Frances L.G (2005) <u>'The music of what happens': spaces of
performance of Irish traditional music in Galway City, Ireland</u>, unpublished
Ph.D. thesis, University of Bristol.

Moy, Ron (2000) <u>An Analysis of the Position and Status of Sound Ratio in
Contemporary Society</u>, The Edwin Mellen Press, Lewiston.

Moy, Ron (2006) "Sonic Architecture: Home Hi-fi and Stereo(types)" in Smyth
and Croft (eds.) (2006), pp. 195-208.

Negus, Keith (1996) <u>Popular Music in Theory</u>,
Polity Press, Cambridge.

North, Adrian C. and David J. Hargreaves, (1997), "The Musical Milieu: studies
of listening in everyday life", <u>The Psychologist</u>, vol. 10, no.7, pp. 309-312.

Ockelford, Adam (1998) <u>Music Moves: Music in the education of children and
young people who are visually impaired and have learning disabilities</u>,
Royal National Institute for the Blind, London.

Oliver, Michael and Colin Barnes (1998) <u>Disabled People and Social Policy:</u> <u>From Exclusion to Inclusion,</u> Addison Wesley Longman Ltd, Edinburgh.

Oliver, Mike (1999) "Final accounts and the parasite people" in Corker, Mairian and Sally French (eds.) (1999), <u>Disability Discourse,</u> Open University Press, Buckingham, pp. 183-191.

O' Reilly, Karen (2005) <u>Ethnographic Methods,</u> Routledge, London.

Pavlicevic, Mercédès and Gary Ansdell (2004) "Introduction: The Ripple Effect", in Pavlicevic and Ansdell (eds.) (2004), pp. 15-31.

Pickering, Michael and Tony Green (1987) "Towards a Cartography of the Vernacular Milieu" in Pickering, Michael and Tony Green (eds.) (1987), <u>Everyday Culture: Popular Song and the Vernacular Milieu,</u> Open University Press, Milton Keynes, pp. 1-38.

Plimley, Lynn A. (2007) "A review of quality of life issues and people with autism spectrum disorders", <u>British Journal of Learning Disabilities,</u> vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 205-213.

Prus, Robert C. (1996) <u>Symbolic interaction and ethnographic research:</u> <u>intersubjectivity and the study of human lived experience,</u> State University of New York Press, Albany.

Quirey, Belinda, Steve Bradshaw and Ronald Smedley (1976) <u>May I have the</u> <u>Pleasure? The Story of Popular Dancing,</u> British Broadcasting Corporation.

Race, David (2002) "The Historical Context" in Race (ed.) (2002), pp. 23-52.

Radway, Janice (1984)
<u>Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy and Popular Literature,</u> University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

Reynolds, Frances (2002) "An exploratory survey of opportunities and barriers to creative leisure activity for people with learning disabilities", British Journal of Learning Disabilities, vol. 30, no. 2, pp. 63-67.

Richards, Chris (1998) Teen Spirits: Music and Identity in Media Education, UCL Press, London.

Riddell, Sheila, Stephen Baron and Alastair Wilson (2001) The Learning Society And People With Learning Difficulties, Polity Press, Bristol.

Riesman, David (1990) [1950] "Listening to Popular Music", in Frith and Goodwin (eds.) (1990), pp. 4-13.

Ritchie, Fiona (1993) "Opening Doors: The Effects of Music Therapy with People Who Have Severe Learning Difficulties and Display Challenging Behaviour" in Heal, Margaret and Tony Wigram (eds.) (1993), Music Therapy in Health and Education, Jessica Kingsley Ltd, London, pp. 91-102.

Roberts, Dave (ed.) (2002) Guinness World Records: British Hit Singles (15th edition), Guinness World Records Ltd, London.

Ruddock, Andy (2001) Understanding Audiences, Sage Publications Ltd, London.

Ruud, Even (2004) "Defining Community Music Therapy", Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy [online], Moderated Discussion, November 22, 2004, http://www.voices.no/discussions/discm4_04.html [accessed on 22.3.08].

Ryan, Joanna and Frank Thomas (1987) The Politics of Mental Handicap, Free Association Books, London.

251

Schafer, R. Murray (1977) <u>The Tuning of the World</u>,
Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

Schechner, Richard (1990) "Magnitudes of performance",
in Schechner, Richard and Willa Appel (eds.) (1990),
<u>By means of performance: Intercultural studies of theatre and ritual</u>,
Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, pp. 19-49.

Shank, Barry (1993) <u>Dissonant Identities: The rock 'n' roll scene in Austin
Texas</u>, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut.

Shumway, David (1999) "Performance" in Horner and Swiss (eds.) (1999) pp.
188-198.

Silverstone, Roger (1994) <u>Television and Everyday Life</u>,
Routledge, London.

Slobin, Mark (1993) <u>Subcultural Sounds: Micromusics of the West</u>, Wesleyan
University Press, Middletown, Connecticut.

Sloboda, John A. and Susan A. O'Neill (2001) "Emotions in everyday listening
to music" in Juslin and Sloboda (eds.) (2001), pp. 415-430.

Small, Christopher (1998) <u>Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and
Listening</u>, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut.

Spradley, James P. (1980) <u>Participant Observation</u>,
Holt, Rinehart & Winston, New York.

Stige, Brynjulf (2004) "On Defining Community Music Therapy",
<u>Voices: A World Forum for Music Therapy</u>, [online] Moderated Discussion,
December 20, 2004, http://www.voices.no/discussions/discm4_05.html
[accessed on 22.3.08].

Stockfelt, Ola (2004) "Adequate Modes of Listening"
in Cox, Christoph and Daniel Warner (eds.) (2004),
Audio Culture: Readings in Modern Music, The Continuum International
Publishing Group, London, pp. 88-93.

Schwoch, James and Mimi White (2006) "Introduction: The Questions of
Method in Cultural Studies" in White, Mimi and James Schwoch (eds.) (2006),
Questions of Method in Cultural Studies,
Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, pp. 1-15.

Tacchi, Jo (2003) "Nostalgia and Radio Sound",
in Bull and Back (eds.) (2003), pp. 281-295.

Tagg, Philip (1994) "Subjectivity and Soundscape: Motorbikes and Music" in
Jarviluoma, Helmi (ed.) (1994), Soundscapes: Essays on Vroom and Moo,
Department of Folk Tradition, Tampere, pp.48-66.

Taylor, Steven (2003) False Prophet: Fieldnotes from the Punk Underground,
Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut.

Thornton, Sarah (1995) Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital,
Polity Press, Cambridge.

Thrift, Nigel J. (1997) "The Still Point: resistance, expressive embodiment and
dance" in Pile, Steve and Michael Keith (1997) Geographies of Resistance,
Routledge, London, pp. 124-151.

Thurman, Sue, Jane Jones and Beth Tarleton (2005) "Without words –
meaningful information for people with high individual communication needs",
British Journal of Learning Disabilities, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 83-89.

Titon, Jeff Todd (2003) "Textual Analysis or Thick Description" in Clayton et al.
(eds.) (2003), pp.171-180.

Turino, Thomas (1990) "Structure, Context, and Strategy in Musical Ethnography", Ethnomusicology, vol. 34, no. 3, pp. 399-412.

Turner, Victor (1987) The Anthropology of Performance, PAJ Publications, New York.

Turner, Victor (1990) "Are there universals of performance in myth, ritual, and drama?" in Schechner and Appel (eds.) (1990) pp. 8-18.

Tyler, Helen M. (2000) "The Music Therapy Profession in Modern Britain", in Hordern, Peregrine (ed.) (2000), pp. 374-393.

Van Leeuwen, Theo (1999) Speech, Music, Sound Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Van Maanen, John (1995) Representation in Ethnography, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, California.

Walmsley, Jan (2005) "Research and emancipation: prospects and problems" in Grant, Gordon et al. (eds.) (2005), pp. 724-743.

Walser, Robert (1993) Running with the Devil: Power, Gender and Madness in Heavy Metal Music, Wesleyan University Press, Middletown, Connecticut.

Webb, Richard and David Tossell (1991) Social Issues for Carers, Edward Arnold, London.

Wigram, Tony (2005) "The Scope of Music Therapy in Health and Education", unpublished conference paper, A Sound Intervention, One Day International Conference, Liverpool Hope University, June 24th 2005.

Wigram, Tony and Christian Gold (2006) "Music therapy in the assessment and treatment of autistic spectrum disorder: clinical application and research evidence", <u>Child: Care, Health and Development</u>, vol. 32, no. 5, pp. 535-542.

Williams, Christina (2001) "Does it really matter? Young people and popular music", <u>Popular Music</u>, vol. 20, no. 2, pp. 223-242.

Williams, Raymond (1983) <u>Keywords</u> (second edition),
Fontana Press, London.

Willis, Paul (1978) <u>Profane Culture</u>,
Routledge, London.

Wood, Miriam (1983) <u>Music for Mentally Handicapped People</u>,
Souvenir Press, London.

Discography

Boney M (1997) <u>The Best Of</u>,

BM830 Camden, BMG Entertainment, UK and Ireland.

Various Artists (2005) <u>Rock Godz</u>,

Sony, BMG, Universal Music TV.

<u>Interviews and Staff Diaries</u>

Interview with 'Charlotte' (2004), unpublished audio interview, 27.3.04
40 minutes, '17 Orwell Street'.

Interview with Mel (2004), unpublished audio interview, 26.4.04,
42 minutes, '17 Orwell Street'.

Interview with Beryl (2004), unpublished audio interview, 19.9.04,
28 minutes, Preston.

Interview with Nicky (2005), unpublished audio interview, 3.11.05,
45 minutes, '17 Orwell Street'.

Mel (2001), unpublished diary of music related events.

Jay (2003), unpublished diary of music related events.

Various authors (2005), unpublished diary of music related events.

Appendix I

<u>Consent Letter from "Community Connections"</u>

Ref RB/ES/Ops/041000

10th October 2000

Mr N Hassan
25 Brookside Avenue
Eccleston
St Helens
WA10 4RN

Dear Mr Hassan

Further to your letter dated 29th June 2000, I am unable to authorise funding for your research. However, I can authorise you to undertake some of your research with   and

Informed permission must be obtained from any service users potentially involved and the issues discussed with families and Care Manager where appropriate.

Yours sincerely

GENERAL MANAGER

Appendix II

To all the residents at no. 17 and no. 19 Orwell Street

I would like your help with a music project that I have designed. What I would like to do is to talk to each of you about lots of different things to do with the music that you hear in your everyday lives. I am very interested in how people like you who are supported in their own homes enjoy popular music. With your help I would like to write about the ways that music is connected with your daily experiences both now and in the past. The finished piece of writing that I will provide would be a large part of my PhD thesis. In my writing I would maintain your confidentiality at all times and I will not use your real names.

It is my hope that the finished project will eventually be published as a book. This is because I would like to make more people aware of how important popular music can be in the lives of different people with learning disabilities.

If you have any questions about this music project then please feel free to ask me anything at all.

Best Wishes,

Ned.

After being made aware of the contents of this letter and Nedim Hassan's music project, I would/would not like to help Nedim with this work (delete as appropriate).

Signature:

Appendix III

Nedim Hassan
C/o 17 Orwell
Street

Dear

Enclosed is a letter that I wrote and explained to all the residents at no.17 and no.19 Orwell Street.   has agreed to help me with my research project in the ways outlined in the letter. At present, there is hardly any research that focuses on the musical practices of people with learning disabilities. By exploring this subject for my PhD in popular music studies I hope to enable students of popular music and members of the general public to become more aware of valuable musical experiences that have hardly been written about. I would welcome any help you could offer me with my research and I would be particularly grateful if I could talk to you about your thoughts on enjoyment of popular music. If you have any questions or comments about this research project then please feel free to contact me at 17 Orwell Street.

Best Wishes,

Nedim Hassan (support worker at no.17)

If you have no objections to   being involved with this research then I would be extremely grateful if you could sign the bottom segment of this letter and return it to me as soon as possible. This research is a vital part of my degree and I would appreciate a swift response.

Signature:

Print name:

Appendix IV

<u>To all staff at Orwell Street</u>

As some of you may know I have recently been authorized by C.C to carry out a research project based at Orwell Street. This will form a major part of my PhD in Popular Music Studies that I have just begun at the University of Liverpool.

For a number of years I have been very interested in the roles that popular music can play in the lives of people with learning disabilities. I am especially interested in the variety of ways in which popular music can become important on an everyday level within the home. I believe that research in this area is very important. Up to now there has hardly been any work done that explores the musical experiences of people with learning disabilities. Apart from different studies done by music therapists, there is a lack of research that highlights the many ways learning disabled people enjoy music on a day to day basis.

With your help I would like to do extensive research into how residents at Orwell Street use popular music on a daily basis (I have gained permission from the residents themselves, their families and care managers). By 'popular music' I basically mean any music that residents listen to, sing along to and generally respond to. What I would like each of you to do is to consider the many ways that popular music plays a part in the lives of the people you support. Whilst you are thinking about this I want you to take nothing for granted, take into account all the experiences you observe. For example, think about tunes and jingles residents respond to from the TV, songs they may sing, music they may hear in different places both in and outside their home and the CDs and tapes they listen to. Everything associated with music is useful for this project. I would also like you to consider *how* residents respond to the music: what body language you notice, what they say and do, how you think it makes them feel and why you think it is significant to them etc.

As my project progresses I would like to interview each of you to discuss these experiences you observe. If you have worked with or have contact with other people considered to have learning disabilities or special needs then I would also like you to consider how they use popular music. If you get chance, then you could jot down any events that you see as important when you are working with residents.

I will be eternally grateful for any help you can offer me with this project. One of my hopes for this research is that it will enable future students of popular music to become aware of valuable musical experiences that have hardly been written about. The histories and experiences of people with learning disabilities have often been neglected in the past. I strongly believe that my research could increase the general public's awareness and understanding of this group of people who are often misunderstood.

Best wishes,

Ned.

Appendix V

<u>Presentation for Staff and Residents</u>

1. <u>Introduction</u>

As I told you all in the past I am very interested in studying how music becomes part of peoples' everyday lives. I asked your permission to study how the four of you experience music. You kindly agreed to let me write about these experiences for my PhD research. A PhD is basically a very large book that I need to write so I can get a certificate.

There are three reasons why I wanted to give this presentation today:

a) I wanted to remind you about what I am doing and invite you to ask any questions.

b) I wanted to tell you about what I'm going to be writing.

c) I wanted to tell you why I'm writing this book and what I hope to achieve.

2. <u>Rationale behind the Project</u>

a) One of the first things I noticed when I started working here and supporting you is that music seems to be an important part of your daily lives. I wanted to find out how music becomes important and why. This is something that is very hard to do but because I've been able to watch and listen to you over a few years, I've began to think about some answers to these questions. I think this is a good thing because it could help a lot of people who read my writing to learn about how music might become important to them in their everyday lives.

b) Related to this point, I also want other people to read about your lives and experiences. This is because many people don't know what it is like to live in a house like yours. Also I know that people like you, who live in a supported living scheme, may sometimes find it difficult to write down their experiences and life stories. By writing about your experiences I'm hoping that other people will be

able to read about you and start to understand what everyday life is like for you as well as how music plays a part in this.

But I also know that it is important to maintain your privacy so I won't be using your real names and I won't be mentioning where you live. In fact, if there is anything you don't feel comfortable with and you don't want me to mention then let me know at the end of this presentation (or at any time in the future).

3. The Project

What I've been doing up to now is writing lots of notes about what you've been doing in your home. I've paid close attention to musical events and activities in these notes. It's a bit like when the staff write in the daily notes file but my notes have been more detailed. I've kept making notes over a number of years in different diaries. I've also interviewed Charlotte, Beryl and Roy and Mel (before she left) to ask them questions about music. In the next few months I hope to interview Christine, more staff members and any family members who want to talk to me.

4. Findings

I've come up with a number of ideas for chapters for the book. These are based on important music-related themes that I've found. They include:

a) Music and memory – how music helps people to remember things.
b) Music and social performance – by this I mean the singing, humming and dancing that goes on in your home and at social events like parties.
c) Music as 'therapeutic' – in this chapter I want to write about how music helps people to feel good and to relax.
d) Music and the domestic soundscape – a soundscape means the regular sounds that you can hear in and around your home. So basically I'm going to be writing about what your house sounds like and how this might effect how music is enjoyed.

e) Music and routine – in this chapter I'll write about how music is often part of the things that you do every day. For instance, John usually likes to have music on whilst getting dressed in his room.

I'll now talk through these themes in more detail, starting with music and memory.

5. Main Themes

a) Music and memory

Many people have suggested that music is good at helping us remember things. If we hear a song it can help to revive memories of feelings, relationships, events and places from our past. But after watching how music plays a part in your lives, I've been able to find out more about how this remembering actually happens.

Whilst it is difficult to tell how many songs Andrew knows, over the years I've realised that Christine, John and Charlotte know a lot of songs. Sometimes it surprises me how well you all know the melodies and the lyrics to some pop songs. Charlotte and John in particular can sing along to a variety of chart hits, even if they don't know who the singer is. Christine also knows a lot of songs from musicals and from singers like Jim Reeves and Andy Williams, even if she doesn't sing along as often.

So singing is one way to show that you remember a song. But it is also clear that certain songs or performers are associated with particular memories. For instance, John associates Jim Reeves's song "He'll have to go" with doing exercises. So when he hears it he usually says "exercises" and performs the exercises he probably used to do at the day centre. Similarly when he hears some of the hymns on his Songs of Praise album John often acts as if he is in church, putting his hands together and saying "Amen". So it seems that music doesn't just remind us of past experiences it can enable us to re-enact them. By thinking about how everyone here uses music it has helped me to realise that memories

are not just in our heads, they are also part of how we act. We perform them by singing or moving our bodies.

b) Music and social performance

My research here has also helped me to realise how important performances such as singing, dancing and humming are. These are things that seem to happen on a daily basis in your home and not simply on special occasions like parties. So I've learnt that these 'little performances' that happen on an everyday level can be very important for a number of reasons.

(i) Performances like singing and dancing are very interesting. They can tell people around us a lot about ourselves. If we're feeling confident or good then our singing voices can show this. For example, Charlotte and John are often very confident with their singing – they're not shy about using their voices, whereas I would tend to be a bit more reserved.

(ii) On the other hand, singing and dancing can give the impression that we're feeling good even if deep down we're a little bit unsure of ourselves. So if we're a bit unhappy about something, singing or humming could be a way of disguising how we feel.

(iii) So, what I'm suggesting about some of the musical performances I've seen here at 17 Orwell Street is that they often seem deliberate. They're based on the fact that other people will be watching. So, for instance, I think that John and Charlotte especially like to sing and dance with other people in mind. This could be to entertain us, to make us laugh or to show how happy they feel.

(iv) Musical performances depend on where we are and what we're doing. At more public events such as parties I've noticed that people tend to behave differently. So people may be livelier or more affectionate than they are in the house. They also might feel more confident and able to dance because the music is louder and they're in a completely different environment.

(v) Musical performance such as dancing makes us physically feel differently. I've noticed how people move their bodies to music in ways that are often very positive. Whenever anyone dances to music in here they usually seem to feel good. This is made clear by peoples' facial expressions or moods. For example, Andrew often rocks in his chair to music on his stereo. This 'rocking' is something that seems to make him feel good and this seems to be very important for Andrew. It is something that seems to affect his body system in a positive way. Even though Andrew can't put his feelings into words we can tell by his movements and expressions that this is something good. So what I've learnt from Andrew is that the pleasures of musical performance are not easy to describe. They're not just about thinking or emotions but they're also about our bodies and how they feel.

c) Music as 'therapeutic'

Music can help people to relax and to feel better. I've already talked about how this can be done through musical performances. But I've also noticed how listening to music can be beneficial to people here at Orwell Street, helping to change moods. For instance, Joanne wrote about how Christine was feeling down and how listening to Tony Christie whilst sat at the kitchen table helped her to feel better. Music can change surroundings, making them more pleasant. For example, Charlotte told me about how music helps her to relax in her bedroom whilst she tidies and polishes.

d) Music and the domestic soundscape

When I talk about the soundscape of this house I mean everything that can be heard in the main rooms of the house. Sounds can create a certain atmosphere, just like the furniture and interior designs help to create an atmosphere. At times this environment is very noisy and it could be quite bewildering. For instance, if you think about Andrew he spends a lot of time in the kitchen. He has to cope with a lot of noises in that area – the kettle, cooker, washer, drier, fans, the sound of traffic outside, the sounds of people coming in and out and also the sound of the stereo if it is on.

It is difficult for us to control many of those noises because they are the sounds of a 'working household'. We have to have the washing machine on for much of the day for example. But the music is one aspect that we can control therefore it is very important. If music is something that Andrew listens to and enjoys on a regular basis then it provides a welcome relief from the other less predictable and pleasurable aspects of his environment. Also if it can relax him and help him to feel calm as it seems to be able to do on many occasions, then it may help to prevent him from becoming unsettled. This is a positive thing for Andrew and for the people around him.

e) <u>Music and routine</u>

Many of us have routines in our lives and routines are very important for all the people who live here and the people who work here. I've just talked about Andrew and it is clear that Andrew is someone who likes routine in many aspects of his daily life. So if there are disruptions to his environment such as people doing decorating in the kitchen or new members of staff, he doesn't like it and might become annoyed.

Listening to music is something positive that is part of Andrew's regular routines. He sits near to the stereo and he can listen to music whilst sat in his chair. Music is also a vital part of peoples' routines in this house in different ways. For example, John likes to listen to music whilst he's getting dressed every morning. Similarly Charlotte often likes to listen to music whilst she's tidying her room. Christine and John like to watch <u>Songs of Praise</u> every Sunday and sing along to the hymns.

So music is not only an important part of routine for the people who live here, it seems to make these routines better and more enjoyable. It seems to make the things that we have to do everyday more interesting, but music is also often the best part of the 'little things' that we like to do regularly. So, for example, when watching <u>Songs of Praise</u> every week it is the hymns that John likes the best.

6) Conclusion

Hopefully now you all understand a bit more about what I'm writing about for my PhD project and why I'm writing it. There are other more general things that I'll need to mention in my writing. I'll need to set the scene by talking about what the home is like both by describing what it looks like but also outlining the general routines for yourselves and the staff. Also I'll discuss what kind of organisation Community Connections is, just to give the readers some background information. I'll mention some brief historical details about you four people who live here. These will include things like how long you've lived here and where you used to live before you came here. I'll also discuss a little bit about why you're here and types of support that you need, in other words the kinds of things that the staff help you with. For example, with John I'll write that you need some support with getting washed and dressed, those kinds of things.

I will mention the real first names of staff members, unless you don't want me to. However, I won't mention any other personal information. I'll also give each of you the opportunity to read what I've written when it is finished.

If there's anything you don't want me to write about then please let me know now or at any time in the future. Also if there are any questions about this then please feel free to ask me anything.

Appendix VI
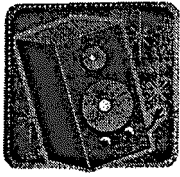
Why is Ned studying how we use music?

One of the first things I noticed when I started working here and
supporting you is that music seems to be an important part of your daily
lives. I wanted to find out how music becomes important and why. This is
something that is very hard to do but because I've been able to watch
and listen to you over a few years, I've began to think about some
answers to these questions. I think this is a good thing because it could
help a lot of people who read my writing to learn about how music might
become important to them in their everyday lives.

Related to this point, I also want other people to read about your lives and
experiences. This is because many people don't know what it is like to
live in a house like yours. Also I know that people like you, who live in a
supported living scheme, may sometimes find it difficult to write down
their experiences and life stories. By writing about your experiences I'm
hoping that other people will be able to read about you and start to
understand what everyday life is like for you as well as how music
becomes important to you.

But I also know that it is important to maintain your privacy so I won't be
using your real names and I won't be mentioning where you live. In fact, if
there is anything you don't feel comfortable with and you don't want me to
mention then let me know at the end of this presentation (or at any time in
the future).

To all staff at no.17 and no.19 Orwell Street

As many of you know, my PhD research project aims to investigate the many ways that music plays a part in the daily lives of the residents at no.17 and no.19. Up to now I have been keeping a regular diary that describes all the various experiences involving music that I have observed during my shifts.

Obviously the notes I have made in the diary are only *my* perceptions of events. In order to ensure that my research is not one-sided it is very important that I learn more about your perspectives as well as those of the residents. With your help I would like to achieve this in 2 ways: In the near future I would like to conduct extensive interviews with all the staff and residents. However, prior to these interviews I would like staff to keep their own diaries, recording any music-related activities that occur during their shifts.

Those members of staff who choose to complete diaries would only need to do so for a short period of time (I would suggest 2 weeks). I will provide participating staff with a list of questions that I want them to consider, together with a notebook to use as a diary. I would be eternally grateful if staff could just find time to write a few notes in these after (or during) their shifts. The amount of detail you go into is up to you. Ideally I'd like you to go into as much detail as possible. However, I realise that you are all busy people so even if you just write down a few sentences or key words it will be useful. Please read through the question list I will give you before writing your diary entries, this should be very helpful to you as it will guide you as to what experiences and events I want you to note down.

I value staff input into this project a great deal; your experiences of observing and interacting with residents will enrich my research and final written account tremendously. Thank you for your time.

Ned.

Appendix VIII

Questions to think about whilst writing diary notes

1) What music did residents hear during your shift? Were there songs on the radio, tapes or CDs, music on the television (advertising jingles etc.), digital or cable music video channels playing pop videos, hymns sang at church etc.

2) What particular songs or tunes can you remember? If possible write down song titles, performers, or just the style of music e.g. jazz, chart-pop, 70s disco, 80s pop, rock, country and western, opera etc. If you can't remember specific songs on the radio write down the station e.g. 'Wish fm' and list the types of music played e.g. Top 40 singles, love songs etc.

3) Describe any instances where music is heard outside the home. For example trips to pubs, concerts discos, restaurants etc. (this doesn't have to be a specific musical event such as a karaoke night, residents might just hear background music played through speakers in a pub or in a supermarket or might listen to the radio whilst riding in the car).

4) How did residents respond to music heard during your shift? Did the music provoke an obvious response? For example, singing along, clapping, swaying, dancing, foot-tapping, smiling, humming, rocking. What was their body language and facial expression like?

5) Was there music in the background whilst other activities were taking place? For example, residents talking to staff or each other, reading, eating food, getting dressed, watching television, sleeping, carrying out household duties such as tidying etc.

6) In what places could music be heard? Could music be heard throughout the entire household or just in the kitchen, lounge, garden etc? Was the volume loud or quiet? What were the main noises that dominated the rooms people occupied? E.g. these could be people talking, sounds from the T.V, the radio or stereo, the sound of the oven, electric fans, the hoover, washing machine, tumble-drier etc.

7) Who chose what music was heard during your shift? Did staff switch the radio or T.V on? Did residents decide these things or influence certain choices?

8) Did residents talk about music to each other, or to staff during your shift? Did an enjoyment of music have a positive effect on friendships between residents or between staff and residents? For example, does it enable them to have something in common, does it prompt them to sit together, does it stimulate conversations etc?

9) Did an enjoyment of music allow residents to relax on a more individual basis? Did residents like to take time on their own to listen to music in a separate room?

10) Did music have any negative effects during your shift? E.g. was it disruptive or distracting etc?
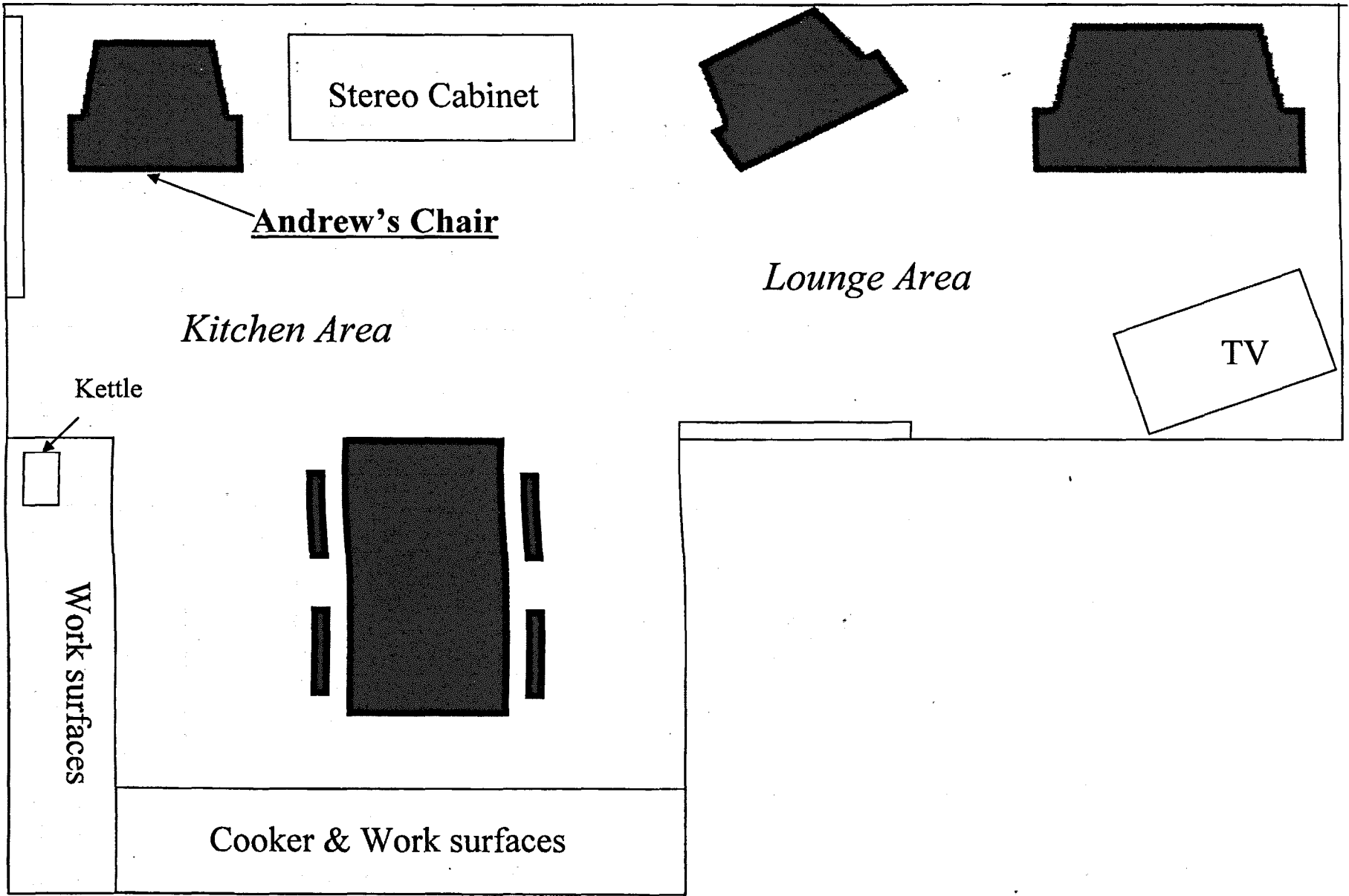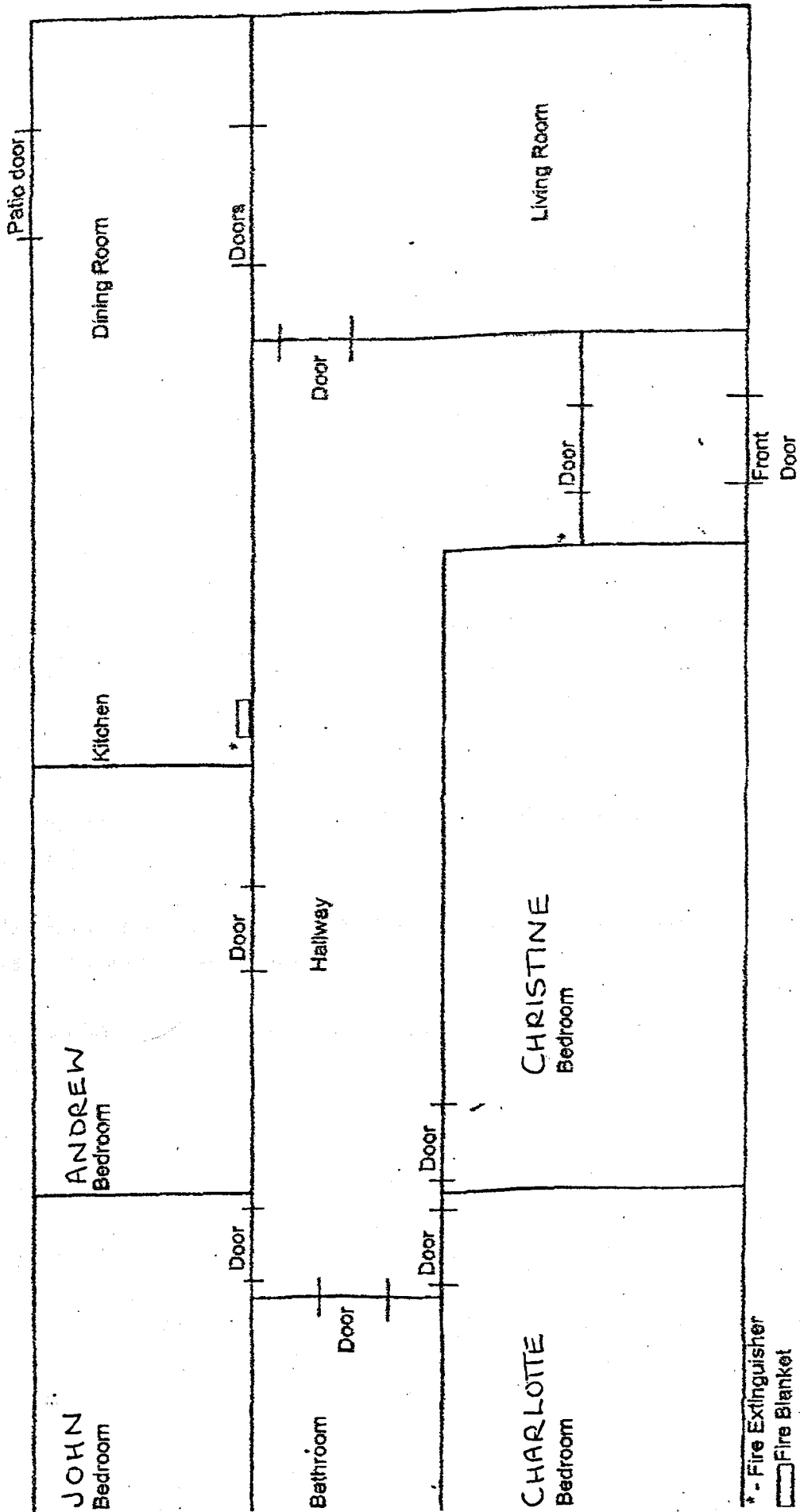
Stereo Cabinet

Andrew's Chair

Lounge Area

Kitchen Area

Kettle

TV

Work surfaces

Cooker & Work surfaces

Appendix X

17 Orwell Street Floor Plan of the Bungalow

JOHN
Bedroom

Patio door

ANDREW
Bedroom

Dining Room

Kitchen

Doors

Door

Living Room

Door

Door

Bathroom

Door

Door

Hallway

Door

Door

Front
Door

CHARLOTTE
Bedroom

CHRISTINE
Bedroom

* - Fire Extinguisher

Fire Blanket

Aims and Objectives

To ensure that   is recognised by the service users as their home. Staff will support them to create and to enjoy a friendly and safe home environment.

To respect the service users privacy and dignity and to promote self-esteem, valuing each person within the home.

To ensure that each service user is fully involved in their person-centred planning and care planning process. These will be reviewed at least every six months or immediately when a need arises.

To support people to make choices and to enable them to exercise control over their lives as much as possible.

To ensure service users are offered equal rights and opportunities at all times. To liase with external agencies to ensure their needs are met.

To assist service users to attain relevant skills and to develop their independence.

To include service users next of kin and families in decision-making when the service users request this.

To encourage and support independent advocacy where relevant and appropriate.

Appendix XII

<u>Feedback Questionnaire on Ned's Research on Music in Everyday Life</u>

(Please read the letter from Ned and the two articles before answering these questions)

Please note that for confidentiality reasons I will use pseudonyms for the service users you mention if I include your feedback in the final thesis. I will also only mention your Christian names, again to ensure confidentiality. If you do not wish me to use your name at all but merely to mention your opinions in my writing then do not put your name on this questionnaire. If you want to write longer responses then please feel free to continue on a separate sheet.

Name:

Number of years worked at 17 Orwell Street:

Number of years worked in the caring profession:

1. Do you think that what is written in the two articles is an accurate portrayal of the roles of music in everyday life at 17 Orwell Street? Please try and give reasons for your opinions.

2. Do you think that the findings of this research could be valuable for support workers working at 17 Orwell Street or at a similar supported living scheme? If so, in what ways?

3. Do you think there are any benefits or disadvantages for the service users in having their 'musical lives' written about in this way? Explain why.