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# Inside the musical world of homeschoolers in southern Wisconsin: a collective case study

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BOSTON UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF FINE ARTS

Dissertation

**INSIDE THE MUSICAL WORLD OF HOMESCHOOLERS IN SOUTHERN WISCONSIN:  
A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Musical Arts

2017



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## **DEDICATION**

This work is dedicated to all parents who have sacrificed in order to provide for their children.

To my parents, Bob and Clare Ledgerwood, who modeled qualities of faithfulness to each other and to their five children, who taught us the value of work, and instilled in all of us the conviction that learning was to be life-long.

To my wife, Kim, who continues to embody a combination of keen intellect, distilling insight, and personal consecration, while choosing to sacrifice on behalf of our family.

To my musical mentors, Sister Mary Helen, David Tambouri, V. Lee Harrity, Joseph Wilcox Jenkins, Nicolo Sartori, Frank Garlock, and Monty Budahl, who went beyond the teaching of content, and imparted character.

To my musical colleagues at Maranatha, David and Ruth Brown, Rick Townsend, Michelle Clater, Carol Ruffin, Janet Tschida, Katie Potter, and Lewis Rosove, who continue to provide our department with a wealth of experience and wisdom, while maintaining a wonderful camaraderie.

To the God of Heaven, who in His sovereign mercy, provided salvation to an undeserving rebel.

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The debt I owe to my advisor and first reader, Dr. Deborah Bradley, can never be fully satisfied. Dr. Bradley embodied the skills of a true mentor: knowledgeable but humble, firm but not rigid, encouraging but not coddling. My

collaboration with an experienced, knowledgeable, conscientious, and thoughtful advisor has been transformative, and one that I desire to replicate.

**INSIDE THE MUSICAL WORLD OF HOMESCHOOLERS IN SOUTHERN WISCONSIN:**

**A COLLECTIVE CASE STUDY**

**DAVID ROBERT LEDGERWOOD**

Boston University College of Fine Arts, 2017

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**ABSTRACT**

Homeschooling is a growing phenomenon. Estimates are that 1.7 million children are homeschooled each year in the United States. Although a number of studies have explored various aspects of this phenomenon, little has been written concerning the musical experiences and practices of homeschoolers.

I interviewed three families consisting of six parents and a total of 10 children three times each using semi-structured questions. I also observed each family's school day a minimum of four times, and explored the motivations for homeschooling and musical instruction, the kinds of educational and musical activities each family evidenced, and then solicited opinions regarding musical style preferences, musical experience, and the use of music in everyday life. I analyzed and interpreted the data through a framework of concepts formulated by Bourdieu (habitus, cultural and symbolic capital, exchange, and economism)

My findings suggest that each family's decision to homeschool was an outgrowth of



their Christian habitus, but with nuanced considerations that included ideology, pedagogy, and family. The parents' decision to support musical learning and experience (each of the 10 children played at least one musical instrument, most of them two, and a few three) centered on a desire to learn music as an aid to worship. However, both parents and children noted non-musical benefits including self-discipline, time management, character formation, training in focus, and life-long usefulness. Parents and children approached educational and musical studies conscientiously. They also reported preferring classical and church music to music associated with youth culture. The families used music as a concentration aid, a mood regulator, and a teaching tool.

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## CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

*The family—seven stair-stepped children, girls in matching flowered jumpers and boys in jeans and collared shirts—gathered around the two threadbare couches in the living room of the modest, white, two-story framed house for the weekly Saturday night sing time. The week’s activities completed, they were looking forward to “The Lord’s Day,” a day filled with musical activities, meeting friends, and hearing sermons. Each child, from ages 3 to 12, took one of the tattered blue paperback hymnals. The oldest—a longhaired, sprightly girl—excitedly requested,*

*“Daddy, let’s sing, ‘The Bible Stands!’”*

*They progressed from hymn to hymn for the next 30 minutes. Several of the children then took out instruments and began playing along. Key choice made no difference because the children knew how to play in whatever key was needed, improvising embellishments as they went along. Favorites such as “How Firm a Foundation” and “Jesus Paid It All” were sung and played confidently and robustly. When the time was over, the children put away their instruments and trotted up to bed, ready for a restful night of sleep.<sup>1</sup>*

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<sup>1</sup> Derived from an article originally published by the author in *Frontline Magazine*, March/April, 1998 titled: “Music in the Home.”

The scene described above is autobiographical and yet also represents an idealized version of what some Christian homeschooling parents aspire for their children: the development of musical skills to sing, play, and accompany sacred music individually, with their families, and with their congregations. Parents with these goals are willing, often at great personal sacrifice, to oversee the practice and spend the money necessary to purchase instruments and lessons with local instructors. What motivates these homeschooling parents to seek out musical education for their children despite these sacrifices?

In this dissertation, I explore the educational and musical worlds of three homeschooling families in southern Wisconsin. Their stories are conveyed in their own words via interviews and by way of my personal observations. I examine their philosophical, educational, and musical motivations, and investigate their activities and experiences, their system of beliefs, and the function of music in their lives.

### **Homeschooling and Maranatha Baptist University**

Maranatha Baptist University, where I have been employed for 31 years, actively recruits homeschooled students: 29% of students in the 2015 freshman class indicated they had been homeschooled for at least some part of their pre-college instruction. I have considerable classroom experience with these students and find many to be respectful, eager to learn, and willing to work hard at assigned tasks. College for some of them is their first classroom instruction experience, so they often approach collegiate work with firm commitment and a determination to

do well. One homeschooler told me she was surprised to find that her classmates never completed the assigned readings.

Others of these students, however, face challenges, including time management and meeting deadlines. Some homeschoolers do not know how to pronounce words they have read but have never heard. One student was both embarrassed and astonished when she connected the historical figure she knew as “So-Grats” with the philosopher, Socrates. Some have knowledge gaps and tend to be naively trusting. During one choir tour, I pointed to the Atlantic Ocean and told a homeschooler it was the Caspian Sea. She believed me, and was very embarrassed when she discovered her mistake, especially when I teasingly threatened to tell her mother. Although some homeschoolers have extensive technology exposure, others are computer illiterate. One student came to college never having learned to type or turn on a computer. She had a very difficult time adjusting to email schedules, Learning Management System (LMS) software, and the music program Finale. Some homeschoolers avoid getting their driver’s license until after age 20. Most negotiate with their parents as to how much freedom they should be given. I have personally noted that a small group of homeschooled families advocates that a single woman should remain in her parents’ home until marriage, even if she attends college. This belief understandably creates tension between the natural desire for independence and the biblical injunction to “honor thy father and thy mother “ (Exodus 20:12, King James Version).

Due to the religious nature of my institution, most of the homeschoolers I

meet come from a conservative Christian ethos. Many were raised with limited media influence; some have grown up without a television. Many have avoided popular forms of music, preferring church music and classical styles to rock, jazz, and hip-hop. Some have read very widely, from Shakespeare to the Romantic classics; others have limited their reading to popular Christian romance novels.

Their musical skill levels vary. Nichols (2006) found that the homeschool musical groups she observed were inferior in quality, and that instruction lacked a sound educational foundation. Some come to college with inflated opinions of their own musical talent, having had little experience beyond their own small circle of friends and church acquaintances. Some homeschoolers, having taken lessons from a substandard church pianist who plays only by ear but cannot accurately read a musical score, have had a rude awakening upon entering college. Other homeschoolers have parents who sought out the finest musical instructors, drove great distances, and sacrificed time and money to provide unique musical opportunities for their children. Some participated in youth orchestras and bands. The inherent flexibility of the homeschool schedule, as well as the continual parental oversight, allowed such students to perform at very high levels, earn commendation from music education providers, and move on to prestigious music institutions for study.

The homeschooling community sends mixed signals regarding the need for college education. Some homeschoolers choose a Christian institution that upholds values similar to those of the family. Others eschew college altogether, believing it to

be a waste of time and money and unnecessary for holding a well-paying job. For example, I am personally acquainted with a group of Christian homeschoolers in the Chicago area who have decided that apprenticeship relationships with music professionals are preferable to college. One person in this group, a skilled pianist with an impressive list of Chicago-area teachers, changed his mind and applied to our college in his mid-twenties. In my personal correspondence with prospective music students, I have noted that a segment of homeschool parents choose a secular conservatory approach for their children. These children are often quite advanced on their instruments.

### **History of Home Schooling**

The first author to contextualize the present homeschooling movement was Milton Gaither (2008), an academic from a religious college in Pennsylvania. His book, *Home School: An American History*, especially “rang true” for me as someone who has spent 25 years in the homeschool movement hearing names, attending conferences, reading books, and listening to presentations by the various persons and organizations mentioned in the text. Gaither’s overriding idea was “the family was in fact the very center of education in early America” (p. 2), and that “the vast majority of children acquired almost all of their formal education and pretty much everything else they learned in the home” (p. 16). Others have affirmed this. According to the Wisconsin Parents Association publication *Kitchen Tables and Marble Halls* (2010): “Throughout history, most people have learned in their homes

and communities, not in institutions called schools” (p. 3). Knowles, Marlow, and Muchmore (1992) pointed to the universal nature of home education throughout history. Knutson (2007) found that “in many non-western cultures, learning under the guidance of one’s parents, extended family members, or community members was the main model of education” (p. 58).

In the early American colonies, families were held accountable to ensure that each member of the family could “read and understand the principles of religion and the capital laws of this country”<sup>2</sup> (Cremin, 1970, p. 124). Parents were subject to fines and governmental intervention for noncompliance. The Massachusetts General Court hired officials to “monitor parental instruction and bolster good household government by reporting unruly children and adults” (Gaither, 2008, p. 13). Gaither also noted that early education was the father’s duty, and the father’s teaching partner tended to be his minister rather than his wife. Some colonists felt that too strong a maternal attachment tended toward “coddling and overindulgence” (p. 20).

Motivation for education in Colonial America was strongly religious (Cremin, 1970). Colonial Protestants were committed to reading and understanding the Bible. They believed Biblical writings were inspired and “profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness” (2 Timothy 3:16, King James Version). Children needed to understand what God expected of them and how they were to fulfill His purposes for them. A segment of the modern homeschool movement wholeheartedly agrees with this position. I heard a homeschooling

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<sup>2</sup> The country referenced would have been England.



mother say she viewed teaching her children to read as a sacred task because it enabled her children to read the Bible, which she believed to be “God’s Word.” She was more than willing to invest time and life energy into a task with this level of significance. Even Apple (2007), a critic of the movement as a whole, noted this sacrifice: “We need to respect the labor and the significant sacrifices of home-schooling mothers” (p. 34).

The role of education gradually moved from the home to other institutions. The beginning of the public school movement in the early 1800s slowly began to take away this responsibility from parents. Although family matters still took precedence (such as farm chores and other duties), and the time in school was minimal by current standards, the family ceded some educational duties to the school. The social movement to establish public education was led by Protestant reformers or part-time educators who sought to persuade their fellow citizens to build and support common schools (Knutson, 2007, p. 53). Today, many Christian homeschoolers believe these existed in the 1800s within a religious consensus upon which most citizens could agree. Sending children to a public school within the 19th century cultural ethos would probably be considered acceptable by many present-day religious homeschoolers. The 19th century literature reprints that are popular at homeschool conventions also reflect this. Some homeschoolers look fondly to family life in that time period and seek to reproduce those ideals in their modern families.

Cremin (1977) wrote that the main objective in 19th century public

education was to extinguish characteristics of the lower classes, including immigrants. Public education was seen as a “melting pot” where people from all over the world would become unified as Americans through a common educational experience. Individual family and cultural differences were minimized to help create a presumed homogeneous society. In a sense, the public school acted against the cultural values of the individual families, although it seems that many families were more than willing to sacrifice those differences to be considered “Americans.”

Tyack and Hansot (1980) noted that at the turn of the 20th century, the emphasis in school policy changed. Power was given to university experts and professional managers who had the “ability to define what was normal or desirable in educational thought and practice” (p. 291). Knutson (2007) wrote that this concern of social efficiency (managerialism) has been the dominant trend in American education over the past century (p. 54). This means that if a parent approaches a school that is managerial in nature, “they often face bureaucratic, impersonal, or efficiency-based responses” (Knutson, 2007, p. 57). This is exactly what had happened in Knutson’s qualitative study of mothers who withdrew their children from school. In each case, the parents had never considered homeschooling until they met with unsatisfactory responses from school officials, both public and private. This is echoed by Gaither (2008): “As public schools grew larger, more bureaucratic and impersonal, less responsive to parents, and less adaptable to local cultural variations, many families felt increasingly alienated” (p. 114).

The social movements of the 1960s and 1970s were largely a reaction to the

“mass culture of the modern liberal state” (Gaither, 2008, p. 85). In terms of homeschooling, this reaction came in two streams that follow the “ideologue” and “pedagogue” division proposed by Van Galen (1988a, 1988b). Gaither (2008) used the terms *new left* and *countercultural right* (p. 101), and Stevens (2001) wrote in terms of *Christian* and *inclusive* (p. 7). Regardless of the precise terms chosen, the fragmentation of the homeschooling population into two factions is noted (Gaither, 2008, p. 94). Both left and right political factions united in their support of homeschooling, rejecting the mainstream. A newspaper reporter covering a Wisconsin rally supporting homeschooling wrote, “The audience ranged from Bible-thumping Baptists to granola-crunching back-to-the-landers” (Wisconsin Parents Association, 2010b, p. 10).

In the 1960s and 1970s, educational critics of the public school system wrote influential books and magazine articles explaining their concerns and appeared on syndicated television (Gaither, 2008). Ivan Illich (1971) wrote against common school practices such as age-specific classes and compulsory attendance, and introduced the concept of “deschooling,” believing that institutional schooling would lead to “physical pollution, social polarization, and psychological impotence” (p. 2). In 1965, Holt wrote *How Children Fail*, arguing that conventionally structured classrooms and curriculum squelched children’s natural inquisitiveness. He introduced the idea of “unschooling,” a belief that children learned best when the focus and course of study emerged in response to natural interests and needs. Holt also founded the magazine *Growing Without Schooling* in 1977. In their book *School*

*Can Wait* (1979), Raymond and Dorothy Moore championed the notion that children should stay home longer before entering school. They later made a case for abandoning schools altogether in favor of homeschooling in their book *Home Grown Kids* (1981).

Proponents of homeschooling won legal battles. In *Wisconsin v. Yoder* (1972), the Supreme Court ruled that members of the Old Amish Order did not have to comply with the Wisconsin state compulsory attendance statute (Wagner, 2008, p. 12). In *State v. Popanz* (1983), the Wisconsin Supreme Court ruled that homeschoolers could not be prosecuted for truancy since the state had not defined private schools. In 1993, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled in favor of homeschooling parents found to be truant. In 1994, members of the U.S. House of Representatives were inundated with calls concerning a proposed amendment that some said would require homeschooling parents to be certified teachers. The number of calls from across the country surprised the legislators, and the amendment was defeated (Knutson, 2007, p. 62).

These legal victories came in the face of resistance from the state. In 1987, the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction paid \$16,000 to a University of Wisconsin professor to write a report on homeschooling. When the report was published, the Wisconsin Parents Association (WPA) believed that the results were biased and asked to see the original research documents, only to be told they had been thrown away (Wisconsin Parents Association, 2010b, p. 15). The WPA next asked the Associate Director of the LaFollette Institute to review the report. This

director found that the report was flawed and biased against homeschoolers. After that, the report seemed to physically disappear (Wisconsin Parents Association, 2010b, p. 16). In 1988, the National Education Association called for tighter restrictions on homeschooling. In 1990, Wisconsin's largest teachers' union (WEAC) sought concrete examples of homeschooling problems to build a case against homeschooling. In 1992, the National Association of Elementary School Principals adopted a resolution criticizing homeschooling (Knutson, 2007, p. 62; Wisconsin Parents Association, 2010b, p. 15).

Large social movements like homeschooling do not occur in a cultural vacuum. There are many forces at work. Stevens (2001) called the leaders of the homeschool movement entrepreneurs. They saw problems in the surrounding culture, defined those problems in compelling ways, found ways to fix the problems, effectively shared their vision, and took risks (p. 5). In contrast, Apple (2001) called such leaders authoritarian populists "because they have taken the rhetoric of what they see as hegemonic liberalism and recast it around their own core concerns" (p. 111). Gaither (2008) listed four social reasons that he felt led to the homeschooling movement: (1) the countercultural sensibility became the American sensibility, (2) suburbanization, (3) the American cult of the child, and (4) the changes in both public schooling and families (p. 112–114). Gaither (2008) summarized as follows:

Intellectuals articulated the vision. Parents tried it out. Lawyers and politicians worked to smooth the way. Organizations emerged to facilitate networking among homeschoolers and eventually to sort them into competing tribes. Entrepreneurs and eventually corporate

conglomerates rushed to meet the demand of the growing movement for curriculum materials. (p. 114–115)

### **Rationale for the Study**

This study emerges from recognition of the relatively large population of homeschoolers, the research that has already been done, the lack of musical research involving this culture, and the possible gain in knowledge from such a study. In addition, I have a personal connection to the topic. My wife and I subscribe to the tenets of conservative Christianity, and we homeschooled our eight children through high school over a period of 24 years, providing each child with a musical foundation.

Researchers estimate 1.7 million students are currently homeschooled (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). The number has been steadily increasing over the years. “On this basis alone, educational researchers should take heed” (Nemer, 2002, p. 16). Various studies and books have examined homeschool life (Hurst, 2002; Knowles, 1998; Kunzman, 2009; Stevens, 2001; Taylor, 1993, 1997), motivations (Knowles 1988; Knutson, 2007; Mayberry, 1989; Spiegler, 2010; Van Galen 1988a, 1988b, 1991), learning environment (Apostoleris, 2000; Mayberry, 1993), educational philosophy (Hood, 1991), classroom set-up (Knowles, 1988), objectives (Mayberry & Knowles, 1989), curriculum (Swanson, 1996), and interaction with the public school (Lines, 2000, Wagner, 2008).

A relatively stable family unit may afford the opportunity for musical and

other extra-curricular emphases within the family unit. Researchers have addressed the importance of family in determining a liking of classical music (de Bezenec & Swindells, 2009), development of musical talent (Lamont, 2002), and musical identity (Borthwick & Davidson, 2002; Pitts, 2011). Zdzinski (2013) and Mcpherson (2008) reported the positive influences that parents had on the musical success of their children. The successful Suzuki program stresses parental involvement in practicing (Morris, 2005). Early childhood music programs often involve the parents who bring their children to the classes (Lorrince, 1998). Parents who homeschool are typically highly involved in their children's education, including music instruction.

The interaction of music and the social group has also been addressed (North, 1999; North & Hargreaves, 1997; North, Hargreaves, & McKendrick, 2000; Russell, 1997). Homeschoolers form a subculture. My belief, as I will demonstrate, is that Christian homeschoolers function under what Bourdieu refers to as habitus. Part of this particular Christian habitus is a rejection of perceived worldliness. This has resulted in extensive teaching on courtship, dress, music standards, college choice, home and church interaction, and family businesses. Secular homeschoolers are also united in their rejection of the public school system, but for different reasons. They reject the "one-size fits all" educational mentality they ascribe to the institutional school. They often emphasize learning based upon the child's innate interests rather than a standard curriculum.

Carlos Abril was the guest speaker at a dinner for Wisconsin Music Education

supervisors in Madison, Wisconsin that I attended (October 26, 2011). He challenged us to broaden our musical research beyond the traditional classroom, and gave examples of researching involving music apart from the school. Nemer (2002) called for research of the homeschool movement as a whole because such research would likely yield insights “driving parental choice, techniques aimed at individualized instruction, multi-age learning, emulation of role-models and peers, child development and developmentally appropriate learning, and issues of cultural reproduction and social stratification” (p. 17). In the music education field, this kind of knowledge might inform music educators as to the overall thinking process of homeschoolers, because many school districts now permit homeschoolers some access to musical groups and activities.

### **Goals for the Study**

My background as a homeschooling parent, as well as my training and experiences in music education, influenced me to undertake this study. I had several goals for this study. The first was to provide a window for educators into the thinking and practice (educational and musical) of three homeschooling families. This window served to confirm and disconfirm stereotypes and bring to light both the strengths and challenges of homeschooling. A second goal had to do with musical higher education. Since homeschooling graduates are represented in the musical ranks of academia, I felt as if an actual portrayal of homeschooling life would provide insight into the factors that may contribute to their successes or failures. The third and final goal was directed towards the homeschooling



community. I desired that any homeschooling parents reading the study would be better able to recognize their own academic and social strengths and weaknesses, and either strengthen their deficiencies or provide suitable alternatives.

### **Need for the Study**

Although there is a great deal of anecdotal evidence from applied music instructors concerning studious, respectful, and talented homeschool students, what is missing is a focus on the overall musical world of homeschoolers. We do not know what is being taught, when it is taught, and by whom. We have no notion concerning homeschoolers' views on musical preference or their use of music in everyday life. Other than studies by Young (1999), Matchael (2003), and Nichols (2006), there is very little written that addresses the musical world of homeschoolers.

Because of the increasing connection between music and homeschooling, more studies from an academic viewpoint are needed to evaluate philosophies and practices. Homeschooling graduates join the ranks of students in our colleges, universities, and conservatories. One colleague told me that homeschoolers were the best musicians in her large undergraduate music department, and this has been indicated in some of the limited amount of research to date. Silverman (2011) conducted a study that explored the inner workings of a homeschool chorale in New Jersey. The impetus for Silverman's (2011) study was the particular artistry of a homeschooled music student. Before the study, Silverman had little knowledge of musical homeschoolers. The popular classical music program, "From the Top," listed seven students who were homeschooled (O'Riley, 2016). Albert (1999) wrote a

book popular with homeschoolers that chronicled his homeschooled daughters' forays into musical study and composition.

### **Purpose and Research Questions**

What I hoped to discover through this study was an understanding of why these parents chose homeschooling in the first place, and the reasons they continued with the practice each year. Was the motivation academic or spiritual? I wanted to investigate the reasons why each family valued and supported music, and what they hoped to gain from its study. I also wanted to explore the musical style preferences and experiences of both parents and children, as well as their educational endeavors and procedures.

As I reported data from the interviews and observations of parents and children in the study, I added personal experiences as part of the data. My experience with homeschooling as a parent, and as a teacher of many religious homeschoolers, provides another means of triangulation.

The purpose of this study was to explore the educational and musical worlds of three homeschooling families residing in southern Wisconsin, in order to examine their motivations for homeschooling and musical study, as well as their attitudes regarding musical preference and experience. The research questions I addressed were:

1. How do the parents of the school age children in this study decide whether or not to homeschool? What issues influence their decision?

2. How do these same parents decide whether or not to include music as part of their homeschool? What issues influence their decision?

3. What educational and musical activities do these homeschooling families employ?

4. How are the attitudes of each parent and school age child regarding music in everyday life, musical preference, and the importance of musical experience reflected in their choices?

In keeping with Stake (1995, 2006), I implemented a collective case study approach of three bounded systems (three families). I collected data from interviews and observations, triangulated it with personal experience, and applied cross case analyses based upon the answers to the research questions. I compared each set of parents to the others, each family to the other families, children of one family to those of the other families, and different children within the family. I approached the research questions in an open way, then searched for an interpretive framework that had the most explanatory power for the data. I settled upon the interpretive constructs of Bourdieu.

### **Overview of the Dissertation**

In Chapter Two, I provide a rationale for a Bourdieusian interpretive framework, a review of the literature regarding Bourdieu and music education, of studies combining music and homeschooling, as well as topics pertinent to my research questions. I also include a sampling of scholarly critiques of homeschooling.

In Chapter Three I explain the research design, the recruitment of participants, the types of data collected, the data evaluative methods utilized, and the various confidential protections in place to ensure the anonymity of the participants.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six provide data presentation and analysis. In Chapter Four I describe each family, and examine various homeschool stereotypes and demographic indicators. I present the ideological, pedagogical, and familial considerations each family expressed about their homeschooling decision. In Chapter Five I seek to answer the question of “Why Music” for these families, exploring the influence of parents and siblings as well as extra-musical benefits, including the overriding desire to use music for worship. In Chapter Six I explore the “nuts and bolts” of educational and musical study for each of the families, including sections on musical preference and musical experience.

In Chapter Seven I discuss my findings regarding motivation, philosophy, and educational and musical practices, a summary of Bourdieusian constructs pertinent to the study, as well as implications for education as a whole and music education specifically. Finally, I provide suggestions for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter I discuss the interpretive framework I chose for data analysis. I define and apply *habitus*, *Christian habitus*, *capital*, *economism*, and *exchange* from Bourdieu's perspective and review music education literature conducted from a Bourdieusian perspective. I review the literature pertinent to my research questions and note some of the academic critiques of homeschooling. Finally, I summarize several studies that examine the musical practices of homeschoolers.

### Interpretive Framework

While considering an interpretive framework for this dissertation, I reflected upon some of the tenets of home education: parental support, involvement and control, preparing a child for life, and religious and familial values. I also considered the musical activities of homeschoolers, who often participated in music as an outgrowth of their religious ethos, or as a function of "character development." I concluded that I needed to investigate social theories of education, even as I investigated the educational and musical motivations and practices of homeschoolers. Wright (2010) wrote: "sociological thinking" presents a "new lens or set of lenses through which to examine such issues " (p. 1), while Reay (2016) noted that "the social permeates and produces music" (Reay, 2016, Location No. 188).

Bourdieu's (1977) *Outline of a Theory of Practice* seemed to best represent the many decisions made by the homeschooling families I studied. I was initially

unfamiliar with Bourdieu and thus did not begin the study seeking to fit the data into Bourdieusian constructs. However, as I investigated the actions and conversations of the families, observed them in their homes, and considered them in the light of my own experience, various aspects of Bourdieu's constructs seemed to apply. Prior (2013) wrote that Bourdieu provided a "most elegant and fertile conceptual scheme" to understand the role of music in "power relations and stratified social trajectories" (p. 191). Bourdieu's explanation of *habitus* best explained, in my mind, the many decisions the study families made regarding their educational and musical choices. In addition, their understanding of the value of education and musical accomplishment in terms of future success beyond music, as well as usefulness in society, reflected a sense of the value of cultural and symbolic capital. Each family's understanding and embracing of present sacrifice anticipating future reward highlighted Bourdieu's notions of economism and exchange.

### **Habitus**

Maton (2014) noted that Bourdieu's notion of *habitus* was widespread, but also hotly debated and elusive. Wright (2016) added that "Bourdieu developed the term *habitus* to describe collective patterns of preference formed around norms of behavior and evaluative schemata" (Wright, 2016, Location No. 1883-1884). Bourdieu (1977) affirmed that environmental structures produce *habitus*, "systems of durable, transposable *dispositions* (*italics in the original*) (p. 72), and that "*habitus* is the product of inculcation and appropriation necessary in order for those

products . . . to succeed in reproducing themselves” (p. 85). This inculcation begins early, and Bourdieu notes that it is “laid down in each agent by his earliest upbringing” (p. 81).

Bourdieu (1977) also wrote: “One of the fundamental effects of the orchestration of habitus is the production of a commonsense world endowed with the objectivity secured by consensus on the meaning of practices” (p. 80). Bourdieu noted that this habitus appeared to be “perfectly harmonized” and “totally predictable from outside” (p. 2). Bourdieu and Wacquant (1992) wrote that the habitus of the family structures school experiences (p. 192). However, habitus goes deeper than stated philosophies and precepts. Like the operating system in a computer, it runs quietly in the background, but is nonetheless vital to the maintenance of the “commonsense world” described by Bourdieu. For this reason, Bourdieu cautioned against putting “too much faith in native accounts” or even “too much distrust of them,” the first leading to the presentation of a “mere ideological screen” and the latter leading to the neglect of the “social function of a lie socially devised and encouraged” (p. 43). Often the informants themselves do not understand the nature of habitus and how it influences their lives. Thus, the challenge for the researcher is to uncover aspects of the habitus under which the participants are acting and to do so in such a way as to not influence the response. Bourdieu wrote that a researcher’s particular disposition tended to invite the same response from the informant; potentially resulting in a construct Bourdieu refers to

as an “object of thought” (p. 106) rather than an accurate reflection of what actually exists.

### **Christian Habitus**

Habitus explains norms or behaviors that exist in any cultural group. For example, Piecowye (2003) wrote about habitus in the United Arab Emirates while Cessario (2009) discussed habitus in relation to Christian virtues. The Christian habitus that I address is a particular manifestation of habitus, unique to conservative Christian culture within the United States. I see the other Bourdieusian terms, *social*, *cultural* and *symbolic capital*, as well as *exchange* and *economism*, as constructs intersecting with and subservient to this Christian habitus.

The term habitus came from Aristotle but was reworked and “Christianized” by Thomas Aquinas (Cessario, 2009). Aquinas centered on virtue. Bourdieu (1977) referenced this background of the term (p. 79). A Christian habitus involves a Christian worldview, a set of teachings and dispositions through which all of life is evaluated. Included are attitudes of character training, decision-making, priority of the home and family, attitudes towards children, the importance of music in church services of the church and an individual believer’s life, and the value of education. This body of beliefs and attitudes has been recognized and accurately described by academics such as Apple (2001) and Kunzman (2010) and is evident when homeschoolers get together for conferences.

Reprints from out-of-print Christian themed books are popular choices at



homeschooling conventions. Beginning in 1867 and concluding in 1909, the author Martha Finley wrote 28 books about the life of Elsie Dinsmore. The series follows the 8-year old Elsie as she struggles with the conflict of Christian principles and family loyalty. These books are popular with Christian homeschoolers in that they present an idealized version of Christian dispositions in the face of adversity. In addition, the virtue-infused children's books of G.A. Henty are also very popular and are often touted as books to aid in the formation of strong moral character. Another reprint is by Phillips, who provides a justification for his tome (1865):

In the age of extreme individualism, we have almost left out of view the mission of home as the first form of society, and the important bearing it has upon the formation of character. . . . The idea of human character as a development from the nursery to the grave, is not realized. (p. iii)

The 60-word title encompasses many of the themes common in Christian habitus, all centering on the Christian home. A few of the topics in the book include the home as a divine institution (p. 3), elements of a Christian home (p.13), family religion (p. 40), the home and the church (p. 50), responsibilities of each member of the home (p. 74), the character of home education (p. 177), evil and good habits (p. 204), home discipline (p. 222), and the promises of the Christian home (p. 303).

The ideas in such books, along with the reinforcement from Sunday sermons and church fellowship, helps to solidify elements of the habitus unique to conservative Christianity. As Kunzman (2010) pointed out, all of these issues occur on a continuum, with differing levels of agreement and disagreement on particular elements. However, even with the range as it is, there still seems to be something in

the background that forms the backdrop for the particular ideas, and against which these homeschoolers form their opinions.

## **Capital**

Based upon his field studies in North Africa, Bourdieu (1977) went beyond Marx's acknowledgement of economic capital to observe that people made decisions upon factors beyond economic benefit. Based upon his observations, Bourdieu referenced four types of capital: economic (money assets), cultural (certain types of knowledge, taste, discrimination, cultural preferences, language), social (connections and networks, family, religious, and cultural heritage) and symbolic (things that stand for all the other types of capital and that can be exchanged in other fields, such as qualifications) (Wright, 2016, Location No. 1983-1986).

**Cultural capital.** Bourdieu (1977) wrote that cultural capital represented an accumulation of skills, knowledge, life experiences, and certificates that could be converted into money. "Academic qualifications, like money, have a conventional, fixed value" and "are to cultural capital what money is to economic capital" (p. 187). Homeschoolers recognize that education is an important ingredient in the future success of their children. Children need to earn what Bourdieu referred to as the "same certificate," a certificate that made it possible to relate "all qualification holders to a single standard, thereby setting up a *single market* for all cultural capacities and guaranteeing the convertibility of cultural capital into money" (p. 187, italics in original). In the minds of their parents, each of the skills the children

learned, including musical skills, enriched their children, developed their character, and helped them to accumulate cultural capital. Homeschoolers seek these academic qualifications, but believe they can be earned more efficiently and effectively outside the “in-place” system, in the context of their own homes.

It should be noted that the value of the “certificate” or university degree has also been called into question by some homeschoolers. Bourdieu refers to the “objectification” of credentials, which gives them value and the ability to be transferred. Some homeschoolers reject the college or university degree as this certificate. My personal experience at homeschooling conventions is that there is lingering distrust of academia. There is a push, although it seems small, to skip college altogether and enter a trade or start a business. This also supports Bourdieu’s sentiment (1977): “So long as the work of education is not clearly institutionalized as a specific, autonomous practice, and it is a whole group and a whole symbolically structured environment . . . the essential part of the *modus operandi* which defines practical mastery is transmitted in practice” (p. 87, italics in original).

**Social capital.** Prest (2016) defined social capital as a “framework that provides the vocabulary and creates a space” to “discuss the personal and collective benefits derived from specific kinds of relationships” (p. 127). Franke (2005) noted its genesis from the interdependence between individuals and groups in a community (p. 2). Bourdieu (1986) wrote that the volume of an agent’s social capital

depended on the number of network connections the agent had formulated (p. 51). Homeschooling emphasizes relationships, beginning with the family. Mayberry and Knowles (1989) noted that one of the primary motivations for homeschooling was to ensure strong family ties. At homeschooling conferences, I have heard statements encouraging parents to utilize their large families as teaching opportunities in relationship building.

**Symbolic capital.** Bourdieu (1977) connected symbolic capital with the “prestige and renown attached to a family and a name” (p. 179). Bourdieu studied who made purchases and arranged marriages for the purpose of enhancing reputation and increasing power. This is not a new practice. Certain names bring that kind of recognition, even today. In Wisconsin, the name Kohler implies power and economic success. In the homeschooling community, names like Harris, Duggar, and Willis have sparked a great deal of media attention (positive and negative) as well as a certain amount of influence within the population.

**Exchanges.** Ideology often implies an exchange. Bourdieu (1977) wrote about exchanges and their meanings in the culture in which he was working. Adherents to particular belief systems are often called upon to give up something now for the promise of something better in the future. Bourdieu concluded that “phenomena in social life can be exchanged for something else of value (Söderman, Burnard & Hafvander Trulsson, Location No. 265-267). The maxim is that the greater the present sacrifice, the greater the future reward. Homeschooling as an

outgrowth of religious ideology fits this idea, for it requires great sacrifice, especially on the part of the mother, who usually oversees the children's education on a day-to-day basis. In order to manage the school, the mother often exchanges an "outside the home" career (with the personal fulfillment that often accompanies such work), for the often-frustrating and all encompassing task of teaching one's own children. This exchange is not limited to homeschooling mothers. Women have been making these kinds of sacrifices for millennia.

**Economism.** Bourdieu (1977) wrote: "everything conspires to conceal the relationship between work and its product" (p. 176). Bourdieu referenced the nine months between plowing and harvest as a time when "hardly any productive work" was done, and that this was "disguised" by the "countless minor tasks intended to assist nature in its labour" (p. 176). Homeschoolers have wondered the same about institutional school. They reference the countless activities common to school life, recess, quiet time, lining up to go to the bathroom, seatwork—as activities that disguise the fact that no work is being done. They use as justification the short time required to make up a day's worth of missed work. In their minds, and from an academic perspective, homeschooling is a more efficient use of the time.

Similarly, Bourdieu (1977) noted:

Perhaps we should say that the relationship between work and its product is in reality not unknown, but *socially repressed*; that the productivity of labour is so low that the peasant must refrain from counting his time, in order to preserve the meaningfulness of his work. (p. 176, italics in original)

In other words, all of the activities listed above, in addition to those noted by Bourdieu—“coordinating the work, speaking in the men’s assembly, bargaining in the market, and reading in the mosque” (p. 176)—would be considered unproductive if evaluated from what Bourdieu refers to the “economic naiveties of economism” (p. 177). Homeschoolers relate to this, for on one hand it does not make sense for a parent to give up earning power and fulfillment if viewed from a strict economic evaluation; however, Bourdieu argued that one must “extend economic calculation to all the goods, material and symbolic, without distinction” (p. 178), and that these go beyond “callous cash payment” (Marx & Engels, 1848).

### **Review of the Literature**

#### **Bourdieu and Music Education**

The music education field is increasingly connecting musical study with Bourdieusian concepts. Söderman, Burnard and Hafvander Trulsson (2016) wrote that a “Bourdieuian approach to music education will thus have a strong focus on the role of music in social life and on the symbolic values of music” (Location No. 268-269). For musical families, the social and musical worlds are entwined, and the values that each family places upon the instruction, use, and experience of music are part of the social fabric of the family.

One of my research questions concerns the musical preference of homeschooling families. Bourdieu (1984) noted that “nothing more clearly affirms one’s ‘class’ than tastes in music” (p. 18). Söderman, Burnard, and Hafvander

Trulsson (2016) wrote that people reveal “who they are and who they want to be” through music, and thus musical preference is tied to identity (Location No. 288). Frith (1998) and McDonald, Hargreaves, and Miell (2002) reinforced this idea. Hofvander Trulsson (2016) used Bourdieusian concepts to study music as a commodity of exchange within minority groups in Sweden, with music education used as a tool for “deliberation and control and identities” (Location No. 828). In that study immigrant families used classical music study in order to gain social standing. My study of homeschooling families reveals the strength of habitus, and how beliefs about musical involvement, musical preference, identity, and cultural and symbolic capital all flow from a conservative Christian habitus.

Bourdieu’s (1998) notion of habitus reflects a practical sense of how to act in any social reality (p. 25). Accordingly, when musical habitus defines a group or a family, certain ways of thinking and acting are normalized. Reay (1995) suggested that musical habitus manifests itself in different ways of engaging with music (p. 354). Scholars have explored different manifestations of habitus, such as the musical habitus of choirboys (Hall, 2016), a classical music performer (Sagiv & Hall, 2016), a conservatory student (Perkins, 2016), and that of a career musician (Burnard, 2016). Religious homeschoolers approach music in a certain way because of their habitus.

Religious homeschoolers often use the term “character” to reference their educational goals. They also suggest this prepares them effectively for life.

Hofvander Trulsson (2010) noted parents’ roles in using music for teaching

discipline and self-regulation. Valenzuela and Codina (2014) connected family musical cultural capital with school musical experience, and Bourdieu's notion that "cultural capital is strongly related to family context" (p. 505). "Children from families with higher levels of cultural capital in the area of musical practice . . . may well feel more comfortable playing an instrument or singing in a choir and obtain greater optimal experience from [those] activities" (p. 505–506).

Moore (2012), in a framework drawn from Bourdieu, sought to discover whether the "ideologies surrounding musical value impact on the student experience in higher education." Preliminary findings suggested a relationship between students' musical habitus, cultural capital, and their experience in higher education (p. 63). Mantie (2013) examined recreational music making at a large university, and utilized Bourdieu's views on higher education to "examine relations of class and privilege as they exist in on-campus *recreational ensembles*" (p. 41–42, italics in the original).

Coulson (2010) examined the factors that enabled musicians to earn a living in music. Connecting Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and cultural capital, Coulson proposed the term *musical capital* "as a useful shorthand for the interconnected cultural, social, and symbolic assets that musicians acquire and turn to economic advantage in the music field" (p. 256–257). Thorgersen (2011) examined a Swedish music company and its struggles for status using Bourdieu's theory of symbolic capital. Brändström (2000) applied cultural capital to interpret and explain how Swedish youngsters use optional music education. Magnúsdóttir (2016) studied



how parents used music to create what Reay calls a “worthy and cultured child” (Reay, 2016, Location No. 227).

## **Homeschooling**

Although the number of research documents addressing general homeschooling is comparatively small, the publication of books, dissertations, and articles in scholarly journals, newspapers, and magazines is increasing. Scholars have increasingly found this to be fertile ground for study. Perhaps this is because homeschooling as a movement is growing; however, higher education knows comparatively little about its practitioners. The International Center for Home Education Research (2016) lists over 1900 references related to homeschooling. The six board members and ten additional affiliate scholars of the organization have contributed a great deal to this field of research.

**Overview.** Perhaps the most comprehensive treatment of homeschooling is Murphy’s (2012) *Homeschooling in America: Capturing and Assessing the Movement*. The book represents the synthesis of many articles, dissertations, and books on all aspects of homeschooling, from demographic characteristics to motivational frameworks to the analysis of the effects of homeschooling. The book comprehensively summarizes research upon all aspects of homeschooling: motivation, demographics of its participants, history, curriculum, schedule, as well as provides some conjecture for its positive effects (p. v–vi).

Brian Ray founded the National Home Education Research Institute in 1990

and has written extensively about homeschooling. Ray's publications are often quoted in the homeschooling research literature. He has reported on family characteristics, student achievement, and longitudinal straits (1997), and argued that homeschooling is a public good (2000). He explored homeschooling academic achievement (2001), and summarized the research on homeschoolers in college and as adults (2004).

**History.** An important overall history of the movement is by Gaither (2008). *Homeschool: An American History* provides a readable and well-researched account of the taproots of the contemporary homeschool movement. Cremin (1970, 1977) provides insight into the practices and traditions of colonial education, and how religious practices and attitudes inspired some present day homeschooling approaches. Knowles, Marlow, and Muchmore (1992) summarized 20 years of the movement, and delineated five phases that illustrate the "fluid nature of home education as a social movement" (p. 195). They suggest that Christian fundamentalists discovered homeschooling in the 1970s and 1980s, describing it as a movement that had previously been "part of the hippie movement" (p. 195). The motivation changed, and according to these scholars, propelled homeschooling to become a broad movement rather than a small one. The Wisconsin Parent's Association (2010b) published *Kitchen Tables and Marble Halls*, a history of homeschooling in Wisconsin that chronicles the journey from homeschooling as an

illegal activity to the passage of legislation affording homeschoolers in Wisconsin a great deal of personal choice.

**Motivations.** Van Galen's (1988b) study has gained considerable attention. Van Galen broadly classified homeschoolers as either "ideologues" or "pedagogues." Others scholars adopted these terms. Apostoleris (2000) wrote that "ideologues" were characterized by their fundamental objection to the content of public and private schooling, while "pedagogues" were primarily characterized by their dissatisfaction with the school's effectiveness, not the underlying morality of formal schools.

Some scholars have found this breakdown useful (Knowles, 1991; Marshall and Valle, 1996; Mayberry and Knowles, 1989; and Nemer, 2002). Other scholars questioned the binary notion of "ideologue" and "pedagogue." Arai (2000) suggested that most parents exhibited a mixture of both ideological and pedagogical reasons for homeschooling (p. 214). Knowles (1988) wrote that the reasons were more multidimensional, while Nemer (2002) concluded that classifying any parent based on purely ideological or pedagogical reasons was difficult (p. 8). Mayberry and Knowles (1989) concluded that another essential motivation to homeschool was family unity; however, Arai (2000) took exception, stating that for many families, "family unity was an unexpected benefit of the practice, not an initial motivation for it" (p. 211). These studies further illustrate the complex motivations of parents who decide to homeschool.

The actual decision to homeschool has also been studied. Van Galen (1988a) conducted interviews with 23 homeschooling parents from 16 families and suggested the process of becoming homeschoolers was “emotional . . . intuitive . . . and non-rational,” without a substantial amount of deliberate weighing of pros and cons (p. 95). On the other hand, Knutson (2007), in a hermeneutic phenomenological study of three homeschooling mothers who withdrew their children from traditional school in order to homeschool them, concluded that the decision to homeschool represented a thoughtful process over an extended period of time.

Two Wisconsin studies addressed motivation. Wagner (2008) conducted case studies of five homeschooling families in rural Wisconsin to determine homeschooling parents’ beliefs and feelings about public education and homeschooling. Wagner noted two broad themes: influence and values/morals. Chopp (2001) conducted two surveys, one quantitative and one qualitative, of sixty-three homeschooling parents of a suburban Milwaukee school district (the entire home schooling population in the district) and found the following: (a) school safety was a parental concern and reason to home school, (b) the traditional school curriculum and/or instructional pacing did not match the needs of the homeschooled child, (c) the parents preferred a specific type of religious education that only the homeschooling parent could provide, and (d) other variables.

**Philosophy.** Instruction is based upon a philosophy, although not all instructors, regardless of teaching venue, are conscious of this. Burns (1993), in a survey of 425 Arizona homeschooling families along with 15 personal interviews, and Taylor (1993,1997) in a qualitative inquiry involving three California home schools, noted that homeschoolers held to essentialism<sup>3</sup> as a core philosophy. Burns (1993) categorized the homeschoolers as essentialists when they affirmed the following values: “preserving traditional values and a democratic way of life; providing the knowledge and skills most essential for students to acquire in order to become adequately prepared for life; and the value of hard work and obedience” (pp. 78–79). Taylor agreed that homeschoolers were essentialists, but defined essentialism as “the belief in a body of knowledge that must be transmitted to the younger generation” (p. 136). Certainly many homeschoolers do believe in a body of knowledge that needs to be passed on, and yet Hurst (2002), in a study of a single homeschooling family in rural Georgia, found a different underlying philosophy. In this study, the homeschool mother believed learning was a lifelong process, and thus the thrust of all the family’s educational endeavors was to promote lifelong learning (p. 64).

Hood (1991), in a historical-descriptive study, sought to determine the nature of the philosophical ideas influencing the homeschooling movement. Hood conducted a content analysis of the books, magazines, workshop materials, and

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<sup>3</sup> Essentialism: an educational theory that ideas and skills basic to a culture should be taught to all alike by time-tested methods <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/essentialism>

curriculum resources on the market, and then compared those ideas to the tenets of essentialism, progressivism,<sup>4</sup> perennialism,<sup>5</sup> and existentialism.<sup>6</sup> Hood found that homeschoolers varied widely in their curricular choices, which often did not split according to religious lines. Hood noted that publishers such as Bob Jones University Press, A Beka Books, and popular homeschool speaker Gregg Harris adhered to essentialist beliefs while Raymond and Dorothy Moore (considered founders of the modern homeschool movement) advocated progressive beliefs. The books of Charlotte Mason, Susan Schaeffer Macaulay, and the founders and directors of Child Light appeared to adhere primarily to perennialist beliefs, while John Holt and the editorial staff of the magazine *Growing Without Schooling* promoted existentialist beliefs and practices.

**Teaching practices and curriculum.** How parents actually teach is also part of the homeschooling environment. Knowles (1998) found “considerable congruence” in teaching practices employed in both home education settings and public and private schools” (p. 304). This surprised Knowles, for many parents used

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<sup>4</sup> Progressivism: of, relating to, or constituting an educational theory marked by emphasis on the individual child, informality of classroom procedure, and encouragement of self-expression. <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/progressives>

<sup>5</sup> Perennialism: the aim of education is to ensure that students acquire understandings about the great ideas of Western civilization. <http://oregonstate.edu/instruct/ed416/PP3.html>

<sup>6</sup> Existentialism: Existentialism is a catch-all term for those philosophers who consider the nature of the human condition as a key philosophical problem and who share the view that this problem is best addressed through ontology. <http://www.iep.utm.edu/existent/>

methods they had criticized in others, specifically their public school counterparts. Taylor (1997) agreed: “the pedagogy tends to be seatwork emphasizing coverage and control” (p. 112). Knowles (1988, 1998), in drawing conclusions from a longitudinal ethnographic study of Utah homeschools, found nearly half of the parents had their children completing workbooks so that the children were quiet, much like a regular classroom. Knowles (1998) found this structure “narrow” (p. 76). If the parents used another method, it was not generally a lecture, but a question and answer format dominated by parents or the occasional inquisitive child (pp. 319–320).

Swanson (1996) studied the curriculum practices and instructional strategies of 39 homeschooling families in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and noted homeschoolers used direct instruction most frequently but often used independent study for older children. Instructional strategies were chosen based on the needs and learning styles of individual children (pp. 59, 64). Swanson (1996) also found that most of the families used a commercially produced curriculum for its ease of use and affordability.

Burns (1993) distributed 800 initial surveys through 40 homeschooling organizations in Arizona. A total of 425 families completed the survey and indicated their belief that homeschooling was superior because it provided “individual attention in a family-centered learning environment, one-on-one instruction, and a curriculum that stressed the beliefs, values, and morals of the parents” (p. iii).

Nemer (2002), in a paper outlining a proposed homeschooling research

agenda, found instructional diversity among homeschoolers. Nemer reported that some homeschooling families used formal lesson plans while others allowed the child to set the pace. Nemer (2002) also noted that some parents designed their own curriculum, while others enrolled in correspondence schools or purchased a pre-packaged curriculum (p. 12).

Van Galen (1988b) found that parents chose curriculum based on ideological persuasion. Ideologues tended to “employ methods and materials that most closely resemble those employed by traditional schools” (p. 62), while pedagogues tended to make their home schools as “different from formal school as possible” and encouraged their children “to analyze and criticize, rather than merely memorize the materials they are using” (p. 61).

Taylor (1993) conducted a qualitative study of three Christian homeschools and focused on what was taught in homeschool settings. Taylor (1993) observed that for one of the families, the aim was to “get through the books” (p. 111), but for the other family, reading aloud was a “rich and important family pastime” (p. 122). Taylor (1993) did not find any families that included art as a subject. One mother remarked, “I don’t include art as a subject because my... kids are very creatively-minded. They don’t really need a class in that. We are all kind of artistic” (p. 69). In a later journal article Taylor (1997) wrote that despite successfully breaking from institutional schools to establish homeschooling, for some families, “the traditional school paradigm remains an influence that is hegemonic” (p. 113).

Knowles (1998), in reflecting on his long observations of homeschool



families noted:

Parents new to home education often prepared and presented lessons . . . that were highly structured at first; as their teaching proficiency increased over time, the structure was reduced. This same kind of loosening-up occurred with respect to selection and adherence to a particular curriculum. (p. 321)

Another vital component of schooling is extracurricular activities. Swanson (1996) interviewed 89 homeschooled children in Berks County, Pennsylvania, and noted the use of field trips (factories, businesses, museums, community service organizations) as well as hands-on activities (farms, orchards, caves, clubs) and libraries. Swanson noted, “almost all of the families frequented the public library” (p. 69). Colfax and Colfax (1988) recalled their own homeschooling experiences as they prepared their children for Harvard, and mentioned the books and magazines obtained through the public library.

How the homeschool relates to the outside world has also been studied. Nemer (2002) noted some homeschool parents disallowed training outside of the home, whether by the public schools or outside tutors (p. 12). Some enrolled in correspondence schools, others “enroll their children in part-time classes at a college campus,” hire tutors, or “participate in programs formed specifically to meet the needs of homeschoolers in specific content areas” (p. 12).

The yearly and daily calendar of the homeschool also varies. Nemer (2002) found that the age when schooling begins is not consistent, with some students starting at 3, others waiting until 8 or even 12 (p. 12). Swanson’s (1996) study of 39 Pennsylvania families found most parents operated the homeschool within a

traditional school-like setting, with day-to-day instruction abbreviated. Taylor (1993) found one family did school in the morning and used the afternoon for piano practice, chores, and free time (p. 54). Hurst (2002) noted the morning schedule was predictable: they recited the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance and then turned to music activities. After this came Bible study, reciting Bible verses, and Bible stories. The academic subjects came next.

**Homeschool learning environments.** Mayberry (1993) examined data from studies on effective learning environments to determine which variables "consistently show a positive impact on academic achievement" (p. 61). Mayberry then studied the data from a survey of 497 home schools in four western states (Oregon, Washington, Nevada, and Utah) that explored the learning environment of children taught at home. Mayberry (1993) concluded the "home school setting allows parents to emphasize high academic expectations within the context of an orderly, warm, and supportive learning environment" (p. 65). Mayberry (1993) also found the environment to be moral, and one that reflected the family's values.

Another aspect of environment has to do with the actual setup of the teaching space. Taylor (1993) found a homeschool where the teaching place resembled a traditional school, complete with posters, school desks, and various bookshelves filled with instructional materials. In another homeschool, Taylor found no special teaching/learning space; the students worked wherever they were comfortable.

**Critiques of homeschooling.** Various scholars have been concerned with the unregulated homeschooling movement. Lubienski (2003), while acknowledging legitimate reasons for homeschooling, worried that when education becomes an individualized or privatized matter, homeschoolers “leave institutions rather than participate and deliberate with fellow members, citizens or congregants” (p. 167).

Lubienski (2000) noted:

Home schooling is both a more benign and more destructive form of privatization: benign because it does not put a claim on public resources (as do for-profit charter schools, for instance), and destructive in that it is a more fundamental form of privatization. It privatizes the means, control, and purpose of education and fragments the production of the common good not simply to the level of a locality or ethnic group, but the atomized level of the nuclear family. (p. 215)

Lubienski (2000) wrote that this privatization allowed the homeschooler to “enjoy the benefits of education while asking others to disproportionately bear the social burdens of education as a public good” (p. 216). In other words, even though homeschooling parents bear the costs of education themselves through out-of-pocket purchases of curriculum, materials, tutors, and educational experiences, and support the state through their tax payments, the physical loss of their children in the classroom makes it difficult for those who remain. This loss might be financial, as in state subsidies based on a per pupil count (Apple, 2011), or in musical venues, where the “best players” choose not to participate in the large groups because he or she is too “good” for the school group. Lubienski’s opinion is that when good parents, committed to education and involved in the educational process for their

own children, withdraw their children from the public schools, the peer loss cost must be borne by the children who remain. Lubienski wrote that the homeschooling community failed to consider this, and noted: “In education, home schooling, by its very nature, denies this public interest by acknowledging no mechanism, no legitimate public interest in the education of ‘other people’s children” (Lubienski, 2000, p. 214).

Reich (2002a) wrote it would be wrong to ban homeschooling (p. 161), but argued that educational customization is harmful, for it “threatens to insulate students from exposure to diverse ideas and people and thereby to shield them from the vibrancy of a pluralistic democracy” (2002b, p. 56). Reich advocated a fixed curriculum that “exposes children to and engages them with cultural values and beliefs other than those of their parents” (p. 161–162) so that children might be educated for “minimalist autonomy,” the ability to make their own value, belief, and lifestyle choices. Reich argued that the state should make such autonomy a fundamental educational aim. This belief flows from Reich’s (2008) assertion that “there are tripartite interests at stake in the education of children: interests of the child, the parents, and the state,” and noted: “neither parents, nor the state, nor the child ought to be permitted to exercise sole authority over the education of children” (p. 17).

Kunzman (2009) addressed the idea of autonomy as it related to independent thinking skills. “If conservative Christian home school parents are determined to shape their children’s character to reflect their own cherished beliefs

and values, what room does this leave for children to learn to think for themselves?” (p. 9). Kunzman (2009) explored whether it was possible for parents to remove their children from traditional schooling and yet still teach them independent thinking skills.

Apple (2001, 2007, 2011) has written extensively on home schooling. Apple (2001) wrote that many homeschoolers are religious (p. 173), and applauded parents genuinely interested in the education of their children, especially noting the sacrificial efforts of homeschooling mothers (p. 172). At the same time, Apple (2001) noted several ironies. The first is that religious homeschooling parents withdraw their children from the public sphere in order to arm them to return and fight the world (p. 177–178). The second is that religious homeschooling’s distrust of feminism seems disconnected from the preponderance of female leadership within the movement (p. 127). Apple (2001) agreed with homeschooling’s criticisms of public schooling, but wrote that public schools provide “a kind of social glue, a common cultural reference point in our polyglot, increasingly multicultural society” (p. 177). Apple (2001) questioned the child-centered educational focus of many homeschooling parents, who want their children “to explore, to achieve their full academic potential, to have ‘his’ needs met” (p. 183).

**Summary of homeschooling literature.** As homeschooling enrollment grows, so does the research literature. Various aspects of homeschooling have been investigated, although music in connection with homeschooling has been addressed

only tangentially. The following section summarizes the research on the intersection of homeschooling and music.

### **Musical Participation**

Music is universally valued, homeschoolers and non-homeschoolers alike, even without 21st century distractions. My second research question explored why homeschoolers choose music. Gates (1991) noted that “music is engaging and we are not sure why.” Music’s intangible “social and aesthetic contexts” makes it a desirable choice (p. 7). Campbell, Connell, and Beegle (2007) found common motivations for musical involvement including (a) fulfillment of emotional needs, (b) distraction from boredom, and (c) the relief of tension and stress (p. 221). North, Hargreaves, and O’Neill (2000) concluded that music allowed adolescents to “portray an image to the outside world and satisfy their emotional needs” (p. 255).

Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves (2001) summarized the research regarding youth identity and music. They found that “involvement with (mainly popular) music is especially prominent during adolescence, and this appears to be greater than involvement with other forms of media. Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald (2002) suggested: “one of the primary social functions of music lies in establishing and developing an individual’s sense of identity” (p. 5). They posited that music affected a person’s interpersonal relationships, mood, and self-identity (p. 5). Borthwick and Davidson (2002) applied the principles of “script theory” in a qualitative study of 12 families, examining the development of a child’s musical

identity. According to this theory, “patterns of relating and functioning within a family emerge out of those that have been established and then transmitted down the generations” (p. 61). This included parents, grandparents, and siblings, something they called the “transgenerational plot” (p. 63). This seems to apply to homeschooling families, as often the education process is a transgenerational endeavor, and musical involvement contributes to identity formation.

### **Musical Preference**

Music is important to Christian worship. Reformers Calvin (1553) and Luther (Buszin & Luther, 1946) wrote about the importance of music, as well as warnings about its misuse. All three families in this study declared themselves to be devout Christians. It has been my experience that homeschoolers from religiously conservative backgrounds have definite opinions about the kinds of music they permit and support. They are not alone in this. Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald (2002) noted “most people have strong musical likes and dislikes regardless of their level of musical expertise (p. 11). Russell (1997) summarized the research on factors that affect “music taste publics” (p. 141). A common theory is that family often begins the role of providing influences that increase the likelihood children will adopt, at least initially, the taste of their parents (p. 150); however, Russell contended that family factors and schools have a minimal influence on young people’s music preferences because they tend to listen to their music with peers, not family.

Woody and Burns (2001) noted that “past emotional experiences with classical music” tended to be a predictor of music appreciation, as expressed by a willingness to listen to classical music on one’s own time” (p. 57). Some homeschooling parents control and provide musical experiences for their families from birth through high school graduation. In such cases, family influence on musical taste would tend to be stronger than for the typical child in school.

Bradley (1971) concluded that musical preferences could be altered by repeated hearings. Dorow (1977) posited that adult approval could change musical preference in students. Peery and Peery (1986) suggested, “repetition, modeling, and social reinforcement can influence musical preference” (p. 24). The homeschool model, with its repetitive schedule, adult affirmation, and modeling, serves to strongly affect musical preference and to limit the musical “generation gap” suggested by Russell (1997).

### **Music in Everyday Life**

One of my goals was to investigate homeschoolers’ use of music in everyday living, especially as school and home were combined. DeNora (2000) explored how people used music in their everyday lives and noted that the aim was to “document some of the many uses to which music is and can be put”(p. xi). These uses included a “range of strategies through which music is mobilized as a resource for producing the scenes, routines, assumptions, and occasions that constitute ‘social life’”(p. xi). Examples include music as a means for inspiring faith (p. 11), for defining situations



(p. 13), and for signaling plot and mood (p. 13), identity formation and relation (p. 63), and as a means of providing memory and “choreography of feeling” (p. 67).

Merriam (1964), in referring to music, stated, “There is probably no other human cultural activity which is so all-pervasive and which reaches into, shapes and often controls so much of human behavior” (p. 218). Thirty-six years later, North and Hargreaves (2000) said, “music is a virtually inescapable aspect of our everyday lives” (p. 43). Even with the great technological changes in those 36 years, the statements say the same thing about music.

North, Hargreaves, and Hargreaves (2004) noted the preponderance of recorded versus live music as music shifted to being considered a commodity. North (1999) wrote concerning how technology has changed musical exposure, specifically 24-7 access, portable listening devices, and how musical experience has become a “soundtrack to everyday life, and thus a central part of personal development and identity” (p. 73). North and Hargreaves (1999) noted the increasing use of music in the course of doing other activities such as “driving, shopping, eating, or doing the housework” (p. 136).

Studies have also focused on the importance of music for adolescents. Larson (1995) examined adolescents’ television and music media use in the privacy of an adolescent’s bedroom, noting the difference between “exterior” and “interior” self, and how the interior self is reflected in private music listening (p. 539). Sloboda (2001) noted a decline in musical participation for adolescents over time, with a critical point identified as the change from junior high to high school (p. 244).

North, Hargreaves, and Hargreaves (2004) noted that listening habits changed depending upon with whom the participant was listening (p. 53). Cohen (1993) advocated studying people's musical choices in the context of their "day-to-day activities, relationships and experiences" (p. 127). North (1999) suggested "the social functions of music are manifested in three principal ways for the individual, namely in the management of *self-identify*, *interpersonal relationships* and *mood*" (p. 71, italics in the original). Sloboda (2001) commented on the role of music in regulating mood, and Cohen (1993) wrote about music as a context for activities and relationships.

### **Summary**

I have summarized the research literature on various aspects of homeschooling, homeschooling and music, musical participation, preference, and music in everyday life. In the following section I investigate several studies that explore musical activities of homeschoolers.

### **Research Connecting Music and Homeschooling**

In one of the few dissertations studying music and homeschooling, Young (1999) noted that existing studies referenced music education and homeschooling tangentially and wrote, "some qualitative studies have provided descriptions of the home schooling situation that invariably include music, but the primary focus of these investigations was not music education" (p. 17).

Fehrenbach's (1995) article, "Music in Home Education: A Creative Approach

to Understanding Music,” explained the difficulty of establishing a music curriculum for homeschooling because of the lack of a “solid, universally agreeable philosophy of music” (p. 11). The public school curriculum is often used as a model for “equivalent instruction.” Curriculum requirements and philosophies vary, making application to a diffuse homeschooling population difficult. Still, similar to writings of Holt (1989), Fehrenbach said, “children should be allowed to develop their musical skills as naturally as they develop language learning” (p. 11). The instructional and experiential goal for music in homeschooling should thus be active listening, composing with and without standard notation, and performance of these compositions. Fehrenbach noted that the homeschool environment was ideal for early music learning, drawing from the writings of Gordon, Holt, Regelski, and Thomas to design practical suggestions to facilitate music learning in the home.

Young (1999), in *The Music Education of Home Schooled Students in Broome County, New York*, wrote that New York statutes required homeschooling parents to “provide an education for their children that was ‘substantially equivalent’ to what was provided by the public school” (p. iii). Since music was a required subject for all school children, Young sought to identify “the types of music experiences homeschooling parents provide for their children” (p. iii). Young surveyed 157 homeschooling families who were part of homeschool support groups in Broome County, New York. Young found the families provided music experiences through opportunities to “listen to music, sing, and learn to play an instrument,” the latter usually taught by outside instructors who also provided students with opportunities

to participate in classes or ensembles.

Even though music was a required subject in the state of New York (Young listed other states requiring public school musical instruction), complying with the National Standards was voluntary, and indeed was specifically exempted with respect to private, religious, or home schools. Yet Young (1999) examined common curricular offerings from homeschool publishers and found that “some similarities exist between the music learning objectives in home school literature and the National Standards in Arts Education for music” (p. 30). At the same time, Young quoted Breshears (1996), who found “music ranked very low in regard to the subjects home schooling families emphasize” (p. 10).

Matchael (2003) explored, by means of a 10-question survey sent to all 50 state music educators’ associations connected with Music Educator’s National Conference (MENC)<sup>7</sup>, the opportunities homeschoolers were given to participate in large musical group instruction, either through the public schools or some type of homeschool cooperative. At the time of the survey, Matchael noted a wide disparity of state regulations related to homeschool access to music classes. The tensions surrounding this issue had to do with eligibility requirements. A public school student would have to meet eligibility requirements to be able to participate in extra-curricular activities, while “homeschooled students [did] not have to meet the same requirements” (p. 4). Matchael reviewed the literature and noted private

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<sup>7</sup> The Music Educator’s National Conference changed its name to NAfME (National Association for Music Education in 2011.

piano or violin lessons seemed to be the “predominant suggestion for homeschoolers accessing music instruction” (p. 11). Matchael also listed various homeschool cooperatives nationwide that provided group opportunities for homeschoolers. Matchael’s results indicated that in most states, public school music classes were available for homeschoolers. In all but a few states, homeschoolers could participate in all-state and solo and ensemble events, albeit with some restrictions.

Nichols (2006) sought to explore, by means of a phenomenological inquiry, the music education practices of eight home schooling families in the metropolitan Phoenix area of Arizona, “in order to provide a better understanding of music education in the home schooling community for those who are not familiar with this educational subculture” (p. iii). Nichol’s research questions explored (a) the rationale for parents choosing to be involved in music education as homeschoolers, (b) opportunities that homeschooling parents selected for their own children, and (c) students’ own responses to music education as part of their studies (p. 271).

Nichols found that a variety of factors informed the first question: the parents’ own philosophies and rationales of education, their own personal experiences with music learning, the child’s personal interest, the availability, affordability, and in some cases, the requirements of a homeschool academic program administered by an outside entity (p. 270). In short, Nichols found that philosophic motivations for music education tended to be family-specific, seemingly with no single overarching philosophic motivation.

In reference to what homeschool parents believed their children would gain from musical study, Nichols grouped parents' responses for music education into three broad ideas: "music is an essential part of the whole, either whole person or whole program of study; music enables connectivity between persons, either through shared knowledge or experiences; and music is an important component of religious expressions and experience" (p. 270–271). Nichols also noted that these parents articulated a "deeper, intensely personal layer of meaning: Music is necessary to the human being" (p. 271).

In terms of the opportunities available to homeschoolers, Nichols noted four categories of options: opportunities provided by the homeschool community, churches, public schools, and/or the communities or cities (p. 271). Along with this question, Nichols observed homeschool class and ensemble programs and interviewed various music education providers for the homeschoolers. Nichols noted the poor quality of the homeschool music ensembles (p. 284) and interviewed the various musical providers enlisted by homeschooling families. One reported being initially skeptical, fearing the homeschooling parents would interfere. The provider instead reported positive experiences, yet still faced difficulties as a result of homeschoolers' strong religious beliefs (p. 273). Two public school teachers welcomed participation by homeschoolers in their bands and orchestras. They appreciated the flexible homeschool schedule, which permitted the homeschool students to play or sing in multiple ensembles (p. 273).

Nichols noted the homeschooled students were "generally affirming of their

music lessons, classes, and ensembles” (p. 273). Of the seventeen students Nichols observed, two studied music because of parental mandate, ten viewed music as one interest among many, and five valued music so highly that other academic subjects were “subjugated to the scheduling demands of attending music classes, lessons, and ensembles” (p. 273).

Nichols (2006) saw irony in complaints by media commentators, politicians, and some educators that “parents are not doing their job at home” while resisting increased parental involvement in schools. Nichols was supportive of the methods educators and homeschool parents have used to “bridge the gap between the family and the state” (p. 276), which included allowing homeschooled students to participate in public school ensembles and music classes, though homeschooled students were excluded from honor choirs, district clinics, and all-state events because of the by-laws of musical professional organizations (p. 285).

Nichols (2006) concluded that the music curricula used in the homeschool community were not generally designed for the homeschool setting and were erroneous or not grounded in “accepted developmental pedagogy” (p. 287). Nichols suggested studying homeschool graduates who pursued careers in non-homeschool education, specifically the hurdles they may have experienced, compared to those who attended institutional schools during their formative years (p. 287).

**Summary of musical/homeschool research.** The work of Fehrenbach, Young, Matchael, and Nichols provides a basis from which to explore the

homeschooling/musical connection more closely, or at least from a different vantage point. The following areas: musical participation, preference, and music in everyday life are specific to my research questions. Providing a literature overview on these topics helps to provide context for those questions. I seek to find “why” homeschooling parents support musical participation, what kinds of musics they affirm and avoid, and how they use music in their everyday lives.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I provided a background and rationale for using the concepts of Bourdieu as an interpretive framework for the analysis of my data. I summarized the extant literature on homeschooling in several different areas: history, motivations, philosophy, teaching practices and curriculum, learning environments, and critical scholarship. I also investigated findings regarding musical participation, musical preference, and music in everyday life. I summarized several studies that explored the interaction of homeschooling and music.

In Chapter 3, I outline my research methods and procedures, methods of selection of the participants, data collection and analysis procedures, and ethical issues connected to the study.



### **CHAPTER THREE METHODS AND PROCEDURES**

The purpose of this study was to explore the educational and musical worlds of three homeschooling families residing in southern Wisconsin in order to examine their motivations for homeschooling and musical study, as well as their attitudes regarding musical preference and experience. The research questions I addressed were:

1. How do the parents of the school age children in this study decide whether or not to homeschool? What issues influence their decision?
2. How do these same parents decide whether or not to include music as part of their homeschool? What issues influence their decision?
3. What educational and musical activities do these homeschooling families employ?
4. How are the attitudes of each parent and school age child regarding music in everyday life, musical preference, and the importance of musical experience reflected in their choices?

#### **Research Design**

In order to answer these questions, I employed a qualitative approach with a case study mode of inquiry. Qualitative approaches allow for a deep understanding of attitudes, values, and choices human beings make, and thus are appropriate to address the research questions proposed, evidenced by the fact that a great deal of

homeschool research has been qualitative (Arai, 2000; Chen, 1999; Chopp, 2001; Hurst, 2002; Knowles, 1991, 1998; Knutson, 2007; Kunzman, 2009; Nichols, 2005; Nichols, 2006; Ortloff, 2006; Rua, 2009; Stevens, 2001; Taylor, 1993; Wagner, 2008).

Stake's noted the defining characteristics of qualitative research as "holistic," "empirical," "interpretive," and "emphatic." Holistic means the phenomenon should be considered in its context; empirical means that research is based upon observations in the field; interpretive means that researchers see their research as interactive; and empathic means that researchers reflect the vicarious experiences of the subjects in emic perspective (Stake, 1995, Yazan, 2015). My study sought to fulfill all of those expectations.

Within qualitative research there are different modes of inquiry. Although "research methodologists do not have a consensus on the design and implementation of case study" (Yazan, 2015, p. 134), I use the term *collective case study* in the same sense as Stake (2000) as he indicates that "a researcher may jointly study a number of cases in order to investigate a phenomenon, population, or general condition" (p. 437). The phenomenon studied was homeschooling, and each of the three families was connected because of its involvement in and commitment to that practice.

In case studies as envisioned by Stake (1995), the researcher views each case as a "bounded system," calling it "a specific, a complex, functioning thing" (p. 2). For this study, I viewed each of the three families as such, bounded in that each family possessed a specific identity, separate from the others. They were also bounded in

the sense that they had no interaction with each other. I examined the parents' decision-making process in choosing homeschooling and musical involvement, the actual educational and musical activities that made up the schooling, as well as the attitudes of each member of the family with respect to music in everyday life, musical preference, and musical experience. I examined each case (family) for what it had to offer, but presented the data collectively (Stake, 2000). In addition, I added my own experiences as a homeschooling parent as a lens. These personal reflections are presented in italics, to distinguish them from participants' comments.

### **Purposeful Selection of Participants**

Homeschooling is legal in Wisconsin. All homeschooling families are required to complete a yearly registration form (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2016). I only recruited families who had completed the form, believing there were some who practiced homeschooling "under the radar," i.e. without completing the form. I also limited my recruiting to families in southern Wisconsin for ease of access, an important consideration (Maxwell, 2005) because the research had to be conducted while I maintained a full-time job.

### **Recruitment of Participants**

My original intention was to recruit four or five homeschooling families whose motivations fell along the lines described by Van Galen (1988), ideological and pedagogical. In Van Galen's classification (1988a, 1988b), ideological motivations for homeschooling were often a function of Christianity, and usually on

the conservative section of the continuum. I did not set out to only recruit Christian families; my intent was to recruit non-Christians as well. For this purpose, I developed a flyer (see Appendix A) that I distributed to interested individuals upon request. I obtained permission to make these available to students in the Milwaukee and Madison Youth Symphonies, because both organizations reported numbers of homeschoolers as participants. Several libraries within a 20-minute drive of Watertown agreed to post my recruiting poster.

I contacted the two major homeschooling organizations in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Christian Homeschool Organization (Wisconsin CHEAA), and the Wisconsin Parents Association (WPA) for permission to advertise my study. The first organization replied and invited me to speak on several musical topics at their yearly conference. I did not receive a reply from the second. I made my posters available to interested area pastors associated with the university where I teach. I conducted a Google search of all area homeschool groups, and sent each of them a cover letter with a recruiting poster. I acknowledged all respondents, and asked each to complete a screening survey (see Appendix D). The purpose of the survey was to determine demographic characteristics of the families, as well as screen for Van Galen's (1988a, 1988b) dualistic motivation proposition. Burns (1993), Wagner (2008), and Kunzman (2009) also utilized a screening survey in their homeschool research.

## **Selection**

I spoke at the Wisconsin Christian Home Educator's Conference in May 2013. From this engagement I met and recruited the Chen family. The Anderson family contacted me on the recommendation of a colleague who taught their daughters piano lessons. The Greene family contacted me on the recommendation of an area pastor. Several other families responded, but indicated that the required home interviews and observations were too intrusive. It so happened that the religious orientation of each selected family was Christian, although they did not know each other, lived in different areas, and attended different, independent churches. I set up interviews with each of the three families, and explained the informed consent documents. I left the documents with the family for them to read over and consider. The Andersons, Chens, and Greenes (all pseudonyms) signed the required forms. I obtained verbal assents by the minor children in the company of their parents in their homes.

## **Data Collection Procedures**

In qualitative studies, the data are derived from several different sources, including interviews, observations, documents, and artifacts. (Creswell, 2003; Creswell, 2007; Phillips, 2008; Stake, 1995). I conducted three semi-structured interviews with each set of parents and each of the 10 participating children, a total of 39 interviews. The interview questions were divided into three groupings: focused life history, details of the experience, and reflection on the meaning (Seidman, 1998).

The original goal was to complete all data collection within a five-week period. In reality, for two of the families, portions of the data collection period stretched beyond the five-week period because of personal and family schedule conflicts. The Anderson family interviews occurred from April 09, 2013 to July 25, 2013. For the Greene family, the interviews began October 10, 2013 and extended to November 5, 2013. I was able to complete the Chen interviews within the proposed timeframe, from July 8 to July 30, 2013. I recorded all of the interviews on an iPad using the *Super Notes* program. I personally transcribed the first 16 interviews. Later, I hired a court stenographer to transcribe the remaining 23. I sent copies of the interview transcripts back to the participant families for “member checking” (Creswell, 2007, p. 46). After the text of the data chapters was complete, I collated all of the material related to each family and sent it to each one for review.

My observations involved the physical setting of each family’s neighborhood and home. I mapped out various room configurations and noted whether or not the family used a designated schoolroom. I examined textbooks, recreational reading and games, and individual home artifacts. I sought to notice and record dress styles, the order of the daily schedule, the daily “opening exercises,” and the interaction of the children with the parents. As I listened to the children practice, I noted composer/arranger, the volume number of each Suzuki selection for families who used this approach, and sought to evaluate how each child approached practicing. In the course of the observations, informal conversations occurred, and I sought to reconstruct these from memory after the observation. I made note of any ambient

music as well as the children's musical listening habits.

Observations occurred during school hours, and usually lasted for most of the morning or afternoon, fitted within my own teaching schedule and the family's preference. My initial plan had been to observe portions of each family's school day on six occasions. This proved to be more than necessary. I observed the Chen family on five occasions in July 2013. From November 19, 2013 to February 21, 2014, I observed the Greene family five times. I observed the Anderson family separately on three occasions, April 2, 2013, October 13, and Oct 29, 2013, and other times in combination with their interviews. I felt that I was able to obtain data saturation (Stake 1995, p. 110) in my observations, especially in combination with the 39 home interviews.

### **Data Analysis Procedures**

Stake (1995) wrote that analysis gives meaning to first impressions and final compilations, taking apart each situation for the meaning it has to offer (p. 71). Two strategic ways that researchers reach new meanings about cases are through direct interpretation of the individual instance and through aggregation of instances until something can be said about them as a class (Stake, 1995). Each observation, informal conversation, interview, and artifact is dissected and then put back together again in order to explore meaning.

### **Use of the Computer**

Another feature of qualitative analysis is the necessity to winnow the data so

they are useable (Basis, 2003; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Stake, 1995; Wolcott, 2001). Creswell (2007) suggested using the computer to aid in the coding process. I searched various qualitative software packages and decided upon HyperRESEARCH (currently version 3.7.3).

### **Coding**

The data coding was based upon the concepts related to the research questions rather than a search for emergent themes or issues. Granted, connecting empirical data to a study's initial research design is more closely aligned to the perspective of Yin (2002) rather than Stake (1995); however, finding the answers to these questions was at the heart of the study, but still through the constructivist perspective of Stake rather than the positivist notion of Yin (Yazan, 2015).

For the purpose of coding, I considered each family as a single case, but ended up organizing the data on the computer into six cases: Anderson parents, Anderson children, Chen parents, Chen children, Greene parents and Greene children. I wanted to be able to look at the parents' data separately from that of the children, and still be able to compare one family's ideas to the other. I felt the same about data from the children: I wanted to be able to group each family's children independent of the other families.

I initially coded the data, tying each code to one or more of the research questions (Basis, 2003). I coded again, attempting to eliminate redundancies, revised wording, changed groupings, and compiled a list of the main ideas. I also



completed a code map in order to better visualize the main ideas.

In preparation for writing the data analysis chapters, I created a document with citations from various research literature sources as well as the quotes of participants that confirmed or disconfirmed portions of each research question.

### **Triangulation**

Bailey (2007) wrote that triangulation is a way to ensure the quality of field research. Stake (1995) suggested that the protocols that insure both accuracy and alternative explanations in qualitative research “come under the name triangulation” (p. 107). I interviewed both parents and children independently (although for the Chen family children, Hannah Chen was usually present). I observed the children doing their schoolwork and practicing their instruments, and engaged in conversations with them. The observations and interviews did not all take place at the same time of day. These multiple viewpoints helped to strengthen the analysis of the data. At times I also inserted my own viewpoint as a homeschooler as a means of confirming and disconfirming data.

### **Reliability**

Morse (2015) defined reliability as the “ability to obtain the same results if the study were to be repeated” (p. 1213), although the terms validity and reliability are more an outgrowth of a positivistic philosophical viewpoint rather than a constructivist one (Yazan, 2015, p. 146). And yet, even in constructivism, Stake (1995) asked the question: “Are we developing the interpretations we want” and

“Are we getting it right”(p. 107)?

Stake (1995) and Creswell (2007) suggested member checking as a data protection protocol. After the initial interviews and observations were transcribed, I sent them to the families for review and verification. Fred Chen mentioned reading the transcriptions in subsequent interviews and observations. After I completed my initial draft of the data analysis, I extracted the comments related to each family, pasted them into a single document and sent these to each family for review. The Anderson family responded with several minor word changes and a clarification of a situation about which I had written. Once the data analysis section was finished, I sent the three chapters to each of the families for review and comment. Hannah Chen replied: “I appreciate the care you took to quote and represent the families in an objective and honest fashion” (personal email, August 17, 2015). Once I had written the draft of the final chapter, I once again sent the data analysis chapters as well as my concluding chapter to each of the families. Meg Anderson noted an error in one of my conclusions (I had ascribed a situation to the wrong family). I thanked her, made the correction, and sent her a revised copy.

To ensure that my data were coded correctly, I shared my coding files with my advisor, an experienced qualitative researcher, on a regular basis. She gave consistent helpful feedback regarding the combining of codes and looking for the essence in statements and interviews. This protocol falls in line with what Stake (1995) suggested as investigator or methodological triangulation.

Another helpful protocol is data source triangulation, where different

people's ideas and views are triangulated (Denzin, 1978). The benefit of a collective case study is to do that very thing across the cases. In this study, the six parents whose experiences were both the same and different from each other, the ten children in the three families who also brought multiple perspectives to the interviews, and my own experiences as a homeschool parent for 24 years also helped to confirm and disconfirm the data.

One issue that might affect the data is my own personal bias. Each family ascribed to conservative Christian values similar to mine. In addition, the university where I work has a reputation for those same values. Finally, my wife and I had homeschooled our own children. When beginning the recruiting process, I did not identify myself as a Christian, but did indicate my own experience with homeschooling. Some of my musical preferences are similar to those expressed by the families. In my analysis, I sought to give thoughtful consideration to both proponents and critics of homeschooling. I used reflection passages to demonstrate both positive and negative sides of homeschooling, as well as some of my ambivalent feelings regarding the practice, especially as I have had the opportunity to reflect upon my own family's homeschooling experience.

### **Ethical Issues**

It is important to share my personal history to inform the reader of potential bias or skewing of the analysis. This study was not a narrative inquiry per se, but my experiences and perspectives are used as a way to interpret and triangulate the data. Sharing my history also provides the reader with insight into my personal

interest in the topic of homeschooling.

I grew up in Western Pennsylvania, the oldest of five children, born to parents who never completed college. My father managed and then owned an automobile-related business, and my mother, a registered nurse, was the youngest daughter of immigrants from Eastern Europe. Our home was a religious one, and I attended Catholic school through the eighth grade, and also attended a Catholic university. I was not able to complete college due to a low draft lottery number and chose to enlist in the Air Force, obtaining a position as pianist/percussionist for a jazz/rock/marching/concert band stationed in Tacoma, Washington.

During this time I experienced a faith crisis and was “converted” in the Puritan sense of the term. My wife and I were married shortly thereafter, and we determined to frame our decisions as a family around Biblical precepts and values. I wrestled with the notion of leaving music and entering the ministry, much to the chagrin of my colleagues in the Air Force band. However, we chose to follow the advice of my parents, who suggested that I first complete my unfinished music degree before deciding upon ministerial training. I completed my undergraduate degree in Music Education near my home in Western Pennsylvania. After graduation, I accepted a teaching position at our church’s Christian Day School, where I taught a variety of subjects for six years. Concurrently, I completed two masters degrees, one in Sacred Music, and another in Music Theory and Composition. In 1986 I accepted a position at Maranatha Bible College in Wisconsin,

(later Maranatha Baptist University), where I have been teaching ever since.

My wife and I are the parents of eight grown children. All of the children played string instruments. We formed two string quartets and then travelled throughout the country giving concerts. In conjunction with another family, we produced two recordings, consisting mostly of my own arrangements. Four of my children obtained undergraduate degrees in music performance: cello, piano, harp, and violin. Two completed graduate degrees in music performance, one at the University of Texas-Austin and the other at the University of Minnesota. At the time of this writing, the third is in his second year of an MM program in Violin at the University of Minnesota.

With the exception of our oldest, all of the children were homeschooled until college. Our daughter began homeschooling in the third grade. My wife, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Indiana University, taught them all. Our motivations for homeschooling in the beginning were primarily religious and familial, but over time, we felt there were educational advantages that we could reinforce, mostly in the area of literacy. The older children were insecure when they first attended college, but shortly realized their ability to “hold their own” and compete with their peers. Four of the children are now employed as public school teachers, one holds the position of Chief Operating Officer for a tech start-up, one is employed at the corporate headquarters for a national firm, one owns a home remodeling business, and one is in graduate school.

No study is without some risk to the participants. On a broad continuum of

risk, this study fell on the minimal end. All of the interviews and observations took place on each family's "home turf." I was the guest. Each family offered refreshments during interviews and observations, and I stayed for lunch with the Chens on two occasions. The parents were always in the area when I interviewed younger children, yet I did not sense the children's answers were scripted, although Hannah Chen and Tirzah Greene would sometimes encourage a child to add something to an answer, or supply a piece of information the child could not remember. The Greene children did their schoolwork in their bedrooms, and I was invited to sit with each one and ask questions and observe their work. The Chens used a basement schoolroom where all of the children had desks, and I observed them there.

Following the lead of both Kunzman (2009) and Nichols (2006) in their qualitative studies of homeschoolers, I sought to demonstrate respect for the participants by being punctual with appointments (both beginning and ending), obtaining prior permission, sensing when the timing or situation was not appropriate, communicating a genuine desire to hear and learn each family's "story," and exhibiting a gracious spirit that expressed thankfulness for every opportunity to interact. I was not asked, nor did I offer, comments regarding curricular decisions or individual music practice strategies.

### **Data Protection and Storage**

I backed up all of the data on a daily basis to a password protected Dropbox account. About once a week, I utilized an external hard drive to back up the data as

an added precaution. In addition, printed copies of the informed consent forms, family screening forms, interview transcripts, and observation notes were stored in specific binders assigned to each family and kept in my secured home office. I stored all correspondence with my advisor and participant families on my password protected university account, which is backed up each night.

### **Confidentiality**

Each family was identified by pseudonym. The Chen and Greene families wanted to choose their own family and individual pseudonyms. Several of the Chen children thought of themselves as “secret agents.” In the writing of the dissertation, I at times disguised certain details of the families in order to maintain privacy. I did not discuss any details of the study between the families. In the last several months I did send the families the entire data analysis and conclusions chapters.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I outlined the methods used in recruiting, screening and selecting the three families for my study. I also described procedures involved in collecting, organizing, and then analyzing the data. Lastly, I wrote concerning some ethical considerations related to this study. In the following chapters, I present a detailed report on each family, their motivations to begin and then continue homeschooling, their attraction to and involvement with music, the kinds of educational and musical activities of each home, and their opinions regarding musical preference, experience, and the use of music in everyday living.

## CHAPTER FOUR THE OVERARCHING MOTIVATION

In this chapter I present an analysis of interview and observation data collected from three homeschooling families living in southern Wisconsin: the Andersons, Chens, and Greenes. I interviewed each set of parents and each school-aged child three times, and observed a portion of each family's school day. This chapter covers data related to the first research question: *How do parents of school age children decide whether or not to homeschool their children? What factors influence their decision?* As I discuss in this chapter, my interpretation of the data revealed that the overarching motivation was the parents' desire to control the education and the socialization of their children. I posit that this desire for control was not self-serving, but rather a function and an outgrowth of the Christian habitus which influences these families. I also examine motivations that continue to fuel each family's desire to remain homeschoolers.

I begin with a brief description of the Anderson, Chen, and Greene families, their educational, professional, and family backgrounds, their homes, and what they enjoyed doing. Next I examine some common homeschool stereotypes and demographic summaries found in the research literature, and compare these with what I learned through the interviews and observations. Finally, I summarize my findings for the first research question, addressing the motivation to undertake homeschooling, as well as other considerations that reinforced the initial decision.



## **Family Descriptions**

### **The John and Meg Anderson Family**

John and Meg Anderson lived with their three daughters, Linda (19), Helen (17), and Susan (14), in a brown, ranch-style home with a full walkout basement. The home overlooked Wisconsin farmland. On the east side of the single street, carved from former pastureland, was a slow moving river. Both John and Meg were born and raised in suburban Indianapolis. John graduated from Ball State University with a degree in finance. His employer, a national insurance company, transferred the family from Indianapolis to Madison several years ago. Meg, a registered nurse, met John in college. The oldest daughter, Linda, away at college, did not take part in this study. Meg and her daughters, Helen (17) and Susan (14), enjoyed watching wildlife. Helen was an accomplished photographer who maintained a blog that featured her photographs as well as her poetry. The Andersons place a high priority on music, as each member of the family played the piano. Helen (17) also studied the flute and classical guitar, and Susan (14) the clarinet, although she desired to play the tuba. The Andersons have homeschooled all of their children since kindergarten.

### **The Fred and Hannah Chen Family**

Fred and Hannah Chen lived in a two-story house situated on a cul-de-sac in suburban Milwaukee. They have six children: Matthias (14), Michelle (12), Christina (10), Micah (7), Peter (5), and Emily (3). Fred was born in Taiwan to parents who

were both physicians. Fred and his brother accompanied their mother to America while she completed a medical residency in Galveston, Texas. Fred was in the fourth grade at the time. After his mother's residency was completed, Fred attended a Christian boarding school in New York State for his junior and senior high years. Hannah was born in Milwaukee to Chinese parents; her father was an engineer and her mother a Milwaukee public school elementary teacher.

Fred graduated from the University of Wisconsin with a B.S. in Zoology and had planned to become a physician like his grandfather, parents, and brother; however, after working as a research scientist for six years, Fred enrolled in a religious seminary and completed a Master of Divinity (M. Div.) degree. He currently co-pastors a church.

Hannah met Fred while a student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. She received a B.A. degree in Applied Mathematics with a minor in Computer Science. After working in the IT industry for ten years, Hannah resigned her position to stay home with the children. Hannah is an accomplished musician with extensive training and experience in piano, violin, and clarinet. The Chen family enjoyed visiting sites for field trips, playing their musical instruments, and taking regular trips back to Taiwan to visit Fred's parents.

### **The Peter and Tirzah Greene Family**

The Greene family home was located in a subdivision several miles from the center of a small southern Wisconsin city, halfway between Madison and

Milwaukee. Peter and Tirzah Greene have five children: Katie (15), George (14), Joshua (12), Grace (10) and Christy (4). The Greene family home reflected their values. The doormat outside their front door was inscribed with the words: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:15). There was a large plaque (10" x 40") above the piano in the living room with the family name and the same Bible reference underneath. Over the piano and a little to the right was a large mounted stuffed turkey, a trophy from a family hunting expedition. The family displayed two mounted deer heads above the steps to the basement (Tirzah said that one stuffed animal in the living area was enough.) Two cases containing archery equipment and hunting boots, a stump for splitting wood, a thermometer with a picture of a dog, two hunting paintings, and a clothes rack with supports made to look like deer hooves filled the basement. The older children were hunting and fishing veterans (Katie successfully "bagged" her first deer when she was 13). The family owned undeveloped hunting property in Northern Wisconsin.

Peter Greene repaired commercial equipment for the food industry. He serviced grocery stores and restaurants in the surrounding area. Peter attended college for three years, aspiring to become a meteorologist. He balked, however, when he discovered the academic requirements associated with weather forecasting.

Tirzah graduated from a Catholic college with a degree in Secondary Education-Math/Science. She participated in intercollegiate sports in high school

and college. After graduation, she taught math and science in a local public school for several years before beginning homeschooling.

### **Stereotypes**

Social groups are subject to stereotypical labeling, and homeschoolers are no exception. In some ways, the families confirmed stereotypes, and in other ways, these stereotypes did not apply. Drenovsky & Cohen (2012) wrote: “Stereotypes of homeschooled children often include labels such as ‘backward’ or ‘on the fringe’ of society” (p. 2).

### **Social Backwardness**

A common objection to homeschooling is that withdrawing children from school limits or inhibits socialization. The frequency of this objection has caused the homeschool community to refer to this as the “S word” (Sizer, 2016).

Social backwardness may be perceived as an inability to communicate with those outside of family. Susan Anderson (14) noticed homeschoolers who fit this description: “When you start a conversation with them, they don’t know how to communicate.” Susan also observed some homeschoolers who are “really smart kids who can’t talk to people because they’ve never been taught to” (interview, July 25, 2013). Susan’s statement suggests some homeschoolers are unable to communicate effectively. Payton and Scott (2013) wondered if this inability was greater for homeschoolers than others. In a survey of 404 college freshmen, the authors measured “communication apprehension” (fear that affects oral communication)

and found no significant difference between homeschooled students and others. This suggests that the inability to communicate might not be connected to peer socialization. Murphy (2012) stated: “The counsel of despair in the area of student socialization in particular is poorly supported in the research literature available to date” (p. 39).

I found the Anderson and Greene children to be good conversationalists. They were at ease in the interviews, asked intelligent questions of me, and supplied extended and thoughtful answers to my questions. At the end of the interviews, I always asked if the participants would like to ask me anything. From the Greene children I received the following questions: “Were you homeschooled?” “What do you like to do for fun?” “When did you start playing the piano?” “How many instruments do you play?” (interviews, October 17, 22, and November, 05, 2013). Susan Anderson (14) supplied extended answers to questions of “why people choose one musical style over another” and “the importance of musical experience” and offered a long narrative of her experience participating in the World Choir Games (interview, July 25, 2013). Helen Anderson (17) supplied a thoughtful evaluation of each of her musical instructors and related what she learned from each individual instructional style (interview, May 16, 2013).

It was more challenging to elicit extended conversations with the Chen children. Rarely did they want to ask me questions, and their answers to my questions were often “yes” or “no,” or one word. I was not sure if this was a function of my interview skills or their lack of comfort with me as an interviewer. Another

possible reason may be cultural. Their view of education and the role of “teacher” might be different from mine. Fred and Hannah Chen self-referenced certain cultural stereotypes: “Asian kids score superbly high in math and science” (interview, July 22, 2013), and “in many Asian families, children are encouraged to play the piano or the violin” (observation, July 07, 2013). Fred Chen commented on the Asian notion of drill and memorization. Fred said this emphasis harmed a child’s ability to think critically, and he noted that the critical thinking that resulted from this kind of drill was “pretty bad” (interview, July 22, 2013). Perhaps for the Chen children, I fulfilled the role of teacher whose responsibility was to pass on information rather than elicit it from them.

### **Societal Withdrawal**

Homeschoolers “on the fringe of society” may refer to a withdrawal from society. There is a perception that some homeschoolers set themselves apart from society, trying to minimize contact with the outside world. The families in this study did not fulfill that perception. The Anderson and Chen children were involved with well-known community music organizations. The Chens located skilled artisans to teach their children practical skills. The Greene children hunted with friends and relatives who did not share the family’s religious values. The Anderson children worked at the Indiana State Fair, and Helen Anderson (17) spent time in Nicaragua helping in an orphanage. All three families actively participated in music and ministry programs of their respective churches, which brought together people

from diverse occupations and educational backgrounds.

### **Backwardness in Dress and Grooming**

In my personal observation and experience, a segment of the homeschool community reflects a conservative style of dress bordering on “Amish.” John Anderson commented on a homeschool family that he knew who fit this category:

One of the (homeschool) families that I’m talking about in particular, the mother always made the dresses and they all looked the same, and they all wore their hair back, you know, tied like this (demonstrates), and she was very regimented and strict in what they did and how they did it—everything. (interview, February 22, 2013)

Susan Anderson commented on a dress stereotype for homeschoolers: “they walk around in polos and khakis,” and regarding male grooming, “they always have their hair parted exactly right” (interview, July 25, 2013). In contrast to this style, John said of his own daughters: “our girls, they dress decent. They’re not in their bonnets and their long dresses, but they’re not in their tight, form-fitting, accentuating clothes either” (interview, February 22, 2013).

In terms of dress, I never saw khakis and polos for any of the children. In fact, Susan Anderson (14) said she deliberately avoided that look “at all costs” (interview, July 25, 2013). The usual dress for school was slacks/jeans and shirt, sometimes a T-shirt, and sometimes a dress shirt. Sometimes the girls wore skirts, sometimes jeans. I never saw long dresses on the girls. The Greene boys, with their love of all things outdoors, enjoyed wearing camouflage pants and jackets. In terms of grooming, the Chen and Greene boys (there were no Anderson boys) kept their

hair so short that a part was not possible. The Anderson, Chen, and Greene girls tended to have shoulder length or longer hairstyles.

### **Educational Backwardness**

In 2001, J. C. Penney advertised a T-shirt that depicted a “dilapidated mobile home paired with the words ‘Home Skooled.’” The shirts were pulled from the shelves after customer complaints and threats of a boycott (Drenovsky & Cohen, 2012, p. 2). Susan Anderson (14), in describing these stereotypical descriptions of homeschoolers, said: They “don’t do anything (educationally) and just raise pigs. They stay home and do nothing” (interview, July 25, 2013). Michelle Chen (12) experienced this perception first-hand. She described the following situation:

Okay, so I was at my friend’s house for a birthday party, and then one of the girls asked me what school I went to, and then I said I was homeschooled, and she was like: “Oh, can you spell star?” I was like: “Yes,” and then I spelled it, and she thought I was like, I don’t know—and she was like “Oh, okay.” (interview, July 24, 2013)

Michelle was left with the impression that her friend believed that homeschoolers were not educationally up to par with those who attended school.

The children in the study did not appear to be backward educationally. Hannah Chen reported that her oldest three children, Matthias (14), Michelle (12), and Christina (10), had just received their Iowa achievement test scores, and had scored in the 96, 97, and 98 percentiles (observation, July 21, 2013). Michelle Chen (12) was writing a novel for fun (observation, July 12, 2013). Helen Anderson (17) maintained a personal photography and poetry blog (interview, April 09, 2013).



Susan Anderson (14) taught herself Finale (a musical notation software program) so that she could transpose flute parts for her clarinet. For recreation, she mentally devised gadgets (interview, April 09, 2013). Joshua Greene (12) discussed his science and history lessons with me, evidencing comprehension of the material, and an ability to remember pertinent details. Katie Greene (15) read widely, even though during her elementary years, she did not desire to read.

Scholars are not in agreement as to the educational success of homeschooling. Kunzman (2005) wrote that it “remains a matter of dispute” (p. 4). On the other hand, Wood (2003) stated: “current evidence indicates that homeschoolers’ college academic performance is comparable to that of traditionally educated students” (p. 2). Ray (2005) summarized the research of Oliviera, Watson and Sutton (1994) and found that “home-educated college students had a slightly higher overall mean critical thinking score than did students from public schools, Christian schools, and ACE (private) schools but the differences were not statistically significant” (p. 6).

A stereotype exists that homeschooling seeks to indoctrinate rather than develop critical thinking skills. The families recognized this as a possibility. Fred Chen spent extended time discussing literature with his children, believing it to be vital in the development of critical thinking. The Andersons developed decision-making skills in their children, continually giving them increasing freedom to question even their own homeschooling. The Greene children responded in different ways. Joshua Greene labored over his assignments with such tenacity that he

frequently struggled to accomplish his daily goals. It wasn't that the material was difficult; rather, it was so interesting that it required extra investigation. Katie Greene continually read classic works of literature. This kind of effort and work seems to be contrary to the idea of indoctrination.

School for these children was intentional, scheduled, and evaluated. Tirzah Greene completed lesson plans for each child and tracked their progress. The Anderson girls devised their daily and yearly schedules on their own, but under the supervision of their parents. Fred and Hannah shared in the teaching and evaluation of the children. The children appeared to accept the fact that school was a necessary responsibility. When asked what advice he would give to a prospective homeschooling family, Matthias Chen (14) said: "Work hard. You might be tempted to slack off, but don't. Do your work" (interview, July 30, 2013).

Still, there are some homeschoolers that fit the "stay home and do nothing" stereotype. Jones and Gloeckner (2004) conducted a survey of 55 college admissions officers, focusing on their homeschool admissions policies. Three-fourths indicated that they have special policies in place for homeschoolers, often requiring extra documentation such as essays, personal interviews, and classes successfully completed at a community college. This seems to suggest that, indeed, not all homeschoolers approach their education seriously; however, it may also be indicative of bias that exists against homeschoolers. For example, several admissions officers indicated that their institutions did not accept homeschool graduates because they "did not believe that students [homeschooled] are prepared

for college” (p. 17). This kind of sentiment led Murphy (2012) to conclude, “the deep-seated skepticism and disagreements that define relationships between homeschoolers and public educators have not disappeared” (p. 49).

*My daughter, homeschooled until college, fulfilled her student teaching assignment in the local public high school. When her supervising teacher met her for the first time, she was suspicious of my daughter’s preparation and abilities. She told my daughter later that the stereotypical opinion of homeschooling among the staff at the high school was “legalized dropping out.” This was confirmed to my daughter in class. My daughter tried to encourage a student to complete an English assignment. The student replied that she was going to be homeschooled in several days and wouldn’t need to do it. My daughter told the girl that she would still need to complete the work, homeschooled or not. The student insisted that she would be homeschooled, with the distinct inference that once homeschooled, she would no longer have to do her work.*

### **Demographics**

Scholars have researched the demographics of the homeschool population. Certain characteristics appear more frequently than others. Nichols (2006) reminds us that public education is not monolithic. This should also be kept in mind when referencing homeschooling. Certainly there are trends, but anomalies exist, and often make for interesting research. In this section I report on race, religion, family size, parental training and occupation, as well as who is responsible for the teaching for the three families in my study.

**Race**

Both the Anderson and the Greene families are of European descent, while the Chen family is Taiwanese. Collum and Mitchell (2005) concluded that most homeschoolers were White, citing studies that put the percentage from 75% to nearly 90%. The latest National Center for Educational Statistics report (2015) indicated that Whites made up 68% of homeschooled students, and that Asians or Pacific Islanders made up only 4%. The data suggest that the ranks of Asian homeschoolers are relatively thin. This spotlights the Chen's decision to homeschool, for in making this decision, they stand apart from the perceived cultural norm. In fact, Fred and Hannah's parents originally suggested that the Chen children might be better served in school, although all the grandparents are now very proud of their grandchildren's accomplishments.

**Importance of Religion**

Another characteristic of homeschoolers is strong adherence to religious values. Stevens (2001) found that over 90% of homeschoolers indicated that their religious commitment was important to their lives. Murphy (2012), in drawing upon the research of McKeon (2007) and Ray (2005), concluded: "many homeschool families have conservative religious beliefs, ones that tightly align with Christian religious orthodoxy and conservative biblical doctrine" (p. 22). The Anderson and Greene families are actively involved with churches that ascribe to fundamental Baptist doctrine, while the Chens are members of a conservative evangelical

congregation. All of the parents expressed aspirations for their children that involved service to God as well as the church.

### **Family Size**

Homeschooling is often connected with the parental decision to have more children than the national average. One movement closely aligned with homeschooling is known as the “quiverfull” movement. The name is derived from the following scripture passage:

Lo, children *are* an heritage of the LORD: *and* the fruit of the womb *is* *his* reward.  
As arrows *are* in the hand of a mighty man; so *are* children of the youth.  
Happy *is* the man that hath his quiver full of them (Psalm 127:1–3, King James Version)

The “full quiver” philosophy encourages parents to have large families. One Internet search revealed 97 family websites, most of them espousing homeschooling and the benefits of larger families (Peterson, 2016). Although none of the families in this study subscribed to the “quiverfull” philosophy, the number of children in each family (3, 5, and 6) exceeded the national average (1.9) referenced by Murphy (2012).

### **Parental Training and Occupation**

Of the six parents in this study, five had completed college. The mothers had degrees in nursing, applied mathematics, and secondary education, while the fathers had degrees in finance, zoology, and theology. One father, Peter Greene, had majored

in meteorology in college, but did not graduate. This supports Murphy's (2012) findings that homeschooling parents tend to be well educated.

Mayberry (1988) found that homeschooling fathers are more likely to work in professional/technical occupations. This was the case for all three fathers: John Anderson is an insurance professional, Fred Chen is a zoologist turned pastor, and Peter Greene is a service technician for food industry equipment.

Generally the mothers in homeschooling families did not enter the labor market, believing that "staying home is best for the kids, valuable enough to trump other valuables like income, comfort, and career (Stevens, 2001, p. 87). Tirzah Greene and Meg Anderson were definitely "stay-at-home" moms, while Hannah Chen did some part-time piano accompanying to earn cash for her children's music lessons.

### **Responsibility for Instruction**

Mothers do most of the homeschool teaching (Knowles, 1991; Ray, 1997; 2005). Hannah Chen and Meg Anderson provided the bulk of instruction as well as the day-to-day educational oversight of their families. Tirzah Greene's older children used a DVD curriculum that included classroom instruction, tests, and quizzes. Still, she wrote lesson plans, graded her children's work, and then recorded the grades into a homeschool tracking program. She also tutored her older children and instructed her younger children in subjects beyond the scope of the DVD curriculum.

Each of the fathers in the study believed homeschooling to be a joint endeavor and invested themselves in the process. Fred Chen spent his day off and his evenings tutoring the children in literature and science. Fred found homeschooling frustrating at times. He said: “I am not able to cover as much as I want with each child” (interview, July 8, 2013). John Anderson provided beginning piano lessons for his daughters and also graded math papers. Peter Greene was considered the Greene family’s authority on history, and so when faced with a difficult question, Tirzah told her daughter Grace (10): “Go ask the history whiz” (interview, Oct 17, 2013).

### **A Variety of Motives**

In the first of the research questions, I explored the parental reasoning and individual circumstances that led each set of parents to make the decision to homeschool. Early homeschool research divided homeschool motivations into two broad categories, ideological and pedagogical (Van Galen, 1988). While these terms are frequently seen in the literature, the strict dichotomous relationship has been called into question in other research. Collum and Mitchell (2005), in a summary of the literature, noted four broad categories of homeschool motivation: religious values, dissatisfaction with the public schools, academic and pedagogical concerns, and family life (p. 277); however, Collum (2005) cautioned (in a separate article), “homeschoolers cannot easily be pigeonholed into different types” (p. 326). Murphy’s (2012) survey of the research caused him to conclude that the “motives of homeschool families are multi-dimensional” (p. 79). Collum (2005) wrote,

“homeschoolers are a heterogeneous population with varying and overlapping motivations” (p. 307). Nemer (2002) reported that many families often fell between an ideological and pedagogical motivation, leaning one way or the other; however, over time, these parents began to see the benefits of the “other side.” In this same way, Meg Anderson confirmed a change in her own motivation to homeschool:

So, mainly I decided that they needed to be at home for about the first four or five years to get a really good foundation in Scripture and in your life as a Christian, not just you going to church to be a Christian—I wanted there to be that difference. But then, as time went on, it was just easier to keep them at home. They had a learning pattern established, they tested well, and the doors were wide open.  
(interview, Feb 22, 2013)

### **The Desire for Control**

Murphy (2012) suggested that the “glue” central to all of these motivations was control. “They (homeschooling parents) want control of their children and their education . . . This is the foundation that informs all other motives. It is the vehicle to meet other goals—for example, to impart cherished values or to protect children from social harm”(p. 77). These “cherished values” find their source in the religious faith practice of the parents, which in turn is part of an overarching Christian habitus. The parents believed that the control inherent in homeschooling provided the best opportunity to monitor and strengthen these values.

I did not sense that the parents were trying to remove their children from societal interaction, for the parents recognized and supported a great deal of socialization. It seems they recognized Bourdieu’s notion of cultural capital—that activities such as musical study and participation, sports, involvement in ministry,



work, and travel, all serve this acquisition; however, they did desire to maintain control. It seems the parents avoided or minimized situations in which the primary social structure was heavily controlled by peer interaction. Thus, many of their interactions were church related, or at least done with other homeschoolers. On the other hand, however, the Anderson and Chen children participated in the Indianapolis Children's Choir and the Milwaukee Youth Symphony, respectively, organizations whose primary memberships were derived from public school students.

John and Meg Anderson realized that their girls would eventually be exposed to ideas different from their familial norms. Rather than withdrawing the children from situations where those kinds of tensions might surface, the Andersons embraced them as opportunities for teaching and counsel. The Andersons believed they could give guidance and supervision for the values conflicts their children faced. John related the following:

The Indianapolis Children's Choir was a huge eye-opener for us because though they sing a lot of Christian music, it's a secular organization. I can still remember Linda coming up to us, and she was probably in sixth, fifth, seventh grade—I don't know what it was—she's like: "Dad, some kids wanted me to pretend I was smoking pot, but I didn't want to, so I just left." I said, "Okay." Then she said: "What's pot?" (interview, Feb 22, 2013)

Meg and John related the following in dealing with exposure to music outside the realm of what the family considered acceptable:

Meg: They sang some jazz in the children's choir, and did not appreciate or enjoy it.

John: But they were introduced to it, and they know what it is, but they never developed a liking for it.

Meg: No.

John: And it wasn't something we chose to introduce them to. It was something we had to choose to let them do because they were in the choir. (interview, April 09, 2013)

For the Chen family, control meant something else. Fred Chen had been sent to boarding school from the 7th–12th grade. His parents had led very busy lives as physicians that did not allow for much family time, even during summer vacations (observation, July 7, 2013). Consequently, Fred's notion of control was seen in his insistence to personally influence and instruct his own children. This seems to supports Knowles' (1988) finding that parental neglect provides a possible rationale for homeschooling. In Fred's mind, this included instructing his children in the faith: "You can't really delegate your responsibility; you are ultimately still responsible. You can delegate the teaching, but not the responsibility" (interview, July 30, 2013). This also meant taking ownership of his children's writing skills as well as instructing them in classic works of literature that Fred believed represented a Christian worldview such as *Lord of the Rings* and *The Hobbit* (interview, July 30, 2013).

Peter and Tirzah Greene wanted control over their children's development of character as well as educational content. They stated that developing character traits in their children such as responsibility, initiative, attention to detail, and neatness were nearly as important as learning subject content (interview, October 10, 2013). In this connection, Tirzah, a former public school teacher, did not believe

that any salaried person would have the same interest in both the character and educational goals that she had for her own children. She stated:

That person that's being paid to take care of my child or teach them, it is from a different standpoint. They aren't going to love my child as much as I love them, or like them, or care for them, or care that it's not just the material I want them to learn . . . I would rather them have learned the character, Godly character, and to be living for Him in the end. (interview, October 10, 2013)

Furthermore, Tirzah remembered fellow college students who had been “passed along” without learning foundational material in high school, and thus they struggled in college. Peter and Tirzah came to the conclusion that “it would be better to have (our) kids taught by somebody who is a teacher and would give them the same values that we hold as parents and who wouldn't just push 'em along” (interview, October 10, 2013).

*When asked about my own reasons for homeschooling, I often referred to my six years as a teacher of junior high students in a Christian school. After graduating from college, I taught history, science, and mathematics to sixth through eighth graders. I discovered that when my male students reached puberty, it was no longer “cool” to learn or do well in school. Some of my brightest male students began acting “dumb,” seemingly in order to impress the girls. There were financial pressures as well, unique to a private school. I counseled one mother of a struggling student on the need to assist her child with homework. The mother replied that she was so tired from working to pay for her children’s tuition that she had no energy to assist her son. As a result, I determined that when given the chance, for the sake of my children’s*

*education, my wife and I would homeschool our own children. We desired to reinforce our belief that learning was vital to eventual success in life.*

### **Considerations**

Even though the overriding motivation for these parents was control, it did not seem to be control for its own sake or from fear of other ideas. Murphy correctly referred to control as a “vehicle to meet other goals” (p. 77). Van Galen’s (1988) division of “ideological” and “pedagogical” motivations may be overly limiting, but helps to clarify some of the considerations these parents made in choosing homeschooling.

### **Ideological Considerations**

*There is no social practice outside of ideology (Hall, 1985, p. 103).*

*Both the liberal and conservative arms of the {homeschooling} movement also see homeschooling not as an isolated activity but as part and parcel of a more comprehensive worldview (Murphy, 2012, p. 23).*

*Through the habitus, the structure which has produced it, governs practice (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 95).*

My findings suggest that each of the three families expressed their parental, child rearing, and educational philosophies within the confines of a Christian habitus. Bourdieu (1977) explained habitus as “systems of durable, transposable dispositions” (p. 72). Lawson and Garrod (2001) defined habitus as “the cultural context into which individuals are socialized” (p. 106). The parents in this study desired to control their children’s cultural context so that the children would

embrace and then maintain certain values.

**Religious values.** The literature strongly supports the notion that the desire to pass on religious values is a motivating factor for homeschooling (Lines, 1991; Mayberry, Knowles, Ray & Marlow, 1995; Ray, 1997; Ray, 2004). Thus the ability to have some control over the cultural influences of one's own children makes homeschooling a logical choice. Kunzman (2010) wrote, "The relative freedom and flexibility of homeschooling allows parents to craft an educational environment that reflects their values and priorities, and religious conservatives find such an option particularly appealing" (p. 18).

Even though none of the families in the study had any acquaintance with each other, and they all attended independent churches, a common set of teachings unified them. The Chens were members of the Wisconsin Christian Home Educators Association, and the association's Statement of Faith included assertions regarding the inerrancy and authority of the Bible, the Trinity, the Virgin Birth of Christ, the need for personal salvation due to the entrance of sin in the world, and the efficacy of the death of Jesus Christ as payment for the penalty of man's sin (Wisconsin Christian Home Educators Association, 2016). These core beliefs were consistent with conservative Christianity as well as other homeschool groups (Advanced Training Institute, 2016; Christian Liberty Academy, 2016). They were also foundational to the churches that were part of the Wisconsin Fellowship of Baptist Churches (WFBC, 2016), a group of independent, non-affiliated churches, loosely

connected for purposes of fellowship. Both the Greenes and the Andersons were members of churches belonging to this fellowship.

### **From Ideology to Homeschooling**

None of the parents in this study had originally planned to homeschool. In fact, both Hannah Chen and Tirzah Greene initially resisted the idea when their husbands first suggested it. Unlike the findings of Knutson (2007), none of the mothers had negative school experiences related to their own children that necessitated pulling them from a conventional school to begin homeschooling. On the contrary, for two of the families, their own schooling experiences were positive. John and Meg both “liked school” growing up, and John referred to himself as “weird” because he did so (interview, Feb 22, 2013). Hannah Chen flourished in school, both musically and academically. She took lessons on the harp, violin, and clarinet through her public school, as well as additional piano instruction at a local college. Administrators noticed Hannah’s academic abilities and selected her for “gifted” classes and programs from early on. She graduated from a magnet high school for college bound students. Fred Chen, in much the same way, remarked that he “excelled” in school (interview, July 08, 2013), although the loneliness he faced at a remote boarding school clearly affected him.

Each of the families adjusted their thinking regarding the educational choices they faced. The Andersons faced a growing sense of how schooling outside the control of the home affected one’s ideology. When the Andersons purchased their

first home, they had decided to locate within a school district that had a reputation for quality academic instruction and educational opportunity. The Andersons valued education, and Meg initially thought: “This is where I’ll put my children” (interview, Feb 22, 2013); however, as Meg began talking with her neighbors she discovered “the philosophies that you get in a large (high) school.” She was not pleased. “The philosophies were just not the worldview I wanted my children to grow up with . . . I wanted something different for my children” (interview, February 22, 2013). Thus, for John and Meg, ideological control trumped other considerations, at least initially.

One aspect of habitus, and by extension its related ideology, is the design of structures so that certain things can be efficiently passed to the next generation (Bourdieu, 1977). Tirzah Greene, drawing upon her own experiences in school, did not like the effect of the school environment on her own character. In reflection she said: “I just cringe at the person I turned into (in high school), and it was a result of the environment that I was in” (interview, October 10, 2013). For Peter and Tirzah Greene, character development was an outgrowth of ideology, and traits such as responsibility and attention to detail sprang from a Biblical foundation. To them, it was vitally important to control the school environment so that those character qualities could be emphasized.

In the same manner, Fred Chen spoke of his responsibility to instruct his children in spiritual things with the goal of presenting a Christian worldview to them (interview, July 30, 2013). As a child, he missed that interaction with his parents, and thus wanted to insure that his children did not lack guidance and

instruction, especially during key times. Fred, in speaking of one of his daughters, commented on her intelligence and success. Yet, at the same time he wanted her to learn “to enjoy what it means to be a woman” (interview, July 30, 2013). This desire to ensure ideological guidance led Fred to homeschooling, and he saw it as his duty to discharge it (interview, July 30, 2013).

### **Anomalies within Ideological Consistency**

Ideological consistency, however, is not absolute. Kunzman (2010) said of the religious movement popular among homeschoolers: “It seems more useful to conceive of fundamentalism as existing on a continuum of sorts, with varying levels of rejection, resistance, compromise, and accommodation toward the broader culture, depending upon the particular issue” (p. 20). This statement could probably refer to all religions. Still, the Andersons, Chens, and Greenes were not carbon copies of each other. There were differences between them and from some of the common beliefs of the wider homeschool population.

Each of the three families indicated that musical study and experience were an outgrowth of ideology; however, the application of this principle differed. The Greene and Anderson families eschewed popular music, especially jazz, rock, and hip-hop. Both the parents and the children were united in that belief. The Chens, however, while rejecting secular manifestations of those musical styles, had a different opinion when it came to Christian expressions of the same styles. The Chen children wholeheartedly embraced what they called “Christian contemporary” style.



The parents permitted it as well; however, they did question some of its textual content (interview, July 22, 2013).

Another such issue was what some homeschoolers refer to as “courtship,” a method of finding a spouse for one’s child. This belief rejects what it considers to be the American culture’s view of casual dating (Institute in Basic Life Principles, 2016). With courtship, the parents disallow teenage dating and rather search for a suitable candidate when they feel their child is ready. The parents interview both the candidate and the candidate’s parents, and then set aside supervised times for the prospective couple to meet and interact. General contact between the sexes is avoided unless supervised by the parents. Neither the Greenes nor the Chens mentioned this topic, but John Anderson did. He did not support this notion. Contrary to courtship supporters, he supported interaction between boys and girls, even in high school. He said:

I guess I am really the unique side (from the courtship notion), because I’d prefer my daughters to have a boyfriend while they are in high school. Not a serious boyfriend, just so they can learn how to talk with guys, so they can have questions while they’re under my authority. . . . Helen doesn’t have a boyfriend, but she has friends who are boys that she talks to a lot. It’s relationship building that I want to be involved in. I want them to know what’s appropriate, what’s not appropriate as far as different things. Right or wrong, that’s the path that I have taken; we’ll see how it turns out. So far it’s going okay. (interview, February 22, 2013)

*My wife and I were connected with a church that espoused courtship as a badge of authentic Christianity. This church had a number of homeschooling families in the membership. The conviction of courtship strengthened over time in the church. The*

*church did not sponsor or permit dating activities. Fraternization between the sexes was avoided, and if noticed, the parties faced discipline and censure. Matches that occurred without the approval of the leadership were boycotted. The situation was distasteful, and we eventually changed churches.*

### **Pedagogical Considerations**

*A parent's personal philosophy of learning shapes decisions about the instructional program (Murphy, 2012, p. 107).*

For these three families of Christian homeschoolers, a Christian habitus influenced their philosophy of learning. Murphy correctly notes that this shapes the instructional program. At the same time, the well-educated parents in this study referred to pedagogic considerations that in the beginning helped to tip the scale in favor of homeschooling, and also encouraged each family to maintain its commitment to the practice.

Control was still evident in pedagogical choices. Parents controlled decisions regarding philosophy of education, method of instruction delivery, and course sequence usually decided by the professional educator. The parents in this study permitted their children some freedom in organizing their daily schedule. The yearly calendar and course sequence were negotiated between parents and children, especially as the children reached junior high school. Both parents and children seemed to appreciate both the control as well as the personal autonomy that this control afforded.

## **Educational Philosophy**

One of homeschooling's attractions is the opportunity to put into practice an integrated, all-encompassing educational philosophy. Murphy (2012) stated, "homeschooling happens because parents want to integrate values and beliefs into all dimensions of the curriculum" (p. 89). These are not only religious beliefs, but educational ones as well. Homeschool conferences (Wisconsin CHEA, 2016) hold educational workshops that aid parents in understanding that homeschooling can be different from the standard educational paradigm. Wenger (1998) described the prevailing notion as follows:

Our institutions, to the extent that they address issues of learning explicitly, are largely based on the assumption that learning is an individual process, that it has a beginning and an end, that it is best separated from the rest of our activities, and that it is the result of teaching. (p. 3)

In contrast, these homeschoolers considered learning a way of life and not tied to the hours and schedule of a traditional school. Tirzah Greene said: "Homeschooling—you can do it any time" (interview, October 31, 2013). She mentioned that if her children wanted to spend more time on a topic, or examine it in more detail, they had the freedom to do that. They would then talk about it "over the dinner table" or even "do it at night." Thus to her, homeschooling more accurately pictured "what life is really like" (interview, October 31, 2013). John Anderson said that he viewed homeschooling as "more of a lifestyle" than a part of the day. He recommended considering homeschooling as "your day," not just 8:00–3:00 (interview, May 17, 2013). John said of his wife: "Meg has been homeschooling

since the children were born because she's been reading to the kids, teaching them, singing, doing everything" (interview, April 19, 2013). Fred Chen referenced a biblical passage, Deuteronomy 6:7, to support the notion that instruction is all day long: "when you rise up, when you walk along the way, and when you sit down" (interview, July 22, 2013).

Another aspect of an integrated educational philosophy is that learning is not tied to a specific place. Hannah Chen recalled telling her son to prepare for a literature test while on a trip to Taiwan. She said that he "went out and sat in a tree with his book" (interview, July 22, 2013). The Greene children each worked at desks in their bedrooms, although Tirzah Greene established her workstation at the kitchen table. The Chen children had individual school desks in the basement, but the children worked throughout the house and were not tied to that location. The Andersons did their group work around the dining room table, and the family computer was set up in the kitchen/dining area, but the girls worked in other areas as well.

A third aspect of an integrated philosophy is that learning is not limited to what is taught in the traditional classroom. The Greene parents made sure their children were trained in archery, the use of firearms, the ability to process a deer carcass (Peter Greene was a butcher), as well as various aspects of fishing. Helen Anderson spent a great deal of time and money perfecting skills as a wildlife photographer and subsequent blogger. The Andersons sent their daughters to work in a cooking truck at the Indiana State Fair so they could learn business skills, a

strong work ethic, and the ability to communicate with customers. Hannah Chen desired that her own children learn things beyond academics. She said:

I grew up in a household where my mom's main mantras were: "Go practice your piano," "Go do your homework," and I was never exposed to cooking and household chores, and things like that. I think that is a part of life skills as well, to learn how to do laundry, how to cut the grass, take care of the house, how to cook a meal, how to show hospitality. Those are all, I think, Godly characteristics, as well as being good stewards of what God's given you. My husband does what he can to teach the children how to do home repairs and car repairs. That's all part of home education, not just academics. (interview, July 30, 2013)

*One of our sons expressed at a young age an interest in learning building trades. We arranged for him to work with an experienced builder several days a week in an apprentice type situation while he was in high school. Homeschooling afforded that flexibility. He learned how to hang drywall, frame buildings, install roofing, and run wiring. In college he pursued academic training. After completing his undergraduate degree, he utilized those "other skills" to form a highly successful contracting business that required him to utilize both academic and practical skills.*

### **Flexibility of Schedule**

One of the benefits that homeschoolers report is flexibility of schedule. Ray (2004) said of homeschooling: "the learning program is flexible and highly individualized" (p. 2). This flexibility can take many different forms. One aspect is the ability to individually order daily classes. Both Matthias (14) and Michelle Chen (12) mentioned enjoying the fact that they could choose the daily sequence of their classes (interview, July 30, 2013). Katie Greene liked saving her favorite class

(history) for the end of the day (interview, October 22, 2013). Both Helen (17) and Susan Anderson (14) enjoyed alternating easier classes (vocabulary and literature) with difficult ones (math and chemistry). Helen offered:

Well the biggest thing for me is the flexible time schedule and being able to do the different classes when you want to do them. Not necessarily when they say: "OK first you do gym, and then you do math and then you do science, and then you do writing" or something like that. Because I prefer to do a harder class, like chemistry or something that takes a lot of brainpower, and then instead of taking a break or something, I'll just do an easier class, like vocab, which still takes brainpower, but it's not deep thinking, you just memorize the words. (interview, July 25, 2013)

Susan Anderson (14) also said that practicing her clarinet for 15 minutes between classes allowed her to do something she enjoyed, as well as keep her embouchure from becoming too tired. Additionally, when she got tired of "looking at books," she would go to the piano and "play three songs," which she described as "banging" and then go back to her books (interview, April 09, 2013). Matthias Chen (14) enjoyed having the freedom to spend extra time on more difficult subjects, as well as moving on when he satisfied easier studies. He disliked having to "put time in" just to satisfy the prescribed class period length (interviews, July 09, July 30, 2013).

Flexibility can also refer to the year in school in which certain courses are to be taken. Helen Anderson appreciated the fact that "we can take harder classes earlier than we could if we had been in a public school setting" (interview, April 9, 2013). When Helen was in the 8th grade, she and her mother planned her high school classes, and like many homeschooling children, accelerated the process.

According to Helen:

OK. I need to have this many classes of this, and I need to have this many classes of this and so then we planned it out . . . This class goes under this category and that class goes under that category. We planned out how it was all going so that I would graduate with the same, not exactly the same classes, but the same knowledge as if I were getting an actual diploma from a school. (interview, July 25, 2013)

### **Calendar**

Flexibility of schedule can relate to the yearly school calendar as well. Susan (14) and Helen (17) Anderson said that their family enjoyed being able to visit attractions such as museums and parks in off-season times. They could go to Florida in February and then make up the time at the end of the year. They could spend time helping a grandparent or volunteering because of the freedom of schedule (interview, April 09, 2013, and July 25, 2013).

Hanna (2011) wrote that field trips were more common with homeschoolers than in regular schools. An Internet search connecting homeschooling and field trips resulted in recommendations for nearly every state, as well as suggestions for integrating lesson content with the experience. These families enjoyed visiting cultural and commercial sites as part of the school day. Hannah Chen remarked: "There are field trips galore" (interview, July 22, 1013). Christina Chen (10) mentioned visiting a "canyon thing," although her mother said it was "a quarry" (interview, July 9, 2013). Christina reported liking the Buddy Squirrel Cheesy Popcorn place because of the free samples (interview, July 24, 2013). George Greene (11) mentioned the Milwaukee Zoo (interview, October 31, 2013) and the

Andersons, except John, noted the International Crane Foundation. John did not understand what was special about viewing and then photographing cranes (interview, April 19, 2013).

Travel was not only local. The Chens were veterans of many trips to Taiwan and the experiences that accompanied such travel. Helen Anderson participated in a missionary trip to an orphanage to Nicaragua. Susan Anderson travelled with her children's choir to another state to participate in a competition. The Greenes frequently "went up north" for hunting and fishing.

*Our family enjoyed "extended travel" that a flexible homeschool schedule permitted. We formed a travelling string group. Our eight children played four violins, two violas, and two cellos that we packed into a 15-passenger van when we travelled to play concerts. For a number of years we would travel both during the school year and for a time in the summer. We performed as far north and east as Moncton, New Brunswick, Canada, and as far south as Tampa, Florida. One summer we played concerts westward to the Pacific Ocean and back. We scheduled tours to Colorado on two separate occasions, with many other engagements in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and New England. As a result of this travel, we were able to visit many historical and cultural sites, as well as a number of geographical wonders in both the United States and Canada, while at the same time maintaining the children's school studies. Extensive travel can be enriching, and underscores the acquisition of cultural capital.*



Because of homeschooling's flexibility, several Greene children mentioned the idea of "making up the time," or even working ahead. Katie Greene said, "I work on Fridays at an organic garden, and so if it wasn't for home schooling, I wouldn't be able to (work) because I can just get ahead in my classes, and I can still go there" (interview, October 17, 2013). George Greene also mentioned spending the night at his grandparent's house in order to help them. Then he could go fishing, knowing that he could make up the time before or after (interview, October 31, 2013).

### **Personalized Learning**

The learning program in homeschooling is highly personalized (Ray, 2004, p. 2). For the Andersons, this meant individualized instruction. John Anderson said: "if you teach one kid a certain way and try to teach all of them that way, it's probably not going to work with your own children" (interview, May 17, 2013). Helen Anderson (17) said that the advantage to homeschooling was a personalized education. "It's not just a generic, this is what you get and if you don't learn it, if you don't understand it, oh well." Rather it was: "It's OK. This isn't working for you. We'll try and figure out what will." Helen also enjoyed the opportunity to take classes at her level:

If you are behind or excelling quicker than someone in a classroom, then you can kind of have a more personalized education and take classes that you need, or classes that are taught the way that you would learn. (interview, July 25, 2013)

Helen's mother Meg echoed the same sentiments. She said that one of the advantages to homeschooling was the ability to tailor instruction to meet each

child's personal needs. She added:

Some children need more attention in certain areas and some need significantly less. So, where they need less, then they can advance quicker, where they need more, then they can get a better, deeper understanding of it. (interview, May 17, 2013)

Meg's statements support the writings of Tomlinson (2001, 2014), who wrote of the differentiated classroom, where instruction is adjusted according to the needs of the individual students. Tomlinson (2014) argued for the need to "attend to their differences" (p. 49), meaning each child's unique characteristics, including their differing academic aptitudes. It seems as if Meg Anderson intuitively put this into practice with her own children.

## **Environment**

Knowles (1991) found that parents' recollections of school and of learning environments figured prominently in their thinking about home education. Murphy (2012) noted that parents' desire to protect children from unhealthy learning environments was a consideration in the homeschooling decision. In the three families I studied, the Andersons and Chens described good school experiences; however, both Peter and Tirzah Greene said the environment of the schools they had attended was harmful. Tirzah believed the environment caused her to become "loud" and to develop "a terrible mouth" (interview, October 10, 2013).

Peter attended a public grade school and private Christian high school. Peter said that discipline in his high school classroom was poor and that teachers "played favorites" (interview, October 10, 2015). He also noted that he had five principals in

three years. This produced a poor learning environment. His opinion of his elementary school experience was that several teachers showed little interest in the students and were teaching for the paycheck. The following experience was particularly irksome for him:

In the fifth grade, our teacher said we needed to memorize all 50 capitals of all 50 states for a test we were going to have. So I looked forward to this, and I really studied hard for a couple weeks, and I memorized every state capital . . . I still know them; to this day I could probably name all of them. I really did a lot of work and was excited to take the test and do my best. I was really deflated when the teacher handed out the test and said: “Well, I decided to let you guys use your books for the test.” Here I had spent all this time memorizing all the state capitals, and apparently she didn’t want to hurt any kids’ feelings if they didn’t prepare and study them. So I guess all the “sluff-off” students in the class would get the same grade I did, even though I had prepared well and done my best. (interview, October 10, 2013)

The ability to control the learning environment in the home was noted.

Matthias Chen (14) appreciated the quiet atmosphere of his home: “I guess the classroom setting (in the home) is probably quieter (than a public or private school), so you get to do your homework” (interview, July 24, 2013). For the Andersons it was different. Helen (17) loved music and said “I could listen to music all day while studying.” However, she noted that some of her classes were more difficult, and said that if she listened to music, she wouldn’t “pay attention” to her books. She said: “music is more interesting than my books,” and “I prefer music to schoolwork.” So she preferred a silent atmosphere, especially for studying classes like physics (interview, April 9, 2013). Susan (14), on the other hand, said that music helped her study. She noted: “All of my life, especially with my other sisters

playing piano, I've had music just playing through my head, so like whenever I study, whenever I need to focus, I listen to music" (interview, April 9, 2013).

### **Family Considerations**

*The family becomes the defensive bulwark and sanctuary wherein children are prepared for eventual engagement with the world (Kunzman, 2009, p. 6).*

Family matters to homeschoolers. Hannah Chen stated, "Family is very important, especially in the light of my husband's upbringing" (interview, July 30, 2013). It follows that the homeschoolers in this study desired healthy family relationships. Mayberry and Knowles (1989) summarized the motivation of one group of homeschoolers as follows: "control of a child's education guaranteed not only their (homeschooling parents') ability to monitor the content of the curriculum but to ensure strong family ties" (p. 217).

Conservative Christian teachings espouse strong family relationships and deem these relationships as vital for future success (Vogrin, 2016). Tirzah Greene said: "We're building the relationship and the bond and the trust that I pray will last a lifetime, and that when it comes time for the bigger decisions in life, it's just natural for them to come to us, because they've been doing it all their lives" (interview, October 31, 2013).

Building relationships takes time. Peter Greene remarked:

You just have so much more time to teach them at their own level, you know, answer not only school questions but life questions—just build a stronger bond, rather than, you know, we see them for maybe an hour in the morning and a couple of hours in the evening (interview, October 31, 2013).

Tirzah Greene suggested that having the time to work through problems together resulted in strong family ties. She said that a “family that has bonded together will be able to stick together when those hard times come.” She also related the following issue with her own daughter:

I know that we've had the time to really work with the children, as I look back over the years that we've homeschooled—really work with the children, whether it was my oldest, who was so frustrated at trying to blend her sounds so she could read, and just wanting to give up. Now she absolutely won't put a book down. So it—it's neat to be able to help them through those struggles and see the “ah-ha” moments. (interview, October 31, 2013).

The extended time and contact, however, also caused Hannah to recognize her own shortcomings: “I recognize that I have a bad temper. I can get angry with them (her children). I have a lot of pride.” On occasion Hannah needed to apologize and asked her children's forgiveness (interview, July 30, 2013).

Lyman (2000) reported the debate as to whether family-based or school-based socialization was preferable. For the Anderson family, it was not an “either-or” choice. Their family's mantra was, “We home educate. We do not home isolate” (interview, Feb 22, 2013). John and Meg therefore rejected what they called “helicopter parenting,” a situation where parents “hover” and thus control a child's every decision (Padilla-Walker & Nelson, 2012). Instead, John and Meg said that children needed the freedom to make decisions with guidance and within certain boundaries. On two occasions the Andersons gave their girls the choice whether or not to remain in homeschooling. Both times the girls chose to continue. The parents permitted and even encouraged their children to participate in a community musical

organization, even though they recognized that there would be conflicts in terms of values and musical choices. The Andersons recognized the need for both levels of socialization, but still desired to remain in control.

The Greene and Chen families also demonstrated that family-based socialization did not mean isolation from other adults and children. Both of these families deliberately chose to participate in a variety of activities that brought them into contact with neighbors, friends, extended family, and professionals whom they included as part of their children's education.

### **Chapter Summary**

The Anderson, Chen, and Greene families represented demographic factors found in the literature: well-educated parents with the fathers employed in professional/technical jobs, larger family size, suburban homes, and the mother as primary teacher. The Asian heritage of the Chen family is not often represented in homeschooling circles.

I found that the common thread for the motivation to homeschool was the desire to exercise control over the instruction and socialization of the children. The parents sought to integrate a unified system of instruction that would enable them to inculcate the values of their Christian habitus, which included character training and individualized instruction, and also guide their children in decision-making skills.

The research literature noted a common stereotype of homeschoolers, that of educational or social backwardness. Overall, I did not find the children either

educationally or socially backward. Educationally, Hannah Chen reported high achievement test scores for her oldest children. In my observations, the children appeared to be engaged in the learning process, and Michelle (12) cultivated extra-curricular writing. Hannah (17) and Susan (14) Anderson studied subjects earlier than the standard sequence, maintained disciplined educational schedules, and participated in blogging, photography, and musical transcription. Tirzah Greene established daily, weekly, and yearly lesson plans for each of her children, and recorded each child's progress in a collective database. In my observations, the children were quick to explain the things they were learning, what was difficult and challenging, as well as their educational likes and dislikes.

Conversations with me were easiest with the Greene and Anderson children. The Chen children were more reserved; some might say shy. All of the children mentioned their friends and things they liked to do together. Most of the children's friends were from their churches, although the Anderson children maintained contact with friends outside their church from their homeschool co-op. The co-op represented families whose values, although Christian, would have been considered less restrictive than those of the Anderson family.

The following chapter addresses the question of why the families included music as an integral part of their homeschooling. I explore each parent's musical background and what parents and children said regarding the emotional, character, and pedagogical issues they considered when affirming music.

## CHAPTER FIVE WHY MUSIC?

Homeschooling statutes in the state of Wisconsin do not require musical instruction (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2016). Therefore, a homeschooler's decision to promote musical study for each child, and to make music a significant part of the day, is a deliberate one (Fehrenbach, 1995; Nichols, 2005). This chapter addresses my second research question: *How do parents decide whether or not to include music as part of their homeschool? What factors influence their decision?*

My findings suggest that parental musical background was a factor for two of the families. The parents in the third family had a limited background in music, yet still believed musical study was worth the time and financial investment for each child. The positive influence of siblings upon the desire for musical study is noted. For all three families, commitment to learning music in connection with worship was primary. Musical study also afforded, in the minds of these parents and children, lessons in character development, a common aspect of Christian habitus. Additionally, both parents and children noted educational and emotional benefits inherent with musical learning that may or may not have been initial motivations for musical study, but were mentioned as beneficial. Finally, I explore the theoretical construct of cultural capital as it relates to participants' musical involvement.



## Parental Musical Backgrounds

### John and Meg Anderson

John and Meg Anderson were musical. Though John did not come from a musical family, he studied piano, and in fact, was his daughters' first piano teacher. In Meg's home, her parents often played recordings of what Meg refers to as "elevator" music. When I asked her to explain the term, she mentioned the recording *Mantovani Strings Play "Exodus."* Meg's father could sing but her mother was unable to match pitch. Meg, her sister, and her brother sang for church services during their youth. In addition to her involvement in high school musical productions, Meg also studied classical organ.

Both John and Meg still play the piano, and their home had two recent model upright pianos. John said that he occasionally goes to the piano to practice (especially after hearing his daughters' musical successes), and that Meg accompanies her daughters for solos and duets at church. When John and Meg considered their daughters' piano skills in comparison to their own, John remarked: "Wow! Imagine how much better we could have been playing the piano if we would have actually practiced" (interview, Feb 22, 2013).

Meg's first course of study in college was music. One of the required classes had a reputation among the students as the "weed out" class, taught by the "weed out" professor. According to Meg's music major friends, this professor's mission was to try to talk people out of the music program, or at least have them realize they did

not belong. When Meg was asked to compose music for a drum solo, she realized she had no background for that kind of writing. To her, the message was clear: she was out of her element. She switched to nursing, which incorporated her love for all things scientific.

### **Fred and Hannah Chen**

Hannah began studying piano at the age of four—something she said was in keeping with Asian tradition (observation, July 11, 2013). At that time, her mother also purchased a 1/16" size violin, "but it was so squeaky and so unbearable that my father said: 'No, stop that' " (interview, July 8, 2013). Hannah progressed quickly in her piano studies, and was one of four students selected to study with a well-known college professor.

Not only did Hannah study piano, but other instruments as well. Hannah's public school district had a program whereby any student could rent an instrument and receive lessons for a nominal charge. Hannah took advantage of this, and studied the clarinet, violin, cello, and even harp, in addition to the piano. She commented on this time in her life:

In the summer time, pretty much a lot of times growing up, that's what we did every morning between 8:00–12:00. We got dropped off with all our instruments and took lessons . . . It was just so much fun! You go down to the central school district (office), pick out the instrument you wanted, and sign off. (interview, July 8, 2013)

Hannah thrived in her musical studies and won awards on several instruments. She was concertmaster of her youth orchestra, she won second place in

the Milwaukee Area Piano Teacher's Association contest, and also performed piano and clarinet solos at Milwaukee's *Summerfest*. She graduated from high school with honors, while maintaining extensive musical involvement as a clarinetist in the band, violinist in the orchestra, pianist for the jazz ensemble and choir, and accompanist for the Wisconsin School Music Association's (WSMA) Solo and Ensemble contest. One year she accompanied nearly 20 events.

As a math student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, she continued her musical involvement. She had intended to become part of the marching band, but missed the first rehearsal. Instead, she joined the concert band and also took piano lessons. Her piano teacher was impressed with her ability and encouraged Hannah to major in music, but Hannah decided against it, dropped her lessons, and instead focused her energies on helping the musical program of a Chinese church.

Fred came from a family that appreciated music. His physician parents loved to play recordings of classical music, and his mother played the piano. He said of the musical atmosphere of his home:

Fred: Actually, I did have a lot of musical background. My mom, my dad— they loved classical music and blasted it a lot.

David: And opera too, right?

Fred: Opera, and actually I could recognize a lot of pieces growing up. My mom played piano really well. In fact, she claimed she had the first Steinway ever in all of Southern Taiwan. At the time, it cost my grandfather, who was a doctor, a fortune, Mom said it (the piano) cost as much as what an apartment building would have cost. (interview, July 8, 2013)

Even with musical parents and a home atmosphere rich with musical listening, Fred's musical abilities and experiences stood in direct contrast to

Hannah's. Fred said his mom wanted him to play the piano as a young person, but Fred said: "I screamed and I hollered, so I guess she gave up after a month. I wish she hadn't" (interview, July 8, 2013). When he came to the United States to attend elementary school, his brother took up the trumpet and Fred the trombone. Fred said that he wasn't really that interested in music. Even today, Fred's singing is regarded as "off." Hannah said: "When Fred sings at the pulpit, they turn off the microphone (laughs)." Fred added: "They turn off the microphone all the time (laughs)" (interview, July 8, 2013). Fred did try his hand at the guitar, and impressed Hannah with his skill when they first met. However, Fred only knew one song. He had practiced that one song so many times it was second nature, but he couldn't play anything else.

### **Peter and Tirzah Greene**

Peter believed his musical background was limited, even though he took several years of piano lessons in elementary school. When I asked him which of his musical skills were most and least developed, his answer was "big zipper," meaning he did not believe he had any musical skills (interview, Oct 10, 2013). His parents were not musical, although he had an aunt who sang in a trio and made a gospel recording. His parents did not play music in the home, although in the car they listened to country and rock. Peter never sang in any kind of school group.

Similarly, Tirzah's musical experiences were limited. She never had any private musical lessons. Her parochial school did not have a choir, and her general

music class was basic. By the time she reached high school (she was the fourth sibling in the high school), the “non musically involved” example of her older siblings made it easy for her to not participate. She said that now she enjoys “making a joyful noise to the Lord on Sunday” but does not participate in the church choir (interview, October 10, 2013).

Tirzah Greene’s parents were much the same. Her mother knew the accordion, but never pulled it out to play. Her father’s favorite eight-track selections were “Nadia’s Theme” and “The Wreck of the Edmund Fitzgerald.” Tirzah does remember the music her family played at Christmas time, and has carried on that tradition in her own home.

### **Summary of Parental Musical Background**

Three of the parents had strong musical backgrounds; three did not, yet all ten children from these parents studied music seriously. Eight of the ten played two instruments and the remaining two were anxious to begin an additional instrument. Helen Anderson (17) studied three instruments, even though her intended field of study in college was not music. This interest in music extended beyond the musical background of the parents. The parents, both musical and not, insisted upon musical instruction for their children. Although too early to tell, none of the children at the time of this research aspired to become professional musicians. Still, they enjoyed the study of music and saw many benefits from musical involvement.

### **Influence of Siblings**

In the Anderson and Greene families, older siblings influenced younger ones in decisions to study music. There are three girls in the Anderson family, Linda (19), Helen (17), and Susan (14). Helen said that some of her earliest musical memories were as a 4-year old listening to her older sister Linda's piano lessons. When asked if hearing Linda's lessons caused her to desire her own she said: "very much." Helen's younger sister, Susan (14), also commented: "All of my life, especially with my other sisters playing piano, I've had music just playing through my head" (interview, April 9, 2013).

In the Greene family, Katie (15), George (14), Joshua (13), and Grace (10) all studied piano. George (15) acknowledged that his desire to play the piano came from listening to his older sister Katie play. Joshua (13), who came to the piano late, said it was the influence of his younger sister Grace playing the piano that caused him to start. He said that he began lessons after Grace but had since "passed her up." Grace said it was accompanying her older sister to lessons and hearing her older brother George play that made her want to study piano (interview, Oct 17, 2013).

For two of the families, the children specifically mentioned the influence of older siblings on musical interest. In these cases, the entire family, parents as well as children, provided the impetus and encouragement for musical study and involvement. The parents did not single out "the gifted child," but rather supported and encouraged each child's musical involvement.

### **Music for Worship**

Music is, and has historically been, an important part of a Christian habitus. Pliny the Younger noted in A.D. 112 that, when first-century Christians met together on the first day of the week, they sang to Christ (Pliny, Stevenson, ed., 1974). DeNora (2000) wrote: “throughout history and across culture, aesthetic materials have been used to instill and inspire faith” (p. 11). Kang (2011) commented about a “lifelong habitus that every Christian of all ages is engaged in as a part of God’s kingdom” (p. 114), adding that all Christians are to “worship the triune God completely and to love others compassionately” (p. 114). Fehrenbach (1995) noted that “music suitable for use at religious assemblies is an ideal outlet for the fertile minds of children” (p. 10). For the families in this study, musical involvement coalesced these ideas.

Common musical activities when modern Christians gather for worship are congregational singing, age-segregated choirs (although mixed-age choirs are becoming more common in smaller congregations), as well as vocal and instrumental duets, trios, quartets, and various other ensembles. For all three families, a prime motivation for including, emphasizing, and supporting musical activity was its connection to worship in the church.

*My family and I were involved for an extended period of time in a church with a comprehensive music program. Besides congregational singing and choirs for children and adults, there were different instrumental ensembles. These included a 15-member flute choir, 10-member saxophone choir, and a 25-member string ensemble in addition*

*to a brass quintet. My string-playing children received extensive musical training and experience as a result of their participation in the various opportunities provided by the church ministry.*

George Greene (14) said the importance of music revolved around “glorifying God” (interview, October 31, 2013). Peter Greene remarked: “If God thinks it’s (music) important, then I think it’s important too” (interview, October 31, 2013). Peter Greene also said: “If the Lord has given a child a gift musically, a musical ear, or the ability to sing, I think it’s such a blessing to be able to use that (for the church)” (interview, Oct 31, 2013). Michelle Chen (12) believed the importance of music resided in music’s ability to “give glory to God” (interview, July 30, 2013). Hannah Chen commented: “Music can be used to bring about worship” (interview, July 30, 2013). Susan Anderson (14) enjoyed the fact that “you can use it in ministry” (interview, May 16, 2013). Tirzah Greene noted: “this talent can be used in the local church for many, many years to come” (interview, October 31, 2013). Clearly one of the themes expressed by both parents and children alike was the connection of music with worship/ministry.

Meg Anderson wanted her daughter’s training in music to help people “understand the beauty and majesty of the songs (hymns) that have depth and meaning to them.” She also hoped her children would understand the power of music, and thus make appropriate musical choices (interview, February 22, 2013). Fred Chen desired that his children would realize that they had a musical gift that he did not possess, and that they should “use it for God’s glory” and be skilled enough



so they would “be able to serve His church” (interview, July 30, 2013). Hannah Chen agreed and hoped that her children would be able to “lead children’s Sunday School in worship.” She also prayed that her family could be “an outreach to others,” mainly in the church but also in the community (interview, July 30, 2013). Peter Greene related an account of how he and a pianist friend helped with the cleanup of damage caused by Hurricane Katrina. His friend was able to play the piano for the services at a heavily damaged church in Mississippi. Peter commented on the appreciation of the people for this small gesture and desired this ability for his own children (interview, October, 31, 2013).

### **Character Considerations**

In the minds of many Christian homeschoolers, education extends beyond the acquisition of knowledge. Fred Chen said: “We are called to disciple our children” (interview, July 30, 2013). This involves the holistic shaping of each child. Kunzman (2010) supports this:

Homeschooling is a shaping not only of intellect but—even more crucially—of character. This means more than just moral choices of right and wrong; character is developed through the inculcation of an overarching Christian worldview that guides those moral choices. (p. 23)

Homeschoolers stress both academic and character development in their children, but often consider character more important. Tirzah Greene said she “would rather them (her children) have the character, Godly character, and to be living for Him in the end” than to achieve academic success (interview, October 10, 2013). Hannah Chen said: “I think there is a lot of character training at the

homeschool time” (interview, July 8, 2013). The families specifically applied this to the reason why they supported musical study. Hannah Chen said that learning music was a character issue that involved discipline, focus, and a teachable outlook (observation, July 24, 2013). Hannah said that she and her husband were most interested in their daughter’s character development: “If she becomes a great musician but she becomes a ‘Tiger Mom’ I’ve failed” (interview, July 30, 2013). Tirzah Greene, in response to my question: “So, doing music was to help with her (Katie’s) character development?” replied, “Absolutely” (interview, October 10, 2013).

One of the reasons these homeschooling parents concentrated on character development was that they believed the benefits transferred to other areas of life. Especially noted by the families was the connection of musical study with discipline. Hannah Chen said that music was “something you learn for discipline.” Then she connected this to a broader application: “If you don’t work hard at something, it is not going to be worth it.” She also noted that the benefits were long-term rather than immediate: “You won’t see the value of it until the future (interview, July 8, 2013). Meg Anderson said: “To really play an instrument, it requires time, it requires discipline, it requires a desire to better yourself” (interview, May 17, 2013). The children noted this connection as well. Matthias Chen (14) said that music was important because “it gives you discipline and it helps you learn and work hard” (interview, July 30, 2013). Helen Anderson (17) said: “I’ve learned discipline (from studying music, because I have to practice it, I have to memorize, I have to work

everyday on it or else it will go downhill” (interview, July 25, 2013). Her sister Susan (14) remarked that musical study not only afforded her “techniques and the skills, but a lot of self-discipline” (interview, July 25, 2013).

The research literature on character development features articles on how specific subjects can be used to teach character. There is some discussion in the literature as to whether the proper metaphor in character education should be “molding clay” or “planting seeds” (Linkins, Niemiec, Gillham, & Mayerson, 2015). For homeschoolers, both have validity: planting seeds via religious instruction, and molding clay by careful oversight and correction. The thoughtful homeschooling parent must constantly attend to the character development of each child. For all three families, musical study was viewed positively in this connection.

The parents emphasized the musical/character connection regardless of whether they believed their children demonstrated special musical aptitude. In fact, most of the parents did not view their children as “gifted.” Meg Anderson, in referring to musical prodigies, said of her own children: “mine were not” (interview, April 19, 2013). John Anderson said:

Our children are very talented in their piano playing, and their other instruments, but neither one of us think our children are gifted. It doesn’t come naturally to them; they have to work at it, so I think their work is a good benefit. (interview, May 17, 2013)

Hannah Chen (the parent with the most musical background and training) remarked: “You know I’ve come to terms that I will not have children bound for Juilliard, or ever probably anything like that. And I’m OK with that. I hope that they

can enjoy it (music) for their lives” (interview, July 30, 2013). Even Tirzah Greene commented: “Without having a musical background, I need to have somebody who can communicate to me their (her children’s) progress or lack thereof” (interview, October 22, 2013). Music was, for these families, something every child did, regardless of aptitude.

### **Educational Considerations**

*It appears that the parents’ choices for music education are rooted in their reasons for including music in their homeschool curriculum, which is in turn linked to their fundamental philosophy of education (Nichols, 2005, p. 37).*

As Nichols noted, a parent’s philosophy of education provides the undergirding rationale for musical study. For the parents in this study, it seemed that the primary motivation was religious; however, as each set of parents weighed other benefits of musical study, they decided that intentional musical study was worth the investment of time and money. These considerations included music as a “rounding out of education,” as a continual educational challenge, as well as training in focus, time management, and accountability. In addition, the children listed benefits of musical study that transferred to other areas of life.

Tirzah Greene decided that her oldest child needed musical instruction to “round out her education.” She said that music was beneficial because of its challenge for her oldest daughter, Katie (15), and then later on for all of her children. Tirzah noted that musical study was practical, hands-on, and emphasized not only auditory learning, but also kinesthetic (interview, October 31, 2013). She

also said that since Katie's other academic subjects had come easily to her and music did not, Tirzah felt that Katie needed to learn something that was difficult.

I didn't want her (Katie) to go through life thinking everything was that easy, because at some point she was going to face something that was more trying, and she did. By the time she got to eighth grade science, she actually had to apply herself. But up until that point, she pretty much breezed through school. So music added a different dimension. (interview, October 10, 2013)

Meg Anderson believed that learning to sing properly was an important part of education. She said that her second daughter started singing with a "country twang" as a young girl. Meg noted that she "couldn't abide that" and decided to enroll her daughter in choir in order to "learn how to sing correctly" (interview, Feb 22, 2013). This comment revealed Meg's notion of cultural capital, although she would not have been acquainted with that term. In her mind, the ability to sing correctly in a "high art" style was preferred over the country sound, which she considered less desirable. Meg clearly guided her daughter in obtaining vocal skills that reflected that thinking.

Helen Anderson (17) was drawn to the notion that music presented a continual challenge. Elliott (1995) wrote: "no endeavor can continue to provide self-growth and enjoyment for long unless both the challenges and the knowledge that define the pursuit become more complex over time" (p. 116). This is what Helen Anderson found with her musical studies.

You can't get bored with music. There's always another instrument, another type of music, another new thing to learn right around the corner. You can't say: "I know everything, this is really boring." There's always some new challenge that can get thrown at you at a

moment's notice or you can find something. And if you think that you know all of the songs that were ever written, then you can always write another song. There's no end to the possibilities of music. (interview, May 16, 2013)

Meg Anderson connected musical study with the ability to focus. She said that her oldest daughter had “attention deficit and focusing issues” as a young child. Meg intentionally began piano studies with her daughter in order to help remedy the problem. Meg's rationale was that “piano requires your sense of touch, your sense of hearing, and your sense of sight,” and one had to integrate all of these in order to play a piece of music. Meg said that piano lessons would help to “control and train her brain” (interview, April 19, 2013). This kind of intervention is not common in the literature. Jackson (2003), in a survey of music therapy methods to treat ADHD concluded: “there was little in the music therapy literature about music therapy treatment for ADHD” (p. 302); however, Meg noticed these symptoms in her daughter and then intuitively selected piano instruction as an intervention therapy.

DeNora (2000) also noted the connection of music and focus. “Music for some respondents was intrinsic to producing environments that afford concentration” (p. 58–59). Susan Anderson (14) described her brain as having two parts, one part filled with random thoughts and the other struggling to focus on a school subject. Her solution was music listening:

Whenever I need to focus, I listen to music. Mostly, like classical—I like Beethoven. And that helps me focus because then I have something else that my brain can think about without actually thinking about it. Then I can look in my book and figure out what it's saying. (interview, April 09, 2013)

DeNora (2000) found that classical music was most often listed as an aid to concentration (p. 59), it was effective in blocking out other sounds (p. 58), and that it structured the “sonic environment” (p. 60–61); however, it should be noted in the Anderson family that John and daughter Helen had the opposite reaction to music listening. They needed absolute quiet in order to concentrate. DeNora (2000) also addressed this:

Not all respondents used music to establish focus. Indeed, to most of the respondents over seventy and to those who were professionally trained musicians, the idea of music as “background” to nearly anything was antithetical. (p. 61)

John Anderson noted that playing an instrument helped one develop time management skills in relation to practice. As a busy insurance professional, he noted the importance of learning that skill and commented: “I think the time management discipline is the biggest benefit that I’ve seen from playing an instrument” (interview, May 17, 2013). This, too, speaks to the notion of cultural capital. John’s interaction with the corporate insurance world demonstrated to him the value of time management, and he applied this lens as he evaluated his daughters’ musical study.

A segment of the homeschool community eschews outside evaluation and oversight. One of the taproots of the movement, and sometimes stereotypically applied, is that of an isolated family with little or no interaction or responsibility to outside society (Gaither, 2008). Contrary to this, two sets of parents mentioned the positive effect of musical instruction related to accountability to others. Meg

Anderson wanted her children to learn responsibility towards other adults, and music lessons presented this opportunity. She said it was important to have her children meet the standards and expectations of their music instructors, not just those she had set for them (interview, May 17, 2013). Although their private teachers were generally, but not always, Christian, the family's involvement with the Indianapolis Children's Choir was a secular undertaking. The parents noted that their children flourished under the accountability expectations of that program.

Similarly, Hannah Chen said that she had found "wonderful partnerships" with private lesson teachers. The Chen family sought out professional teachers who pushed the children, irrespective of religious persuasion. Hannah noted that these teachers were very supportive in helping her children grow as musicians, and that they were "never at odds" (interview, July 30, 2013). Hannah often sat in on the weekly string lessons and made sure that her children met and exceeded their weekly lesson goals. Hannah said that learning all of the notes for the lessons demonstrated "appreciation for the teacher" (interview, July 24, 2013). The family also viewed the expectations and accountability provided by the Milwaukee Youth Symphony as positive.

This kind of accountability, at least musically, permitted the homeschool parents to gain a more accurate picture of how the skill levels of their own children compared with the wider population. Hannah Chen regarded her children's orchestral assignments as verification of the success of her home-based instruction (interview, July 30, 2013).



*We often have homeschooled students apply for the music program of our institution. Their musical ability varies. Some have received rigorous training from well-qualified instructors. The parents of these students located recognized teachers and then made sure their children were prepared for their weekly lessons. On the opposite end of things, we also have had homeschool graduates apply who have taken lessons from unqualified instructors. These students, because their circle of reference is small, have little understanding of the requirements and expectations of a collegiate-level music program.*

*We had a recent homeschool applicant who had received poor instruction in high school but demonstrated talent and commitment. To complicate matters, her parents had little experience with technology, and so their daughter had no computer experience. The parents were not musically discerning, nor were they technologically savvy. Their deficiencies affected their child. This scenario tends to reinforce the import of an informal comment I have heard: "Homeschooling serves to magnify both the strengths and weaknesses of the parents."*

Musical study can aid in developing skills that are transferable to other areas of life. The students in this study recognized this and commented on it. Matthias Chen (14) said that musical study taught him "how to learn," and to "work hard." He felt these skills could be transferred to a job or other parts of school (interview, July 25, 2013). Susan Anderson (14) noted that learning a musical instrument helped her to "organize her life" (interview, July 25, 2013). Helen Anderson (17) recounted the leadership and communication lessons she learned while a member of the

Indianapolis Children's Choir, as well as the way music forced her "out of her comfort zone" (interview, May 16, 2013). George Greene (14) gained an understanding of just how difficult it is to perfect musical skills (interview, October 31, 2013).

### **Emotional Considerations**

*It is a pervasive idea in Western culture that music possesses social and emotional content (DeNora, 2000, p. 21).*

The parents and children in this study recognized the emotional content in music. With the possible exception of the Andersons, musical study for these families did not seem to grow out of these emotional considerations; however, as musical study progressed, these considerations were mentioned as justification for its continuance. The Andersons noted music's power and intentionally taught this to their children. The Chen and Greene families emphasized music's ability to express personal feelings as well as connect with others. Additional emotional considerations mentioned from members of the families included music as a means to relieve frustration, for personal enjoyment, and as an emotional anchor.

John Anderson desired that his children recognize at an early age "what different styles of music can do" (interview, May 17, 2013). Since Meg Anderson said: "music is very powerful to me, almost like a drug," she wanted her children to understand that power (interview, February 22, 2013). Following her parents, Susan Anderson (14) noted: "Music has the power to change lives" (interview, July 25, 2013). Helen Anderson (17) noted this power in connection with film music. She

said that music had a

good control over people's emotions . . . You don't always realize how much the music cues you into wherever the movie's going, or whatever somebody's saying until you don't have the music, and then you go: "It's (the scene) not as important, as big, as monumental as it was before." (interview, May 16, 2013)

DeNora (2000) referred to music as a resource for "entraining and modulating mood" (p. 16). This might refer to one's own mood, or the mood of others. Christina Chen (12) liked "the different feelings you could convey with music" (interview, July 30, 2013). Hannah Chen said: "music has a way of expressing your feelings" (interview, July 30, 2013). Grace Greene (10) learned to "express feeling" in her piano studies (interview, Oct 31, 2013). Katie Greene (15) liked music because "it could touch people's emotions," and playing for others could "brighten their day" (interview, November 5, 2013).

John Anderson said: "Piano is a release for all the girls. Guitar (her third instrument) is very relaxing for Helen" (17). Referring to his oldest daughter, he said: "If she's tense or she's frustrated, she'll go play the piano and she's a completely different person" (interview, April 19, 2013). Katie Greene said that playing certain piano songs always cheers her up (interview, October 22, 2013). Susan Anderson said that piano was her big "stress reliever." She said: "I'll go play a few big songs that make lots of noise and then I can go back to studying" (interview, May 16, 2013).

The children also enjoyed music making for its own sake. This supports Elliott (1995) who wrote: "The actions of music making and music listening often

give rise to experiences of positive or satisfying affect” (p. 109). George Greene (14) liked music because he could play songs that he enjoyed, and because music could be relaxing (interview, October 22, October 31, 2013). Grace Greene (10) liked “learning new songs and playing them” and said it was “kinda fun” (interview, October 22, 2013). Katie Greene (15) said that she enjoyed “making beautiful sounds” (interview, October 22, 2013). Michelle Chen (12) said of music: “It’s fun to get it right. I like the pieces I’m practicing” (interview, July 24, 2013).

DeNora (2000) wrote that music could be a “place or space for ‘work’ or meaning and lifeworld making”(p. 40). Susan Anderson (14) said that one of the things she learned from choir participation was that music was an anchor. She described what she called a “brain reset” when coming into a rehearsal of the children’s choir:

You focus and it bonds the choir together because at that point, you take, you could say, you take your day off, and all of the problems, and you leave them at the door. And so once you come into that room, and you get focused, then you bond with the choir and say like in your brain: “Ok, I’m at ICC (Indianapolis Children’s Choir) and this is what I’m going to do. My job here is to make beautiful music.” (interview, July 25, 2013).

### **Exchange and Cultural Capital**

These homeschool parents invested time and money into the music education of their children. Each family provided the finances and the support to make musical instruction possible and to enable its success. This instruction was given to every child in the family, not only to those who demonstrated special

aptitude. These parents saw instruction as an investment that implied a future benefit or return. Bourdieu (1977) refers to the concept of *exchange*, where a gift implies an obligation on the part of the receiver. The parents believed that if they raised their children according to Biblical standards, the children would be successful, and thus “give back,” not financially, but in the sense of standing in the world (cultural capital). Although the parents did not use Bourdieu’s language, they considered future returns on their investment.

Bourdieu (1977) wrote that the “concept of capital formed the foundation of social life and dictated one’s position within the social order.” He extended the definition of capital beyond economic to include symbolic elements such as “skills (including the time management skills mentioned before), tastes, posture, clothing, mannerisms, material belongings, (and) credentials” (“Habitus,” 2016). Therefore, in the minds of these parents, the acquisition of musical skills provided cultural capital that would yield dividends in the future.

The conservative Christian world values those who can play the piano to accompany congregational singing, perform solos while the collection plate is passed, or sing in the worship service, either as a solo or as part of a group. The homeschool world lauds families who do things as a unit. Homeschool conference presentations are often related to music, but also include some type of family business or enterprise. Demonstrating skills enhances one’s standing, and increases the demand for one’s service. John Anderson, an insurance professional, emphasized the value of time management skills in his professional endeavors, and how that

musical study helped his children in this discipline (interview, May 17, 2013).

Hannah Chen aspired for the group of string players she taught at church to someday help to “lead worship” (interview, July 22, 2013). She rejoiced that other people with whom she had worked in the past had since taken “leadership positions” in other churches and ministries (observation, July 21, 2013). She also looked forward to the time when her own children would be able to “lead the children’s Sunday School in worship” (interview, July 30, 2013). Thus, in Hannah’s mind, the return on her investment was a position of church leadership for each of her own children.

Hannah also noted how the discipline of practicing music, the idea of “working at something” until one achieved “success and mastery,” would enable a person to be recognized, to be singled out for his/her work ethic, and thus rise in the eyes of others (interview, July 30, 2013). Here again, Hannah intuitively recognized the value of this manifestation of cultural capital (status) in relation to future success.

Susan Anderson (14) connected the idea of practicing her musical exercises to getting a job, starting at the “bottom of the chain,” having to do the “dirty work” before you could “work your way up to the top of the company . . . where you get to do what you love best” (interview, July 25, 2013). Susan believed if she dutifully practiced her exercises she would get to play music she loved. She understood the benefit of this mindset, that working this way would someday help her in the workforce.

Tirzah Greene saw the return on musical investment as a way to help others. She and her husband believed that if their children conscientiously maintained their music practicing, that in future years they would be able to be “a blessing to others,” singled out for possessing and developing a skill that would be considered helpful (interview, October 31, 2013). Thus, the members of the parents’ social circle valued musical skill, and therefore the acquisition of music’s perceived cultural capital was considered worthy of pursuit.

I do not believe that this acquisition was the primary motivation of the families. Their primary motivation seemed to be to study music because of its spiritual usefulness, which actually reinforces a Christian habitus. They did not necessarily study music in order to enhance one’s position in the social circle. Still, it did seem that the parents considered these ideas as they evaluated music study.

Hannah Chen commented on the dangers of the quest for musical skill. She said there were times she pushed her children too hard and then lost her temper and needed to ask her children’s forgiveness. She said that her own pride and competitiveness would sometimes get in the way.

I think there is some danger in music in that it [music] can be competitive. It can lend itself to comparing other people. This happens in Chinese families a lot. “Look at that kid. He’s only this age and he got into this orchestra,” or “He practices this many hours a day,” or “He has this best teacher, this Russian teacher.” It lends itself to a lot of comparisons, even in the church where you know that these people are more gifted than your kids and you get jealous. “Come on. We’re going to beat this kid. We’re going to show them.” (interview, July 30, 2013)

### **Summary**

This chapter dealt with the “why” of musical involvement. I posit that the choice to do music for these three families flowed out of an overarching habitus that put value on music in worship. Parental musical background was a factor, but not exclusively so. In two of the families, siblings positively influenced the desire for musical instruction. These parents saw that character development was vital for the inculcation and maintenance of a Christian worldview. They noted the discipline and rigor of musical study and embraced these as important for every child’s development and future success. Parents’ educational philosophy was an outgrowth of their religious faith practices; however, they also noted educational and emotional benefits to the study of music as they examined their own children’s experiences and responses. Finally, the parents and at least one child mentioned the concept that consciously crafted musical skill carried over into successful living, and served to increase what Bourdieu (1977) called cultural capital.

The following chapter explores the musical and academic activities of each of the families. All three families valued and thus prioritized both musical and academic study. Each family’s daily schedule reflected these priorities. The children evidenced engagement in both areas. Educational and musical decisions resulted from a Christian habitus, and included views of what kinds of musical styles were appropriate, the nature of musical experience, and how music should be used in life.



## **CHAPTER SIX**

### **EDUCATIONAL AND MUSICAL PRACTICES: THOUGHTS ON MUSICAL PREFERENCE AND EXPERIENCE**

In this chapter I report the findings relative to the last two research questions: *What educational and musical activities are employed in the homeschooling families studied, and How are attitudes of each parent and school age child reflected in their choices regarding music in everyday life, musical preference, and the importance of musical experience?*

The first part of the chapter relates to educational activities. I examine the families' curricular choices, their calendar and daily schedule, their use of homeschool cooperatives, and their involvement in extra-curricular activities. In the second half of the chapter, I report on the various musical activities of the families, listening, practicing, playing, and performing, and then address each family's ideas on musical preference and experience.

#### **Educational Activities**

In institutional schooling, administrators and teachers make decisions regarding curriculum, yearly calendar, and daily schedule. In homeschooling, these decisions typically fall to the parents. In this section I explore parental rationale and practice in each of these categories. An additional area, unique to homeschoolers, is the homeschool cooperative (co-op), through which families of homeschoolers come together to supplement individual instruction. The Anderson, Chen, and Greene families all participated in this endeavor, and I chronicle some of their experiences.

Some of the children also participated in extra-curricular activities, which the parents considered integral to the educational process.. I discuss these because of the homeschooling notion that all of life is educational.

### **Curriculum**

Murphy (2012) noted the connection between parental philosophy and instruction decisions (p. 107), and the connection of philosophy to a worldview (p. 33). Each of the families made individual decisions regarding their choice of curriculum and instructional materials as an outgrowth of their worldview. Their selections were also rooted in their own experiences, their personal comfort level with the material, their knowledge of the individual learning tendencies of each child, and economic factors.

**John and Meg Anderson.** Meg and her husband John described their curriculum choices as eclectic. Meg loved to learn and to teach. Her own schooling was interesting, and Meg wanted to communicate that same experience to her children (personal communication, October 29, 2013). Consequently, she desired that her children be exposed to challenging academics. She expected her daughters to “give their all” to what they did. Her thinking was aligned with that of Caruana (1998), a former public school teacher of gifted students and now a homeschool mother:

I don't want my sons to learn that doing the bare minimum is valued and rewarded. I don't want future leaders who shy away from challenge and aren't risk takers. I want children who grow up to be

independent workers, effective communicators, and strong leaders! (p. 10)

Meg Anderson did not begin homeschooling her daughters until first grade (interview, April 9, 2013). At first she used a pre-packaged curriculum. Later, she discovered that her daughters learned differently, and so she felt the need to adjust both curriculum and teaching style. The individual differences widened as the girls got older. Consequently she tailored choice of text and manner of delivery to fit the needs of each daughter. Tomlinson (2014) advocates this idea in the public school setting, calling it the “differentiated classroom.”

Susan Anderson (14) studied for her marine biology course from the Apologia Company (a Christian textbook company). The textbook was loaded on a CD with an additional CD for tests and supplementary materials. Susan also took Algebra 2 through a computer-based course called ALEKS, used by some public high schools for supplemental and tutorial instruction. Susan studied geography using a text from Bob Jones Press. Meg believed it was important to choose curriculum that taught to each child’s strengths and learning styles. Susan was good in math, and this program seemed well suited for her. Susan also studied her *Apologia Worldview* text, a combination of writing, literature, and social studies. This text required a great deal of supplemental reading and writing assignments tied to the readings. I examined the text and discovered excerpts from Thomas Hobbes, C. S. Lewis, Mary Shelley, Niccolò Machiavelli, Dante Alighieri, and Thomas Aquinas.

Besides her own version of the *Apologia Worldview* text, Helen (17) studied

Spanish, chemistry, and psychology. She chose this last course as preparation for a possible major in occupational therapy. The text was a secular one published by Allyn and Bacon in an edition called "S.O.S." This edition offered many individual helps, especially beneficial if parents were not particularly adept at science.

I observed the Anderson family in the spring and again in the fall. In the spring, Helen took chemistry and algebra 2. The following fall it was physics and trigonometry. Helen (17) said of her education in high school:

Helen: As a freshman, I definitely did a lot harder classes than freshman level classes, which was nice, rather than having to be pulled back, and believing "you can only learn so much."

David: So you like the idea of being able to learn more than . . .

Helen: Yes, and be challenged, not just going through the course book that you are technically *supposed* (emphasis) to. We always did the classes, but we sometimes did them years before. (interview, April 09, 2013)

The Andersons appeared to receive a well-rounded education, and said they took courses earlier than many of their peers. The parents expected the children to apply themselves. At times, the children learned material beyond what their parents knew. Helen (17) said that her mother Meg could not always answer content questions. This was difficult for Helen, but she used it as an opportunity to do extra research. Sometimes that involved calling a friend who had taken the same course, sometimes it meant asking an adult at church, and sometimes it meant searching the Internet until she could find the answer.

Meg Anderson was more of an educational facilitator than a dispenser of information. The girls assumed responsibility for their own learning. At the same time, Meg was prescriptive in the classes that were to be taken. The example of the Andersons seems to suggest both sides of Murphy's (2012) conclusion:

Researchers generally conclude that families that pursue homeschooling for religious reasons engineer more parental control into their instructional designs. Parent-led learning is the norm here. Families drawn to homeschooling for academic reasons are more likely to supplement or replace parent-led instruction with child-centered learning and self-study (p. 110)

**Fred and Hannah Chen.** The living room of the Chen home had a piano, a cabinet that kept several violins, a sheet music repository, and a large maple coffee table with copies of the bible in several different editions: *The English Standard Version*, *Reformation*, and *Seek and Find*. Also on the table were the Brian Jacques book *Triss*, copies of *World* and *Voice of the Martyrs* magazines, and a book titled *Say Good-Bye to Whining and Complaining and Bad Attitudes in You and Your Kids*.

Hannah used the book *Teach your Child to Read in 100 Easy Lessons* for teaching her children to read. This is a secular book, and an adaptation of the Distar fast cycle reading program. I have often heard of this book in homeschool circles. Peter (5) began his reading lessons at age three, and was able to read portions of the *English Standard Version* of the Bible at five.

Hannah's repertoire of curriculum was mostly from Christian publishers: Christian Liberty Academy, A Beka, Bob Jones, Apologia Science, but she also used secular publishers as well: Saxon and Singapore Math.

What seemed to set the Chens apart was their continual effort to present all of learning—science, literature, education, and music—from a Christian perspective. This included textbooks as well as news sources. For example, they subscribed to *World Magazine*, a news magazine somewhat like *Time*, but which offered news reported through an evangelical Christian lens. The family, along with several other church couples, recently viewed a video series entitled *Biblical Economics* by R. C. Sproul, an evangelical Christian leader. They probably would agree with the comment by Kunzman (2010): “For religious conservatives, the intellectual life only finds meaning when it aligns with religious truth” (p. 23).

Fred and Hannah did not grow up in families that subscribed to a Christian belief system. Neither attended a college that reinforced Christian teaching; in fact, Fred said he had several college professors who were “anti-Christian” and who presented ideas that challenged his Christian beliefs (interview, July 8, 2013). Still, both Fred and Hannah felt it vital to maintain and reinforce their Christian values in academic studies.

**Peter and Tirzah Greene.** The Greenes used to be part of a satellite-delivered instructional program from Bob Jones University. This program featured live instruction in a combination residential and virtual classroom. When the Greenes learned that the program was going to be discontinued, they had the opportunity to purchase the recordings and textbooks for a greatly reduced price (observation, October 11, 2013). They purchased the entire set, enough to complete

high school for each of the children. Each of the older children had a small, portable DVD player and the accompanying textbook and workbook. The children watched the lectures, paused as needed, and completed the homework. Tirzah used the teacher's edition to grade her children's assignments and then recorded the grades into a computer program designed for homeschoolers. For math, she preferred a program entitled Math-U-See and did not use the DVDs. Katie (15) took a few online college courses in addition to maintaining her DVD studies. For the younger children, Tirzah used a kindergarten program called Chester, also available from Bob Jones.

**Curricular Challenges in Homeschooling.** Parents' academic weakness in a particular subject may affect their children. Generally, the average homeschool parent is well educated (Ray, 2010); however, particularly in the high school grades, students may study material beyond the scope of the parents' understanding. If the parent has a particular weakness, it may appear sooner. Matthias Chen (14) said that one of the challenges of homeschooling was that he generally had to "read it out of the textbook and then do the work" (interview, July 9, 2013). This was amplified in his mind after spending some time in a regular classroom where he was able to ask his teachers questions about the material.

Meg Anderson felt inadequate teaching literature and English grammar. To remedy this, she sought a homeschool co-op to supplement her own deficiency. In exchange for teaching her specialty (science), Meg's daughters could enroll in

classes taught by a teacher with a degree in English. When the family moved away from the homeschool co-op, Meg decided to teach English and literature all-year long rather than for nine months, “because I have difficulty teaching them” (interview, April 09, 2013).

Neither Peter nor Tirzah Greene enjoyed English or literature in school. Their interests were in science, and Tirzah’s degree was in Secondary Education Math with a minor in Computer Science. Tirzah did seek to reinforce her children’s learning in English; I listened to Tirzah drilling her daughter on compound subject/verb agreement. Still, she expressed frustration that English grammar was not as logical as source code for a computer program (interview, October 10, 2013). Katie Greene (15) mentioned her parents’ weakness in English, and sought a qualified person in her church for assistance with writing papers (interview, October 17, 2013).

### **School Calendar**

These families were subject to Wisconsin statutes regarding homeschooling. One requirement states that homeschools provide 875 hours of instruction (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2016). Unlike public school calendars with a pre-determined number of instructional days, homeschoolers in Wisconsin have some flexibility in reaching the required number of hours.

Meg Anderson said that for many years, when the family lived in Indiana, her family’s homeschooling calendar coincided with that of the homeschool cooperative



to which they belonged. Since moving to Wisconsin, they have not been part of a co-op, and so their calendar has changed. She said: “the school calendar year is usually nine months for science and math, but literature and grammar last longer.” When I observed the family in May 2013, Hannah said that Helen (17) had completed her trigonometry and Susan (14) her chemistry, but they would continue other subjects throughout the summer, although not for full days (interviews, April 19, May 17, 2015).

Hannah Chen said that her family started “very strong in September,” and it was easier in the fall than later in the year because they were not “running out to lessons and sports and activities” (interview, July 22, 2013). Prior to these last two years, Hannah also chose to go to school year round, but only four days per week. Because Fred’s day off was Monday, they used that day to have Fred teach, or to do “family things” together. For the last several years they have switched back to a five-day week to accommodate their son’s desire to enroll in a science class in a local Christian school. Summer afforded the family the opportunity to emphasize more art, reading, writing, and science projects. Fred, a trained scientist, held “dissection parties” for a couple of other homeschooling families. They dissected worms, frogs, and crayfish. Hannah said: “We got multiple dissection kits and everyone had gloves, knives, and things like that. It was very interesting to see who had a future interest in medicine or science in that way” (interview, July 22, 2013).

Tirzah Greene looked at the calendar at the beginning of each year and removed each child’s birthday, some time for hunting season, and a few “free

Fridays.” The family took very minimal time off for Christmas. Tirzah said: “I figure the weather isn’t that great, so I’m not going to spend a bunch of days where they are just at home” (interview, October 22, 2013).

The amount of instructional time in homeschools varies and is often difficult to track. Tirzah Greene said that school was from 8:00 a.m. to around 3:30 (interview, October 31, 2013), but her sons often went until 4:30 or 5:00 (interview, October 22, 2013). The Anderson girls—Helen (17) and Susan (14)—created their own schedules. Helen began her day at 7:00 a.m. and continued until 4:30 or 5:00 p.m. Susan began at 8:00 a.m. and finished at the same time. Sometimes they continued after dinner (interview, May 16, 2013). The Chen family began between 8:00 and 9:00 in the morning. The younger children finished around lunchtime, and the older children in the afternoon. The Chen family drove to weekly string lessons at a local conservatory, typically in the late afternoon. They also participated in weekly co-op meetings and some sports activities. The children took their schoolwork with them. Hannah Chen said: “homeschooling doesn’t mean that you’re at home very much” (interview, July 22, 2013).

Homeschool students attending school only for the length of time required by the State would fulfill their hourly requirement in 120 days or less. Given the fact that these families chose to have school in the summer, each family easily exceeded the number of required hours; however, some fuzziness arises over what to count as instructional hours. Do music lessons and sports practices count? Music is counted in a traditional school as part of the day, but generally sports activities are held after

school. If students do assignments from workbooks, should the time allotted to these activities be counted? Even in a traditional school, there are times that students work independently, have study halls, or go to the library, and no direct classroom instruction takes place. These are counted as part of the school day. Some schools permit outside visiting teachers to supply private music instruction during the class day, and some reserve it for after school times. The homeschoolers I studied did not appear to be “watching the clock” in terms of instructional hours. My sense was they felt their school calendar allowed for many hours “beyond the requirement,” and so they did not think about it on a daily basis.

### **Daily Schedule**

Sheffer (1995) reported that the daily schedule of homeschoolers tended to be seamless. For the two Anderson girls, this was certainly the case. Helen (17) listed her daily schedule:

My homeschool day begins at 7:00 and I start my first class, which is usually SAT practice. And then I do half of my next class, Worldviews. Eight o'clock we have breakfast, grammar, and Bible. At 9:00 we do our PE, so we walk the dogs. At 9:30 is Spanish, 10:00 flute, 10:45 guitar, 11:30 I write, and then 12:00 is lunch. 1:00 is math, 2:00 is piano, 3:00 is Worldviews, and then 4:00 is Physics and then at 5:00 I do everything I have yet to do that I didn't get done in the rest of the day. (interview, May 16, 2013)

Susan Anderson (14) did not usually begin her school day until 8:00 a.m. Her schedule corresponded with Helen's at certain points: breakfast, grammar, bible, walking the dogs, and lunch. She did her math from 9:30–10:15 or 10:30, then piano from 10:30–11:30. She then switched to an easier subject like vocabulary or

literature, until noon. She studied chemistry from 1:00–2:00 p.m., although sometimes longer. Then she interspersed clarinet practice before beginning her Starting Points Class (a Christian worldview class). In order to give herself breaks from her studies, she often played the piano or her clarinet (interview, May 16, 2013).

Both Helen and Susan devised their own daily schedules (with the exception of meals and PE). Susan commented: “I like separating my hard topics (math and chemistry) out throughout the entire day” so that she had a “break for her brain” (interview, May 16, 2013). Susan enjoyed playing her piano and clarinet for short time periods between her classes, and if the class day was especially trying, played the piano as a stress reliever (interview, April 9, 2013).

John Anderson reminded me that although they had a strict schedule, there needed to be room for flexibility. When the family moved to Wisconsin, the girls complained that they never enjoyed the benefits of snow days like their friends in public school. The next morning John called up to his daughters and said: “Okay! Two-hour delay. There’s fog!”

Hannah Chen had more children to supervise than the Andersons: Matthias (14), Michelle (12), Christina (10), Micah (7), Peter (5) and Emily (3). This presented an additional challenge. Hannah said her goal was to have everyone up at 7:00 a.m., but she hadn’t been able to accomplish that. I observed the family in the summer, and it seemed relaxed. Hannah began the day with a morning devotional for everyone, then breakfast, chores, string practice (all the children at the same

time), and then other schoolwork until lunch. The younger children were finished around lunchtime (Emily, Peter, Micah). After lunch she worked with Christina while Michelle and Matthias worked independently.

Each of the Chen children chose the order of classes on which they worked; the amount of time for each class was not fixed—it varied with the amount of work that needed to be done. Hannah and Fred expected the children to help with meal preparation, care for their little sister (including giving her a bath after an accident), meal cleanup, yard work, and tutoring one another in difficult subjects. These activities concur with Murphy (2012), who noted the expectation that homeschool children help with managing the household and daily chores (p. 17).

George Greene (14) described his schedule as waking up at 7:00, having devotions, breakfast, chores, schoolwork until piano practice at 11:00, lunch, and then schoolwork in the afternoon until around 4:30 or 5:00. Grace Greene (10) added that during family devotions (a time for the family to study the Bible together), the children ate smoothies their mother had prepared. After breakfast, the children went about the chores that Tirzah had taped to the refrigerator. Grace Greene (10) described the following:

We have to clean the table, do dishes, clean the stove, the microwave, vacuum the living room, make our beds, and vacuum our rooms. On Saturdays, George mops the floor, and we clean the bathrooms. We do split up some of the bathroom chores. On Thursdays, George gathers all the garbage and he takes it out, because the next day is garbage day. (interview, October 22, 2013)

Each child was allotted a time for piano practice beginning with Katie (15) at 8:00, Grace (10) at 9:00, Joshua (12) at 10:00, and George (14) at 11:00. The family's goal was to have all practicing done by the afternoon so that the 3-year old little sister was able to nap. The children practiced their secondary instruments later in the afternoon, after naptime.

Tirzah Greene held teacher certification. In the beginning of each school year, she planned what each child needed to accomplish in every subject for the year. She logged daily goals, progress, and grades on her laptop into a program called Homeschool Tracker. She then printed out each child's daily tasks. Any child who fell behind was responsible to do the work in the evening, on Saturday, or by getting up earlier than the other family members. If a member of the family wanted a vacation during what would be a school day, then it was the child's responsibility to "work ahead" and make up the missed assignments before the vacation (interview, Oct 22, 2013). In the interviews, all of the children liked the option of "working ahead." They understood that schoolwork needed to be done and that they could not simply "skip" for something that seemed important to them. They worked into the evening (until 8:00–8:30) and on Saturdays in order to stay on track. George Greene remarked that permission to spend the night with his uncle and grandfather depended on "getting my homework done for the next day or next two days" (interview, October 31, 2013).

All of the children in the study seemed to have embraced the idea that schoolwork was a responsibility that needed to be accomplished on a daily basis.

Christian homeschoolers understand this inculcated sense of responsibility as the manifestation of what Weber (1958) called the “Protestant ethic”—the concept that all of honest labor is dignified, and thus demands one’s complete attention and effort—and it is the responsibility of parents to see to that they pass this on to their progeny.

*I have a daughter who taught in a project based, public Charter school. She often remarked how difficult it was to instill in her students the concept of daily work. It was not uncommon for her to find her students playing video games, surfing the web, and texting. Her students often ignored specific, measurable daily goals. At the end of the quarter, some of the students had little to show for the time they had spent in class.*

*In contrast, at my small private university, we contract with 13–14 music teachers each semester. The experience of these teachers has been largely positive, not because our students are the most advanced they have ever taught, but because the students’ (many of them homeschooled) Christian habitus has manifested itself in honesty, diligence, determination, and responsibility.*

### **Homeschool Co-Ops**

Responsibility for instruction in homeschooling may be viewed on a continuum. On one end, the parents (most often the mothers) are responsible for all of the teaching. On the opposite end the child is enrolled in a homeschool co-op or public school on a part-time basis, but mostly supervised by the parent. In between

are various accommodations and combinations (Murphy, 2012). Some homeschoolers are adamantly opposed to cooperation and supervision of the public school, while some seek to enroll in classes or sports on an “a la carte” basis. State laws vary on this. None of the families in this study opposed the public school, but did not choose to utilize any hybridization between what they chose to do as parents, and what the public school could supplement; however, the families did choose to participate in supplementary instruction from religious home school cooperatives. They recognized their need to supplement parental instructional weakness, to provide a larger context for socialization, and to provide opportunities for participation in large group dramatic events.

The Andersons began their homeschool co-op experience in Indianapolis when their daughters were quite young. The co-op met one day per week in a church facility. Susan (14) especially enjoyed the science classes. When she was younger, she enjoyed sitting in the science classes her mother taught. She recalled an incident where the students mixed vinegar and baking soda into a pop bottle, and placed a balloon over the spout to collect the carbon dioxide. Apparently some of the students were not careful with their measurements and ended up with more baking soda and more vinegar than required. The balloons flew off; the students got scared and ducked underneath the desks. Susan told them: “Ah, come on guys. It’s not that scary. It is just baking soda (laughs)” (interview, May 16, 2013).

In addition to the two or three classes Helen (17) and Susan (14) attended, they both participated in the co-op’s dramatic productions. This was a highlight for



them. Helen became the pianist for *Anne of Green Gables* on very short notice, and secured acting roles in *Tale of Two Cities*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, plus several other smaller Christian plays. Susan enjoyed working on the stage and helped with running the lights (interview, April 09, 2013).

The two older Chen girls (Michelle 14, Christina 12) supplemented home instruction by enrolling in language arts, history, and literature classes offered in the co-op. Matthias (14) chose speech and debate. Hannah Chen considered co-ops as opportunities for enrichment that a small homeschool could not offer. Their co-op offered classes in art, writing, gym, and drama. The children especially enjoyed drama, and participated in productions of *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Sound of Music*, and Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* (interview, July 22, 2013).

Although there were several co-ops from which to choose, the Andersons chose one that was Christian, but whose members espoused a definition of Christian that was wider than their own. John felt that this socialization was beneficial because he desired to teach his daughters that "there are different people out there who have different twists and different beliefs, but yet they can still all love the same God that we do" (interview, April 19, 2013). John's attitude runs counter to the stereotype of religious close-mindedness ascribed to Christian homeschoolers (Apple, 2001). While there is little doubt that the Andersons monitored the educational and social decisions of their children, they strongly rejected the notion that the parent should monitor every childhood decision. Based upon my observations, the philosophy of the Andersons was "freedom within boundaries,"

and “increasing freedom with maturity” (interview, February 22, 2013). John involved his children in decisions that affected them (including their schooling, daily schedule, and some curricular choice), and gave them the freedom to have a voice in those decisions.

Overly strict parents run the risk of negative reaction from their children. Edmund Gosse (1907), son of strict, religious parents, described his own homeschool experience as a “bird fluttering the net-work of my Father’s will, and incapable of the smallest independent action” (p. 339). Kunzman (2010) began his article on the connection between homeschooling and religious fundamentalism with the Gosse quote. Thoughtful homeschool parents recognize the possibility of reactions like those Gosse reported. This was the kind of response that the Andersons sought to avoid. I did not sense this kind of resistance and reaction on the part of any of the children. While acknowledging that there were challenges in homeschooling, they did not react negatively to it in any detectable way.

Tirzah and Peter Greene also participated for a time in several homeschool cooperatives. Their co-ops offered Latin, singing, speech, and art. As the children matured, the Greenes said that participation in the co-op was just another thing to add to an already busy schedule, and they withdrew. Tirzah said that her priority was “to get them (her children) through the material” (interview, October 10, 2013). They also participated in dramatic events, but as part of a local university, not a home-school cooperative.

### **Extra-curricular Activities**

For the homeschooler, education extends beyond academic subjects to include an “array of subjects related to daily life” (Sheehan, 2002, p. 192). Hannah Chen said it was important for the children to be developed in many different areas (personal communication, July 9, 2013). These included track, soccer, swimming lessons (there is a designated homeschool time for family swim), tennis lessons, Awana (a sort of Christian Boy Scouts), Dayspring Drama (a homeschool drama group), as well as art classes. During the school year the family also participated in the National Bible Bee, where the children memorized over 235 verses in a contest patterned after the National Spelling Bee. Hannah said her children have done well at the local level, but had not as yet advanced to the national level (observation, July 21, 2013).

Individually, the Chen children had many interests. Matthias (14) loved science, especially physics, and sports: basketball, football, tennis, and lacrosse. Christina (10) liked helping with Vacation Bible School, playing Legos, and running the mile track alongside her father. Micah (7) enjoyed playing Legos and tennis as well as his violin. Michelle (12) liked to doodle and draw, to take part in homeschool musicals, and invent elaborate governmental structures for an imaginary city called “Ouville.” The children, along with neighborhood friends and cousins, divided themselves into legislative, executive, and judicial branches governing this imaginary city. Michelle was chosen to head the judicial branch, because her siblings and cousins all believed she would be the most “fair and unbiased” (interview, July

24, 2013). Michelle also enjoyed writing, and had written the first chapter of a planned five-chapter novel named *Royal Purpose*, patterned on the *Wingfeather Saga* by Andrew Peterson. In Michelle's story, everything in the story was purple in the capital city of Nurgaburgopolis, in the country of Nurgaburg. The plot involved changing the city back to normal. Although Michelle had not had a typing class, I noticed that she was careful with punctuation, spelling, and layout. When I observed her, she had just begun writing Chapter 2 and told me she was making up the plot as she went along (observation, July 21, 2013).

Helen Anderson (17) was a well-rounded person who enjoyed taking pictures, listening to and practicing music, volunteering, writing letters, biking, spending time with family, farm animals (especially goats), and organizing things. Her camera hobby was serious, as she did landscape, portrait, animal, and macro photography (small things) with her digital single lens reflex camera. She posted her pictures online. She and her sister also volunteered to file music for the Indianapolis Children's Choir. In terms of organizing things, she said that she had a "passion for order" and frequently organized a cupboard to the complaints of her family, who subsequently could not find anything (interview, April 9, 2015).

Susan Anderson (14) enjoyed science experiments, especially ones in which she could "blow things up." She also spent time thinking up devices like a robotic life preserver that could be shot from a cannon (interview, April 09, 2013). She liked reading biographies about people who changed their world, and for physical exercise rode her bike and played ball with the dogs (interview, April 09, 2013).

I noticed the children enjoyed recreational reading. George Greene (14) said he liked to “read a book” for fun (interview, October 17, 2013). Grace Greene (10) agreed, and reported reading *Elsie Dinsmore*, *The Chronicles of Narnia*, *Boxcar Children*, and *Bonnets and Bugles* (interview, October 17, 2013). Joshua Greene (12) preferred mystery books and Katie Greene (15), Jane Austen. She said she was seldom without a book (interview, October 22, 2013). The Greene children liked reading more than their parents, who did not characterize themselves as avid readers (interview, October 10, 2013).

It was not surprising that the children liked reading more than their parents. Hetzel (1997), summarizing data supplied via questionnaires of 332 students enrolled in a public school independent study (homeschool) program in California, found that homeschoolers spent 72 to 117 minutes per day in activities related to reading. In contrast, a research brief summarizing seven national studies (Common Sense Media, 2014), although noting wide-ranging estimates of reading time, concluded that “reading rates among 13- and 17-year-olds have declined dramatically” and that today “a third of 13-year-olds and close to half of 17-year olds read for pleasure only a few times a year or less” (p. 10).

*Murphy (2012) wrote: “homeschoolers are fairly heavy users of public libraries” (p. 113). In speaking with homeschoolers for numbers of years, and in keeping with our own children’s experiences, one of the highlights of the week was “library day.” Some of my children would bring home 20 or more books, and all needed to be checked by the parents and then logged into the computer. Rounding up all of the books for*

*return was often a daunting task, and fines were not uncommon for misplaced books. However, the dividends for inculcating literacy have been rewarded in meaningful employment and educational success (an aspect of cultural capital).*

The Greene children had varied interests that often touched the outdoors. George Greene (14) liked to fish, hunt, and shoot his BB gun. He also enjoyed reading war and mystery books, and playing various card games (interview, Oct 17, 22, 2013). Grace Greene (10) enjoyed jumping on her trampoline, playing tennis, board games (The Game of Life), and acting in various plays and musicals. She was able to play the part of “Want” in *Christmas Carol*, and loved being able to have “crazy hair” (interview, October 17, 2013). She was also cast in productions of *Cinderella* and *Anne of Green Gables* at the Baptist university near her home. Joshua Greene (12) reported liking sports and strategic board games such as chess and Axis and Allies (interview, October 17, 2013). Katie Greene (15) liked to read, clean her room, and hunt and fish (interview, October 22, 2013).

Technology, other than the computer or DVD player for school, did not feature prominently in any of the families’ extra-curricular activities. I did not observe any of the children playing video games on their computers. The children did not have phones. Television and movie watching were the exception rather the rule. Hannah Chen told me the children did not watch many movies (observation, July 7, 2013), and that they had never seen Hannah Montana (interview, July 22, 2013). John Anderson, in describing his daughters’ entertainment choices said: “Movies, TV shows, it’s kind of like, ‘Nah, we don’t really need to see that.’ They’ll

(the girls) turn it off, they won't watch it" (interview, May 17, 2013). Katie Greene (15) liked to watch movies, although she said "we don't do it very often" (interview, October 22, 2013). In my mind, the word "imaginative" described the children in this study. Although it appeared that the families covered the required academic material, there was also time during the day for enrichment activities.

### **Musical Activities**

Each family dedicated time to musical activities during the school day.

Homeschoolers have that flexibility. One homeschooler, Albert (1999), wrote about his daughter's forays into musical composition, and said:

Music composition perhaps best exemplifies what homeschooling can afford our children and what they could never experience in a school context, embodying the poet Shelley's maxim that we must learn to imagine that which we know. This, above all, requires time: time in solitude, time peering out the window at nothing in particular, time staring at a blank page, time daydreaming, time taking a long walk when one feels called, *wasted time*. The demands of school administrators to cover material belie the simple truth that real knowledge can only make its appearance out of a disciplined emptiness. (p. 217, italics in original)

In this section I explore musical activities shared by all of the families (listening, practicing, and performing). I then discuss the musical preferences of each family and report on the participants' notions of the importance of musical experience in their lives.

### **Listening**

Musical listening is a common activity, especially for adolescents (North, Hargreaves & O'Neill, 2000). Helen Anderson (17) listened to music in her room

while cleaning, in the living room where she did her schoolwork, outside, in the kitchen, and in the car. She had a portable CD player in her room, and she sometimes used headphones. When she played music outside, she did not play it loudly. She said that her music “goes with the wind and with the atmosphere outside” (interview, May 16, 2013). She did limit listening while doing schoolwork, because for several of her more difficult subjects, she needed quiet (interview, April 09, 2013).

Susan Anderson (14), on the other hand, used musical listening to drown out her sister Helen’s piano practice. During those times, Susan put her headphones on and listened to “Beethoven or Bach or something like that.” She also listened to music while exercising and cleaning the house, music that was “more of a fast-paced, bigger sound like Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony.” In school, Susan believed that music listening collected her wandering thoughts and enabled her to “focus on schoolwork” (interview, May 16, 2013).

Helen and Susan’s parents disagreed on whether to have background music playing for school. John liked it absolutely quiet, while Meg enjoyed having music playing in the background. Even with the absence of background music, Meg said that the music of practicing was pretty much a standard part of the day because both parents and daughters played the piano, and the girls practiced flute and clarinet. Meg said: “some type of music is always being played” (interview, April 19, 2013).



Christina Chen's (10) answer to the question "What do you like about music?" was: "listening to it." As a family, they did not play music in the background upstairs, except at lunch (interview, July 24, 2013). At that time, Hannah played a Suzuki violin CD for whatever book or pieces the children were studying, or a CD that helped the children memorize Bible verses. After lunch, Hannah permitted music to be played in the basement. Matthias (14) enjoyed listening to music while doing his schoolwork downstairs. He said: "I don't think it slows me down." Michelle (12) noted that Matthias enjoyed listening to music more than she did. Micah (7) said the children listened to music "downstairs," and this was often after lunch (interview, July 24, 2013). Hannah mentioned listening to music in the car/van as well, but said it was often the *Bible Bee* scripture verses (interview, July 22, 2013).

The Greene children listened to music in similar venues: the van, in their individual rooms, or in the kitchen. George (14) said he never listened to music while exercising, but mentioned listening to several Christmas CDs while cleaning house (interview, October 22, 2013). Grace (10) enjoyed listening to *Patch the Pirate* and stories from the *Sugar Creek Gang* and *The Chronicles of Narnia* (both *Patch the Pirate* and *Sugar Creek Gang* are Christian-themed music and stories). Katie Greene noted that she put a musical CD on when working on her math homework or cleaning her room. She jokingly said her room should be cleaned more often (interview, October 22, 2013). Tirzah said that most of the family's listening was done before or after school with the exception of Christmas, when music was more consistently played in the background (interview, October 22, 2013).

Both the Andersons and Chens indicated that they did not support the use of portable mp3 devices. Fred Chen's reservations stemmed from hearing loss he attributed to his adolescent use of a *Sony Walkman*, playing rock music at a very high volume. Helen Anderson (17) did not like the private nature of the device, and would rather play her music "to the whole world" (interview, May 16, 2013).

The families' musical listening was often functional. It served as an aid to memorizing Bible verses, and provided energy to clean a room. It functioned as a means of collecting random thoughts in order to aid in mental focus, a pedagogical tool to help learn the standard way to play certain string pieces, and a means to reinforce Biblical truths by means of musical stories and songs.

### **Playing Instruments**

Each of the ten children in this study played at least one instrument. All have had lessons on secondary instruments in the past, but not all were doing so at the time of my research. The children played their instruments regularly, mostly for church and family functions. The overriding purpose for studying music was connected with worship. Proficiency in playing an instrument provided the opportunity to "minister" in church. In the Greene family, the motivation to study trumpet and trombone was to fill out a church brass quintet (interview, October 31, 2013). The Chen children were members of the church orchestra organized and led by their mother (interview, July 30, 2013). On several occasions, I heard Helen (17-

flute) and Susan (14-clarinet) Anderson rehearse duets intended for church, accompanied by Meg on the piano.

Table 1 below indicates areas of instrumental study for each of the children in this study, along with any instruments they have expressed a desire to learn.

**Table 1: Children and Their Instruments**

Name	Current Instrument	Desired Instrument
Helen Anderson (17)	Piano, flute, classical guitar	
Susan Anderson (14)	Piano, clarinet	Tuba
Katie Greene (15)	Piano, flute	
George Greene (14)	Piano, trombone	
Joshua Greene (12)	Piano	Trumpet
Grace Greene (10)	Piano	Harp
Matthias Chen (14)	Piano, violin	
Michelle Chen (12)	Piano, violin	
Christina Chen (10)	Piano, violin	
Micah Chen (7)	Piano, violin	Cello

### **Practicing**

One of the advantages of musical homeschooling is the opportunity to include practice as a part of the school day. In writing about the education of concert violinist Rachel Barton Pine, Crocker (2015) stated that Rachel's second grade

principal suggested taking her out of school and homeschooling her because she was already practicing four or five hours a day (p. 3). Matchael (2003) wrote about a homeschooled violinist who entered Crane School of Music at 12 years of age to begin a major in violin performance. “The implication was that homeschooling allowed him to pursue his music to a degree that set him up to be a successful violinist” (p. 11–12). Hetzel (1998) also confirmed this; he found that a small percentage of homeschool families did so for musical and athletic reasons. All three families in this study included musical practice as an integral part of the school day, but unlike Matchael and Hetzel, it was considered a side benefit to homeschooling rather than a primary motivation.

Helen Anderson (17) began piano lessons at age 6, flute at 8, and classical guitar at 11. She practiced the piano for 60 minutes a day, five days per week, her flute for 45 minutes a day, and her guitar and singing for 30 minutes each. Susan Anderson’s (14) earliest musical memories involved listening to her older sisters practice the piano (interview, April 09, 2013). Susan’s piano teacher assigned a list of goals for the week. Susan tried to “mix it up” a bit, slow songs and fast songs, because she would rather play fast songs. She spent between 45 minutes to an hour on the piano. For her clarinet, she practiced in 15-minute segments because her reeds tended to be temperamental (interview, May 16, 2013).

Christina Chen (10) played scales on her violin, then “played the song.” She studied the first piece in *Suzuki Vol. 4* during my observations. Matthias (14) began his practice with scales, and then portions of pieces, working on the difficult

sections before playing the entire piece. At the time of my research, he was studying *Praeludium and Allegro* by Kreisler. Micah Chen (7) studied pieces from *Suzuki Vol. 2* and *Vol. 3*, “Gavotte” and “Minuet.” Michelle (12) practiced the second part from the Bach “Double” in *Suzuki Vol. 4*. Michelle liked each piece and said that it was “fun to get it right” (interview, July 24, 2013).

The Chen children all practiced at the same time, usually 45 minutes to an hour in the morning. This idea was unique to the Chen family, as the other families took turns for musical practice. Hannah described her “all at the same time practice:”

The children seem to like it when every single one of them is practicing music at the same time. So, each person has a music stand; someone will practice in the bathroom, or someone will practice in the family room, someone in the dining room, while I’m working with someone at the piano in the living room. It’s really noisy, but it seems to encourage them that everyone is doing it at the same time. (interview, July 22, 2013)

George Greene (14) practiced his piano lesson pieces in the order his teacher indicated on his assignment sheet. The piano was reserved for him for one hour, and it was up to him to be punctual and to accomplish his goals in that time. George said that “if you practice correctly, you will improve, but you need to practice correctly” (interview, October 31, 2013). Joshua (12) spent 45 minutes a day practicing and Katie (15) an hour. Grace (10) practiced less (35 minutes) than her siblings and commented:

Well, sometimes I have to use the metronome, and sometimes I like to turn on the metronome and then, like, tap with my feet along with the metronome, and then I turn off the metronome but keep tapping my

feet, and then I start playing with my feet, because it's a little easier for me, like, to feel the vibration throughout my body. (interview, October 22, 2013)

Practicing, from the standpoint of parents and students alike, was a natural part of education, something “you just did.” There was really no resistance on the students’ part; they seemed to embrace the idea of daily practice. This also speaks to the notion of *habitus*, where the structures that are put in place are understood as natural (Bourdieu, 1977, p. 166). Only one of the ten children in the study (Christina Chen) expressed any dislike of music, but she practiced without complaint nonetheless. She said she enjoyed the church orchestra music better because it was easier, but didn’t like playing by herself at home (interview, July 09, 2013). None of the children expressed professional musical aspirations, though the parents expressed the desire that their children be able to “use music” for the rest of their lives.

### **Performing**

The Anderson, Chen, and Greene children were active performers. All participated in studio recitals organized by their private lesson teachers, as well as “house recitals” for the family, or sometimes for family and a few invited guests. John Anderson mentioned these house recitals (interview, April 19, 2013). Hannah Chen called them “pajama concerts.” A pajama concert occurred before bedtime. Each child in a rotation had to play his/her recital piece five times throughout the evening while dressed in pajamas. The siblings (and parents) were the audience

(interview, July 22, 2013). Hannah also mentioned joint recitals that took place for extended family during holiday gatherings at her parent's home.

The three families also performed regularly in church. The Chen children enjoyed being part of the church orchestra, and Helen Anderson (17) accompanied congregational singing on the piano. She and Susan (14) played duets accompanied by their mother. The Greenes' primary musical outlet was also church, or church-related situations. Katie (15) commented on how much she enjoyed playing the piano in the commons of a senior citizens center (interview, November 5, 2013). One of the motivating factors for George (14), who was beginning to play the trombone, was performing with his friends at church (interview, October 17, 2013).

The Chens had been accepted into the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra (MYSO) for the following fall, and were busily preparing for their seating and scholarship auditions. Hannah's dream was for her children to be able to earn a position in the top orchestra, called the Senior Symphony. She viewed this accomplishment as an "objective measure of success" (interview, July 30, 2013). As a child, Hannah had been a member of the forerunner of MYSO, but she did not stay in long enough to advance to the top orchestra, although she was concertmaster for a lower level orchestra (interview, July 09, 2013). Hannah hoped that MYSO would provide the group musical experience she could not provide in her homeschooling program. She desired that the children learn to "sight-read better," "learn to play with others," "learn to be under a professional conductor," and "get a taste of others who are at the same level," as members of the program (interview, July 30, 2013).

The Andersons' participation with the respected Indianapolis Children's Choir could be considered similarly. Their participation had a profound effect on the family—not only the three daughters, but also the parents. The organization frequently came up in interviews and observation conversations, even though their involvement occurred before the time of the study. Susan's (14) most memorable musical experience was performing for the World Choir Games with the group (interview, July 25, 2013). Meg's was experiencing a new work from introduction to performance (she was a chaperone), and changing her opinion of the work as it progressed (interview, May 17, 2013). Helen (17) appreciated the modeling of effective teaching practices on the part of the directors (interview, May 16, 2013), and John was astonished when the director asked the choir to "sing a C" without any reference to the piano, and they could do it (interview, Feb 22, 2013).

Matchael (2003) investigated the opportunities of homeschoolers to access large musical group instruction in the United States. Both the Milwaukee Youth Symphony (MYSO) and the Indianapolis Children's Choir are community organizations, and thus are open to any qualified student. I also spoke with the director of the Wisconsin Youth Orchestra (WYSO), an organization similar to MYSO, who also indicated that they enrolled numbers of homeschoolers. These organizations provided a venue for quality, large-group musical experiences for homeschoolers who would not have them otherwise.

In some states, homeschoolers are permitted to enroll in public school music groups. The Home School Legal Defense Association (2016) summarized Wisconsin



statutes that permit homeschoolers to attend up to two courses per semester, provided there is room and the student has met the admissions standards (p. 8). None of the families in this study took advantage of this. In Nichol's (2007) study of the musical involvement of eight homeschooling families in Arizona, three of the families participated in choir, band, and orchestra in the public school (p. 152). Other options for large group participation are groups as a function of homeschool co-ops; however, of the 23 Wisconsin homeschool groups listed on the website of Homeschool World (2016), only one was a choir, and from the picture, had an enrollment of slightly more than twenty. There were no bands or orchestras pictured.

### **Other Musical Activities**

For the Chen family, singing was a regular part of the school day. Usually they began their day with a time of morning worship. Hannah sought to teach her children the verses of common hymns (interview, July 22, 2013). The Anderson family practiced vocal numbers in various combinations as a family in order to sing in church. Katie Greene (15) often played hymns on the piano so that her family could sing along. Her siblings also played—not just sacred songs—and everyone joined in (interview, October 22, 2013).

The Chen family attended more concerts than the other families. On occasion, church friends who were members of the Milwaukee Symphony provided tickets. When Hannah heard of local folk music concerts, she attended with her family in

tow. The Andersons and the Greenes did not attend many concerts, except at the local Baptist institution, where they attended choral concerts of sacred music.

Susan Anderson (14) enjoyed the mental challenge of “figuring out songs.” She liked to “think of a song,” pick a nice clarinet key, and then “try to play it.” On her piano, she enjoyed playing hymns and trying to “string them together” as a kind of prelude. In connection with her clarinet, Susan learned the Finale Notepad program to transcribe and transpose flute parts for her Bb clarinet, so that she could play duets with her sister. She also liked to notate her own two-measure musical ideas and store them in separate Finale files (interview, April 09, 2013).

### **Musical Preference**

Kunzman (2010) noted that a homeschooling parent’s religious views resulted in specific curricular choices, and Murphy (2012) said these choices represented a specific worldview. In my study, I suggest that these represent aspects of Christian habitus. In addition to educational curriculum, this is also seen in the choices that parents and children made regarding musical genres, or a topic in the research literature known as musical preference.

It seems to follow that musical choice should grow out of habitus. Hargreaves, Miell & MacDonald (2002) reported: “music can have... a more deep-seated influence on our beliefs and behavior” (p. 11) and can “define which social groups one does and does not belong to” (p. 5). Similarly, DeNora (2000) stated that “music possesses the power of producing an effect on the character of the soul” (p.

21). Since character development is entwined in Christian habitus, and parents desire to use homeschooling as a means of shaping that character, it follows that the choice of musical styles is important. The parents in this study played an active role in establishing musical parameters for the children; however, the children seemed to buy into these beliefs as well, as is explained in the next section.

**Specifics: The children.** The children in the study preferred music different from that of mainstream youth culture. In one sense, this was not surprising, for Lareau (2003) argued that the socialization of middle class youth was different than that of lower class families. All three families in this study would be considered middle-class; however, the musical preferences of most middle class youth tend to be geared towards popular music (Campbell, Connell, & Beegle, 2007). This was not the case with the children in this study.

Helen Anderson (17) said:

I like classical: Classical, Romantic, Baroque—that period of stuff. I listen to a lot of music from the Wilds Camp [A Christian camping ministry that produces recordings and octavos] and Steve Pettit [an evangelist whose music is a mixture of Irish folk music, bluegrass and hymns performed in those styles].(interview, April 9, 2013)

She also mentioned listening to orchestral music of the Romantic and 20th Century eras, classical pieces for her instruments (flute, especially James Galway and classical guitar), and Celtic and Irish music. She also enjoyed the choral music of Dan Forrest (interview, May 16, 2013).

Helen discovered that her musical tastes were not the same as her peers, and

some of those peers were homeschooled.

There was one time in Nicaragua, and we were at the festival and people had their iPods up on speakers. We usually had pretty loud music. I have no idea what kind it was. One of my friends put on his iPod which had classical music, cello songs. It was really beautiful, and I was really loving it, I was sitting there going: "This is so nice." And then one of the people came by, and they're like: "Who put this on? It's so sad." And I was thinking: "It's not sad." And so I said: "It's not sad. It's really nice." And they were thinking: "No, it's sad. It's depressing because it's like a cello..." And cellos sometimes have mellow sounds. "Like no, you should leave it on." And they're like: "No, I'm going to find something else." (interview, July 25, 2013)

Granted, one might argue that the appreciation for certain kinds of music might be related to a person's emotional state at the time of the listening; however, Lamont (2002) posited: "children from homes where other people are involved in musical activities are also more likely to develop positive attitudes towards music" (p. 54). Helen's sister Susan preferred listening to "Beethoven, Bach, Mozart; those kinds of people." In addition to classical music, Susan also liked playing "folk songs and fun songs" and felt that the group Celtic Thunder was "cool" (interview, May 16, 2013).

The Chen children, Matthias (14), Michelle (12), Christina (10) and Micah (7), stated their preference for "modern worship songs," "Christian contemporary music," as well as music based on "traditional worship." Their listening venues were two Milwaukee radio stations, one dedicated to Christian contemporary music and the other geared more to traditional sacred music (interviews, July 9, July 24, 2013).

Katie Greene (15) mentioned that she preferred to listen to Christmas music "all year round," as well as sacred music produced by Majesty Music, a company

affiliated with a conservative Christian ethos (interview, October 22, 2013). George Greene (14) liked listening to “arrangements from hymns,” “a little bit of classical music,” and church music from Maranatha Baptist University (interview, October 22, 2013). Joshua Greene (12) preferred listening to the *Patch the Pirate Series*, ongoing musical stories, each focused on a specific aspect of the Christian life, produced by Majesty Music. He also enjoyed the Milwaukee radio station that focused on more traditional worship music (interview, October 22, 2013). Grace Greene (10) also mentioned *Patch the Pirate*, as well as listening to selections from *Phantom of the Opera*, although she had not seen it, because “we heard from our friends that it’s bad improper . . . how they dress is improper.” So they just listened to the music (interview, October 22, 2013).

Music preference may also refer to the kind of music one might avoid. Helen Anderson (17) avoided “rock, jazz, and 80s music,” music with words that depicted situations in which she could not participate, and sacred music that “only has five words,” i.e. overly repetitious text. She said: “I like songs that have more of a depth of meaning in the words that they use” (interview, May 16, 2013). One tension that she faced was with a homeschooling friend who liked jazz. I asked her about that, and she laughed and said: “It’s a hard question.” She said she had determined not to say to her friend: “You play jazz. I’m never going to talk to you again because this is the only kind of music you can ever listen to” (interview, May 16, 2013). Rather she chose to maintain the relationship even though she did not prefer the musical style.

Susan Anderson (14), in response to the question: “What kinds of music, if

any, would you avoid?" said:

The styles of rock, pop, jazz . . . Music with words that maybe I don't agree . . . Music with more of a heavy beat that all you can hear is the drums, and you can't hear any of the words, or really the melody, because all you can hear is the drums. (interview, May 16, 2013)

Matthias Chen (14) avoided non-Christian (popular) music because "my parents don't let me listen to it." Micah Chen (7) avoided "bad stuff," Michelle (12) Chen avoided music "if it swears, or it's really wild," and Christina (10) didn't listen to anything except for Christian contemporary (interview, July 24, 2013).

The Greene children held similar views to the Andersons concerning music. Katie Greene (15) said she would avoid: "the rock, the jazz. . . the pop," musics that have a "pretty strong beat, a lot of metal" (interview, October 22, 2013). When I asked George Greene (14) about what music he avoided, he said: "I don't know the names of all of them, but rock and jazz, maybe rags and ungodly music." I then asked him how he could determine ungodly music. "By the words a lot. Sometimes it's not fun to listen to at all. Sometimes it's something that contradicts what the Bible says, like sometimes it's just not really appropriate." I then asked him to explain "really appropriate." He said: "When the words they're saying, they're singing, it's more about not being appropriate, more ties into being not what the Bible would say" (interview, October 22, 2013).

Joshua Greene (12) maintained the same kind of language, especially in his use of the word "appropriate." Joshua said he avoided

stuff that people say is inappropriate, like rock and roll. Stuff that people say is inappropriate is more jazzy, it's stuff that you shouldn't

listen to because it's more like, if you get into that, and you shouldn't, it will take you away from God.

Once again, I asked how he knew something was inappropriate. His response: "Sometimes you can tell by how they dress and how the music is . . . Usually that's how you can tell if it's bad or not" (interview, October 22, 2013). Grace Greene (10) said she would avoid "rock and roll music," and "stuff that isn't proper and stuff that is bad for you to listen to" (interview, October 22, 2013).

In *Musical Identities* (2002), Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald note that "music can act as a powerful badge of identity for adolescents, perhaps more than any other aspects of their lives, and that as such it represents a fundamental influence on their identities," and that "the music we choose signals many other non-musical aspects about ourselves, and that young people use their liking of particular forms of music to ally themselves with members of their peer group" (p. 17). These authors also said, "Our musical tastes and preferences can form an important statement of our values and attitudes" (p. 1). The children in this study chose music that identified with their Christian values, which "set them apart" from the values of mainstream youth culture. Soderman (2013) cites Thornton (1995) and his concept of *subcultural capital*, which involves "knowing the latest youth music and having the right style of clothing," what the media describes as "being 'hip' and being 'right'" (p. 372). The children in these families did not enter into the contest of acquiring this subcultural capital. The musical choices of the Chen children were the closest to that of mainstream youth culture, as contemporary

Christian music is often considered a bridge between “secular and sacred” that retains the text of sacred music but adopts the styles and conventions of popular music.

It might be argued that the preference for classical music over popular music on the part of the Anderson girls might constitute participation in a “highly valued activity,” a social practice “valued more highly than others” (Lareau, 2003, p. 275), a mainstream “middle class value.” The choice of the children to avoid music that identified with youth culture (even the Chen children avoided secular popular styles) might also be so applied; however, the children’s embrace of classical and sacred music and their avoidance of popular-based youth music seemed to extend beyond their “middle-class-ness.” The Greene children’s desire to disregard styles that pictured activities “not appropriate,” and the Anderson’s avoidance of music with a heavy beat was grounded in the conflict of the values inherent in the music, more than the idea that those activities did not provide appropriate cultural capital.

**Specifics: The parents.** Hargreaves, Miell, and MacDonald (2002) wrote:

“Most people have strong musical likes and dislikes regardless of their level of musical expertise” (p. 11). John and Meg Anderson and Hannah Chen had fairly extensive training and experience, while Peter and Tirzah Greene had virtually none, and Fred Chen’s musical experience had not provided him with encouragement. Still, all of the parents expressed definitive ideas about acceptable/unacceptable music. Meg Anderson reported that her musical tastes had



changed. Growing up in a Baptist church, she was initially attracted to a Southern Gospel style of music.

That style of music had a more rhythmic beat, and that music is very powerful to me, almost like a drug that that would lead me to the next step down, which would be more the contemporary Christian artists. I listened to some of them during college, which when that wasn't musically [satisfying] enough, then I started listening to other styles of music, and that led me down a very slippery slope. (interview, February 22, 2013)

Meg's life response was to change her musical preferences to "something all the way up here (points to the ceiling) way far away from that." She replied that she felt that the words of Southern Gospel style were acceptable, although "fluffy" at times (interview, February 22, 2013). When I asked Meg her current musical preferences she said she preferred "Mozart over Beethoven because most of his (Mozart's) pieces were a little more bouncy." She said she liked "things that move." If she played music during the school day, her choice was music from the Classical period because she believed: "Mozart really organizes your brain cells"<sup>8</sup> (interview, February 22, 2013). She also made a point of saying "and I do love opera," contrary to (gesturing) to her husband, who said he liked the "shortest one [opera] imaginable" (interview, April 19, 2013).

Meg and John believed all music was laden with values, church music in particular. Meg said, "I think contemporary Christian music is objectionable, because it pulls too much from music that is the style of the world, and just sticks

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<sup>8</sup> Perhaps a reference to the research of Rauscher, Shaw, Levine, Ky, and Wright (1994), the findings of which have since been disputed.

good words to it.” Therefore, the family ceased listening to sacred performers who “had gone south,” a reference to what they viewed as a compromise in beliefs and lifestyle. “I’ve taught them (her children) to look at the lifestyle of the writers and the people who perform the music” (interview, April 19, 2013). When I asked about the lifestyles of the classical composers they enjoyed, Meg acknowledged that some of their lifestyles “were absolutely unacceptable.” She mentioned Mozart, whom she said “had a horrible, horrible lifestyle;” still she felt there was a mathematical consistency to Mozart’s music that “you don’t find in today’s contemporary Christian music, or even in the rap styles” (interview, April 19, 2013).

The lifestyle of some classical composers and performers does present a conundrum for conservative Christians. For Meg, it was more acceptable to listen to a secular Mozart symphony than a sacred gospel quartet or praise band. Classical composers like Wagner, Liszt, and Tchaikovsky are even more problematic because of the infidelity and anti-Semitism of Wagner, the affairs of Liszt, and the association of Tchaikovsky with homosexuality. Some Christians might choose classical music because it is considered “high art,” and thus, in line with middle-class cultural capital. However, with the blurring of the distinctions separating “high” and “low” art, and the notion that “music is not a thing at all but an activity, something that people do” (Small, 1998, p. 2), some Christians have had to make choices that at times seem to be inconsistent. Grace Greene (10) enjoyed the soundtrack to *Phantom of the Opera*, but was uncomfortable with the production because there were elements that she inferred from her habitus that were improper (interview,

October 22, 2013). Susan Anderson (14) preferred to listen to classical music, but also thought that the group Celtic Thunder was “cool” (interview, May 16, 2013), even though their musical style stemmed from popular rather than classical music.

I asked Meg, “What music would you avoid?” Her first response was “anything that focuses more on, I would say, the rhythm; focuses more on the beat versus the words, is something that we typically avoid.” Then she referenced Philip Glass. I asked her how she came to know his music, which seemed so different from her “musical orbit.” She spoke about a homeschooling text that featured a study of the effects of different kinds of music on the growth of plants. One of the selections was by Philip Glass. Meg, in listening to the music, described it as “repetitively redundant.” She said: “there’s no beginning; there’s no end; there’s no reason for me when I listen to it, I don’t hear the reason in the song.” As a rule, Meg did not care for many manifestations of 20th century classical music, even though her daughters studied such pieces in their piano lessons.

Negotiating the musical choices of the Indianapolis Children’s Choir required a nuanced approach. Both John and Meg held the directors in highest esteem, even though the repertoire choices, which included jazz and multi-cultural selections, were outside the boundaries of what they as parents would normally have chosen. John felt the experience was good for their girls, because it taught them “the power of music.” Meg said she “would love for [her] children to be missionaries somewhere outside of the United States,” and that this would require immersion in that culture’s music, but living in the United States presented a different scenario. John said that

learning the music was “a cultural experience,” not something the girls continued as part of daily practice. He said it was more of an “educational opportunity versus a desire to make it a lifelong habit” (interview, April 19, 2013).

All of the Andersons, both parents and children, also enjoyed “fun music,” usually bluegrass and American folk music, as well as certain Pandora stations dedicated to the music of Dan Forrest and James Galway. John said that when the family wanted to get “really wild” they would listen to a bluegrass CD titled *Clean Pickin’*, produced by a Christian evangelist (interview, February 22, 2013).

Fred and Hannah Chen centered their musical discussions on contemporary Christian music, a genre of popular musical styles adapted for use with sacred texts. Their church utilized such music in its worship; the children enjoyed it and listened to it recreationally. Both Fred and Hannah supported its use, but each had reservations. Hannah said: “It’s almost all electronic. I really would like to do something more ‘unplugged.’ I would like to do something along the lines of singing traditional hymns” (interview, July 22, 2013). Hannah added:

I think that the songs that are written for drumset probably lend themselves to the kind of choruses that are self-focused in how I worship God, not so much “Let’s worship God,” and “Worship God for who He is”. . . I think when there is a drum, there might be a sense that it is easier to *feel* like you’re really worshipping God, and not really be worshipping God. (interview, July 30, 2013)

Fred’s concerns were that “the attitude and the tone (of the music) may not be very worshipful” and “there’s not as much talk about living a godly life in Christ Jesus.” He questioned his children about messages in the music that communicated

(via style and tone) that “Jesus is your boyfriend” (interview, July 22, 2013). Fred and Hannah seemed to have an understanding of music’s role as performative of character. The entire musical package—notes, rhythms, attitude, and inflection—contribute to meaning. Bowler and Reagan (2014) connected contemporary Christian music with the prosperity gospel,<sup>9</sup> a belief out of character for the Andersons, Chens, and Greenes. “The performative prosperity gospel had found its acoustic analog in the megachurch turn to arena rock worship” (p. 210). Although Fred’s church would not be considered a megachurch, it had embraced this megachurch style of music.

Fred’s opinion of secular popular musical styles was: “they are all about a lot of violence, a lot of hopelessness, a lot of destruction, and I would not let my kids listen to that in my house (interview, July 22, 2013). Still, Fred said if his son Matthias (14) was able to find a Christian who performed in those styles, he said he would “not be completely opposed to that.” If the lyrics were acceptable, then Fred felt the musical style was not an issue.

Hannah recounted an incident that seemed inconsistent with what her children enjoyed. The church purchased a Vacation Bible School curriculum from a Christian publisher that incorporated rap, hip-hop, and other popular music styles as a means to teach the days of creation. When she played the tracks for the children she observed: “the kids were really turned off by it” and said: “this is really terrible

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<sup>9</sup> The evangelical magazine *Christianity Today* defines the prosperity gospel as “aberrant theology that teaches God rewards faith—and hefty tithing—with financial blessings.”

stuff.” After hearing one particular selection, the children insisted: “We’re not doing that one, it’s just too embarrassing” (interview, July 22, 2013). Perhaps the juxtaposition of lyric and musical style struck the children as incongruous. Fred’s comment was that the producers were trying “too hard to be cool” (interview, July 22, 2013).

Tirzah Greene said that her children listened to what they as parents listened to (interview, October 22, 2013). Peter, who described his musical skills as minimal (interview, October 10, 2013), enjoyed hymns, sacred songs that encouraged his thoughts toward God, some classical songs, most patriotic songs, and some country-western songs that encouraged a moral character (interview, October 22, 2013). Peter said that if he liked a song, he sometimes played it over and over without getting tired of it. When asked about music he would avoid, he said: “rap, heavy metal, jazz, hard rock, and polka.” When I followed up on his polka comment, he said that many of the farmer wedding receptions in Wisconsin featured lots of polkas. Tirzah mentioned the lyrics to one that said you needed to drink all of the beer here, since there wouldn’t be any in heaven (interview, October 22, 2013).

Tirzah’s musical tastes changed from her adolescence, and she now regrets some of the musical choices she made growing up. She noted that she was raised without any kind of musical guidelines, and some of the songs she enjoyed then still remain in her mind. The memories of the songs are sometimes triggered while in a grocery store, and the associated lyrics come back, lyrics that she says she did not understand at the time, but now regrets. For example, her eighth grade graduation

song was Whitney Houston's "Greatest Love of All," which Tirzah said was inordinately about "self," and Cyndi Lauper's "True Colors," which Tirzah believed was associated with homosexuality, something she considered to be a sin (interview, October 22, 2013).

Tirzah's musical tastes leaned towards "classical music and hymns," although she did not believe that all classical music was acceptable. She said she "could listen to good orchestra music all the time" (interview, October 31, 2013). She did not play music during the school day until the Christmas season, and then the music was on continually. If Tirzah was out of the house, Peter put on musical recordings for the rest of the family (interview, October 22, 2013).

**Summary.** Perhaps what these families have instinctively sensed is an illustration of DeNora's (2000) comment: "Musical framing occurs when music's properties are somehow projected or mapped on to something else, when music's properties are applied to and come to organize something outside themselves" (p. 27). The Andersons, Greenes, and to a lesser extent the Chens linked meaning with sound, and when the sound's meaning conflicted with each family's Christian values, they either rejected it outright, or else participated with caution.

Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves (2001) have suggested that there is distinction between musical behaviors in and out of school (p. 134). Lamont (2002) posited that age and the home environment were not influential factors associated with positive musical identity (p. 52). When school and home are a single unit, as in

the case of these homeschool families, the dynamic changes. In all three families, musical preferences tended to be the same between parents and children. The teens in the families, as far as I could observe, did not appear to have a private musical world apart from their parents. This reinforces the connection of “appropriate” music and Christian habitus. However, habitus is not absolute. Each family held to different notions of what was acceptable/unacceptable when it came to worship music; however, within the family they appeared to be united, although the Chen parents did question some aspects of contemporary worship music. This unity of family belief is lauded in the homeschooling community (Mayberry & Knowles, 1989).

### **Musical Experience**

Koopman (1996) wrote about the “intrinsic value of musical experience” (p. 484), and noted that the “value of music is to be found in the richness of musical experience” (p. 483). Koopman further stated that “we can come to know the value of musical experience only if we are sufficiently initiated into music, for the intrinsic value of music cannot be demonstrated by words— it must be experienced” (p. 492). For Christian homeschoolers, musical experience, like everything else, is not independent of core beliefs. Murphy (2012) observed and wrote the following:

Religiously motivated homeschooling parents do not divide the world into discrete units . . . They see their faith as an animating force that places God at the center of their lives and pulls all dimensions of their lives into a principled whole (p. 89).

The phenomenon is not limited to Christianity. Bogdan (2003) wrote that “in some



Hindu and Muslim traditions... there seems to be no split between the aesthetic, intellectual, religious and spiritual” (p. 83).

When musical experience did not conflict with each family’s values, they participated wholeheartedly. It did not concern the Anderson, Chen, and Greene families that their children participated in plays and musicals, even popular ones (although G-rated), the Indianapolis Children’s Choir, or the Milwaukee Youth Symphony Orchestra. The music and the structure of the organizations presented values consistent with what the parents tried to inculcate. The parents sought to negotiate the tricky dance between belief and practice with nuanced accommodations. These were taken in stride, and the experiences deemed profitable and wholeheartedly enjoyed.

**Early musical experiences: Church and home.** For the Andersons, Chens, and Greenes, early musical experiences occurred in both church and home. Church attendance and participation were deemed important, and inextricably woven into the fabric of family life. Helen Anderson’s (17) earliest childhood musical memories were of singing songs with other children in the church nursery, and then later sitting and listening to her parents sing in the church choir and various ensembles. George Greene (14) placed his earliest musical memories at church, listening to the singing during the 4-year and 5-year old Sunday school class. Katie Greene’s (15) desire for music also came from church. “I always wanted to be able to sing in the

choir and stuff like that, and I always remember just wanting to stand up there and be a part of that” (interview, October 17, 2013).

The home influence on musical experience was also noted. Helen Anderson (17) remembered when her older sister Linda began piano lessons at age 6. Helen was 4 and had to wait two more years before she was permitted to begin (interview, April 09, 2013). Susan Anderson’s (14) earliest musical memories included “walking around the house listening to my sisters practicing piano” (interview, April 09, 2013). Matthias (14) remembered beginning the violin at age 5, and travelling to his teacher’s house for a lesson (interview, July 09, 2013). Micah Chen (7) recalled listening to music in the home while very young (interview, July 09, 2013).

**Most memorable musical experiences.** Realizing the power of musical experience as a motivator for musical study, I sought to find out each of the participants’ most memorable musical experience. Each child was interviewed separately. I did not “feed the answers,” but asked each one to relate what musical experiences came to mind under the category of “most memorable.”

Christina Chen (10) recalled her mother getting happy because she finally “got vibrato” (interview, July 30, 2013). Matthias (14) said his most memorable experience was playing in the church orchestra (interview, July 30, 2013). Micah’s (7) was getting to play on a stage. He said he wasn’t nervous because they were “all together,” although he had a solo. He said he still wasn’t nervous for the solo because he “knew it already” (interview, July 20, 2013). For Michelle Chen (12) it

was performing a scholarship audition before judges who were “really scary.” She didn’t think she had done very well, but she was awarded second place (interview, July 30, 2013).

Hannah Chen supplied two different accounts of memorable musical experiences, one fun and one embarrassing. During Hannah’s college days, she played the piano as part of a flute, violin, and piano trio. All three musicians were from the Asian community and all could improvise. They played for 15 weddings over a couple of summers.

It is really fun to play with others who are really talented. So you could give any one of us music, and we could improvise, do a prelude with all church music, I could just start and I didn’t even tell them what I was going to play, and they picked right up on it and started improvising and harmonizing, and things like that. So it was really fun. (interview, July 08, 2013)

The other experience involved Hannah playing a clarinet solo at her church, with the arranger present. She wasn’t feeling well, and her mother brushed it aside, and told her to take a Tylenol.

And so I took a Tylenol. I was sick. I was standing there playing the clarinet and I usually play everything way too fast, and that day, you know, I was playing slower and slower and all of a sudden I blacked out, fainted dead on the floor (laughs). One of the physicians in the congregation ran down, got me up, shoved me off to a back room really quickly, where I immediately threw up (laughs). (interview, July 08, 2013)

Fred Chen’s most memorable musical experience was negative, and occurred in grade school when he first came to the United States. Fred played the trombone in a public school band in fifth and sixth grade. He and his older brother Tom shared

the same band teacher. One day, the teacher announced to Tom's class: "When God gave [musical] gifts to Tom and Fred, He gave all the gifts to Tom" (interview, July 08, 2013). Tom gleefully passed on that information to Fred, who promptly quit lessons.

Landing the role of Winthrop in a university production of *Music Man* was George Greene's (14) most memorable musical experience. Part of his role included singing the "Gary, Indiana" song, which he still sings for fun sometimes. He also recalled trying to sing "Jesus Loves Me" as a 5-year old "Tiny Tim" in an adjusted version of *Christmas Carol* (interview, October 31, 2013).

Katie Greene's (15) memories were embarrassing ones. She played an offertory in church and turned two pages instead of one, and when she turned the page back she messed everything up (interview, October 22, 2013). In another instance her brother George accompanied her for a musical solo at church. The piano was located where George couldn't see Katie to know when to begin, and Katie just had to stand there. Then, when they finally did start, he played an extra verse beyond her music. Again, she just had to stand there. Katie said she "cried that night with Mom" (interview, Nov 05, 2013).

John and Meg Anderson recalled several experiences. John said one of his most enjoyable musical experiences was attending a concert in Indianapolis called *Symphony on the Prairie*. The other was that of singing a pre-recorded duet with his wife for their wedding (interview, May 17, 2013). For Meg Anderson, her most memorable musical experience was as a chaperone for the Indianapolis Children's

Choir's premiere of the work: *The Lost Son*, a work based upon the biblical parable of the prodigal son. Meg was present at all of the rehearsals and then the premiere. She did not initially like the piece; the music seemed dissonant and beyond her normal realm of experience (she called it a "really horrible sound") (interview, May 17, 2013); however, when she heard the entire work come together, she realized some of the composer's musical choices in relationship to the text, and when she heard the power of the combination of orchestra and chorus, she wept. She said of that experience:

It was the actual performance, the space, the performance venue, the way the sound— because like I said, I was behind the choir so I didn't hear what it sounded like in front, so I'm sure it may have been [bigger]. I was closer to the organ, and I like organ music, so maybe it was because—I don't know, it was just magnificent! It just was. (interview, May 17, 2013)

Helen Anderson (17) remembered finally reaching the ability level to play one of the three pianos her church used to accompany congregational singing. Susan Anderson (14) spoke at length about her participation with the Indianapolis Children's Choir's as part of the World Choir Games. For the final concert they were the last group to perform what she referred to as a "monster performance" with three other groups. She said the kids were frightened because of the weight of the performance, as if they were to represent the "best children's choir in America." They were singing the selection, "One Song at a Time," which to Susan meant: "we're changing our world one song at a time." She recalled the text: "Come embrace the melody that brings us to peace." She said the choir sang two or three other

pieces, but the message of the last one especially resonated.

That was the last song of the concert, and you know you can tell sometimes when all of a sudden something clicks and you make music, or like you make, not art, you make something more than what you're just making in rehearsals.

Susan was moved when she saw the standing ovation, realizing that they as a children's choir "were able to take a very powerful tool, the tool of music, and share [their] thoughts," and demonstrate "that music can bring peace and comfort." She added:

What we just did as a team is so incredible that I would say we touched people's lives in the audience, because we could hear them crying (she tears up). And just, just being able to do something, just being one little part of a chain, or one part of a team, but to do something so incredible that none of us individually could have ever done. But to use the power of music to influence these people's lives, and affect them and just to kind of, I guess encourage them . . . It was an incredible experience. (interview, July 25, 2013)

### **Summary on Musical Activities**

The musical activities and experiences of these families were in keeping with typical expectations, yet still unique because they were so entwined with each family's life. The various aspects of music: listening, practicing, performing, preference, and experience, were not uncommon. What stood out was the importance each family placed upon music, and the financial and emotional support the parents provided for its continuance. The three families intentionally provided a culture of music-making and musical experience that extended to every family member. This was done regardless of the musical experience and aptitude of the parents, or even the musical proclivities of the individual child. Music was viewed as

a “family thing,” something everyone was expected to do. The parents did not subscribe to the belief that music was only for a few gifted persons. Music was important because it was an integral part of worship as well as a means for children to learn qualities and traits for successful living. The parents sought to inculcate musical study and experience into daily family existence.

An additional area that stood out was family “sameness” in matters of musical preference. Distinctive music related to youth culture, and its accompanying subcultural capital, appeared to be missing. I have heard homeschooling advocates in conferences note the divide between youth and adult culture, and urge their listeners to begin and maintain homeschooling in order to avoid or minimize that gap. In their minds, this difference is introduced and supported in institutional schooling. In contrast, the parents and children in this study had similar opinions as to what they liked and disliked in terms of music. For both parents and children, it was normal to reject certain musical manifestations that conflicted with their values and dispositions.

### **Chapter Summary**

In this chapter I reported on the educational and musical activities of three families. In the first part of the chapter, I examined curriculum, schedule, and calendar, as well as the use of homeschool cooperatives as vehicles for supplemental instruction. In order to give a more complete picture, I wrote about the extra-curricular activities of the children, as well as their likes/dislikes. In the second half of the chapter I examined the musical activities of the families, and reported their

opinions regarding listening, practicing, and performing, as well as ideas on musical preference and experience.

My findings are consistent with the literature (Kunzman, 2005, 2009, 2010) in that religious homeschoolers seek to present a unified existence to their children, where education and (for this study) music, have their ultimate source in religious truth. The outworking of this religious truth was evidenced in life decisions, and presented for these families a “normal way of thinking” that may be attributed in part to Christian habitus. This way of thinking is not limited to these families, but the research literature suggests this extends to a wider group, those who identify themselves as Christian homeschoolers.

There is evidence that habitus changes over time. The Christian habitus of today is different from that of 30 years ago. I have spent my entire teaching experience working in fundamental Baptist educational institutions, and our views concerning subjects like accreditation, worldliness, entertainment choices (music styles, movies, theatre going, dancing, gambling, alcohol use) and dress standards have shifted. I suppose that in a Hegelian world this would be considered synthesis (Stone, 2014). In the religious world this change is frequently noted, but addressed in two different ways. On one side of the continuum, the change is viewed with suspicion, considered to be evidence of increasing compromise of foundational principles, a move away from what is considered a strict adherence to Biblical statutes. The result is that institutional rules are thus adopted to insure conformity with certain outward characteristics. On the other side, change is viewed as



inevitable and considered positive in the desire to maintain the institution's relevance to society. Some parents have noticed these shifts and have chosen homeschooling as a means to counteract these changes.

As a movement, religiously motivated homeschooling seems to have followed a similar course. Thirty years ago the rhetoric was inclined away from any involvement with public education. Today however, some homeschool graduates embrace secular college education as well as popular musical styles and entertainment choices. In addition, a number of my religious institution's education graduates, many of whom were homeschooled for religious reasons (including four of my own children), have sought and obtained employment as public school teachers.

### **Data Analysis Summary**

The data analysis chapters suggest that the families in the study made educational and musical decisions congruent to the values and dispositions of a Christian habitus. Parents and children alike filtered their understandings, preferences for certain musical styles, appreciation for musical experience, and use of music in everyday living through a conservative Christian lens. Families did recognize music as an aspect of cultural capital, but if cultural capital and habitus conflicted, habitus won, suggesting that Bourdieusian concepts of economism, cultural capital, and exchange were subservient to habitus. In the following chapter I summarize and discuss the implications of these findings for the educational and musical spheres.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

Educational practice, regardless of venue, is not monolithic. In this study, I presented data received from only three families over a relatively short period of time. Investigating other homeschooling families might reveal different educational and musical processes, and perhaps disparate motivations. For these families, motivations morphed over time, and adjustments were made. Even within the families, schedules changed yearly, monthly, and sometimes weekly. Curriculum choices were sometimes pragmatic (“you can use your older sister’s history book”) or eclectic (“we use Saxon math, Apologia science, and Bob Jones history”). None of these findings can be generalized to homeschoolers everywhere.

#### **Findings and Discussion**

In this section I summarize my findings in the areas related to my research questions: motivation and philosophy, educational and musical practices, and views on experience, music in everyday living, and musical preference. I discuss these findings in the light of current research and through the lens of my own experience. Finally, I summarize my findings as they relate to the key concepts of the Bourdieusian interpretive framework.

#### **Motivation and Philosophy**

The initial motivation to homeschool for each family was religious. For the Andersons, it was to inculcate a love and zeal for Christianity; for the Chens, it was

to provide a strong Christian family whereby parents and children could work together in ministry; and for the Greenes, it was to use all of family life, including academic instruction, as a means of developing Christian character qualities.

For religious homeschooling parents, and certainly for the Andersons, Chens, and Greenes, instructional tasks were seen as a spiritual calling rather than a job. This meant approaching mundane educational activities with a thoroughness and conscientiousness generally reserved for religious duties. This altruism is not limited to religious homeschoolers. Researcher and writer bell hooks (1994) described her own teachers in the segregated schools of her youth as “on a mission” (p. 2), viewing their tasks as “sacred” and their work as sharing in the “intellectual and spiritual growth” of their students (p. 13).<sup>10</sup> These homeschooling parents also believed they were on a divine mission, and this mission involved protection and instruction, both of which they felt were best accomplished by homeschooling. The Greene family said they prayed about the decision to homeschool every year (interview, October 10, 2013). Fred Chen said he prayed for his sons and his daughters each night: that his sons would be “warriors for Christ” and his daughters would be “women of Christ” (interview, July 30, 2013). John and Meg Anderson commended an early music teacher who prayed with their daughters, saying that this practice was most important (interview, April 19, 2013).

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<sup>10</sup> In context, hooks contrasted identity in and out of school. For hooks, school identity was liberating, unlike home. Homeschoolers desire a consistent identity, but still hope to approach their teaching in attitudes similar to those that hooks described, and to produce results as hooks indicated.

These feelings of “calling” and “mission” infuse the parents with purpose that helps to maintain commitment during the difficult times. Since homeschooling is seen as a vehicle for educating beyond the traditional school day—an “all of life” experience—parents (most often the mothers) have no break. They cannot leave their students and “go home.” They are home, and their students are still with them. The parents in the study reported with candor these pressures and subsequent struggles.

These parents demonstrated teaching in a way that hooks (1994) described as “a manner that respects and cares for the souls of our students” (p. 13). Each child was seen as an individual, different from all of the others. Care was taken to not compare sibling abilities. Different learning styles and interests were taken into account and adjustments were made to curriculum, instructional mode, and the daily schedule in order to address these differences. Learning extended beyond academic content. Issues of character, responsibility, and integrity were highly valued and woven into the daily learning.

Learning in such an environment can potentially be transformative. It was for hooks (1994): “I loved being a student. I loved learning” (p. 2). There is great power when teachers “know” and “respect” their students. I have been teaching at the same institution for over 30 years. Our relatively small size enables me to get to know many of my students’ families personally, where they live, and what their parents do for a living. I have sometimes taught parent and child as well as siblings. This affords me greater insight into these students as individuals. Contrast this with

the large, bureaucratic educational institutions described by Gaither (2008), illustrative of a move away from the personal in education. Homeschooling parents who demonstrate caring and respectful attitudes towards their own children, and who administer firm but loving discipline, can bring about the “love of learning” that Hannah Chen mentioned as a goal for her homeschooling (interview, July 30, 2013).

This highlights a wider philosophical discussion. Who is ultimately responsible for education? Fred Chen made it clear that he believed he was responsible, and this responsibility could not be righteously delegated (interview, July 30, 2013). Educational theorists argue that the democratic state also has an interest. Lubienski (2000) wrote that education is a “public good,” where “democratic ideals” and “civic values” are taught. Thus “society is a ‘consumer’ of education, enjoying the benefits of an educated populace” (p. 211). The state, in his mind, has a legitimate, but not a controlling interest in seeing that all its citizens are educated. The Andersons, Chens, and Greenes agreed, and each year completed the Wisconsin state registration form required of homeschoolers.

This tension of governmental/parental responsibility is not only a modern phenomenon. Gaither (2008) wrote that in colonial America (an era noted for its strong religious environment), “colony after colony” passed laws “requiring parents to educate their offspring” and imposed “fines or worse if parents failed in their duties” (p. 12). The parents, not the schools, were held responsible if children did not learn. These conservative religious people supported the state in its duty to punish families if they did not see to the education of their own children.

Modern homeschooling parents see their efforts as a means to take back a responsibility (educating their own children) that over time has been turned over to the educational and governmental professional. The desire to do so is intensified when the parents feel as if their values are under attack by the institutions these professionals represent. Apple (2001) summarized parental fears: “secular education is turning our children into ‘aliens’ and, by teaching them to question our ideas, is turning them against us” (p. 173). Statements from politicians stating that “religious beliefs and structural biases” need to be changed do not allay those fears (Powers, 2015). In the minds of these parents, such changes begin with indoctrination in the schools. Thus, keeping children from the schools removes them from what these parents view as an assault on their values.

What about homeschooling parents who do not treat their children with respect, who possess a self-serving agenda, or who reject academic learning for themselves and for their own children? What about the parents who allow their children the “legalized dropout” scenario, and who do not insist that their children acquire the requisite subject knowledge according to state curriculum, while at the same time rejecting any notion of governmental oversight? Do they not have the potential to cause their children harm, perhaps to the same degree that conscientious parents are able to influence for good? Does not the state have a responsibility to step in? What is the “tipping point?”

Reich (2002b, 2008) argues that homeschooling should be government regulated and that parents should be made to prove that they are capable of the task

before given permission. While this initially sounds good, the problem is criteria. How would government determine a parent's qualifications? Would the educational level of the parents, or their experience, or their financial acumen determine if they could be granted permission? Even with the rigorous standards in place for current-day teacher education, some teachers are more effective than others, and the effectiveness is difficult to correlate to paper qualifications. If hooks is correct about "mission" and "care," how does one measure that?

Then there is the matter of educational success. How is it measured? The goal of the families in my study was spiritual and familial, although a by-product was academic. Lubienski (2000) attributed strong test scores for homeschooling students as "the fruits of a highly motivated, active, and interested parent participating in the life of the child" (p. 223). The inference is that parental involvement would produce similar results regardless of the schooling option, public or private. It seems that many homeschoolers agree, for I have often heard positive references in homeschooling conferences that point to the small community school, or the one-room school as examples of strong schools structured differently from the current system.

*After graduating from college, I made acquaintance with an elderly, retired, one-room schoolteacher in rural Pennsylvania. Frequently, former students, now successful adults, some in high professional positions, returned and expressed their appreciation for his teaching. He recounted stories of mischievous students (often boys) whom he disciplined in various ways until they "buckled down." He obviously left*

*a very positive impression on his students.*

Homeschoolers often tout the one-room school as an example of successful education, and a model for their own teaching. Homeschooling children frequently learn at the same time and location on multiple levels. The young children sometimes “listen in” on instruction meant for older children, and possibly absorb new material at a younger age. In addition, the “chore” aspect of the one-room school, collecting firewood, keeping the stove going, sweeping the floor, dusting the erasers, is frequently practiced in the homeschool.

In the early days of the modern homeschooling movement, professional educators and government officials strongly rejected the notion of homeschooling and sought various means to shut it down or strongly regulate it. Bourdieu (1977) attributed this kind of response as an effort of the ruling class to maintain its place (p. 169). The response of homeschoolers, i.e. the dominated class, was to push back “the limits of *doxa*” and expose the “arbitrariness of the taken for granted” (p. 169, italics in the original). Homeschooling, therefore, in the minds of some practitioners, represents a way to expose the current educational system as arbitrary.

Students are able to go outside of the system and obtain the “material and symbolic means of rejecting the definition of the real that is imposed on them” (Bourdieu 1977, p. 169). In homeschooling, advocates argue that the playing field is leveled, and student achievement can be evaluated on its own merit, rather than as the product of a system. Students who might have been otherwise marginalized because of religious beliefs, economic status, racial identity, or the social structure



of the school, are able to obtain skills within a nurturing environment, and for religious homeschoolers, in connection with their values.

Collum (2005), with respect to homeschooling found that: “Race and class—the two major divides in public education—are not significant determinants of standardized test achievement” (p, 307). Homeschooling, even among non-white, and non-affluent individuals worked, leading Collum to conclude, “homeschooling is efficacious” (p. 307).

### **Educational Practices**

Malcolm Gladwell’s (2013) book, *David and Goliath*, is subtitled: *Underdogs, Misfits, and the Art of Battling Giants*. The premise is that what appears to be a personal disadvantage may be turned to an advantage given the proper perspective. Large public, private, or Christian schools are able to supply content professionals, provide for large-group experiences in music and sports, and offer specialized facilities such as science or music labs, wood or metal shops, a gym, pool, and weight room. Obviously, homeschooling parents are not able to compete with these types of resources. What homeschooling does offer, and what the parents and children noted in the interviews and observations as an advantage, is flexibility.

This flexibility is noted in the school calendar, which is individually constructed and adjusted to meet church, family, and personal needs. The calendar changed each year. Sometimes it was adjusted mid-year. In all three families, the school calendar involved going to school during vacation breaks, Christmas, and

summer. It also permitted the families the opportunity to visit historical venues and museums in “off-season” or in “non-peak” times.

Flexibility extended to the daily schedule. The students themselves determined the order in which they worked on their daily subjects. Several of the children commented about the strategies they employed for determining maximum productivity. Although there were pre-determined times when the families came together, the choice of study order was individual. In addition, the amount of time given to each subject was flexible. If more time was needed to complete the daily work, or if extended research was called for, it was given (within reason). No bell rang to indicate a change to the next subject or activity. By the same token, if the work for the subject could be accomplished in a shorter time period, the students did not need to wait for everyone else to “catch up.”

The curriculum was also flexible, although the Greenes were, for the most part, locked into a pre-packaged curriculum for their older children. The others used a mix of texts and workbooks from various publishers, both Christian and secular. The sequence of the classes did not always follow that of the public school, leading Helen Anderson (17) to indicate that she took the same classes sooner (interview, July 25, 2013). Sometimes texts were chosen to shore up the children’s learning deficiencies; Meg Anderson did this for several of her children.

This kind of differentiation is discussed today in educational circles. Writers such as Tomlinson (2001, 2014) have advocated attending to the differing needs, including emotional ones, of students in the classroom. Tomlinson (2014) wrote

that the goal of this kind of instruction produced “genuine accomplishment” that “can produce something more potent than self-esteem: self-efficacy” (p. 54). In some ways, it appears that successful homeschooling parents, including the ones in this study, have capitalized on this. They have used the inherent flexibility of homeschooling to their advantage, taking into account all of the various needs of their children, including academic needs.

The parents held the children accountable for their learning. They monitored the schooling and in the truest sense, “No child was left behind.” The mothers and fathers in all three families saw to it that the children did their work and stayed on track. The children seemed to embrace this. Apostoleris (2000) noted that homeschoolers, (differing from the non-homeschool population) increased in intrinsic motivation for their learning as they grew older. They did not hold the teacher responsible if they did not know something. They accepted the responsibility for learning themselves. If mother did not know the answer to a content question, although admittedly difficult, the children learned to find the answer in other ways, leading Helen Anderson (17) to conclude that “sometimes you’ll have to teach yourself or look things up” (interview, July 25, 2013).

A final observation has to do with the collaborative element between parent and child in the educational process. They learned together. The parents, by their example of discussing and teaching content, demonstrated that learning did not cease with adulthood. Learning was life-long and for all. John Anderson said of his wife: “As she’s teaching the girls, she’s learning things,” with Meg responding: “This

sounds very selfish, but yes, I am enjoying it” (interview, February 22, 2013).

### **Musical Practices**

It is impossible to separate each family’s musical identity from their Christian beliefs. Music permeated each family’s practice and experience, not only church music, but participation in other types of music as well. Both child and parent reported this connection. Music was not viewed as an abstraction, a luxury to be whimsically enjoyed, but rather an integral part of life; an area deemed worthy of investment, and one that, it was hoped, would reap dividends over a lifetime. Thus the parents, in the words of Bourdieu (1977), “exchanged” money and time with the hope of later benefits. It appears to be out of the ordinary to randomly find three families with a total of ten children who valued and supported musical study so strongly. Their solitary connection to one another was a common Christian habitus. Musical involvement for the children of all three families was something everyone did. It was “a given.” Musical study was a normal part of existence; it was expected. The idea expressed, though never explicitly stated (in interviews or observations), was “You are part of this family; you study an instrument. Choice of instrument is up to you.” The parents never questioned musical involvement and investment, and the children did not seem to resist it; it was part of their Christian habitus.

Musical study was valued because of its usefulness in worship, ministry (helping others), and the associated by-products of discipline, time management, and general character development. The parents provided encouragement and

financial support regardless of whether or not they had had positive past experiences with music. Parental and sibling musical involvement were noted as strong influences by two of the families. In addition, it was simply assumed that each child could and should learn an instrument, although the parents understood that some of the children possessed greater aptitude than others. The assumption was due to the fact that music was an integral part of these family's lives. Two of the mothers reported making specific musical decisions in order to address educational matters in one of their children. Meg Anderson sought to address her daughter's attention-deficit issues through musical study. She enrolled another daughter in a youth choir to teach her how to "sing properly." Tirzah Greene chose musical study for her oldest daughter in order to present her with a continual academic challenge that she did not find in normal schooling.

Musical instrument practice was a regular part of the school day but was implemented in different ways for each family. The Chens scheduled a daily "mass practice" where everyone worked on their musical instruments at the same time in various parts of the house. Susan Anderson (14) practiced in between subjects in order to give herself an academic break, to relieve frustration, and to give her clarinet embouchure a rest. The Greenes set aside specific times for each child on the piano, and they dutifully followed the sequence spelled out by their private lesson instructor. The children reported learning lessons of discipline as a result of musical practice, and George Greene (14) said he had to "practice correctly" in order to improve (interview, October 31, 2013).

The parents and children in each family liked the same kinds of music. None of the children or parents interacted with the music of contemporary youth culture. They reported liking various genres considered classical, some folk-based styles, and for the Chens, various manifestations of contemporary Christian music. In the Anderson family, the children were more accepting of the sounds of 20<sup>th</sup> century classical music than the parents.

Susan Anderson (14) reported a non-religious transcendent experience (changing the world “one song at a time”), while her sister Helen (17) realized that her appreciation for cello music made her stand out from her peers. Other aspects of musical experience reported were embarrassing performances (fainting, turning two pages in the music), changing one’s attitude about a contemporary classical work, and familial (“Mom was happy I got vibrato”).

Musical performances were often connected with church for all three families. The Andersons were continually preparing instrumental music for offertories as well as vocal numbers. The Greene children sang, played the piano, and participated in the brass choir. The Chens rehearsed with many other children in their church orchestra. Other performances included those with a youth symphony, regional children’s choir, family concerts, and musical productions put on by a local Baptist university and homeschool cooperative.

### **Summary of Bourdieusian Concepts as an Interpretive Framework**

The key concepts of Bourdieu’s writings—habitus, various forms of capital, economism, and exchange—are evident in the interviews, musical and educational

choices, and attitudes reflected in the observations of these three homeschooling families. All three families, Andersons, Chens, and Greenes, indicated that their relationship to a Christian ethos was the prime motivating factor in everything they did: their educational choices, desire for musical instruction, the kinds of music they affirmed and avoided, their relationship to musical experience, and the way they used music as an identity marker. The oversight and control the parents maintained over their children's education and socialization was motivated by a desire to pass on the values and dispositions of a Christian habitus to their own children.

One of the tenets of religious homeschooling is that learning begins earlier than traditional school age. One of the fathers remarked that his wife had been "homeschooling since birth." This is consistent with other religious homeschoolers I have known, and affirms Bourdieu's (1977) observation that this inculcation began with an agent's "earliest upbringing" (p. 81).

All three families' preference for classical and sacred music, and their deliberate avoidance of popular music, speaks to their innate understanding of classical music as a form of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984), as well as the potential values conflict of popular music and a Christian habitus. One family enrolled the children in a community classical youth orchestra as a means of verifying homeschooling success. Another joined a renowned children's choir because of its reputation for quality, and thus giving a nod to the cultural capital such membership provided, as well as social training in the inevitable values conflicts that arose by participating in a non-religious organization.

Involvement with music was seen as a natural outgrowth of religious habitus, and valued regardless of individual propensity. The parents believed that all should be involved with music because of music's pervasive influence on a Christian habitus. This was noted even if the parents were not particularly musical; they still strongly supported musical participation. The parents felt an obligation to prepare their children for usefulness to the wider Christian community in many areas, not the least of which was music. Children noted the positive feelings they experienced when they realized the spiritual and emotional help their musical gifts brought to others. This affirms Bourdieu's idea of the social capital attached to these skills.

Bourdieu's notions of economism and exchange are also evident. All three mothers in this study were university-trained professionals, yet each came to believe that the exchange of professional fulfillment and compensation for the sake of the success of the future generation was worthwhile. The families exchanged earning power for potentially stronger relationships with their children and the expectation that the children would maintain similar values and dispositions into adulthood, in turn passing on these ideals to *their* offspring.

### **Implications for Education**

Homeschooling may, in some circumstances, model "best practice" educational methods and techniques. Public school teachers often are tasked with developing "IEPs," or Individualized Education Plans for students needing remediation. In the public school, this practice is based upon the assumption that something is "wrong" with the child. Homeschooling parents have the opportunity



to craft individual educational programs tailored to the needs of each child. They understand that each child has different styles of learning and interests. Thus, the parents in this study constructed individualized educational programs so that their children would be successful, and in the words of Hannah Chen, so that each child would “learn to love learning” (interview, July 30, 2013). The parents changed the schedule, the textbooks, obtained tutors, and encouraged and supported non-academic activities in order to give each child a positive educational experience.

At times the child was part of that decision-making process, and at times not. The Andersons allowed their teenage daughters a voice in major educational decisions. The Chens allowed their son to attend a private school for a time in order to accommodate his interest in lacrosse. The small size of the instructional program offered maximum flexibility. If something wasn’t working, the parents made changes

Individuality of the instructional program is not limited to homeschooling, but the parents in my study suggest that homeschoolers may be its most consistent practitioners. It is also practiced in some project-based charter schools. Here students, in consultation with teacher-mentors, develop projects that combine student interest with academic content areas. The goal is increased student engagement in the learning process.

Individual freedom may not always be in the best interest of the child. If a parent says: “Johnny just can’t do math, we are going to concentrate on the other subjects, ones in which he will excel,” then the child is not going to master an

important portion of basic education. If the parent says: “I am tired today; I don’t feel like having school” or “We aren’t going to do the entire textbook,” those decisions can affect learning. I did not observe these kinds of attitudes or practices in the families I studied. The children did their work, regardless of personal inclination. It appeared that they did ALL of the problems, not just the evens or odds, they completed their textbooks, and did not stop their American History studies at World War II because the school calendar was finished.

Individuality of schedule is another consideration. One of the hallmarks of higher education is the ability to individually craft schedules. A student may elect to take English Composition first or seventh hour, or may choose the semester in which to take Calculus or Psychology. In the online world, students may decide to attend class at whatever time fits their schedule. The homeschooling students in this study remarked that this freedom permitted them to work on individual assignments as long as they needed (not to be locked into so many minutes for each class). Choosing the order of the academic subjects also helped them personally manage the ebb and flow of their concentration levels.

As homeschoolers get older, they become increasingly more adept at obtaining information from reading a textbook, watching a video, or surfing the Internet. Because of time and academic content constraints, the homeschooling mothers in this study did not generally prepare lectures. The children were expected to obtain their information from reading their textbooks. This emphasis on reading, which appears to be a consistent practice throughout the homeschooling

world, is good academic preparation for future study and learning. Also, the idea of the reversed or “flipped” classroom (Herreid & Schiller, 2013) where teachers facilitate learning rather than teach the actual content appears to be something these homeschoolers did intuitively.

It appeared that the children in this study accepted personal responsibility for learning. Perhaps it was because the parents expected and worked towards that end; perhaps it was an outgrowth of their interpretation of Christian values. It seemed evident that the children saw to their educational tasks without coercion. Communicating that same expectation in a traditional school is more difficult. Students who desire to learn are sometimes singled out by their peers and socially ostracized. Non-homeschooling parents, when faced with job relocation, often choose housing based upon positively performing school districts, where learning is valued. Teaching and learning in a classroom where some students negatively react to educational endeavors is difficult. Therefore, the synergy of a family (or even a classroom) wholly committed to learning is powerful, and for the teacher, personally rewarding.

This sense of reward may help to explain the personal satisfaction experienced by the parents. The Anderson, Chen, and Greene parents were clearly proud of the spiritual, educational, and musical accomplishments of each of their children. They recognized that each child was a distinct individual, and that all needed the discipline of learning to be successful. These parents, in the words of Bourdieu (1977), rejected the “naiveties of economism” (p. 177) (i.e., that all

activities should be evaluated on a strictly economic basis), and instead placed value on what Bourdieu refers to as “symbolic capital” (p. 181).

It appears that a great deal of emphasis in education today is on job training: “You need to learn this in order to get a good job,” or “Do you want to be flipping hamburgers your entire life?” The parents and children in this study seemed to possess a broader, more holistic view of education. They did not study music in order to earn extra money. They did not apply themselves in their science classes because of a desire to be engineers, scientists, or doctors. Helen Anderson (17) did not maintain a poetry/photographic blog, Michelle Chen (12) did not work on a novel, Susan Anderson (14) did not learn Finale notepad, and Joshua Greene (12) did not do in-depth research of the *U.S.S. Indianapolis* because of school requirements. They loved learning for its own sake: perhaps as an outgrowth of their Christian beliefs, or as a matter of self-discipline, or simply because learning was its own reward.

### **Implications for Music Education**

It is a mistake to stereotype any group, including homeschoolers. Individuals should be evaluated as such and should not be mentally “lumped together.” No educational endeavor is equal in terms of quality, be it the traditional classroom or the homeschool. The nature of a qualitative study is such that it does not lead to broad, transferable conclusions. Still, there are some considerations that seem to apply to more than this small sample of homeschoolers, especially those for whom the motivation to homeschool is religious.

Music mattered to these families and they emphasized the “doing” of music (Elliott, 1995). All were consistently involved in performing, whether in church, or in their co-ops or community music organizations. The extra practice time during the school day, parental support, and continual performance opportunities all helped solidify progress. Music was viewed as a vital part of life, and involvement with it served to construct the identity of each child. In contrast, schools have a difficult time. Districts drop music programs because of budget constraints, or reduce them to the point that effective teaching is difficult. Music competes with sports, and it is sometimes difficult to participate in both. In some programs, the sole goal of musical participation is to win the next contest, and music classes are reduced to listening to a few recordings, dancing to a few folk songs, and singing melodies with little personal relevance.

In contrast, many homeschoolers prioritize and seek quality private musical instruction. They tend to be committed to the instructional process, are supportive of the lesson provider, and attend to their children’s practicing. Such was the case with these families. The parents sacrificed financially in order to obtain qualified musical instructors for their children, and the children responded by studying more than one musical instrument. Because of flexible school schedules, parents were able to schedule private lessons when most other students were in school. In informal conversations with private lesson instructors, they seem to be pleased with the additional students, as well as the additional revenue such teaching afforded.

Homeschoolers often desire large group musical experiences. Both the

Milwaukee and Madison Youth Orchestra representatives indicated that numbers of homeschoolers were enrolled in their programs. Small colleges and universities that utilize community involvement to supplement low enrollment in orchestras, especially in the string sections, benefit from the addition of homeschoolers.<sup>11</sup> For the homeschooler, this participation is a new experience, and is often highly valued and deeply appreciated. The Chen's involvement with the Milwaukee Youth Symphony and the Anderson's connection with the Indianapolis Children's Choir are indicative of this desire for large-group musical experiences.

Homeschoolers attending musical colleges and conservatories approach their experience with "fresh eyes." They have not been in a typical classroom year after year. Their academic classroom educational experience is new. As one public school teacher said to my daughter, "They are not burned out." Still, for some, it is a challenge. Homeschoolers may not be accustomed to deadlines, and struggle to meet them. Some are not used to attending many different classes, and find difficulty adjusting to a variety of expectations. Some have been coddled by parents within a small circle of expertise, and are surprised by the introduction of a wider academic world. Appropriate academic counseling services should be made available to these students. They often want to learn but need help with academic skills such as time management and practice procedures.

On the other hand, some homeschoolers are self-starters, organized, and well

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<sup>11</sup> My son was asked to play in the cello section of a local college orchestra while he was in high school.

read. They are committed to and engaged in the educational process. Students from families who conscientiously attend to their children's academic needs are used to actually reading the textbooks, rather than glancing at them for an exam or relying on a study guide. They have a zest for learning and often demonstrate teachable attitudes.

Some music students from religious homeschooling families have had little interaction with various forms of popular music. They do not know the latest popular musical groups or the latest film releases (and sometimes have no interest in learning about them). They often support folk music genres rather than rap, heavy metal, or hip-hop. The families in this study fell into that category. They were not comfortable with dancing as part of a class or an activity because of their religious ethos. Not all religious homeschoolers hold to these ideas, but some do. These notions may conflict with music education classes where students learn folk dances as part of their curriculum, theory/history classes that require listening to jazz and popular music, choir selections that might be considered bawdy, or opera productions where the story line is, in the minds of these students, morally problematic. Music administrators should endeavor to at least be sensitive to the internal conflicts these students face in these situations.

Depending on district policy, public school music teachers might benefit from the introduction of homeschoolers into their musical groups and classes. They might bring a fresh perspective, and a generally positive attitude. If the musical program is heavily weighted towards popular music and jazz, some homeschoolers might be

reluctant to participate; however, others may not see musical preference as an issue. If the homeschoolers are invited to participate, attendance and concert expectations should be very clear: flexibility with regard to practice schedules and concerts is not an option.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

There appears to be an increasing trend for religious and musical homeschoolers to attend secular universities for musical training. Various studies could be devised regarding the educational background of an incoming musical class related to their academic and musical success. These could be constructed as surveys to numbers of schools or qualitative studies regarding the attitudes of music professors and administrators towards the homeschoolers they encounter. If the results of such studies were positive, music schools struggling with enrollment might consider homeschoolers as a new “untapped” market.

*One of our university’s graduates, homeschooled through high school, was enrolled in an MM program in piano performance at a large Midwestern university. The theory professor singled him out for his engagement in the class, his discerning questions, and the quality of his work. She asked to meet after class. At the meeting, the professor inquired of the student’s educational background, and upon learning that he had been homeschooled, told the student to thank his parents for the investment that they had made in him, that had resulted in such academic success as well as personal integrity.*



When homeschoolers are introduced to public school music groups, the dynamic of the classroom might be affected. It would be interesting to study the attitudes of teacher and students alike when homeschoolers are permitted to be part of a public high school musical ensemble, for example. This would be especially interesting in view of the attitude that homeschooling parents have hurt the public school system by removing their children.

A number of homeschool graduates are choosing to work in the public schools as teachers. Four of my own children have made this choice. Future research might explore reasons for this trend, and what these homeschoolers bring to the educational table. Surveying administrators who interview and then decide whether or not to hire homeschool graduates could also be explored.

It appears that a great deal of the extant literature surrounding homeschooling tends to be tilted positively, with many successful homeschooling graduates touted; however, not all homeschool graduates are success stories. Exploring the personal and family dynamics of homeschoolers who disliked or rejected the experience would likely provide insights that might balance uncritical affirmation.

Two of the families in this study mentioned the influence of older siblings on musical involvement. It would be worthwhile to investigate this further. What are the family dynamics in larger homeschool families that make music a priority? Is the example of older siblings a prominent factor? We know of sibling competition and family dynamics of sports personalities; is music similar? We have examples of

musical families in the history of music—Bach, Schubert, and Mendelssohn—but also in current personalities: the children of Itzhak Perlman, siblings Gil and Orli Shaham, the Ying and Elliott family string quartets, the Five Browns, and the Ahn sisters piano trio, to name just a few.

Other interpretive constructs could be researched. Much of my study was premised on the sociological constructs of Bourdieu (1977) as applied to Christian homeschoolers. These could be further explored. Studying homeschoolers who are not motivated by religious reasons might produce a much different set of insights into academic and musical studies.

Homeschoolers are represented in various high school musical competitions, locally and nationally. They are also overrepresented in the Scripps-Howard Spelling Bee (ABC News, 2016). Investigating the educational background of these competitors over time in a longitudinal study might indicate trends and perhaps be correlated with success or failure. Educators might garner insights as to why these particular students were so successful.

### **Conclusion**

Writing a dissertation changes an individual. This is especially true when the topic is so much a part of one's own identity and experience. As I conducted the interviews and observations of these families, many of the comments and experiences I noted matched my own. At times, I could almost hear myself voice the same sentiment as Fred Chen: "You can't really delegate your responsibility [for teaching your own children]" or "I hope they [the children] will grow up and be

Christlike” (interview, July 30, 2013). The comments John and Meg made concerning their musical preferences, their desire for conservative expressions with regards to worship music, and their practice of choosing worship music listening from performers whose lifestyle choices matched lyric content, were congruent with things I had said and/or practiced. I listened to Hannah Chen accompany her children at the piano, going over and over the various selections, practicing shifts, learning vibrato, and checking bowings. My own experience in accompanying my children as they progressed through Suzuki violin, viola, and cello books was similar. When Matthias Chen played Kreisler’s *Preludium and Allegro* for me, I recalled my own introduction to the piece, having performed it with three of my children. Watching Meg Anderson interact with her daughters, delighted in learning academic material she had somehow missed growing up, and valuing the opportunity to grow educationally at any stage of life matched my own experience in homeschool teaching as well as my personal educational philosophy. I was moved as I observed the Greene family make choices on behalf of the values of Christian habitus, rejecting personal preferences and conveniences in hope of a future return. I noted the sacrifices of all of the families to homeschool, especially the mothers who labored with few breaks and no compensation, and was reminded of my wife’s experiences, exchanging the opportunity for fulfillment outside the home for the often difficult challenge of guiding her own children’s academic, social, and spiritual growth.

Still, the concerns of homeschool critics also ring true in ways they would not

have before writing this dissertation. When “good kids” are taken out of a system, as noted by Lubienski (2000), it affects those who remain. Having a classroom filled with students who are fully engaged in the learning process is a wonderful experience for both teacher and student. Removing such students (or, conversely, populating the class with disinterested students) affects classroom synergy. Reich’s (2002) concern is valid, that the total customization of education inherent in homeschooling serves to “shield [homeschoolers] from the vibrancy of a pluralistic democracy,” and is not, therefore, an “unadulterated good” (p. 56). Children eventually become adults, and sooner or later need to come to grips with different ideas in order to successfully function in society. Apple (2001), while acknowledging problems in the schools, wrote that the public schools provided “a kind of social glue, a common cultural reference point in our polyglot, increasingly multicultural society”(p. 177). I can see his point and wonder what our increasingly diverse society would be like without the public schools.

As I view the homeschooling community, now as an observer rather than a participant, I have begun to question the wisdom of what Bourdieu (1977) refers to as the “exhibitions of symbolic capital” (p. 180–181) so common at homeschool conventions and church services. In those venues, it is very common to feature families, usually large ones, performing music or demonstrating academic achievement. Just recently our church hosted one such family. The children were both talented and “cute,” garnering a very positive reaction from those in the audience. At one time, I was part of that, and actually sought out opportunities for

those kinds of demonstrations. My large family in matching outfits, all conservatively dressed, playing their string instruments relatively proficiently to my arrangements and accompaniment, all served to “make me a name” within my small constituency. However, the question nags me: What really was my motive? Was I using my children for my benefit, or theirs?

There is no doubt that the children benefited musically from their participation in a myriad of weddings, concerts, and church services. All are able to improvise; three have perfect pitch, four have undergraduate and three have graduate degrees in music (one is in the process), and all participate in music in some way. Educationally, all have done well, earning various awards, scholarships, promotions, and success in their professional endeavors. Still, I am not confident that they will aspire to the same kind of homeschooling/musical paradigm they experienced growing up. The children who are married will probably not homeschool, but will undoubtedly maintain a very active role in their children’s education. They have consistently demonstrated that since their children were born.

I personally wrestle with why my own children will not likely choose homeschooling. Perhaps they feel as if they missed out on something; perhaps the stresses of continual playing/performing were too much; or perhaps the uncritical, “romantic” notion of homeschooling has been dispelled by the realities of daily living. In addition, we have all observed examples of unsuccessful homeschooling, and so we no longer provide an uncritical appraisal.

My entire teaching experience has been within strongly religious schools.

Since the dissertation process, four of my children have taken positions in public schools. Through their eyes and experiences I have a new appreciation for the challenges that public school teachers and administrators face, and the level of professional commitment many of them exhibit on a daily basis.

*In my daughter's first year of high school English teaching, she told me she was willing to "go to war" in order to teach a subject many did not want to take in a rural public school. When in a parent meeting about a child's behavior, my daughter told the parent that the students had banded together to see if they could drive off the new English teacher, as they had done to the previous four English teachers. Each left after one year. The parent turned to the child and asked if that were true. The child said "yes" and indicated that the students spoke of it quite often. The teacher stayed and "won the war."*

Then there is the nagging question as to the "boundaries and burdens of parental authority over education" (Glanzer, 2008, p. 1). I agree that the state should give the benefit of the doubt to parents in the decision making process for their own children. And yet, at times, some parents have been unreasonable and irresponsible. Sometimes these parents hold to an inaccurate view of their own children: "My Johnny would never do \_\_\_\_." Public school teachers often go to great lengths to make adjustments for these kinds of children. I am not confident that these parents would have the fortitude to genuinely apply themselves in homeschooling, and in a sense, if they were to chose it, the children might suffer.

Homeschooling is a unique experience. In best practice it can pass on the joys

of learning in remarkably effective ways. With insightful parents from all class and racial backgrounds, it can serve to present children with progressively more difficult educational challenges within the context of an affirming atmosphere. It has the potential to skip or minimize some common adolescent educational detours and distractions. It can be an efficient way to prepare children for adulthood.

Musical study within homeschooling is also a natural fit. The idea of continually doing music, of learning, listening, and performing it on a regular basis, of learning to do it for the joy of it, for the self-fulfillment it brings, and for its usefulness in worship within a supportive environment is a wonderful experience.

Homeschooling is distinct from private or public school instruction. Having been homeschooled is often tied to identity. On many occasions I have heard homeschoolers reference themselves as such, much more than other groups. The content of the instruction is not that different, although there are now specialized textbooks geared specifically to homeschooling values and perspectives. What is different is the experience.

Homeschooling is the experience of learning around a kitchen table, or at a desk in one's room, or in a family schoolroom, often with a myriad of children of different ages asking questions, playing with toys, or running from room to room. In a Christian homeschool this experience usually includes family devotions or Bible reading and memory work, practicing music for a church activity, and strict supervision of entertainment choices. This experience might also include stacking books on the kitchen table for mom to check, tabulating daily work via the

computer, working ahead of daily assignments in exchange for a day off, smelling the roast in the oven or the pie that is baking while concentrating on algebra or history, or listening to the sounds of other family members practicing instruments in a different part of the house. It might include a student asking her mother questions about the material that she is unable to answer, forcing her to look up the information for herself, ask someone else, or simply skip it. It might include interruptions to the schedule in order to help a family in need, or to shovel the snow off of a sidewalk or driveway, or to participate in a specialized church activity. The experience may also include tutoring younger children in math, making sure they stay on task, or working in the family business.

When family as a unit is committed to the process of teaching/learning, there is mutuality of engagement. I would not generally make the same claim for non-homeschooling families. In successful homeschooling, as verified by personal experience as well as the observation of other homeschoolers, all of the family is engaged in the learning process. There is no opportunity to “sit on the sideline” or “hide” and not participate in the projects, curricular ideas, and field trips. These shared experiences bond homeschoolers to each other and establish membership in a community much wider than their local family. In the words of Wenger (1998): “Such participation shapes not only what we do, but also who we are and how we interpret what we do” (p. 4). Taken from the lens of Bourdieu (2007), this participation is a function of habitus, a system that integrates past experiences and functions at every moment as a “*matrix of perceptions, appreciations, and actions* and



makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks” (p. 82–83, italics in the original).

Every culture has different ways to educate its young people. Family is often the first of the many units responsible for that task. Our 21st century Western educational system is designed to reach a majority of the children in the most efficient way possible. Flaws and weaknesses are inherent in any system. Different jargon and new bureaucratic initiatives are not likely to address deeper issues such as personal responsibility, work ethic, and engagement. These seem to be individually sourced; however, I suggest that habitus plays a role in establishing and reinforcing dispositions affecting those areas, and that the homeschooling parents’ desire to maintain control over their children’s education enables them to shape those values that are integral to their habitus.

## APPENDIX A: RECRUITMENT FLYER

# Are You a Musical Homeschooler?

If you are a homeschooling family who participates in musical activities as part of your curriculum, I would be interested in interviewing you and your family as part of my musical dissertation study.

For over 24 years, my wife and I have been homeschooling our children and attending recitals, concerts, and lessons every week. I believe that this study of the relationship between homeschooling and musical education will yield a fresh academic perspective on this topic.


I am looking for several homeschooling families, so if you have some friends, please let them know about the study also.

### about the study

**Who:** David Ledgerwood, pursuing a doctoral degree at Boston University in Music Education. I currently serve as the Music Department Chair at Maranatha Baptist Bible College.

**What:** Studying the role of music in homeschool families for my dissertation.

**Why:** I am interested in this topic because my wife and I homeschooled our eight children who played string instruments and piano.



### how it works

I will be interviewing and observing homeschool families musical and home activities during the course of about five weeks.

After the interviewing process, I will incorporate my findings into my dissertation. All information included in the dissertation will be kept confidential; all names changed and identities protected. Transcripts of all interviews will be presented to you for verification of intent, tone, and accuracy.

### contact information

If you're interested in becoming a participant, please contact me, and I will send you more information.  
920-5270-8339 – david.ledgerwood@mbbc.edu

**APPENDIX B: E-MAIL SENT TO WPA AND WISCONSIN CHEAA**

My name is David Ledgerwood. I am currently a Doctoral student at Boston University in Music Education. My dissertation involves studying the musical world of selected homeschool families. This project requires several families willing to let me observe their musical and home activities over a period of approximately five weeks. All information included in the dissertation will be kept confidential; all names changed and identities protected. Transcripts of all interviews will be presented to you for verification of intent, tone, and accuracy. I have an interest in this topic because my wife and I have homeschooled all eight of our children through high school over the last 24 years. I desire to explore other cases in southern Wisconsin. In addition to being a student, I currently serve as Chair of the Music Department at Maranatha Baptist Bible College in Watertown.

If you would be interested in being part of such a study, please contact me at your earliest convenience. I will reply promptly and describe the study in more detail. My contact information is: [david.ledgerwood@mbbc.edu](mailto:david.ledgerwood@mbbc.edu) My cell phone number is 920 527 8339 My office phone number is 920 206 2356.

David Ledgerwood

**APPENDIX C: RECRUITMENT E-MAIL/PHONE SCRIPT**

My name is David Ledgerwood. I am currently a Doctoral student at Boston University in Music Education. My dissertation involves studying the musical world of selected homeschool families. This project requires several families willing to let me observe their musical and home activities over a period of approximately five weeks. All information included in the dissertation will be kept confidential; all names changed and identities protected. Transcripts of all interviews will be presented to you for verification of intent, tone, and accuracy. I have an interest in this topic because my wife and I have homeschooled all eight of our children through high school over the last 24 years. I desire to explore other cases in southern Wisconsin. In addition to being a student, I currently serve as Chair of the Music Department at Maranatha Baptist Bible College in Watertown.

If you would be interested in being part of such a study, please contact me at your earliest convenience. I will reply promptly and describe the study in more detail. My contact information is: [david.ledgerwood@mbbc.edu](mailto:david.ledgerwood@mbbc.edu) My cell phone number is 920 527 8339. My office phone number is 920 206 2356.

David Ledgerwood

# APPENDIX D: QUESTIONNAIRE FOR POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS

- 1) How long have you been homeschooling?
  - i. 0–2 years
  - ii. 3–5 years
  - iii. 6–8 years
  - iv. more than 8 years
  
- 2) Please indicate the age of each of your children  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 3) Please indicate the gender of each of your children.  
 \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_
  
- 4) Who is the primary teacher of the homeschool?
  - i. Father
  - ii. Mother
  - iii. Both, but primarily mother
  - iv. Both, but primarily father
  - v. Equally shared by both
  - vi. Other (explain)\_\_\_\_\_
  
- 5) What is the highest level of formal schooling that the primary teacher has completed?
  - i. Elementary school
  - ii. Junior high/middle school
  - iii. High school
  - iv. College (undergraduate)
  - v. Graduate degree
  
- 6) How many children in your family are currently being homeschooled?
  - i. One
  - ii. Two–Three
  - iii. Four
  - iv. More than four
  
- 7) What best describes the musical background of the father?
  - i. Little background in music
  - ii. Moderate background in music
  - iii. Strong background in music

- 8) What best describes the musical background of the mother?
  - i. Little background in music
  - ii. Moderate background in music
  - iii. Strong background in music
- 9) If the mother has received musical training, how would you characterize her skill level?
  - i. Beginner
  - ii. Intermediate
  - iii. Advanced amateur
  - iv. Professional
- 10) If the father has received musical training, how would you characterize his skill level?
  - i. Beginner
  - ii. Intermediate
  - iii. Advanced amateur
  - iv. Professional
- 11) Have any of the grandparents been trained in music?
  - i. Yes
  - ii. No
- 12) If so, describe their training. \_\_\_\_\_
- 13) Research indicates two broad categories regarding the motivation to homeschool, one philosophical (including religious) and one educational. Realizing that most people are a combination of the two, where would you fall on the continuum?
  - i. Mostly philosophical
  - ii. Mostly educational
  - iii. Tilted towards philosophical
  - iv. Titled towards educational
  - v. Evenly divided
- 14) If your motivations were primarily religious, how would you describe your beliefs?
  - i. Catholic
  - ii. Baptist
  - iii. Evangelical
  - iv. Presbyterian

- v. Mormon
- vi. Other (explain)\_\_\_\_\_

- 15) Circle any or all of the educational philosophies that influence your homeschooling.
- i. De-Schooling (Illich)
  - ii. Charlotte Mason
  - iii. School can wait (Moore)
  - iv. Summerhill (Neill)
  - v. How Children Learn (Holt)
  - vi. Other (explain)\_\_\_\_\_
- 16) Is music a regular part of the school day?
- i. Yes
  - ii. No
- 17) If yes, what kinds of activities are typical in the school day? (Circle all that apply)
- i. Singing
  - ii. Reading music
  - iii. Listening to music on purpose
  - iv. Dancing
  - v. Improvising
  - vi. Writing music
  - vii. Practicing an instrument
- 18) In terms of teaching resources for music, do you use a packaged curriculum?
- i. Yes
  - ii. No
- 19) If so, which one? \_\_\_\_\_
- 20) How much daily time is generally spent on musical activities?
- i. 0–30 min
  - ii. 30–60 min
  - iii. 60–90 min
  - iv. Over 90 min
- 21) Do the children take private lessons on an instrument or voice?
- i. Yes
  - ii. No

- 22) If so, which one?
- i. Piano
  - ii. String (please list)
  - iii. Wind
  - iv. Percussion
  - v. Voice
  - vi. Other
- 23) Do the children take lessons from teachers outside of the family?
- i. Yes
  - ii. No
- 24) If yes, describe the qualifications of the teacher.
- i. Family friend
  - ii. Teacher in an elementary or secondary school
  - iii. Independent private teacher
  - iv. Student at a college or university
  - v. Faculty member of a college or university
- 25) Do the children have the opportunity to be part of larger ensembles such as choir, orchestra, band, etc?
- i. Yes
  - ii. No
- 26) If yes, list the type of group and sponsor.
- 27) Describe your school calendar.
- i. Follow the yearly calendar of the public school
  - ii. Go to school all year with breaks
  - iii. Self-designed calendar
- 28) Circle all of the items that tend to be part of a daily routine
- i. Reading
  - ii. Writing
  - iii. Art
  - iv. Music
  - v. Foreign Language
  - vi. Mathematics
  - vii. Science
  - viii. History
  - ix. Grammar



- x. Religious instruction
- xi. Other (explain)

29) Are there weekly items that are included in the schedule? If so what are they?

-

30) In terms of the daily schedule:

- i. There is a prescribed time for each subject
- ii. Children are free to set their own schedule
- iii. Parents and children negotiate times

31) Which describes the homeschool setup?

- i. There is a room or area set aside for instruction and work
- ii. Instruction and work can take place in any location

32) Circle any/all common musical activities apart from the school day for the mother.

- i. Purposefully listening to music without an external activity
- ii. Listening to music while exercising
- iii. Listening to music while shopping
- iv. Listening to music while driving in the car
- v. Viewing music videos
- vi. Attending concerts of larger classical groups
- vii. Attending rock or popular music concerts
- viii. Listening to music while preparing meals
- ix. Playing an instrument for enjoyment/relaxation

33) Circle any/all common musical activities apart from the school day for the father.

- i. Purposefully listening to music without an external activity
- ii. Listening to music while exercising
- iii. Listening to music while shopping
- iv. Listening to music while driving in the car
- v. Viewing music videos
- vi. Attending concerts of larger classical groups
- vii. Attending rock or popular music concerts
- viii. Listening to music while preparing meals
- ix. Playing an instrument for enjoyment/relaxation

- 34) Circle any/all common musical activities apart from the school day for the children.
- i. Purposefully listening to music without an external activity
  - ii. Listening to music while exercising
  - iii. Listening to music while shopping
  - iv. Listening to music while driving in the car
  - v. Viewing music videos
  - vi. Attending concerts of larger classical groups
  - vii. Attending rock or popular music concerts
  - viii. Listening to music while preparing meals
  - ix. Playing an instrument for enjoyment/relaxation
- 35) What is the father's favorite music genre?
- i Pop
  - ii Classical
  - iii Jazz
  - iv Opera
  - v Easy Listening
  - vi Movie soundtracks
  - vii Country-Western
  - viii Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 36) What is the mother's favorite music genre?
- i. Pop
  - ii. Classical
  - iii. Jazz
  - iv. Opera
  - v. Easy Listening
  - vi. Movie soundtracks
  - vii. Country-Western
  - viii. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 37) What is the child's favorite music genre?
- i. Pop
  - ii. Classical
  - iii. Jazz
  - iv. Opera
  - v. Easy Listening
  - vi. Movie soundtracks
  - vii. Country-Western
  - viii. Other \_\_\_\_\_

- 38) Are there any musical styles you feel should be avoided?
- i. Yes
  - ii. No
- 39) If yes, please list. \_\_\_\_\_
- 40) Are there any specific musical activities you feel should be avoided?
- i. Yes
  - ii. No
- 41) If yes, please list. \_\_\_\_\_
- 42) Why is musical involvement important? Circle any/all that apply.
- i. Builds discipline and character
  - ii. Makes one well-rounded
  - iii. Represents human achievement and is therefore worthy of study
  - iv. Builds teamwork
  - v. A vehicle for personal and emotional expression
  - vi. A vehicle for worship
  - vii. Other \_\_\_\_\_
- 43) What would you consider your primary motivation for musical involvement?
- 44) Would you be interested in participating in a more in-depth case study that would involve interviews and observations over the course of several months?
- i. Yes
  - ii. No
- 45) What figure best represents your annual family income? (Note: you don't need to answer this if it makes you uncomfortable. This is for research purposes only).
- i. 25,000–50,000
  - ii. 50,000–75,000
  - iii. 75,000–100,000
  - iv. over 100,000

## **APPENDIX E: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (Parents)**

### **Interview 1: Focused life history**

Describe your educational experiences growing up. Did you like school? How did you do in school? What parts of school did you like or not like? Do you have any embarrassing anecdotes with regard to school?

What do you feel you learned from your schooling experiences?

Please describe what prompted your decision to homeschool.

Describe the musical influences of your home growing up.

Tell me about any immediate or extended family members that were musical.

Tell me about your personal musical training, your lessons, when you started, group involvement.

Describe any experiences; positive and negative, you had with music as a young person. Do you have any anecdotes you would like to share regarding your involvement with music growing up?

In terms of your own musical skills, which are most developed? Least developed?

Describe your involvement in various musical groups growing up?

Do you have any stories you wish to share regarding homeschool or musical involvement/experience or both?

Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

**Interview 2: The Details of Experience**

How long have you been homeschooling? How long do you plan on continuing? Tell me about how your homeschooling experience has gone. Benefits? Difficulties?

Describe how you go about construct your homeschooling school day? Your yearly school calendar? Your homeschool classroom?

How do you divide up the teaching responsibilities?

How do you use music as part of your schooling? What kinds of musical activities would be common in your home?

Describe any musical curriculum you might use for instruction.

Describe any individual musical training for your children. When did they begin instruction? Do you have a set time for them to practice?

How did you find the instructors for your children? What is important to you in finding an instructor?

Describe any performance opportunities your children have.

Describe any background music in your home, the kind of music played, and when it is played.

Describe the kind of music you prefer for enjoyment. Your children? Describe the kinds of music you might avoid (if any) for yourself and your children.

Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

**Interview 3: Reflection on the Meaning**

Homeschooling is a great sacrifice, both in time and in extra finances for the family.

Describe why you think it important.

Tell me about the kinds of goals you have with respect to your children's involvement in homeschooling.

Wisconsin state statutes do not specifically require music as part of your teaching.

Describe why you think the time and money spent on musical instruction is important.

What do you feel you learned from your own involvement in music?

Tell me about the kinds of goals you have with respect to your children's involvement in music?

Describe the importance of membership in musical ensembles outside the home.

Describe your thinking with regards to musical style choice. Are there any musical styles or genres that you avoid? Why? Which ones would you affirm?

What do you hope your children will leave your home with in terms of musical skills and experience?

Would you care to share any more stories or anecdotes regarding the "why" of homeschooling, and the "why" of musical involvement?

Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

## **APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (CHILDREN)**

### **Interview 1: Focused Life History**

Please describe your earliest memories in regards to music.

Describe your own homeschool experience. How old were you when you began?

Have you ever been in a different school than homeschool? If so, what kind?

What do you like about homeschooling?

What parts of homeschooling might be difficult?

Describe what you like to do for fun.

What musical things do you like to do?

Are there any stories about music or homeschooling you would like to share with me?

Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

### **Interview 2: The Details of experience**

Describe your typical homeschool day.

What do you like about homeschool? What is difficult?

Describe your current musical studies. When did you start? Do you take lessons?

How often?

Describe your musical practice.

What is difficult about music?

What do you like about music?

What kinds of music do you like to listen to?

What kinds of music would you avoid?

When you listen to music, where (location) do you tend to listen to it?

Some people listen to music while doing other activities. Describe the kinds of music you would listen to while exercising, cleaning the house, relaxing in your room.

What do you like to do for fun?

Are there any stories about either homeschooling or music you would like to add?

Are there any questions you would like to ask me?

### **Interview 3: Reflection on the meaning**

What would you say are the advantages of homeschooling over other kinds of instruction?

What might be some disadvantages?

What advice would you give about a child whose parents are deciding to homeschool the first time?

What would you say is important about music?

If you play an instrument, what kinds of things have you learned from playing that instrument?

Why do you think people like listening to music?

Why do you think people choose certain styles of music over others?

Describe your most memorable musical experience.

Are there any questions you would like to ask me?



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Zdzinski, S. (2013). The underlying structure of parental involvement–home environment in music. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, (198), 69–88. doi:10.5406/bulcouresmusedu.198.0069



## **CURRICULUM VITAE**

### **Name**

David R. Ledgerwood

### **Contact Information**

Email: david.ledgerwood@mbu.edu

Office Phone: 920-206-2356

### **Education**

2008–Present DMA, Music Education, Boston University

2003 D. Music (Honorary), Maranatha Baptist Bible College,  
Watertown, WI

1985–1986 MA, Music Theory and Composition, Indiana University of  
Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA

1982–1985 MA, Sacred Music, Pensacola Christian College, Pensacola, FL

1977–1980 BS, Music Education, Indiana University of Pennsylvania,  
Indiana, PA

### **Experience**

Academic Ranking: Associate Professor of Music

Courses Taught in the last five years

Orchestration

Counterpoint

Basic Music Literature

Choral Arranging

Choral Arranging Workshop

Keyboard Arranging

Keyboard Skills 3

Keyboard Skills 4

Hymnology

Composing/Arranging Repertoire Master Class

## Piano Repertoire Master Class

### **Relevant Professional Experience**

2003–Present Chair, Music Department, Maranatha Baptist University

1986–2003 Music Faculty, Maranatha Baptist Bible College

2003–Present Pianist, Organist, Accompanist, Calvary Baptist Church,  
Watertown, WI

1987–2003 Pianist, Organist, Accompanist, String Ensemble director: Falls  
Baptist Church, Menomonee Falls, WI

1980–1986 Teacher/Administrator: Calvary Baptist Academy, Clymer, PA

1978–1979 Music Director: Calvary Baptist Church, Clymer, PA

1973–1977 Pianist, 724 Air Force Band, McChord AFB, Tacoma, WA

### **Professional Service: Honors and Awards**

2003 Honorary D. Music from Maranatha Baptist Bible College

1980 Graduated 1st in class with 4.0 from Indiana University of PA

1979 Winner of Concerto Competition: Indiana University of PA, Performed  
Beethoven 1st Piano Concerto

1976 Outstanding Airman of McChord AFB, Tacoma, WA

1972 Piano Scholarship: Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA

### **Professional Society Membership**

NAfME

ACDA

### **Maranatha Baptist University Service**

2003–Present Chair, Music Department

1986–2003 Assistant Professor, Music Department

### **Church, Ministry, Civic or Other Community service**

Deacon, Calvary Baptist Church (2012–Present)

### **Scholarly Accomplishments**

#### **Publications: (textbooks)**

Ledgerwood, D., & Ledgerwood, K. (2011). *With one voice: Growing congregations that sing*. Maryville, TN: Stockton Music Services.

Ledgerwood, D., & Ledgerwood, K. (2003). *Music investigations*. Whitewater, WI: Joy Baptist Camp.

#### **Publications: (Compositions/Arrangements)**

Ledgerwood, D. (2001). *Great is thy faithfulness*. Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (2000). *My savior*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (2000). *O love that wilt not let me go*. Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (2000). *Victory through grace*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (2000). *Higher ground*. Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (2000). *Springs of living water*. Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (1999). *Heritage band series* (piano accompaniments). Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (1999). *Deep river*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1998). *Higher Ground*. Menomonee Falls, WI: Preach the Word Ministries.

Ledgerwood, D. (1998). *Teach me thy will*. Menomonee Falls, WI: Preach the Word Ministries.

Ledgerwood, D. (1998). O come, o come, Emmanuel. In L. Carrier (Ed.). *The Newborn King*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1998). Joy to the world. In L. Carrier (Ed.). *The Newborn King*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1997). *Must I go and empty-handed?* Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1999). *Ivory palaces*. Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (1998). *The church aflame*. Menomonee Falls, WI: Preach the Word Ministries.

Ledgerwood, D. (1998). *Seek the Lord*. Menomonee Falls, WI: Preach the Word Ministries.

Ledgerwood, D. (1996). *Brethren, we have met to worship*. Greenville, SC: Pinner Publications.

Ledgerwood, D. (1996). *Count your many blessings*. Greenville, SC: Pinner Publications.

Ledgerwood, D. (1996). *When he cometh*. Greenville, SC: Pinner Publications.

Ledgerwood, D. (1996). *Joyful, joyful, we adore thee*. Greenville, SC: Pinner Publications.

Ledgerwood, D. (1996). *While shepherds watched their flocks*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1996). *What child is this?* Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1995). *Alas! and did my savior bleed?* Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1995). *Poor wayfarin' stranger*. Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (1995). *Singing I go*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1995). *I am coming, Lord*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1995). *Lord, speak to me*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1994). *O love that wilt not let me go*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1994). *I want a principle within*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1994). *Make a joyful noise*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1994). *The shepherds looked up*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1994). *Silent night*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1994). *O come, o come Emmanuel*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1994). *What a friend we have in Jesus*. Greenville, SC: Soundforth.

Ledgerwood, D. (1992). *Sacred piano duets*. Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (1992). In the garden. In D. Smith (Ed.). *Sacred Piano Solos II*.

Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (1991). *God rest, ye merry gentlemen*. Greenville, SC: C & L

Publications.

Ledgerwood, D. (1991). *All your anxiety*. Greenville, SC: C & L Publications.

Ledgerwood, D. (1991). *Sacred piano arrangements*. Deckerville, MI: David E. Smith.

Ledgerwood, D. (1989). *Christmas piano arrangements*. Deckerville, MI: David E.

Smith.

### **Lectures/Presentations/Performances**

Ledgerwood, D. (2016, March). Accompanist: Guest Voice Recital. Maranatha Baptist University, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2015, November). Guest conductor. In Levi Kolwinski (chair). *Minnesota Association of Christian Schools All-State Choir*. Festival held at Fourth Baptist Church, Plymouth, MN.

Ledgerwood, D. (2015, February). Accompanist: Artist Series. Maranatha Baptist University, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2014, July). Director: Summer music camp. Camp held at Faith Baptist Church, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Ledgerwood, D. (2014, June). Music in the Church and Home. In Dr. D Wokaty (host). *Graduate module in music for pastors*. Presented at Ebenezer Bible College, Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico.

Ledgerwood, D. (2013, November). Guest conductor. In Dr. Ted Clater (chair). *Keystone Christian Education Association All-State Choir*. Festival held in Harrisburg, PA.

Ledgerwood, D. (2013, September). *Choral rehearsal techniques; A history of hymnody, Getting your child ready for collegiate musical study*. Papers presented at Keystone Christian Education Association Conference, Lancaster, PA.

Ledgerwood, D. (2013, May). *Getting your child ready for collegiate musical study, What research can teach us about music education, A history of hymnody*.

Presented at the Wisconsin Christian Home Educators Conference,  
Oconomowoc, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2012, March). *Pianist: Shostakovich e-minor piano trio, Seven romances on poems of Alexander Blok*. Performed at Chicago State University, University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, and Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2012, March). Accompanist: Senior violin recital. Maranatha Baptist Bible College: Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2012, February). Accompanist: Artist Series. Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2012, October). *Choral rehearsal techniques; A history of hymnody, Getting your child ready for collegiate musical study*. Papers presented at the Illinois Association of Christian Schools, Schaumburg, IL.

Ledgerwood, D. (2011, October). Accompanist: Illinois All-State Choir. Held at Heritage Baptist Church, Frankfurt, IL.

Ledgerwood, D. (2009, May). *Music and culture*. Paper presented at the meeting of Baptist World Mission, Whitewater, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2006, April). *Orchestral reduction: Rachmaninoff: Variations on a theme of Paganini*. Student recital: Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2006, February). Accompanist: Artist Series. Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2005). *Piano soloist: Saint-Saens: Carnival of the animals.*

Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown: WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2005, February). Accompanist: Artist Series. Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (2004, April). *Chamber music recital: Brahms horn trio in E flat.*

Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. & Ledgerwood, K. (2003). *Husband and wife relationships.* Presented at Camp Joy couples retreat, Whitewater, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (1999, October). Piano soloist, accompanist. Michigan Association of Christian Schools held in Flint, MI.

Ledgerwood, D. (1994, February). Accompanist: Artist Series. Maranatha Baptist Bible College.

Ledgerwood, D. (1993, February). Accompanist: Artist Series. Maranatha Baptist Bible College.

Ledgerwood, D. (1992, February). Accompanist: Artist Series. Maranatha Baptist Bible College.

Ledgerwood, D. (1991, May). *Piano soloist: Grieg: Piano concerto.* Music and Drama Camp: Camp Joy: Whitewater, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (1991, February). Accompanist: Artist Series. Maranatha Baptist Bible College.

Ledgerwood, D. (1990, February). *Piano soloist: Bach: Brandenburg V.* Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.



Ledgerwood, D. (1989, September). Piano soloist. In Dr. Ted Clater (chair). *Keystone Christian Association Conference*, Harrisburg, PA.

Ledgerwood, D. (1987, February). *Piano recital: Bach: Chromatic Fantasy, Schubert: Impromptu in Ab, Prokofiev: Op 12: March, Rigaudon, Gavotte*. Faculty Artist Series: Maranatha Baptist Bible College, Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (1987). Piano soloist. In Dr. Arno Q. Weniger (chair). Mid-East Association of Christian Schools Convention, Chicago Hilton, Chicago, IL.

Ledgerwood, D. (1979). Rehearsal pianist for Verdi *Requiem*. Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA.

## **Recordings**

Ledgerwood, D. (director-Chamber Singers). (2014). *How can I keep from singing?* (CD) Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (director-Chamber Singers). (2010). *Softly and tenderly*. (CD) Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (pianist). (2006). *The mercy of God*. (CD) Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (director-Chamber Singers). (2005). *Abide with me*. (CD) Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (arranger, director Heritage Strings). (1999). *Higher ground*. (CD) Menomonee Falls, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (arranger, director Heritage Strings). (1996). *We adore thee*. (CD) Menomonee Falls, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (director-Chamber Singers). (1993). *Lift High the Cross*. (cassette).

Watertown, WI.

Ledgerwood, D. (pianist). (n.d.). *Immortal, invisible*. (cassette). Watertown, WI:

Ledgerwood, D. (pianist). (1988). *My savior first of all*. (cassette) Watertown, WI.