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Music preference and its effects on emotion processes and identity development in young adult females: an examination of the "emo" subculture

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MUSIC PREFERENCE AND ITS EFFECTS ON EMOTION PROCESSES

AND IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN YOUNG ADULT FEMALES:

AN EXAMINATION OF THE "EMO" SUBCULTURE

A clinical dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Psychology

by

Marta Orozco

October, 2015

Shelly Harrell, Ph.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This clinical dissertation, written by

Marta Orozco

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PSYCHOLOGY

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Shelly Harrell. Your kind words, ever-present wisdom, and continued support have helped guide me through the paths of uncertainty and have greatly assisted in fostering my professional career. You were more than a mentor, you were family—and to me that is the most precious of relationships. You helped me fight my battles and I felt secure knowing that I could always count on you.

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Finally, I would like to thank my family. They have been so very extraordinarily patient with me on this journey and have been active participants since day one. Thank you to my father, who has instilled in me a love of learning and hard work; you are my rock, my guardian

angel, my everything. Thank you to my loving mother, who has shown me the true meaning of unconditional love and support. You have always been there, ready with a smile, hug, and of course plenty of food—you are the very essence of beauty and love. Thank you to my sister, my partner in crime. You have forever been an inspiration to me, I have never stopped looking up to you. And finally, I wish to express my deepest gratitude to my fiancée, Tim. You have been my own personal cheerleader. Though geographical distance has often kept us apart, I have never once felt truly separated from you. I cannot wait to begin my life with you.

VITA

Marta Orozco, M.A.

EDUCATION HISTORY

September 2010 – Present **PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY, GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY**
Los Angeles, California
Taking courses necessary to complete the degree earning process of a professional doctorate in psychology (APA Accredited Program).
Dissertation Title: *Music Preference and Its Effects on Emotion*

Processes and Identity Development in Young Adult Females: An Examination of the Emo Subculture
Anticipated Date of Graduation, October 2015

August 2008 – May 2010 **CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, NORTHRIDGE**
Northridge, California
Earned Master of Arts in Clinical Psychology

September 2003 –
June 2007 **UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES**
Westwood, California
Earned Bachelor of Arts in Psychology
Earned Bachelor of Arts in English, World Literature Concentration

DOCTORAL CLINICAL TRAINING EXPERIENCE

September 2014-
August 2015 **CHILD AND FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER**
Northridge, California
Pre-Doctoral Intern
APA Accredited Internship
Supervisors: Susan Hall-Marley, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist & Dr. Magaña, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist
Responsibilities: Provided individual, group, family, and in-home therapy services for children and adolescents with severe emotional and/or behavioral problems attending Northpoint, a non-public school, struggling with mood, anxiety, behavior, substance-related, psychotic, developmental, and personality disorders. Collaborated and consulted with teachers, classroom behavioral specialists, guardians, psychiatrist, school nurse, and educational counselors concerning student's treatment plans and goals. Co-lead

group for adolescents ages 14-16 to help manage anxiety, increase range of coping strategies, improve time management and organizational skills, and reduce stress level. Provided outpatient individual and family therapy for children and adolescents utilizing Evidence Based Practices such as Managing and Adapting Practice (MAP) program. Performed psychological assessments for children and adolescents including intellectual, personality, and achievement measures. Conducted family therapy for children ages 0-5, with the goal of strengthening the relationship between parent and child and increasing the parent's ability to understand and manage their child's difficult behavior. Assisted in leading a group for adolescents ages 14-17 to help manage problems related to mood, anxiety, stressors, and wellness at the North Hills Wellness Center.

August 2013 – July 2014

UCLA YOUTH STRESS & MOOD PROGRAM
Westwood, California
Psychiatry Extern
Supervisors: Joan Asarnow, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist &
Jennifer L. Hughes, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist
Responsibilities: Administered comprehensive psychodiagnoistic assessments with youth experiencing severe emotional dysregulation, in addition to gathering collateral information. Received training in assessment and treatment focused on youth depression, suicide prevention, and reducing health risk behaviors. Conducted various measures of assessment, including but not limited to The Schedule for Affective Disorders and Schizophrenia for School Aged Children- Present and Lifetime Versions (K-SADS-PL), Children's Depression Rating Scale- Revised (CDRS-R), Suicide Attempt Self Injury Interview (SASII), SCID-II Adolescent: The Structured Clinical Interview for DSM-IV, Axis II, and other measures monitoring depressive symptoms and risk assessment.

September 2013 –
June 2014

PEPPERDINE COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER
Encino, California
Peer Supervisor
Supervisor: Anat Cohen, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist
Responsibilities: Offered peer supervision to a first-year doctoral student who provided person-centered, cognitive-behavioral, and insight oriented individual therapy to youth and adults suffering from mood disorders, personality disorders, and relational difficulties. Participated in weekly supervision with first-year student and assisted in monitoring students' clinical training development.

September 2012 –
July 2013

LONG BEACH CHILD AND ADOLESCENT PROGRAM
Long Beach, California
Psychology Practicum Student
Supervisors: Teri Paulsen, Psy.D., Licensed Psychologist &
Ronette Goodwin, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist
Responsibilities: Provided direct services (intakes, therapy, and
assessment) to clients in both the child program (ages 3-18 years
old) and the adult CalWORKS ("Welfare to Work") program.
Provided culturally responsive services in Spanish. Was able to
conduct intake and therapeutic services for monolingual and
bicultural clients. Attended weekly Cognitive-Behavior Therapy
training at Harbor-UCLA Medical Center. Complet4ed
Department of Mental Health documentation, including intake
reports, progress notes, status reviews, discharge summaries, etc.
Co-facilitated time-limited groups, specifically The Incredible
Years with Pre-School Age children. Provided feedback and
discussed case conceptualization in multi-disciplinary case
conferences consisting of psychologists, social workers, medical-
case workers and psychiatrists. Received training and provided
assessments in cognitive, achievement, and personality testing.

July 2011 – June 2012

THE UCLA/STAGLIN MUSIC FESTIVAL CENTER FOR
THE ASSESSMENT AND PREVENTION OF
PRODROMALSTATES (CAPPS)/ SEMEL INSTITUTE FOR
NEUROSCIENCE AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR
Westwood, California
Psychiatry Extern
Supervisor: Carrie E. Bearden, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist
Responsibilities: Completed diagnostic assessment interviews
withmale and female adolescent and young adult clients
experiencing prodromal symptoms of psychosis. Competed
collateral interviews with patients' families in order to obtain
further information that would aid in clarifying diagnostic
impressions. Able to translate assessment measures to collateral
informants whose primary language was Spanish and to obtain
necessary information with regard to patient symptoms. Contacted
primary treatment providers of patients to both obtain diagnostic
information and communicate findings relevant to treatment.
Received training on various measures of assessment, including
the SCID, SIPS, BPRS, SANS, SAPS and measures for
neuropsychological assessment.

September 2010 –
August 2014   **PEPPERDINE COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER**
Encino, California
Therapist Extern
Supervisor: Anat Cohen, Ph.D., Licensed Psychologist & Sepida
Sazgar, Psy.D., Licensed Psychologist.
Responsibilities: Provided culturally responsive services in
Spanish, was able to conduct intake and therapeutic services to
monolingual and bicultural clients. Completed diagnostic
interviews with male and female, child, adolescent, and adult
clients in order to develop individualized treatment plans. Provided
school-based therapeutic services to adolescent youth from a
diverse, low-income population. Provided therapeutic services to
young women from Children of the Night, a privately funded non-
profit organization dedicated to serving the needs of youth
previously involved in prostitution. Conducted individual therapy
primarily from a Cognitive-Behavioral orientation to promote the
completion of treatment plan goals. Completed necessary
documentation to ensure adherence to ethical and legal
requirements, including administration of outcome measures.

MASTERS CLINICAL TRAINING EXPERIENCE

September 2008 –
May 2010   **CHILD AND ADOLESCENT ASSESSMENT CLINIC**
Northridge, California
Responsibilities Administration, scoring, and assessment of a
variety of cognitive tests; School visits and classroom observations
to accompany assessment; Involved in report writing and
interpretative session with parent and child

September 2009 –
January 2010   **MOOD AND ANXIETY CLINIC**
Northridge, California
Responsibilities Training in Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy (CBT)
theory and techniques; Weekly case conference to discuss
assessment and treatment considerations for clients suffering from
various anxiety and/or mood disorders

RESEARCH AND TEACHING ASSISTANT EXPERIENCE

September 2010– Present   **PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF**
EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY
Los Angeles, California

Job Title: Research Assistant for Dr. Shelly Harrell
Responsibilities Worked with Community-Based Organizations—specifically Youthink, a program of The Zimmer Children's Museum in Los Angeles, California whose mission is to make a better society through interactive learning, creative self-expression and art experiences for children, youth and families. Assisted Dr. Harrell in gathering and inputting data (e.g., field observations, interviews, etc), researching pertinent materials, and working with Youthink staff and youth to monitor program development and outcome goals.
Obtained literature within the area of Subjective Well-Being, Happiness, and Affect Balance and organize and present research findings to supervisors. Attended weekly meetings to further develop the construction of a thorough, culturally sensitive measure of Well-Being. Performed a literature review on existing scales that measure similar constructs

January 2006 – December 2007

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES
UCLA PEER PROJECT
Westwood, California
Job Title: Research Assistant for Dr. Sandra Graham
Responsibilities In charge of data entry, survey administration to students in the Greater Los Angeles area, and project organization.

ABSTRACT

Average daily listening hours and annual sales figures give testament to the important position that music holds in the personal and social lives of individuals in contemporary cultures (Arnett, 1991; North, Hargreaves, & O'Neill, 2000; Schwartz & Fouts, 2003; Ter Bogt, Raaijmakers, Vollebergh, van Well, & Sikkema, 2003). Youth, especially, dedicate considerable amounts of time and money to music listening (Roberts, Henriksen, & Foehr, 2009). However, it has been suggested that certain music preferences and music subcultures are associated with problem behaviors and/or internalizing distress in youth, particularly females (Miranda & Claes, 2008, 2009; Selfhout, Delsing, Ter Bogt, & Meeus, 2008). Specifically, the *emo* music subculture has typically been associated with themes of depression, self-injury, and suicide (Porretta, 2007; Sands, 2006; Shafron & Karno, 2013). As a result, this study sought to contribute to the need for research in this area by exploring the role of music in the psychological functioning of adolescents and emerging adult females. Specifically, the purpose of this study was to gain a greater understanding of the experiences and conceptualizations of music in relationship to emotional processes, identity development, and self-concept among young adult females who listen to music that has been commonly labeled as *emo*. Qualitative interviews were conducted with 8 women ranging in age from who reported listening to music considered to be *emo*. Results indicated several themes related to mood, self, and others. With regard to mood, 4 subthemes arose: emotion related coping, music as an emotional trigger, catharsis, and empowerment- hope. In terms of themes related to the self, participants reported being able to feel a personal connection to the music, and most shared that *emo* music helped them feel accepted and understood. Finally, with regard to themes related to others, results indicated that the participants tended to experience some form of negative attention due to their involvement in

this subculture, though they also reported having been able to form social bonds because of their music preferences. Potential contributions include adding to the literature on music preference and its relationship to young adult mood and identity development. In addition, the study provides information relevant to individuals involved in the *emo* subculture that has potential implications for intervention with this population.

Chapter 1: Introduction

What came first, the music or the misery? People worry about kids playing with guns, or watching violent videos, that some sort of culture of violence will take them over. Nobody worries about kids listening to thousands, literally thousands of songs about heartbreak, rejection, pain, misery and loss. Did I listen to pop music because I was miserable? Or was I miserable because I listened to pop music?

Nick Hornby, *High Fidelity*

Background

One common reason cited for listening to music is that it induces strong emotions (Juslin & Laukka, 2004). Music is utilized for emotional-regulation across several age groups: by adolescents (Behne, 1997; Laiho, 2004; North, Hargreaves, & O'Neill, 2000; Roe, 1985; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007; Wells & Hakanen, 1991), adults (DeNora, 1999; Greasley & Lamont, 2006), and the elderly (Davidson, Lange, McNamara, & Lewin, 2008; Hays & Minichiello, 2005; Laukka, 2007). Yet, it remains unclear as to how the self-regulatory use of music develops throughout one's life course, particularly the period between late adolescence and emerging adulthood.

Adolescence is a period of time that signals new challenges, including identity formation and developing outside familial relationships, which hone emotional regulation skills (Erikson, 1959/1980; Grotevant, 1998). During this time, the development of narrative and emotional regulation skills may be particularly essential as adolescents experience increasingly intense and fluctuating emotions (Arnett, 1999). It is a stage of transition from childhood to adulthood, in which the negotiation between a self-determined person and his/her changing social environment are entwined within and across ecological systems as the person develops (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009a, 2009b; Masten & Cicchetti, 2010). A related, but separate developmental period is the stage between adolescence and adulthood, which has been defined as emerging adulthood. Emerging adulthood is characterized as a period involving identity exploration, possibility,

instability, and self-focus (Arnett, 2004). The concepts underlying emerging adulthood are not new (Blos, 1941; Erikson, 1968; Parsons, 1942); however, the term is a relatively recent theory introduced by Jeffrey Arnett in 2000. As a result, there does not exist a great breadth of research examining emerging adulthood and its relationship to music and mood. As a result, much of the research examined in this study focuses primarily on adolescence and, when applicable, includes components incorporating experiences observed in early adulthood.

On average, adolescents listen to music for up to three hours per day and procure more than 10,000 hours of active music listening throughout this time (Roberts et al., 2009; Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2000; Zillmann & Gan, 1997). With regard to emerging adults, one study found that a sample within this population listening to music every day for an average of two hours, with non-music majors listening more (Stratton & Zalanowsky, 2003). Researchers have postulated a number of theories and possible strategies that accounts for music listening and the role it plays these during these developmental periods (Bakagiannis & Tarrant, 2006; Chamorro-Premuzic, Gomà-i-Freixanet, Furnham, & Muro, 2009; Miranda & Claes, 2009; Ter Bogt, Mulder, Raaijmakers, & Gabhainn, 2011). Regardless, it is clear that music is a powerful coping strategy utilized by young adults to cope with life stressors and work through difficult emotions (Miranda & Claes, 2009; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007).

With regard to music preference, it's apparent that generally individuals tend to display stronger preferences for some types of music than others, but what is it that determines a person's music preferences? North and Hargreaves (1999, 2008) describe music as a *badge* that individuals use to make judgments of others, but also simultaneously functioning as a way to express their own self-concepts. During adolescence, when music would appear to play an important role in identity formation (North et al., 2000; Zillman & Gan, 1997), individuals utilize

musical preferences for evaluative functions and group identification processes (Tekman & Hortaçsu, 2002). This continues into emerging adulthood, where music plays a central role in social interactions. For example, an analysis of topics strangers discussed as they became acquainted with one another showed that music was the most popular topic of conversation (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2007).

However, it may be that certain music preferences and music subcultures are associated with problem behaviors and/or internalizing distress in young adults, particularly females. Lacourse, Claes, and Villeneuve (2001) found that girls liking heavy metal music reported more feelings of alienation and appeared to be at an increased risk for suicide. In addition, a recent longitudinal study sought and confirmed that music genres that expressed controversial themes (i.e., heavy metal and hip-hop) predicted more externalizing problem behaviors in adolescence (Selfhout et al., 2008). Emo, also known as emotionally-oriented-rock, emocore or emotional hardcore, is a punk genre that emerged in the early 1990s as a blend of American hardcore and indie-rock (Williams, 2012). The genre's lyrical honesty and intimate self-reflection allow for the possibility of the listener to connect to the music on a deeper level, which appears to be a common characteristic of emo music throughout its history (Williams, 2012). Individuals within this subculture have been known to be at risk both by their peers and authority figures (Grillo, 2008; Michaels, 2008). Emo has been associated with the stereotype of an emotional, sensitive, angst-ridden individual, who may be seen to be at risk for depression, self-injury, and suicide (Porretta, 2007; Sands, 2006; Young, Sproeber, Groschwitz, Preiss, & Plener, 2014). Shafron and Karno (2013) found that amongst a sample of late adolescents and emerging adults, depression and anxiety were higher amongst participants who listened to emo music, whilst

female participants who identified as listening to heavy metal overall endorsed higher levels of depression and anxiety than their male counterparts.

Statement of the Problem

Affective experiences have been shown to be central reasons for music consumption and musical activities (DeNora, 1999; Laiho, 2004; North et al., 2000; Sloboda, O'Neill, & Ivaldi 2001; Zillmann & Gan, 1997). However, the study of emotion has not been central to music psychology. Though there has been an increase of interest in the area, understanding of the psychological functions of the emotional experiences of music is still conceptually diverse and theoretically unstructured. Sloboda and Juslin (2010) suggest research on emotional experiences of music has been hindered by the complexity of the phenomenon. The purpose of the present study was to deepen the conceptual understanding of the emotional functions of music. Mood regulation, a central psychological process related to emotions, was chosen as one of the main focuses of the study. Adolescence and emerging adulthood was considered a significant period of development to study music in mood regulation. Music has a strong relevance for young adults, as they consume music to a great extent and consider it an important part of their lives (Christenson & Roberts, 1998; North et al., 2000; Roberts et al., 2009). Female youths in particular have been known to place a higher value in fulfilling their emotional needs via music (North et al., 2000). Furthermore, during adolescence and emerging adulthood, when music would appear to play an important role in identity formation (Gardikiotis & Baltzis, 2010; North et al., 2000; Zillman & Gan, 1997), individuals utilize musical preferences for evaluative functions and group identification processes (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2007; Tekman & Hortaçsu, 2002).

It may be that certain music preferences and music subcultures are associated with problem behaviors and/or internalizing distress in youth, particularly females. Specifically, the emo music subculture has typically been associated with themes of depression, self-injury, and suicide (Sands, 2006). As a result, this study seeks to contribute to the need for research by developing an understanding of the role of music as a part of the psychological functioning of the individual, particularly during such a critical period of development. Namely, to explore the role and functions of music which has been commonly labeled as emo and how it is used, if at all, with emotion and/or mood regulation in young adult females; and to examine how participation in emo subculture overall influences identity development, self-concept, and affective processes.

Specifically, the current study addressed the following research questions:

1. What patterns and themes emerge in young adult females associated with the emo subculture (either by self or others) with respect their music listening practices?

2. How does music preference influence identity development in young females associated with the emo subculture?

3. In what ways do emerging adult females utilize music recognized as emo with regard to emotion or mood regulation?

4. In what ways do emerging adult females associated with the emo subculture understand and make meaning of their music preferences?

5. What commonalities and differences emerge among young women who listen music categorized as emo?

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Average daily listening hours (e.g., North et al., 2000) and annual sales figures (e.g., Schwartz & Fouts, 2003) give testament to the important role that music holds in the personal and social lives of individuals in contemporary cultures (Arnett, 1991; Ter Bogt, Raaijmakers, Vollebergh, Van Well, & Sikkema, 2003). Billions of dollars are invested in and generated by music across many domains (e.g., arts, entertainment, education, science), while strict legal consequences and societal problems concern the unauthorized sharing of music (North & Hargreaves, 2008). Youth, especially, dedicate huge amounts of time and money to music listening (Roberts et al., 2009), while the technology is designed in order to attune music applications to remain ever compatible with their multi-tasking computers. Therefore, listening to music is of particular importance and ever-present in the contemporary lives of media-socializing and multi-tasking young adults (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011; Roberts et al., 2009).

Music and Mood

One of the most commonly cited reasons for listening to music is that music induces strong emotions (Juslin & Laukka, 2004). But what exactly is emotion? Kleinginna and Kleinginna (1981) gathered and identified 92 definitions of emotion and concluded that there is little consistency among the definitions and that many of them are vague. Despite this lack of consensus, many researchers today agree that emotional responses are manifested in three components: experience, expression, and physiology (Lang, 1995; Matsumoto, Nezlek, & Koopmann 2007; Soto, Levenson, & Ebling, 2005; Sundari, & Pillai, 2013). Rather, emotions produce affective experiences such as feelings of sadness or happiness; prompt physiological adjustments to provoking conditions; and induce expressive behaviors that are often, though not always, goal directed and adaptive (Lundqvist, Carlsson, Hilmersson, & Juslin, 2009).

There are two dominant models on how emotions are organized: the discrete emotions model, which hypothesizes the existence of a small number of distinguishable primary or basic emotions (Buck, 1988; Ekman, 1992; Izard, 1971, 1972, 1991; Tomkins, 1984), whereby each emotion is activated and regulated via different mechanisms and processes (Izard, 1993; LeDoux, 1996), and the dimensional model, which suggests that emotions are best represented by a set of underlying dimensions of emotion that are bipolar and include valence (pleasantness–unpleasantness) and arousal or activation (Green & Salovey, 1999; Russell, 1980; Russell & Carroll, 1999; Watson & Tellegen, 1999). According to the discrete emotion model—also known as the basic emotion model—all emotions originate from a limited number of universal and innate basic emotions such as sadness, happiness, fear, anger, and disgust (Ekman, 1992, 1999). The discrete emotion model builds on the belief that an independent neural system officiates every discrete basic emotion. However, neuro-imaging and physiological studies have not established reliable and consistent evidence to support the theory (Barrett & Wager, 2006; Cacioppo, Berntson, Larsen, Poehlmann, & Ito, 2000), and the idea is still under debate. Research looking at music and emotion, the discrete emotion model has often been adjusted to better describe emotions commonly represented by music. For example, basic emotions not often expressed in music, like disgust, often are modified to more suitable emotion concepts like tenderness or peacefulness (Balkwill & Thompson, 1999; Gabrielsson & Juslin, 1996; Vieillard et al., 2008). It still unclear whether models and theories designed for utilitarian emotions (Scherer, 2004) – such as the discrete emotion model – can also be applied in an aesthetic context such as music (Eerola & Vuoskoski, 2011).

Dimensional theories conceptualize emotions depending on their placement along a continuum of affective dimensions (Sloboda & Juslin, 2010). There are one-dimensional models

(*arousal;* Duffy, 1941) and three-dimensional models (*valence, activation,* and p*ower*; Osgood,

Suci, & Tannenbaum, 1957). Though perhaps the most influential has been Russell's (1980) two-

dimensional *circumplex* model. Rather than an independent neural system for each basic

emotion, the two-dimensional circumplex model (Posner, Russell, & Peterson, 2005; Russell,

1980) posits that all affective states derive from two independent neurophysiological systems:

one connected to valence (a pleasure– displeasure continuum), the other to arousal (activation–

deactivation). Therefore, all emotions can be seen as varying degrees of both valence and

arousal. Compelling variations of the two-dimensional models have also been suggested. Thayer

(1989) proposed that the two foundational dimensions of affect were two separate arousal

dimensions: energetic arousal and tense arousal. Thayer's multidimensional model of activation

hypothesized that valence could be thought of as varying blends of energetic arousal and tense

arousal. However, many studies looking at valence and arousal have concluded that the two-

dimensional model is not sufficiently able to account for all the variance in music-mediated

emotions (Bigand, Vieillard, Madurell, Marozeau, & Dacquet, 2005; Collier, 2007; Illie &

Thompson, 2006). Indeed, emotion research as a whole has pointed out that the two-dimensional

models place emotions typically considered distant in close proximity in the affective space; for

example, anger and fear are both negatively valenced and highly active (Scherer, Johnstone, &

Klasmeyer, 2003). Regardless, both the discrete and dimensional models can coexist under the

premise that the dimensional model best describes the core affects and the underlying

mechanisms, but the conscious interpretation of these is categorical (discrete) and affected by the

conceptual categories individuals have for emotions. This is known as the Conceptual Act Model

(Barrett & Wager, 2006). It provides an appealing compromise between the two positions. In

addition, the Conceptual Act Model may offer information as to possible music-specific

emotions by differentiating between affect mechanisms and culturally influenced interpretations (Zentner & Eerola, 2010).

As discussed, emotions are considered to reflect environmental states and cognitive appraisals that tend to have a distinct focus and often go along with physiological processes and expressions (Gross, 2007; Larsen, 2000). In comparison, moods are usually differentiated from emotions by their longer duration and lack of specific cause (Gross, 1998; Parkinson, Toterdell, Briner, & Reynolds, 1996). Furthermore, moods are considered to be indicators of *internal* states and bias *cognition*, whereas emotions are thought to reflect *environmental* states and bias *action* (Gross, 1998; Larsen, 2000). The central theme of mood research is commonly the regulation of an individual's mood (Isen, 1984; Larsen, 2000; Zillmann, 1988, 2000). The term *regulation* implies the modulation of thoughts, affect, behavior or attention via the use of *strategies*. Thus, *mood regulation* refers to the set of processes by which *mood* states can be managed, whereas *self-regulation* refers to the regulation of all psychological processes related to the self. *Strategies* are conscious and unconscious goal-directed activities aimed at achieving certain outcomes (Van den Tol & Edwards, 2013). The term *goal* is used for the desired outcome(s) of the processes of regulation (Karoly, 1993). Furthermore, the term *function* has been used in literature to describe the possible goals and effects that music listening can serve (Laukka, 2007; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007; Schäfer & Sedlmeier, 2009). Gross (1998) distinguishes mood regulation from emotion regulation as being more about experience than behavior. Mood regulation is associated with the processes focused on modifying or maintaining the occurrence, duration and intensity of both negative and positive moods (Cole, Martin, & Dennis, 2004; Eisenberg & Spinrad, 2004; Gross, 1998; Parkinson et al., 1996). As such, there are a variety of different behaviors that can be applied to regulating mood. For example, Parkinson et al. (1996)

identified over 200 different regulatory strategies. On the other hand, emotional regulation refers to processes of modifying various aspects such as valence and intensity (or time course) of emotions (Cole et al., 2004; Eisenberg & Spinrad, 2004). Regulation of moods and emotions may or may not be conscious, and may be directed at different aspects of emotions: behavioral expression, subjective experience, or physiological responses (Philippot & Feldman, 2004; Gross, 1998).

Research has demonstrated that music listening is a common and effective means for mood regulation (North et al., 2000; Thayer, Newman, & McClain, 1994; Wells & Hakanen, 1991). In addition, several regulatory mechanisms have been studied, including, among others, the use of music for mood improvement, distraction, and relaxation (Behne, 1997; Greasley & Lamont, 2006; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007; Sloboda, 1992; Wells & Hakanen, 1991). Furthermore, Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) proposed that clear theoretical associations occur between the regulatory strategies inductively identified within musical context and the regulatory strategies discussed in general emotion regulation research, including processes like venting, distracting or reappraising (e.g., Gross & John, 2003; Salovey, Bedell, Detweiler, & Mayer, 1999). Comparatively, Van Goethem (2009) demonstrated that several regulatory strategies identified in general emotion regulation literature appear in the context of music as well. Regardless, more studies about the relationship between music-related regulation and general emotional self-regulation would be necessary in developing an understanding and conceptual clarity of the special regulatory features related to music.

Music, Mood, and Youths

Music is utilized for emotional-regulation across several age groups, by adolescents (Behne, 1997; Laiho, 2004; North et al., 2000; Roe, 1985; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007; Wells &

Hakanen, 1991), adults (DeNora, 1999; Greasley & Lamont, 2006), and the elderly (Davidson et al., 2008; Hays & Minichiello, 2005; Laukka, 2007). Yet, it is still unclear as to how the self-regulatory use of music develops throughout one's life course, particularly the period between late adolescence and emerging adulthood.

Adolescence is a period of time that signals new challenges, including identity formation and developing outside familial relationships, which hone emotional regulation skills (Erikson, 1959/1980; Grotevant, 1998). Erikson is generally associated with the concept of identity formation as a result of the fifth stage in his eight-stage epigenetic model of development. According to Erikson, during this fifth stage, the individual is faced with the primary challenge of identity versus identity confusion. This concept of identity refers to adolescents' active search for their role, reflection on strengths and weaknesses, and synthesis of past, present, and future life experiences (Erikson, 1968). Furthermore, during adolescence, individuals begin to incorporate more internal state language in their narratives (Bauer, Stennes, & Haight, 2003) and become better suited to noticing disparities and discontinuities in emotional states and reactions (Habermas & Paha, 2001; Harter, 1999; McLean, Pasupathi, & Pals, 2007). During this time, the development of narrative and emotional regulation skills may be particularly essential as adolescents experience increasingly intense and fluctuating emotions (Arnett, 1999), and the parent- child dynamic becomes more emotionally labile (Laursen, Coy, & Collins, 1998). Adolescence is a stage of transition and plasticity from childhood to adulthood, in which the negotiation between a self-determined (and predisposed) person and his/her changing (and stable) social environment are entwined within and across ecological systems as the person develops (Lerner & Steinberg, 2009a, 2009b; Masten & Cicchetti, 2010). This period of bio-psychosocial reorganization introduces unique stressors, complex issues, and developmental

challenges (Arnett, 1999); regardless, most adolescents are able to adapt to this and thrive developmentally (Steinberg & Morris, 2001).

A related, but separate developmental period is the stage between adolescence and adulthood, which has been defined as emerging adulthood; during the course of this period, the opportunities of adulthood are combined with the acquisition of adult roles and responsibilities (Arnett, 2000). Emerging adulthood is characterized as a period involving identity exploration, possibility, instability, and self-focus (Arnett, 2004). Though research on identity formation has largely focused primarily on adolescence, studies have shown that identity achievement is rarely accomplished by the end of high school and that identity development progresses through late adolescence and into an individual's 20s (Waterman, 1999). Demographic, sociocultural, and labor market changes have resulted in increased complexity and heterogeneity in the passage between adolescence and adulthood, which has made this period more challenging than in the past (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). Regardless, emerging adults appear to have a more open view the world than adolescents (Arnett, 2007). By this stage, youths are increasingly independent, acquire and manage more amounts of responsibility, and take an involved role in their own development (Zarrett & Eccles, 2006). Eccles and Gootman (2002) note that the primary aim of this "last stage of adolescence" (p.15) includes how the individual takes on more demanding roles and specify that these challenges are: (a) the management of these demanding roles, (b) identifying personal strengths and weaknesses and honing the skills necessary to coordinate and succeed in these roles, (c) finding meaning and purpose in the roles acquired, and (d) assessing and making required life changes and coping with these changes. Research on the effects of these social-structural changes has produced mixed results regarding emerging adults' psychosocial functioning. Some studies have found that the majority of emerging adults respond

positively to this stage of prolonged identity development (Arnett, 2007), while others highlight this period as being particularly challenging (Cote & Bynner, 2008). Though the concepts underlying emerging adulthood are not new (Blos, 1941; Erikson, 1968; Parsons, 1942), the term itself is a relatively recent theory introduced by Jeffrey Arnett in 2000. As a result, there does not exist a great breadth of research examining emerging adulthood and its relationship to music and mood. Therefore, much of the research examined focuses primarily on adolescence and when applicable, includes components incorporating experiences observed in early adulthood.

In terms of the developmental significance of music listening, adolescence has been thought of being especially meaningful, particularly because the motivation for listening to music can reach its peak during the second decade of life (Larson, 1995; North et al., 2000; Zillmann & Gan, 1997). Music is an adolescents' soundtrack during this intense developmental period. On average, adolescents listen to music for up to three hours per day and procure more than 10,000 hours of active music listening throughout this time (Roberts et al., 2009; Tarrant, North, & Hargreaves, 2000; Zillmann & Gan, 1997). With regard to emerging adults, one study found that a sample within this population listening to music every day for an average of two hours, with non-music majors listening more (Stratton & Zalanowsky, 2003). Thus, it can be assumed that the amount of time spent listening to music makes both adolescents and emerging adults' youthful authorities in music listening. By contrast, findings from a recent study found that youths spend approximately 20% of their time listening to music in a variety of settings, whereas adults spend almost 13% of their time listening to music and typically listen to music in private (Bonneville-Roussy, Rentfrow, Xu, & Potter, 2013).

Music listening, and the role it plays these during these developmental periods, can be organized by two overreaching motivation systems. The first motivation system accounts for the

satisfaction of individual needs (e.g., emotion regulation, coping, aesthetic appreciation), while the second system is responsible for the fulfillment of social needs (e.g., social identity, relationships with peers, belonging to musical subcultures; Bakagiannis & Tarrant, 2006; Miranda & Claes, 2009). For the purposes of this literature review, the first motivation system focusing on individual needs will be covered in this portion of the literature review, whereas the system exploring social needs will be discussed at length within the section examining adolescence and specific subcultures.

Additional researchers have also looked at youth's motivation for music listening. Chamorro-Premuzic et al. (2009) developed a three-factor model of why people listen to music: emotional use, cognitive use, and background use. North and collaborators (2000) also found a three-factor model of reasons for listening to music among adolescents: creating social image, satisfying emotional needs, and enjoyment. In addition, Ter Bogt et al. (2011) recently identified four uses of music among young people: mood enhancement, coping, personal identity development, and illustrating social identity. From this information, they ran a latent class analysis that identified three profiles of music listeners: high-involved (19.7%), medium-involved (74.2%), and low-involved (6.1%). These results are in line with cluster analyses from Miranda and Gaudreau (2011), that indicated that 19.3% of adolescents were *emotionally-negative listeners* (characterized by medium levels of happiness and higher levels of sadness from music listening), 31.6% were *emotionally-positive listeners* (characterized by higher levels of happiness and lower levels of sadness from music listening), but that most (49.1%) were *emotionally-limited listeners* (lower levels of both happiness and sadness from music listening). That many adolescents were members of the *emotionally-limited* category appears to be in accordance with Sloboda and Juslin (2010), who theorized that everyday music listening may

usually involve low-intensity emotional reactions. Regardless, when looked at cumulatively, these findings suggest an interesting distinction: many young adults—though not all—are passionate about music, or at the very least, react in such a manner to it. Nevertheless, what these studies indicate is that emotion regulation is a significant motivation to listen to music, especially in developing youths (Lonsdale & North, 2011).

Emotional and Mood Regulation

As discussed earlier, mood regulation refers to processes aimed at modifying or maintaining the occurrence, duration and intensity of both negative and positive moods (Eisenberg and Spinrad, 2004; Gross, 1998; Parkinson et al., 1996). Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) examined the role of music in adolescents' mood regulation and found seven emergent regulatory strategies that reflected patterns of employing music in order to satisfy mood-regulated goals and needs. These included: entertainment, revival, strong sensation, diversion, discharge, mental work, and solace. The adolescent participants in this study themselves reflected that their music-related emotions were a representation of their inner state. Similar findings have also shown music to be an effective means of discharging negative emotions (Lacourse et al., 2001; Ruud, 1997; Schwartz & Fouts, 2003; Sloboda, 1992; Sloboda, O'Neill, & Ivaldi, 2001). Along the same vein, previous research has demonstrated that pleasant musical activities may help to distance thoughts and feelings from personal burdens, it serves as an effective means in diverting youths from stress and other such disturbances (Behne, 1997; Christenson & Roberts, 1998; Schwartz & Fouts, 2003; Sloboda, 1992). Several studies have also previously suggested that music may function as a kind of self-therapy and help people to identify feelings, work through conflicts, and regain control over psychic processes (Behne, 1997; DeNora, 1999; Laiho, 2004; Larson, 1995; Ruud, 1997; Sloboda, 1992). Larson (1995)

postulated that in early adolescence music could be used to facilitate solitude, which can be a constructive domain of self-reflection, emotional discharge and personal renewal. Though while in this solitude, music itself provides a sense of kinship. Previous studies have shown that music is often perceived by the listener as an understanding and valued friend (Laiho, 2004; Saarikallio, 2010; Sloboda, 1992). Schwartz and Fouts (2003) proposed that music serves as a source of validation for young adults by assuring them that they are not alone in their emotions, and that their feelings are real.

With regard to age, Saarikallio (2010) found that the basic nature of emotional self-regulation via music appeared to remain highly similar throughout adulthood and identified several strategies which mirrored those utilized via adolescence, such as revival, strong sensation, diversion, discharge, mental work, and solace. In fact, it appeared that the general importance of music in the lives of the participants appeared to increase with age, which is in line with previous research (Gembris, 2008; Laukka, 2007). Saarikallio (2010) noted that through age and experience, individuals seemed to acquire a greater amount of knowledge about music's power. This is particularly relevant for the period of emerging adulthood, as during this stage significant changes occur in the individual's sense of self and capacity for self-reflection (Arnett & Tanner, 2006; Beck, 2012). In other words, as individuals develop from adolescence into early adulthood, their ability to reflect on their motives for music listening may become more pronounced and they may be able to further verbalize distinct internal processes that may have not been apparent before.

Coping

Uses and gratifications theory posits that individuals select media depending on their personal characteristics and social situations they confront. This theory predicts that young

adults use music listening as a way to cope with life stressors (Schwartz & Fouts, 2003). Miranda and Claes (2009) sought to explain coping by music listening in youths by outlining three different coping mechanisms: problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance/disengagement. In terms of problem-focused coping, music listening can be used intentionally by adolescents in order to reflect on the resolution of stressful situations they face. For example, young adults can utilize media as a vital source of information in order to discover possible solutions to their problems (Roberts et al., 2009). Adolescents have reported that they use music as means of reflecting and working on their personal problems (e.g., enhancing mental imagery and creating ideas and gaining insight; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007).

As has previously been discussed, emotion-focused coping via music listening is a common strategy used by youths in emotion and mood regulation. However, though this type of coping strategy is not necessarily seen as maladaptive on its own, young adults who are unable to consistently vent negative emotions may be psychologically less well adjusted (Compas, Conner-Smith, Saltzman, Harding-Thomsen, & Wadsworth, 2001). Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) noted that youths who listened to music in order to alleviate negative moods initially felt worse, though they may afterwards have experienced some improvement. Adolescent females who utilize music listening as a vicarious release of negative emotions have been shown to report fewer suicidal risks (Lacourse et al., 2001). Regardless, it has also been indicated that adolescents who experience sadness after listening to their preferred music display more depressive symptoms (Martin, Clarke, & Pearce, 1993) while adolescent males utilizing emotion-oriented coping by music listening is linked to higher levels of depression (Miranda & Claes, 2009).

Finally, when examining music listening as a form of avoidance/disengagement coping, young adults may use their preferred music as a way to avoid thinking about particular problems

or stressors. As has already been discussed, youths may utilize music listening as a means of distraction; adolescents have reported listening to music in order to forget about schoolwork and stress (Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007). However, recurrent avoidance may be harmful to psychological adjustment in adolescents, and some results indicate that music listening in young adults can be associated as a form of avoidant coping (Connor-Smith, Compas, Wadsworth, Thomsen, & Saltzman, 2000; Ebata & Moos, 1991; Hutchinson, Baldwin, & Oh, 2006). In adolescent females, avoidance/disengagement coping by music listening has been linked to higher depression levels (Miranda & Claes, 2009).

Music, Mood, Youths, and Gender

During adolescent development, gender differences influence a variety of areas, including biological, psychological, and social factors (Galambos, Berenbaum, & McHale, 2009). Research has begun to look at how emotion scripts interact and in turn may lead to gender differences found in adolescents' emotional health (Lillard, 1997; Vinden & Astington, 2000). Previous studies with both children and adults have indicated that females express themselves through more emotionally rich personal narratives (Bauer et al., 2003; Cross & Madson, 1997; Davis, 1999; Fivush & Buckner, 2003), which suggests that females may have a fuller, more distinct ability to understand emotion than their male counterparts.

However, research has indicated that beginning in adolescence, females exhibit increasing levels of rumination, focusing on negative emotions without achieving resolution or regulation, and this form of self-reflection is notably associated to depressive symptoms (Nolen-Hoeksema, Wisco, & Lyubomirsky, 2008). Females experience 1.5- to 3-fold higher rates of Major Depressive Episodes than males beginning in early adolescence (Kessler et al., 2003; Kuehner, 2003). Furthermore, studies have indicated that depressive symptoms are significant

risk factors for self-harm and suicidal behavior (Goldsmith, 2002; Hawton, Casanas, Haw, &

Saunders, 2013; Mohammadkhani et al., 2008). Females in particular have been found to be at an

increased risk for self-harm and suicide attempts, and these risks are especially high during

adolescence (De Kloet et al., 2011; Madge et al., 2011; Waldrop et al., 2007). Regarding self-

harm, one study found that female adolescents reported more reasons for their self-harm

behavior in general (i.e., cry for help, cry for pain), which the authors postulated could imply that

they have a higher need to explain their behavior and communicate their distress (Scoliers et al.

2009). In terms of self-harm ratios across the life cycle, research has indicated that the overall

gender rate ratio is 1.5 females to each male, which varies considerably by age group: 8:1 in 10-

14-year-olds, 3.1:1 in 15-19-year-olds, 1.6:1 in 20-24-year-olds, approximately 1.3:1 in 25-49-

year-olds, and 0.8:1 in people aged 50 years and over (Hawton & Harriss, 2008).

When looking at the process of development, a relational and psycho-cultural approach

can provide a new framework in which to examine young adult emotional faculties, including the

ability to understand emotions and several aspects of the *self* within a cultural context (e.g.,

Bronfenbrenner, 2005; Harter, 1999). Males and females experience different socialization

processes which influence gender differences in emotional development, especially for emotions

which drive and regulate adaptive behaviors as a function of varying socio-cultural and

interpersonal gender roles (Brody, 1999; 2006). Researchers suggest that emotional cultures—a

group's set of beliefs, regulative norms, and vocabulary regarding emotion—provide the youths

with cognitive tools that negotiate social experiences and organize behavior towards others (Lutz

& White, 1986; Saarni, 1999). When looking at music, O'Neill and Green (2004) maintain that

gender differences can be viewed in terms of varying musical practices, such as production,

distribution, and reception. Music is described as a *mirror* that allows young adults to recognize

features of the self and that specific properties of music also come to represent or transform the image reflected in and through its structure (O'Neill & Green, 2004). Therefore, a mutual relationship exists between the emotion culture and the youth's emotional competence, such that emotion is seen as language—or a script—acting both as a product and process co-constructed via the experience within a specific culture, such as music (Lewis, 1995; Saarni, 1999).

The empirical evidence surrounding gender-related differences examining the association between music experiences and emotional perceptions remains somewhat inconsistent. Female adolescents have been shown to spend more time listening to music (Roberts et al., 2009); but this gender difference has not always been able to be duplicated in other studies (Schwartz and Fouts, 2003). Mulder, Ter Bogt, Raaijmakers, Gabhainn, and Sikkema (2010) noted that though some gender differences continue (e.g., a preference for pop music by females), others may eventually disappear (e.g., both males and females now equally appreciate rock music). Motives for music listening may display more pronounced gender differences. Contemporary literature examining socio-emotional competence among older children and adults indicates that girls and women demonstrate a higher level of socio-emotional competence than their male peers (Denham, 1998; Frijda & Mesquita, 1994). Studies on younger children have found that girls outperform boys in tasks looking at emotional understanding and receive higher emotional competency ratings by teachers (Cutting & Dunn, 1999; Parent, Normandeau, Cossett-Richard, & Letarte, 1999), as do youths in middle-school (Denham, 1998), adolescents and adults (Brody & Hall, 1993). Also, when looking at emotional perceptions of music, Hunter, Schellenbert, and Stalinski (2011) observed that adolescent females had a greater likelihood than male adolescents to report positive feelings after listening to several examples of emotionally expressive music. In addition, North et al. (2000) noted that female and male adolescents displayed differences in how

they utilized music listening as they found that females reported that they used music as a means to regulate their mood, while males stated that they mostly used music as impression management. In other words, adolescent girls place a higher value in fulfilling their emotional needs via music, whereas adolescent boys primarily utilize music as a way to manage their social identity. Also, music listening as a means of coping appears to be used more frequently by girls than boys (Miranda & Claes, 2009). This may serve to explain the higher significance between music and symptoms of mood disorders in adolescent females, as they may be using listening to music as a way to cope with their symptoms (Miranda & Claes, 2008).

In order to aid in explaining gender-related differences in music and emotions, gender-role stereotyping has been suggested as a way of explaining young adults' musical behavior (Hunter, Schellenbert, & Stalinski, 2011; O'Neill, 1997). Within their review, Brown and Bobkowski (2011) indicate that media provides models, expectations, scripts and stereotypes regarding romantic and sexual relationships among young people. Media could also be an educational tool and resource in creating progressive gender-role attitudes, but it can also maintain conventional gender roles (Brown & Bobkowski, 2011). For example, Ter Bogt, Engels, Bogers, and Kloosterman (2010) found that differences in music preferences could be linked to either an increase or decrease in gender stereotypes. When reviewing the literature, North and Hargreaves (2008) report studies indicating that lyrics from songs that suggest gender stereotypes may promote gender stereotyping—even sexism—during youth. For example, a popular song by the Beastie Boys describes women as doing little more than household chore, "Girls-to do the dishes/ Girls-to clean up my room/Girls-to do the laundry/Girls-and in the bathroom" (Beastie Boys & Rubin, 1987). While a rock song by Alice Cooper depicted women as passive and powerless,

Man's got his women to take his seed/
He's got the power-oh/
She's got the need/
She spends her life through pleasing up her man/
She feeds him dinner or anything she can/
She cries alone at night too often/
He smokes and drinks and don't come home at all/
Only women bleed. (Cooper & Wagner, 1975)

Songs that portray women as defenseless, vulnerable, or generally in a negative light may continue to reinforce gender stereotypes and harmful attitudes towards women.

Music Subcultures

It's quite clear that generally individuals tend to display stronger preferences for some types of music than others, but what is it that determines a person's music preferences? Are there particularly individual differences that link people to certain music styles? Frith (1981) suggests that musical subcultures form around particular styles because "all adolescents use music as a badge" (p. 217) which communicates their values, attitudes, and opinions to others. North and Hargreaves (1999, 2008) found evidence that adolescents' music preferences appeared to reflect an attempt to fit their self-concept with their perceptions of those who usually listened to that style of music. Like Frith, they described music as a badge that individuals use to make judgments of others, but also simultaneously functioning as a way to express their own self-concepts. Tarrant, North, and Hargreaves (2002) suggested that musical identities develop during early adolescence and are defined as components of self-images, which contribute to the creation of a more general self-identity. This integration of components forms the overall picture that people have of themselves. During adolescence, when music would appear to play an important role in identity formation (North et al., 2000; Zillman & Gan, 1997), individuals utilize musical preferences for evaluative functions and group identification processes (Tekman & Hortaçsu, 2002). This continues into emerging adulthood, where music plays a central role in social

interactions. For example, an analysis of topics strangers discussed as they became acquainted with one another showed that music was the most popular topic of conversation (Rentfrow & Gosling, 2007).

Social Identity Theory (SIT) postulates that when involved in evaluative situations, people tend to favor members of their own social group (i.e., in-group) at the cost of other non-members (i.e., out-group; Tajfel, Billig, Bundy, & Flament, 1971). Studies that have used this theory to examine people's musical behavior have generally supported SIT predictions, which ultimately may help in examining the formation of music subcultures. For example, Tarrant, Hargreaves, and North (2001) asked adolescents to rate the degree to which students at their own school (in-group) and a rival school (outgroup) enjoyed each of six music styles. As social identity theory would have predicted, the adolescents linked the in-group with music that was regarded positively to a higher degree than they linked the out-group with that very same music. Whereas, they linked the out-group with music that was viewed negatively to a greater degree than they linked the in-group with that music. Also, there were reported differences between the preferences of the two groups were associated with the adolescents' levels of self-esteem. Adolescents with lower-levels of self esteem tried to distance the in-group more from the out-group in terms of its reported rate of liking for negatively valued music; in other words, they said that the out-group liked that music more than the in-group liked it less. Using this line of research, Tarrant et al. (2002) determined that a youth's statements regarding their musical preferences reflect information to others about non-music related qualities that help to form an impression. Fundamentally, the association in intergroup situations appears to be one way through which social identity and self-esteem needs can be realized, which may have implications on mood (Bakagiannis & Tarrant, 2006).

Furthermore, when examining a sample largely consisting of emerging adults, Rentfrow and Gosling (2003) found that music was of particular importance to this population and that they believed their music preferences revealed information about who they are as individuals. These results are in line with a recent study, which also suggested that young adult's perceived musical identities are related to music preferences. This was particularly true of individuals who preferred rebellious types of music (such as rock), as they indicated that the music they listened to was a significant part of their self-identity (Gardikiotis & Baltzis, 2011). In terms of group identification processes, Rentfrow and Gosling (2007) examined a sample of college students and found that they expressed specific stereotypes associated with different music genres and that these stereotypes contained some level of validity, which suggests that music stereotypes could promote accuracy in music-based personality judgments. Therefore, the type of music an individual prefers can offer some insight into aspects of their personality and personal qualities.

At present, subculture researchers have primarily taken from Bourdieu's (1984) argument that an individual's *tastes* in the consumption of cultural products are largely based on their class background. By arguing that people born in different classes utilize different methods in understanding and navigating social realities (referred to as one's habitus), consumer societies are seen as being confined into separate *social spaces* which can be identified by the different logic guiding an individual's liking for particular tastes in cultural products like art, fashion, and music. Thornton (1995) modified this framework and introduced the term "subcultural capital" (p. 154) He suggested that one way through which music-based subculture participants accrue subcultural capital is by developing tastes for groups that are seen as *authentic* artistic producers by the wider subculture. This is particularly relevant in today's society, given the emergence of social networking and subcultural media websites, participants active in certain subcultures now

have the ability to serve as artistic critics and while doing so contribute to the process through which an artistic work is considered authenticates, or in turn discredited. The idea of *being authentic* plays an important role in terms of being accepted into certain subcultures (Driver, 2011), which may or may not influence an individual's development of self-identity and self-esteem.

Music Subcultures and Problem Behaviors

It may be that certain music preferences and music subcultures are associated with problem behaviors and/or internalizing distress in young adults, particularly females. Previous research has addressed the link between a preference for genres that are seen as countercultural, such as heavy metal and rap/hip hop, and internalizing distress. Martin, Clark, and Pearce (1993) found significant associations in both male and female adolescents between a preference for rock/metal music and suicidal thoughts, self-harm and depression. In addition, females who indicated a preference for heavy metal appeared to face these problems with more regularity. Similarly, Scheel and Westefeld (1999) reported that fans of metal music (both female and male) displayed higher levels of suicidal ideation than peers who listened to mainstream music, with, once again, females exhibiting more problems than males. Lacourse et al. (2001) also found that girls liking heavy metal music reported more feelings of alienation and appeared to be at an increased risk for suicide. In addition, a recent longitudinal study sought and confirmed that music genres that expressed controversial themes (i.e., heavy metal and hip-hop) predicted more externalizing problem behaviors in adolescence (Selfhout et al., 2008). North and Hargreaves (2008) reviewed literature examining the premise that songs considered *problematic* (e.g., anti-authoritarian, obscene, degrading, antisocial, prejudicial) were a possible risk factor and concluded that there exists an association with *problem music* (e.g., heavy metal, hip-hop, Goth)

and externalizing problem behaviors in adolescence. Baker and Bor (2008) also examined the aforementioned literature and concluded that controversial music tastes are not necessarily the cause of mental health problems, but rather they may be markers of emotional vulnerability. A recent study examining the emotional states of late adolescent/emerging adult listeners of heavy metal music found significantly higher levels of anxiety and depression amongst heavy metal/hard rock listeners as compared with non-listeners (Shafron & Karno, 2013).

Similarly, in recent years young adult males have garnered some amount of negative attention due to the amount and nature of school shootings. Since 1992, there have been 387 school shootings, with 69% of the shooters being between the ages of 10-to-19 (National School Safety Center, 2013). Though there is not necessarily a reliable profile of school shooters, there are a few common characteristics, namely that of White, adolescent males in suburban areas (Leary, Kowalski, Smith, & Phillips, 2003; Verlinden, Hersen, & Thomas, 2000). In addition, the Columbine shooters were connected to the *Trenchcoat Mafia* by the media, and gothic subculture became increasingly scrutinized (Carney, 2006; Hong, Cho, Allen-Meares, & Espelage, 2011).

Researchers have reported that male youths are more likely to engage in violent behaviors and physical fights than females (Espelage, Mebane, & Swearer, 2004). Young adult males are also significantly more likely than their female counterparts to perceive violence as a legitimate way to resolve conflict (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003). One study examining three recent American cases, suggested that these young males had all been constantly bullied and harassed, and that this may have resulted in feelings of humiliation and emasculation, which led to violent enactments of masculinity (Kalish & Kimmel, 2010). In contrast to girls who are encouraged to express a broad range of emotions, boys may be urged to conform to traditional notions of

masculinity such as toughness and aggression and discouraged from acknowledging feelings of vulnerability (Feder, Levant, & Dean, 2010; Kindlon & Thompson, 1999).

Music Subcultures and Gender

However, not all music preferences or involvement in music subcultures are associated with negative symptoms or problem behaviors in females. Researchers have previously conducted critical analysis of gender in music subcultures (Kotarba, 2002) and have identified ways in which subcultures permit public opposition to the gender order within society overall (Leonard, 1997; Rosenberg & Garofalo, 1998; Wald, 1998) and how it upholds that order (Schippers, 2000). Bessett (2006) found that women via *depth-listening* practices employed gender as a socio-semiotic resource from which to understand their relationships to the music and artists and to assess what music could represent in their daily lives. An individual's gender identity is influential in how music is constructed as it is personally transformative and has implications for social change (Bessett, 2006).

For example, in the 1990s a small group of young women musicians active in and around the punk music scenes called for a feminist revolution within independent rock. They coined the term Riot Grrrl as a means of expressing their defiance of punk's long-standing traditions of misogyny, homophobia, racism and sexism within the corporate music industry (Gottlieb & Wald 1994). For the Riot Grrrl subculture, celebrating *girliness* constituted an aesthetic and political response to the male-dominated music industry, as well as a means of recognizing women's agency as cultural producers within independent rock. By placing an emphasis on female themes in their music, lyrics, dress, iconography, and *zines*, the artists tried to create a representational space for females that was, in essence, off-limits to patriarchal authority (Wald, 1998). Riot Grrrl, though political, also focused on personal. It focused more on individual and

emotional aspects than on legislation and public policy. This created a community where girls and young women were able to speak about what was causing them distress (Rosenberg & Garofalo, 1998). An example taken from a declaration by the band Bikini Kill provides an insight into Riot Grrrl's philosophy, "BECAUSE we see fostering and supporting girl scenes and girl artists of all kinds as integral to this process" (Hanna, 1991, para. 12); "BECAUSE we are angry at a society that tells us Girl=Dumb, Girl=Bad, Girl=Weak" (Hanna, 1991, para. 14), and "BECAUSE I believe with my [wholeheartmindbody] that girls constitute a revolutionary soul force that can, and will, change the world for real" (Hanna, 1991, para. 16).

Music Subcultures: Emo

Music genres by their very nature are always changing, artists coming and going, styles shifting. As a result, there are apparent limitations to the feasibility of research on particular music subcultures. However, when a subculture's primary identifiers are of its participants' experience of depression, self-injury, and suicide (Sands, 2006), the need for methodical and exploratory research becomes clear.

Emo, also known as emotionally-oriented-rock, emocore or emotional hardcore, is a punk genre that emerged in the early 1990s as a blend of American hardcore and indie-rock (Williams, 2012). However, the roots of emo can be seen as early as the mid-1980s. One of the most influential predecessors of emo during this time was the Washington, D.C. post-hardcore band Rites of Spring (Williams, 2012). The bands lyrics reflected personal frustration and pain, for example one song expressed the inability to connect with another, "If I started crying would you start crying?/Now I started crying—why are you not crying" (Rites of Spring, 1985)? Another another line displayed morbid dissatisfaction, "Hope's just a rope to hang myself with" (Rites of Spring, 1985). Rites of Spring laid the groundwork for emo as a more introverted and melodic

version of hardcore punk rock, and this style spread to various areas across the United States (Williams, 2012).

A second wave of the genre occurred in the mid-1990s as bands like Sunny Day Real Estate and Jawbreaker, whose albums *Diary* and *24 Hour Revenge Therapy*, respectively, helped emo gain attention beyond local music scenes (Williams, 2012). The two bands helped cement the place of "fearless, emotional indulgence in punk rock" (Greenwald, 2003, p. 19). Sunny Day Real Estate was a much younger band (their lead singer, Jeremy Enigk was eighteen) than earlier emo acts, and as such, they tended to draw younger audiences (Williams, 2012). The band utilized intricate songwriting, falsetto vocals, and self-reflective lyrics to further establish the genre (Greenwald, 2003; Williams, 2012). Similarly, Jawbreaker's lyrical honesty allowed like-minded listeners to relate to music on a personal level. Many times, the lyrics for Jawbreaker's songs came directly from their singer, Blake Schwartzenbach's journal, without editing (Greenwald, 2003). By creating a musical style that appealed to a younger demographic, these two bands were able to inspire the next generation of emo artists, including Saves the Day, Jimmy Eat World, and Dashboard Confessional (Williams, 2012).

In the early to mid-2000s, bands such as Taking Back Sunday, Brand New, My Chemical Romance, and Fall Out Boy, among others, had significant amounts of critical and commercial success (Maloney, 2013). The genre appears to be making a resurgence, as bands like Fall Out Boy and Paramore have recently released albums that have achieved commercial success, meanwhile the Vans Warped Tour, a staple of the genre's scene, continues to have consistent attendance (Maloney, 2013).

The genre's lyrical honesty and intimate self-reflection allow for the possibility of the listener to connect to the music on a deeper level, which appears to be a common characteristic

of emo music throughout its history. Emo lyrics express personal feelings of fear, depression, uncertainty, and the anxiety associated with youths and adolescent culture. As previously mentioned, the genre as a whole leans towards a more emotional, diary-like poetry (Williams, 2012). For example, through their song "Get Busy Living Or Get Busy Dying", Fall Out Boy expressed desperation and hopelessness,

> From day one I talked about getting out/
> But not forgetting about/
> How my worst fears are letting out/
> He said why put a new address/
> On the same old loneliness/
> When breathing just passes the time/
> Until we all just get old and die/
> Now talking's just a waste of breath/
> And living is just a waste of death. (Wentz, 2005)

A current example, by the band Sleeping With Sirens, articulates similar feelings of despair and the process of overcoming self-loathing,

> I used to be a ghost/
> Floating aimlessly/
> So they couldn't see/
> What I think hurts the most/
> I felt like it made me, hate me/
> But I won't apologize for being different/
> I can be who I am, and yeah/
> I felt so dead inside/
> But now I feel so alive, for the first time. (Sleeping with Sirens, 2013)

Via songs that disclose intimate and vulnerable thoughts and emotions not often spoken of openly in daily life, generation after generation of youths may feel drawn music that reflects their internal struggles, while simultaneously encountering a community of similar interests and understanding.

With respect to how emo music sounds, while it generally retains the fast tempos, double time drumbeats and declamatory vocals of its predecessor, hardcore; emo musicians tend to favor

melody-driven accompaniments and complex instrumental arrangements and regardless of the singer's age, the preferred timbre is a somewhat pre-pubescent nasal quality (Williams, 2012), as evidenced by bands such as Saosin, Pierce the Veil, and Sleeping with Sirens. Modern emo also includes diverse styles from other genres, such as metal, thrash, rap, and country, and traversed the inclusion of various different instruments like acoustic guitars, pianos, violins, and cellos (Williams, 2012).

In terms of its existence as a subculture, features such as album art, fashion and communities of fans are of primary importance in the classification of modern emo (Williams, 2012). For example, music videos and album art illustrate adolescent rites of passage such as prom, house parties and anxiety about graduation (Williams, 2012). According to Simon and Kelley (2007), *Core Emo Values* include: depression, effort(lessness), empathy, faith, insecurity, and non-athleticism. Of particular psychological interest are the characteristics of depression, empathy, and insecurity. Regarding fashion, bands and their fans tend to dress in dark colors, accented with bright neon shades of color, striped patterns, skinny jeans and studded jewelry; facial piercings are popular and tattoos are very common; hairstyles typically involve straightened hair that is dyed black or very pale hair, often streaked with bright colors such as pink, purple, or blue and styled so that it falls over their forehead and sometimes over their eyes; females tend to wear heavy, dark makeup (Lehmann, 2011; Richards, 2012).

Though the genre as a whole has met with moderate commercial success, most emo bands dislike the moniker and its pervasive use in popular culture; they reject the label for the social stigma and controversy surrounding it (Greenwald, 2003; Williams, 2012). In addition, participants in this subculture have been known to be at risk both by their peers and authority figures. For example, in 2008, adolescents who identified as emo were attacked by *anti-emo*

groups in Mexico City, Querétaro, and Tijuana (Grillo, 2008); in Russia, a law was proposed to regulate emo websites and prohibit emo style at schools and government buildings, due to the subculture being identified as a dangerous trend amongst teenagers that was encouraging depression, social withdrawal and even suicide (Michaels, 2008); in March 2012 reports indicated that, in a single month, Shia militias in Iraq had shot or beaten to death up to 58 young Iraqi individuals who were described as emo (Ruhayem, 2012). Not only are participants of this subculture at risk from others, but they have also been seen as a risk to themselves. As mentioned, emo has been associated with the stereotype of an emotional, sensitive, angst-ridden individual, who may be seen to be at risk for depression, self-injury, and suicide (Porretta, 2007; Sands, 2006). Shafron and Karno (2013) found that amongst a sample of late adolescents and emerging adults, depression and anxiety were higher amongst participants who listened to emo music, whilst female participants who identified as listening to heavy metal overall endorsed higher levels of depression and anxiety than their male counterparts.

Emo and Gender Bias

Regarding gender associations, the emo subculture has been criticized for its androcentrism (Greenwald, 2003). The success of the *lonely boy's aesthetic* in emo, in conjunction with the genre's popularity, has led to a number of one-sided songs in which males express their anger at the women who have wronged them (Greenwald, 2003). This sentiment is aptly portrayed in the song The Game by The Red Ribbon Army,

> So let's play a simple game of seduce and destroy/
> It's plain and simple, take a pretty girl and hapless boy/
> Observe this girl's marveling, misguided intuition…
> This classic tragedy is one of many sad pathetic lonely chapters of my life/
> Of boy meets girl, then girl leaves boy alone. (Coleman, 2010)

Mayday Parade's "When I Get Home, You're so Dead" provides another example of a female

being portrayed as a deceitful antagonist,

> Say hello to all the boys at the top of this table that you're under/
> Lipstick lullabies/
> This is sorry for the last time/
> And baby I understand that you're making new friends/
> This is how you get by/
> The moral this time is/
> Girls make boys cry. (Sanders, 2007)

However, despite the genre's frequent portrayal of females as powerless victims, fans are

from both genders—some musical artists and bands are even more popular with women than

with men (Greenwald, 2003). One possible explanation is that the genre's expression of

emotional devastation can be appreciated equally by both sexes regardless of the songs' specific

subjects (Greenwald, 2003).

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter presents the research methodology employed in this phenomenological study, including research approach, participants, interview protocol, qualitative measures, data analysis plan, and methodological assumptions and limitations.

Study Approach and Rationale

The purpose of the study was to use a phenomenological approach to explore experiences and conceptualizations of music preference among young adult females who listen to music which has been commonly labeled as emo and the relationship to emotional processes and identity development. Phenomenological research seeks to emphasize the point of view of the individual and to share their subjective experiences, which is at the center of the inquiry (Mertens, 2010). This approach was chosen to complement studies on music research in adolescence, which has not directly examined the effects of preference for emo music from the view of those who identify with this genre. These may include young adults who regularly experience subjugation or marginalization, who may struggle with mental health issues, and may have developed ineffective coping strategies such as self harm (Definis-Gojanovic, Gugic, & Sutlovic, 2009; Sands, 2006). By conducting personal interviews, the phenomenon of involvement in the emo subculture was inspected closely amongst a relatively homogeneous group of young adult females.

Qualitative data collection provides an opportunity to better understand groups that may lack a *voice* in society—groups whose views are rarely heard by mainstream audiences because they are not often published or recognized by conventional outlets. By emphasizing in-depth empirical study, the qualitative approach was well suited for the complex task of understanding groups that escape the grasp of other approaches (Ragin, 2011). By conducting interviews, music

and its relationship to emotion and identity development were no longer interpreted in terms of the scientific terms given by the field of psychology; rather they were dissected according to the perspective or schema of the participants in the study (Mertens, 2010).

Participants

The participants of this qualitative study consisted of 9 ethnically diverse late adolescent to transitional age females who acknowledged current and/or past participation in the emo subculture. In the recruitment of young women for the study, the inclusion criteria for participation included the following: (a) participants must be between the ages of 18 and 21 years old; (b) participants must speak and understand conversational English; (c) participants must acknowledge being current listeners of music is typically considered part of the emo genre and must have self-identified as listening to music considered emo for at least one year since at least the age of 16; (d) participants must acknowledge having been labeled emo by an external source or self; (e) participants must acknowledge by self report that music is an important aspect of their life; (f) participants must provide written consent to be either audio or video-recorded and included in the research database; and (g) participants must be able to be attend one interview held within a Pepperdine University Clinic (i.e., West Los Angeles, Encino, or Irvine), or a location of their choosing.

Recruitment Strategies

Research participants were recruited using a purposeful sampling strategy in order to examine the lived experiences of late adolescents and emerging adults involved in the subculture of interest. According to Berg and Lune (2012), when using a purposeful sample, the researcher uses their special knowledge or expertise about a particular group to select subjects who most represent the population of interest. In this study, participants were selected for participation

based on the criteria outlined from a variety of settings; specifically, via selected personal networks of individuals, social networking, selected college and university campuses, and snowball sampling. Specific recruitment methods are described in further detail below. Recruitment materials included flyers (see Appendix B) that contained general information and contact information of the investigator. Since the term emo can have negative associations (Greenwald, 2003), participants were recruited on the basis of music preferences considered by the researcher to most reflect the genre, such as pop punk, hardcore, and alternative rock. In addition, the researcher inquired if participants were ever labeled as emo by an external source and if they considered themselves to be part of the subculture.

Most of the participants were recruited from university campuses. Permission was requested from administrators within the Psychology Department and Graduate Research Offices of a number of college and university campuses within the Greater Los Angeles Area (see Appendix C). These departments were chosen given the nature of the current study. The investigator disseminated a letter explaining the purpose of the study and requested permission to post recruitment materials on campus. The letter also included a description of the researcher's and dissertation chair's credentials and contact information if questions arose (see Appendix E). Once permission was obtained, participants were recruited primarily through flyers (see Appendix B).

In addition, the researcher contacted acquaintances, musicians, and bands that are actively involved in the emo subculture. They were read a recruitment script (see Appendix D) and encouraged to utilize social networking sites to promote the current study by posting the study's flyer on their Facebook page, Twitter, website, etc.

Participant Selection Process

Potential participants who contacted the researcher underwent an initial screening process to assess their eligibility to participate in the study. During this first point of contact, the researcher thanked the potential participants for their interest and scheduled a time with the potential participant to conduct a phone screen to determine eligibility for the study. The second point of contact was this brief phone screen (see Appendix G), the content of which included inquiries about their music preference ("Do you listen to either pop punk, hardcore, or alternative rock music?") and the importance of music in their lives ("Would you consider music an important aspect of your life?").

Once eligible participants were identified, an interview date was scheduled and the researcher sent them a packet of information via email containing the informed consent (see Appendix F), a confirmation letter (see Appendix L), potential mental health resources (see Appendix P), and a background questionnaire (see Appendix K). The background questionnaire served to collect socio-demographic data and additional information regarding their specific music preferences. The researcher requested for the participant to bring the informed consent and background questionnaire to the interview. At this time, the researcher also asked the participant to bring audio of songs or written song lyrics to the interview that were particularly meaningful for them or were important during a challenging time.

Compensation

Participants who qualified for the study and completed all required aspects were compensated with a $20 iTunes gift certificate for their time.

Consent Procedures

Each participant was given two copies of the Informed Consent and were required to sign both prior to engaging in the study, one returned to the researcher and the other for them to keep for their own reference (see Appendix F). The consent form was reviewed with the participant when they arrived for their scheduled interview.

Specific consent issues addressed in the Informed Consent, relevant to this study included: (a) the need to video or audio tape the interview, (b) the time commitment involved, and (c) the potential need to re-contact participants to clarify responses during the content analysis stage of the data.

Steps to Protect Confidentiality

Once recruitment was completed, only the researcher/moderator and dissertation chair had access to the recruitment information. At the conclusion of the study, these records will be destroyed by using the shredder located in the Pepperdine Mental Health Clinic at the Encino Clinic.

During the interview, participants were not identified by name. At the conclusion of the study, the recordings will be destroyed. In the formal write-up of the results, participants were not identified by first names but by a randomly prescribed number. Information linking a participant with their prescribed number, such as a file containing their name, contact information, and the aforementioned number, was kept in a separate locked file cabinet at the investigator's place of residence.

Research Procedures

Upon obtaining an individual's consent, the researcher conducted the interviews on the aforementioned clinic grounds or on the participant's university campus. While dependent on the complexity of responses, interviews typically lasted approximately 60 to 90 minutes.

The researcher began the interview process utilizing an introduction script (see Appendix M), which included an explanation of why the interview was being conducted, confidentiality issues, and confirmation of the individual's willingness to participate (Mertens, 2010). The researcher then moved on to the semi-structured interview questions (see Appendix N). The initial interview questions were straightforward and transparent to allow for rapport to be built between the researcher and the participant, in addition to assisting the participant in becoming acclimated to the interview structure (e.g., "Tell me about some of your favorite music."; "What's the best concert you ever went to and why?"; "How did you first get into music?"; "Tell me a little bit about your favorite musical artists." and "What drew you to them?"). The researcher then asked about any songs or song lyrics that the participant brought to the interview. The participant was asked to play a segment of a song or read the lyrics. The researcher then inquired about any possible special meaning it held for the participant and explored what about the music/song lyrics are of particular interest. After this discussion, the researcher then progressed through the interview and inquired about the participant's history of music listening (e.g., "How long have you been listening to this type of music"; "What were your musical preferences like during high school?"), reasons for listening to music (e.g., "What is it about these artists and/or songs that make them your favorite?" "Did music ever help you during any particularly difficult situations?"), effects of music on mood ("What role do you think music plays when it comes to your mood?"), past depressive symptoms or self-harm behavior (e.g.,

"Have you ever experienced prolonged periods of feeling down, sad, or depressed?" "Have you ever self-harmed?"), negative attention received because of music preferences ("Have you ever received negative attention from peers or others based on your choice of music or how you looked?"), associations between music preference and aspects of identity (e.g., "How would you describe your individual style?" "Do you think there is a relationship between music and fashion?" "What role do you think music has played in your development as a female?"), peer relationships ("How do you think your friends influenced your music choices?"), and involvement in music-related activities (e.g., "Do you belong to an online community in which music plays a role" "Does music/lyrics play a role in your blog?"). As needed, queries or follow-up questions such as "What do you think about that?", "Can you tell me more about that", or "Could you give an example of that?" (Mertens, 2010, pp. 242-243) were asked. The researcher utilized an end-script for the interview (see Appendix O) to debrief with the participant and assess for any possible safety concerns. The researcher again presented the participant with resources (see Appendix P) to utilize if necessary. At the end of the interview process, the participants were given research compensation in the form of a $20 iTunes gift card as a token of appreciation for participation.

Chapter 4: Results

Data Analysis Process

Semi-structured interviews comprised the data collection method employed in this study. After the interviews were completed and transcribed, they were read through a number of times to gain an understanding of the subjective experience of each participant. During the initial stage of reviewing the data, margin notes were made as a means to identify the ideas and concepts in the text. Afterwards, these notes were given descriptive labels that functioned as preliminary codes for potential patterns and themes (i.e., meaning units). There was no interpretation of these themes done at this point; however, the preliminary codes operated as a way to identify patterns of data or themes, which made it possible to organize similar pieces of raw data together. The data was read through several times until all potential coding possibilities had been rendered.

Subsequently, after establishing the codes and classifying the raw data, thematic analysis was conducted in order to distinguish the core meaning and significance from the data (Patton, 2002). During this stage of psychological reflection, the researcher attended to what the expressions in each meaning unit revealed about the psychological processes being studied (Wertz et al., 2011). Emergent themes were listed on a sheet of paper, during which the researcher looked for connecting themes (Smith, 2003). The researcher continued with this process of analytical and theoretical ordering, noting clusters of themes, and those that clustered into major thematic concepts. Data was analyzed to extract core themes, patterns, and unique demonstrations or expressions of themes and concepts within cases.

A within case analysis was followed by between-case analysis, which was accomplished by conducting thematic analysis across the individual cases (Creswell, 2007). Between-case

analysis allows for systemic comparison of cases, highlighting similarities and differences, while also maintaining the strength of each individual case (Patton, 2002). This included organizing the data into themes that emerged from the within-case phenomenological analysis, as well as utilizing two frameworks from the literature to define additional themes. Specifically considered were the seven emergent regulatory strategies for music identified by Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007; i.e., entertainment, revival, strong sensation, diversion, discharge, mental work, and solace) and the three coping mechanisms outlined by Miranda and Claes (2009): problem-focused, emotion-focused, and avoidance/disengagement. This process began by gathering and reducing the data from individual participants; in order to distinguish the individuals during the cross-case analysis, the data was color-coded. The thematic coding process and analysis was organized using the same process as that for within-case analysis. The researcher analyzed the themes in an effort to interpret the material and develop conclusions drawn from the process and content.

Description of Participants

The sample for this study consisted of nine young women between the ages of 18 and 21 who live in the Los Angeles area. Each of the participants reported that they are current listeners of music that is typically considered part of the emo genre (e.g., pop-punk, alternative rock, hardcore) and that they have been listening for at least a one-year period. All participants have been, at some point in their lives, labeled emo by an external source. In addition, each of the participants identified music as an important part of their lives. Table 1 presents the demographics of the participants. Based on responses to items on the Background Questionnaire, Table 2 presents participants' current preferred music genres, preferred artists/bands, songs listened to during times of stress or difficulty, and the age at which they

joined their current music community (i.e., when they first began to listen to current preferred music). A brief descriptive profile of each participant will be presented.

Table 1

Participant Background Information

Participant	Age	Ethnicity/Cultural Background	Time Spent Listening to Music Per Day	Music Utilized When Stressed or Upset?
101	21	Hispanic/Latino/Chicano White	2-4 hours	Yes
102	20	Hispanic/Latino/Chicano	1-2 hours	Yes
103	20	White	2-4 hours	Yes
104	21	White	1-2 hours	Yes
105	18	African-American Asian/Pacific Islander White	4+ hours	Yes
106	21	Hispanic/Latino/Chicano	4+ hours	Yes
107	20	White	2-4 hours	Yes
108	21	Hispanic/Latino/Chicano	4+ hours	Yes
109	21	White	2-4 hours	Yes

Participant Profiles

Participant 101. Participant 101 is a 21-year-old college student who identifies as bi-racial, specifically, Hispanic and Caucasian. She reported that her parents introduced her to music at a young age, particularly alternative rock via the radio music station KROQ. She reported becoming involved in the emo subculture during middle school. She described having a difficult time fitting in at that time, and was attracted to *the scene* (an analogous term for the emo subculture) because it was a way of not being a part of the mainstream while still belonging to a subset of a community. Participant 101 went on to say that in high school her music tastes began to expand and that currently, she has an eclectic taste in music, which includes, but is not limited to, alternative rock. Participant 101 is a sibling of another participant in the study, Participant 104.

Participant 102. Participant 102 is a 20-year-old college student who identifies as Hispanic. Currently, she is studying music and is also involved in a band, for which she is the lead singer. She reported that she grew up listening to her mother's CDs, which was mainly 70s disco. It wasn't until sixth grade that she began to listen to hard rock, during which she described herself dying her hair black, wearing band shirts or corsets, putting on makeup, and getting piercings as a way of separating herself from others. Participant 102 has been listening to music she classifies as different subsets of rock since middle school, though now includes pop and some rap into what she listens to.

Participant 103. Participant 103 is a 20-year-old college student who identifies as Caucasian. Currently, she is studying art at a local university. She reported that music has always been a part of her life since as far back as she can remember, as she described her family constantly playing it in the household. With regard to rock, she credits her mother as introducing her to Green Day, as she would often buy concert tickets and take Participant 103 to shows. Her younger brother became involved in a heavy metal band when she was 14, which is what prompted her to listen to that genre of music. Currently, she has started listening to classic rock, though she still acknowledged listening to alternative rock and heavy metal.

Participant 104. Participant 104 is a 21-year-old college student who identifies as Caucasian. Currently, she is studying business and is a track-and-field athlete at a local university. She reported that her parents introduced her to music at a young age, particularly alternative rock via the radio music station KROQ. She reported listening to hard rock throughout middle school and high school, but also acknowledged listening to other genres of music, such as pop and hip-hop. Currently, while she still listens to alternative rock, she

described leaning more towards upbeat, pop and hip-hop. Participant 104 is a sibling of another participant, Participant 101.

Participant 105. Participant 105 is an 18-year-old college student who identifies as multi-racial, specifically, African-American, Caucasian, and Asian. She reported being introduced to rock from a "Kid's Rock" CD she had when she was younger. She described being drawn to Green Day and from there expanding to other bands, such as Panic At the Disco and Black Veil Brides. Participant 105 described listening to this music since at least the age of 14 to the present day, though currently she has expanded her music tastes to include Korean Pop.

Participant 106. Participant 106 is a 21-year-old college student who identifies as Hispanic. She reported currently studying marine biology at a local university. Participant 106 described being introduced to music by her first boyfriend when she was 16. She stated she enjoyed listening to several different types of rock, such as ska, alternative rock, metal, and punk. Participant 106 noted that while she still enjoys these types of music, currently she has also been listening to reggae.

Participant 107. Participant 107 is a 20 year-old college student who identifies as Caucasian. She reported being introduced to music by her older brother when she was 11 years old. She described enjoying bands such as HIM and other hard rock early on, and she began wearing band shirts and clothes consistent with punk rock or emo fashion. However, around 10th grade, she acknowledged being persuaded by those around her to dress more like the main stream and began to listen to music her friends liked, specifically, rap and R&B. Participant 107 reported that she returned to listening to rock when she was stressed out with finals and turned to this music as a way of coping with the stress. She reported that she continues to listen to rock music, which she categorized as hardcore, posthardcore, alternative rock, and metal.

Participant 108. Participant 108 is a 21-year-old college student who identifies as Hispanic. She reported currently studying biology at a university and aspires to work towards a career in medicine and ultimately become a pediatrician. She stated that her boyfriend first introduced her to rock music at the age of 13. Participant 108 described becoming involved in the emo subculture at this time; however, she had a difficult time fitting in due to negative attention she received, and began to listen and dress to music deemed more acceptable to her friends when entering high school. Towards the end of high school, she became more comfortable in expressing herself and returned to listening to rock music and wearing band shirts and darker clothing. At present, she continues to listen to rock, specifically, punk, alternative, metal, hardcore, and other similar types of music.

Participant 109. Participant 109 is a 21-year-old college student at a local university who identifies as Caucasian. She described herself as an artist, and creates comic books that she sells online, one of which centers around one of her favorite bands, which she is currently working with. She reported first becoming drawn to rock music at the age of 13 during Halloween, when she was drawn to a friend's ring tone. Participant 108 stated that she asked her friend about the song she was using as her ring tone, and from there went on to discover more bands in that genre, of which she continues to listen to. She reported that she identifies as belonging to the Goth subculture, though has been labeled by others as emo.

Research Questions and Emergent Themes

After thorough review of the interview data, a number of themes emerged relevant to ' emo' music, and how it relates to emotion and/or mood regulation, identity development, and self-concepts in young adult females. Each of the five research questions will be addressed by illustrating the data that informs each question. Quotes that demonstrate the emergent themes

were obtained from each interview. The quotes shown are a verbatim transcription from the

audio taped interviews.

Table 2

Participants' Music Preferences

Participant	Preferred Genres (Current)	Preferred Artists/ Bands	Songs Listened To During Periods of Stress/ Distress	Age (When joined community)
101	Alternative Rock Hip-Hop	Tegan and Sarah Girl in a Coma Janelle Monae	Cold War- Janelle Monae I- Kendrick Lamar	17*
102	Rock Post-Hardcore Pop-Punk Classic Rock	The Used Falling In Reverse My Chemical Romance	I Caught Fire-The Used Famous Last Words-MCR Raised by Wolves- Falling in Reverse	12
103	Classic Rock Alternative Rock Metal	Led Zeppelin Avenged Sevenfold A Day to Remember	Afterlife- Avenged Sevenfold Make It Stop-Rise Against Shattering the Skies Above- Trivium	14
104	R&B Hip-Hop Pop	System of a Down Chris Brown Fall Out Boy	Chop Suey-System of a Down Shake It Off- Taylor Swift	10
105	Alternative Rock Punk Rock Korean Pop	Green Day Panic At The Disco Fall Out Boy	Human-The Killers All Green Day Black Pearl-EXO	14
106	Ska Punk Metal	Social Distortion Sublime Black Flag	Poison Heart-Ramones Angels Wings-Social Distortion Closer to the Sun-Slightly Stoopid	16
107	Post Hardcore Alternative Rock Metal	letlive. I The Mighty HIM AFI	Muther-letlive. When Love and Death Embrace- HIM	11
108	Punk Rock Pop Rock Metal Post Hardcore	Green Day letlive. Memphis Mayfire My Chemical Romance	Virgin Dirt-letlive. The Victim-Memphis Mayfire Sleep-MCR	13
109	Post-Punk Industrial Goth Pirate Metal Punk	Creature Feature Voltaire The Creepshow	Count to Ten-Thoushaltnot Almost Human- Voltaire Fuck Off- Reel Big Fish	13

Research Question 1: What patterns and themes emerge in young adult females associated with the emo subculture (either by self or others) with respect to their music listening practices? Based on the analytic strategy previously described, themes were identified both within and across participants. Table 3 displays the themes that emerged during the analysis of all participants. A definition for each theme is provided. The information gathered from the themes was used to identify patterns and derive conclusions relevant to music and its effects on the individual. It is important to note that the emergent themes are not exclusive to one another, but integrate relationships that influence each other, which will become apparent in the subsequent research questions.

Table 3

Themes and Sub-Themes

Major Theme	Sub-theme	Definition
Themes Related to Mood	Emotion Related Coping	A method of utilizing music as a means to improve one's mood and/or decrease negative emotions.
	Emotional Trigger	Sudden, powerful feelings of emotion activated as a result of listening to music.
	Catharsis	Using music as an emotional release
	Empowerment and Hope	The ability to move forward as a result of the music. Music promotes strength, motivation, and serves as a catalyst for change.
Themes Related to Self	Personal Connection	Connecting and/or relating to a song, artist, or lyrics based on personal emotions and experiences.
	Accepted and Understood	Music as a source of affirmation and empathy; The individual recognizes that she and her emotions are seen and known.
Themes Related to Others	Negative Attention	Antagonistic treatment by others because of individual's association with a type of music or music community.
	Social Bonds and Community	Music as a means of creating social bonds, friendships, or relationships. The perception of sharing similarities with others, and the feeling of belonging or being a part of something larger.

Themes related to mood.

Emotion related coping. In a subjective sense, coping skills are strategies an individual can utilize to lessen psychological stress, a way to decrease negative emotions and improve mood. After conducting the thematic analysis across participants, the following statements summarize the varying approaches and methods of emo music as an emotion related coping method, as well as their understanding of how it contributed to either improve their mood and/or decrease psychological stress. Participant 104 recognized the important impact music had on her mood:

> It has a big role in my mood when my mood is not what I want it to be. When my mood is upset or angry, I'd listen to more of a positive message, upbeat song, or listen to stabilizing music.

Similarly, Participant 109 shared that it helped her through periods of depression: "I was pretty depressed in high school, and then music kind of got me out of that funk. Dark Cabaret was pretty poppy and happy, and I was becoming happy listening to it." Participant 105 likened it to therapy:

> It's kind of like, "Why are you here?" "Why are you feeling this way?" It's kind of like a self-psychiatrist. You don't have to be like, "Life sucks right now." You don't have to have a one sided conversation with a psychiatrist that isn't there. You can be like, "Music, you're chillin' me right now, it's getting better. Just, like, helping me. It's a music therapy drug.

Participant 103 noted that, regardless of the aggressive nature of the music, she saw music as a way to relax:

> I mean, it's definitely an angry song, but it's definitely one of the most powerful songs that I have in my iPod—and it's oddly calming to me. Like, people look at me oddly when I listen to Metallica and Trivium. I kind of sit there and go "Ahhh," because it's relaxing to me, and people stare at me, "This is relaxing to you?" And it is.

Similarly, Participant 107 turned to music when feeling stressed, and through listening to this music, was able to achieve a sense of calm:

Participant: When I was stressed out, I had CDs sitting on my shelf (because I still buy CDs because I'm old school), and something drew me to that CD. I was like, "Let me play it." And I did.

Interviewer: What were you stressed about at that time?

Participant: Finals. It was the end of the semester. Finals… everything was crazy. So I listened to that, and it calmed me down.

Participant 108 noted that what the bands were saying had a positive effect on her mood: "I'm not sure, even though the music is kind of depressing at times, just hearing the messages that the bands have made me feel better."

Some participants recognized that music could also function as a type of distraction from unpleasant or unwanted feelings. Participant 106 shared:

Participant: It just kills the silence and then you're there, listening to something that's meaningful and it gets you thinking, and it keeps your thoughts going, and like your mind is not focused on everything that's here…It kind of gives you something else other than here.

Interviewer: Like a different perspective?

Participant: Yeah, kind of like…it does make you think of something else, and it distracts you, it distracts you in a good way, not in a way that you're like retarded—because sometimes you can watch videos on YouTube and they are so stupid…I mean, you don't want to do that all the time—and yeah, music is great.

Perhaps the most existential of responses came from Participant 109, who spoke of the importance of music, and how it could provide comfort, a distraction, and a new understanding:

I don't know, as a kid I was always picked on, but when I would listen to this kind of music, I would feel comfortable. It felt like Halloween night, it would bring me back to that and it would make me feel comfortable and at home listening to it, and that I could kind of escape from the world with it. That was with the dark cabaret genre, and then with the post-punk industrial, it felt like…it was something new, but something that was also at the same time old, sort of like seeing the cosmos for the first time. It's old, but it's everything. Seeing things, like, in new ways.

Interestingly, Participant 101 acknowledged that while emo music did help improve her mood, it also had the opposite effect:

It made me feel better usually when I played happy music, which now I do that. Or, it helped me, like, maybe talking about the same kind of situation—not that that would happen too often—and I'll be relating to it, just you know, someone else going through it. But then it made me feel worse sometimes, depends on my overall mood I guess, I don't know how to describe it.

Participant 101 consistently maintained that emo music was akin to a "double edged sword," and while it could improve one's mood, it also often made it worse. She often made this connection unprompted, while many of the other participants only acknowledged this possibility when asked directly. However, several of the participants did identify emo music functioning as an emotional trigger, which emerged as a prominent sub-theme.

Emotional trigger. For the purposes of this study, an emotional trigger was defined as a sudden, powerful feeling of emotion activated as a result of listening to music. As mentioned above, Participant 101 noted that even though emo music had the power to help, to be utilized as a coping skill and improve mood, it could also at times spark emotions, memories, evoke negative feelings and worsen one's mood. Participant 102 shared that at times even the same song could have different effects on how she was feeling:

Yeah, because there are songs like, The Red Hot Chili Peppers or something…you know, that first song—that song is just so beautiful, and it's like yeah, hell yeah! Sometimes stuff like that when I 'm in a really bad mood, or sometimes *even the same song* can put me in a bad mood. It just depends on where I am emotionally; a lot has to do with internal.

A number of participants acknowledged that they avoided certain emo songs or bands because they were aware of how this music could trigger negative feelings. Participant 103 identified the band Simple Plan as one she currently avoids because she doesn't "want to be depressed" while Participant 106 spoke about abstaining music that she believed would put her in a bad mood. She stated, "If it's something that's reminding me of something bad, and I am feeling happy, I'd definitely avoid it, because I don't want to bounce back into it." Participant

109 expressed a similar sentiment when she described refraining from listening to certain songs when in a positive space because of the effect they could have. She stated, "If I'm in a good mood, I'm usually not going to be listening to 'Almost Human' because that song usually makes me kind of sad." Participant 105 acknowledged that certain songs had the power to evoke negative emotions, even in cases when she could not identify with the emotions being expressed. She reported:

> I can't do that, it makes me feel so bad. I like being happy and smiley! And if I purposefully listen to it, I'll be in a mood for the next two days. Like, "Why is the sky blue? So Sad." It just won't make sense to me. I can't really do that. I haven't been in a bad break up, so I can't listen to break up songs, because it doesn't make you feel better. It's like going out and getting drunk when you feel bad, it doesn't make you feel better…It makes you feel better for like five minutes and then you start thinking, "Why did you break up with me? Why am I so angry that he broke up with me? Why am I like this?"

Some participants recognized that despite the fact that, at times, emo music had the power to activate strong feelings of sadness or anger, it could also be a healing experience during these times. Participant 107 stated:

> I think even though it can sometimes evoke the negative emotions in me, I think afterwards it gives me a calming sense. It brings me back together. Yoga used to do that for me, when I was stressed out I would do Yoga; but now music does that for me. When I'm upset, I listen to a song. I'll get all emotional and let out those emotions. It's like hitting the reset button.

Participant 107 acknowledged that music can evoke negative feelings, but she also pointed to another central sub-theme related to mood, that of catharsis and the function that it serves.

Catharsis. Catharsis, in this study, was defined as emotional release; more specifically, music as a means to such a release. A number of participants recognized the affect of emo music as a type of conduit to something within themselves. Participant 106 reflected, "You let out a lot, " while Participant 103 felt that, "Just something about it… it's a release of energy in a way."

Participant 102 described it not only as a release for emotions, but also, it seems, as a release of the self. She stated:

> Well at that point I was still very angry and blamed the other person. So it just kind of helps channel my anger even though my anger didn't go anywhere, it channeled off into somewhere else. It was kind of for me to scream into my pillow, and for me to get sucked up into the void.

Of all the participants, Participant 107 was the most aware of this particular function of emo music. She made several references to utilizing music as a "cathartic emotional release" and "Sometimes to just sit and cry, I can't. So with the song, the song makes me cry." She stated:

> There is one by HIM called "Sleep Walking Past Hope," and for me I like song titles that represent something…just the song itself. When I listen to "Sleep Walking Past Hope," sometimes you are just like lost…lost in a daze, maybe you lost hope in a situation. Again my music is very cathartic to me. So it brings out those emotions and just lets me breathe.

Participant 108 shared a similar sentiment, noting "I think it let's me cry it out and puts me back up." Therefore, it is not just that emo music allows for such a release of emotions, but that afterwards, many of these young women reported that they felt better. As Participant 109 shared, "It's a way to vent. I think when I listen to angry music when I'm angry; it's kind of like venting. With sadness it lets you get it out. It's like having a good cry."

Empowerment and hope. The sub-themes of empowerment and hope are defined as the ability to move forward as a result of the music. Music promotes strength, motivation, and serves as a catalyst for change. A number of participants were able to connect to such a level where not only did they feel accepted, but they were ultimately able to gain courage from that acceptance and move forward. Both participants 107 and 108 directly stated that they felt "empowered" after listening to certain emo songs, while 109 alluded to music giving her the courage to move past difficult situations, as she shared, "I could get through it." Participant 102 stated:

Everything that I associated with the scene—the punk, the "You don't understand me, I am stronger, blah blah blah"—that as a young insecure teenager was something that I really needed to find strength. And that's something that helped me as an adult, even though I don't rely so much on that anymore. It's something I accredit to me being a strong individual.

Participant 102 associated her current strength as an individual to the strength she found via music in her adolescence. Similarly, Participant 105 recognized that while she was an adolescent certain doors were closed to her, at this stage she could be empowered by the music's message to advocate for change. She reported:

Back then, you don't really care what you are listening to, you don't really care about the lyrics because you are fourteen, and it's not like you can go out and vote for new authority or anything. You can't say "eff you" to the establishment because you are fourteen. And now, I'm like "*I could do that*." I could.

Participant 108 in particular consistently asserted that it was via emo music and its messages of hope and encouragement that she was able to find strength and move forward. She shared:

There's this line in the song, 'Crash into my rigid back/ You'll see that I don't bend.' The way that I relate to it is that in the past a lot of people have tried to put me down for the things I like, or the things I like to pursue, and it kind of makes it seem like no matter how hard you try, you can't break me.

Participant 108 reflected that the messages she received from music provided a source of hope:
Earlier I said that one line kinda hit home. Some people in the past have always tried to put me down because of what I like and with Memphis Mayfire songs—and not just that song, but a lot of their songs also—I can relate certain situations to them, even towards people or the situation in general. And then, with My Chemical Romance songs, not only does it kind of target me, but I can also, like . . . I think of them is "Hanging High," there's parts in that song, it's like telling somebody else "Don't give up. Keep going," kind of thing.

Themes related to self.

Personal connection. A personal connection is defined as a way of relating and/or connecting to a song, artist, or lyrics based on personal emotions and experiences. Every participant noted that they felt as if one of the main aspects behind their affinity for emo music, whether current or during adolescence, was that they felt a sense of personal connection.

Participant 101 noted that the music was "Something that I can relate to," as did Participant 108

when she said, "I can relate certain situations to them [songs], even towards people or the

situation in general," while 102 stated, "I identify with that," referring to what the song was

speaking to. Participant 109 described the music she listened to as "familiar" and "it makes you

feel sort of at home with it," while 104 simply stated being able to "relate to those feelings."

Participant 107 stated:

> I think it's my connection to the song, if I can't connect to a song I might like it . . .but I won't listen to it as much. When I can make some kind of an emotional connection, if it makes me cry, if it gives me chills, makes me happy, I tend to like the song better. I remember the song more. So that emotional connection.

A number of the participants admitted that, at times, they purposefully listened to music they

considered sad or that would put them in a down mood. Participant 106 explained:

> When you are sad, and let's say you are going through some break up, and you listen to a song and it explains how you feel, and the song is still depressing, and the song is complaining too, I think…with you, and then you keep listening to it. It doesn't make you feel better, but it helps you relate, "Yeah, like. . . yeah!" You relate to the song, and yeah it's better.

Participant 103 expressed a similar sentiment. She stated:

> Yeah, I think there have been times when I've done that, where I've been in a down mood and I just listened to sad songs, because I think it's sometimes nice to hear something that you can relate to, even if it doesn't make you feel better, you can relate to it…and sometimes it's a way to get emotions out there that you might be having a hard time expressing without music.

Some participants described being able to feel connected to the artists' themselves, as Participant

107 noted when she said, "You feel like you are having a conversation with the artist even

though they are not even there." Participant 105 described a mutual relationship existing between

the listener and the artist, a connection manifested via this relationship, particularly during a

concert. She stated, "Yeah, they engage with you, and they are not just up there singing—all

boring and sad. And they make you feel like you are actually helping them and they are actually

helping you, there's a relationship." She also acknowledged that this connection went further, and could be felt when she was on her own, in need of someone to be there for her. She stated:

> My father and I had a strange relationship, it wasn't terrible . . .but he was . . .it was just a person paying rent and stuff. So we wouldn't really talk much and I'd be like, "I'm going to my room, make some friends with my music." You don't feel so *alone* when you listen to music, even if you *are* alone listening to music, you don't *feel* alone. I won't say that they are singing to you, but they are singing for you—there's a relationship. You can't go out and make a record label about all of your sad feelings and all of your happy feelings, so they do it for you.

Participant 105 touches not only on that sense of a connection to a kindred spirit, but on music's ability to express what one cannot, that sense of being understood, which is part of the next sub-theme.

> *Accepted and understood.* The sub-theme of being accepted and understood was defined

as music being seen as a source of affirmation and empathy. The individual recognizes that she and her emotions are seen and known. It goes beyond a personal connection, such that the listener feels validated in her emotions, it is okay to feel what she feels. Participant 103 demonstrates the progression. She stated:

> I enjoyed listening to it [music] at times, at times it definitely improved my mood . . . sometimes it was just something to relate to, like being stressed out about school. It was nice to hear to hear a song that was . . . that sort of . . .it wasn't about stress, but it was sort of similar, so it was like "Okay, my feelings are valid, me feelings are real." That sort of thing.

Participant 109 shared how music helped her see that others were going through similar situations as she was, and with that knowledge she felt understood and comforted. She stated:

> Participant: Dark Cabaret kind of made me think about other things other than the down side of life. And Post Punk Industrial I got into a little bit of it in high school, before I went to college, but post punk industrial made me feel like other people were going through the same thing and that I could get through it.
>
> Researcher: So one it's like a distraction and the other one is more of a. . . ?

> Participant: It's like talking to someone who has the same problem as you and being comforted by it.

Participant 102 felt that that sense of acceptance when gathered with other like-minded individuals to enjoy a favored artist at a concert. She felt, "What I am doing makes sense—these people understand where I am coming from." Participant 107 shared that she experienced that sense of understanding via music during adolescence, though admitted that it came when she sought out songs that reflected the sadness she was experiencing. She stated:

> I think with the whole teen angst kind of thing, I misunderstood stuff like that. I used to, when I was younger, listen to My Chemical Romance and Fall Out Boy, and they would make me feel that way. I would listen to it and be like "Yeah, they get me. They *understand* what I am going through."

Participant 108 explained that some of the music she listened to affirmed her family's messages of self-acceptance, and promoted a sense of reassurance and positivity. She described:

> Some of the songs that I would listen to would definitely kind of reassure me of like what my parents were saying. There were a lot of songs they touched on the fact that you can't live your life on someone else's expectations.

Participant 108's quote reflects not only the feeling of being accepted, but alludes to a growing strength and determination to live on her own terms, which ties back to the sub-theme of empowerment and hope.

Themes related to others.

Negative attention. For the purposes of this study, negative attention was defined as antagonistic treatment from others because of individual's association with a type of music or music community. Every young woman in this study acknowledged having received negative attention from others at one point in their life, whether it was peers, family, or strangers, because of the music they listened to or the way they were dressed. Participant 106 admitted that in her past she remembered "people freaking out," while Participant 101 shared that in middle school

she was often called emo as "some sort of insult." Participant 105 reported that in high school

her peers would tease her and say, "Oh you're emo, you're like a Satanist." Participant 109

acknowledged that she still gets negative attention from strangers, who often call her "Devil's

Spawn" and "Satanist." Asked how she felt about having received this negative attention,

Participant 102 stated, "I hated it, absolutely hated it. They just harassed me." She went on to

say:

> It was like, obnoxious and rude. And made me so mad to the point I would just shut
> down. So you know what? You don't get that opportunity to take the time to know me.
> Why should I even try to reciprocate, try to give you anything in return when you are
> setting the stage for something awful? So why?

Emo often gets stereotyped as a subculture that is associated with self-harm, as is evident by the

type of attention Participant 103 received:

> A lot of people assumed that I was cutting myself. At the same time I was trying to lose
> weight, so people assumed that I was bulimic and anorexic, when I was actually working
> out and eating healthier. But they just assumed because I wore black, and because I
> listened to that music, clearly I was harming myself instead of being healthy.

Participant 104 reported a similar experience:

> I think it's weird, I don't know how it came about. Black is a cool color to wear, you
> don't have to be emo to wear black, because in middle school, I was like 'Those people
> look cool wearing black, I want to wear black.' So I wore black, and people were saying
> emo. I was like 'What? I'm just wearing black?'

She went on to say that she wondered at that point "Why people are so mean?" Many of these

young women acknowledged finding themselves confused and frustrated with the type of

attention they received. Participant 107 expressed:

> It made me sad. I was bullied growing up. I was chunky. I was . . .whatever . . . they
> wanted to pick on me, they picked on me. On top of that, they picked on my music
> choice, and I was like, "Can we all grow up? I have never bullied anybody. Can you grow
> up?"

As a result of this unwanted attention, some participants ended up feeling alone and distinctly different. Participant 108 explained feeling this way and ultimately believing that she had to change herself in order to be accepted:

> It almost made me feel like I wasn't accepted or I was an outsider, kinda like a lone wolf in a sense. I've only had a small handful of friends who listen to the same music that I do, and recently I feel that people are more accepting of the kind of music that I listen to. But, back then in like middle school and high school I was almost afraid to let people know who I was, like the things I listen to, the way I dress. And there was a period of time when I was changing myself so that I could feel more accepted, especially after my ex-boyfriend said that I dressed "too dark"—I started wearing different kinds of clothes, kinda changing my style, even though I wasn't necessarily comfortable with it, but I felt like "Oh, people will like me more."

Social bonds and community. The final sub-theme that was identified was that of social bonds and community. This was defined as utilizing music as a means of creating social bonds, friendships, or relationships. Through music, six out of the nine women acknowledged that they were able to find a community, which is the perception of sharing similarities with others, and the feeling of belonging or being a part of something larger. Participant 105 described this feeling as being "part of a whole," while 107 felt, "Everybody is unity" and acknowledged this "big sense of community," particularly at a concert. Participant 103 agreed that she was able to bond with others over music, while 102 described the comfort of being around other like-minded individuals, as she said, "We were all able to just feel like we are not being judged." These women who had experienced so much negative attention largely because of the music they listened to, where able to find that sense of community through music, and bond with others who could understand. Participant 108 shared, "Everyone goes through the same journey when listening to these bands, and we are all there [concert] for the same reason —just to be together and listen to that music." Participant 109 added a similar sentiment:

> A lot of people are accepting of other people, like they know what it's like to get bullied and they don't want to bully you. And also, they have similar interests; like, I love the

Halloween monster movies and this kind of music, and they are based around this kind of music.

Participant 102, as a musical artist herself, has been on both sides of the lens. She speaks to the affirmation received from others in this community, but also of the coming together of similar people, in harmony:

> When you are at a concert, you are with many like-minded individuals. You come together and celebrate that artist, honoring them, singing along to them, pumping your fist. And especially being on the artist's side, seeing that reciprocated is really awesome. It makes you feel like "Okay, what I am doing makes sense—these people understand where I am coming from."

Research Question 2: How does music preference influence identity development in young females associated with the emo subculture? Identity in itself is unique, personal to each individual. Participant 102 noted,

> There are so many different factors that play into what it means to be a part of the punk scene or rock scene, or how that person develops as a person, and where they've come from and what kind of a person they were before that.

Regardless, some commonalities amongst some of the participants did arise. For example, four participants acknowledged having experienced difficult situations in early adolescence, difficult to the point where they felt the need to change themselves in some way. Participant 101 expressed:

> In, like, seventh grade, that's when I started saying "I need to start fitting in," you know, and it was that kind of time—puberty—so that was when I started trying to dress normal. But that didn't work out so well, I had no idea what that was like. And then, in eighth grade I was like, "Screw that! Let me be seen." Which is the opposite of normal.

She felt uncomfortable being "normal," but still wanted to belong, so she turned to the scene (emo) community as a middle ground, "It was alternative, but it wasn't like Goth—I think it was popular even though it was technically like—what's it called—anti-mainstream? Like I thought it was that." Participant 102 shared a similar sentiment; "This was a way for me to give myself

an edge to kind of not be like most of the other people." Though Participant 107 acknowledged experiencing problems with peers in adolescence, rather than turn to the emo community she felt pressured to change into what she thought her friends would accept. She shared,

> When I was eleven, I did listen to a lot of this music. I would wear band t-shirts to school, everybody thought I was weird, that I was punk rock or emo. And I think around tenth grade in high school, I just started to fall into that peer pressure of 'Oh, that's not cool'—like most kids do. And so I started to listen to what my friends were listening to, even though it was terrible.

Participant 108 expressed a similar sentiment, which was mentioned in previous sections, where she felt she had to change herself in order to be more accepted by others. She stated:

> I started hiding myself . . . kind of . . .almost losing my whole identity just to focus on someone else's that they placed for me. Then, once it got to the point where I was fed up with it, I was like, 'I can't take this anymore.' And then when I had my parents help me realize that you can be who you want, people are going to hate you, people are going to love you, but you can't live your life on someone else's expectations, then that's when I started to regain myself.

> Although Participant 109 did not acknowledge changing as a result to fit in, her bullying history was perhaps the most extreme of all the young women interviewed. She shared a number of experiences where she suffered both verbal and physical aggression by her peers, and was the only participant who reported still receiving negative attention, namely from strangers. She described her youth by explaining,

> I was kind of a freak in high school. Other kinds didn't . . . I was like . . . other kids did not like me ever since elementary school because I was always kind of quiet, kept to myself. I was just, like, ignored by everybody.

She went on to share that she was able to build social bonds based on the music she listened to. She explained, "It kind of introduced me to other people who liked the same thing . . . kind of let me know that I'm not a freak." It was through these bonds built through music that she, and two other participants, was able to become a bit more comfortable with her self. Participant 109 also stated, "It [music] got me more in to the underground subcultures and communities. It made me

feel a bit more happy with my appearance and interacting" and "It's kind of let me out of my box a bit more. I'm a lot more confident and eager to talk to people because of it." Participant 107 shared a similar experience:

> Participant: I think it's where my personality comes from. Because before, I was really shy, there was the whole identity finding and searching, you don't really know who you are. I feel like music kind of brought that out, maybe because I can go to shows and I can connect with people, so I feel like it gave me something to bond with—not even a real object—the sense of community. So it helped bring out that personality, "Hey this is who I am, these people aren't going to judge me." And it translated to my whole life, because I ended up, "Hey they're not going to judge me, so why should I care if this person judges me, because I have those people." So it was like, "Who cares?" And my personality came out, because I met people who were like me, because before I didn't, and before I was like, "I'm all alone, I'm confused."
>
> Interviewer: The sense of community helped you also—
>
> Participant: The sense of community, even growing up in high school, bands used to have on their sites forums and you could meet other people. So you could be like, "Hey, there's other people like me out there." I'm not as "weird" as we think growing up. Like "Hey I don't have anybody, there's nobody like me." You find all those people, and you're like "Hey, I'm not one fish in this empty lagoon, there's actually more."

Similarly, Participant 108 described her community as individuals who bonded based on a shared experience, "We all gravitate towards these bands because there is something that they offered us." However, unlike the previous two participants, Participant 108 described entering into a community once she began to accept herself,

> End of high school, I started meeting more people when I started not caring about what other people thought. It started like, people were coming out of the woodwork, like, "Hey, hi, how are you?" They started coming out and were being accepting like showing me, "Hey, it's okay."

She went on to say that music has "Always been a big part of me becoming who I am," and: It has helped me in opening up and going and talking to people more often. Also me becoming more independent, and focusing on what I want and where my goals are at and how I'm going to get there." Participant 105 described music as an important piece of her identity. She stated:

Your clothes you take a certain way, your makeup you take a certain way, your life you take in a certain way. What you think of your life isn't what someone else thinks, and music is part of your life, part of your identity. You either have to own it and accept that you are weird and are out there, or you confirm. That's just the way it is. You can't do both.

Research Question 3: In what ways do emerging adult females utilize music recognized as emo with regard to emotion or mood regulation? Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) examined the role of music in adolescents' mood regulation and found seven emergent regulatory strategies that reflected patterns of employing music in order to satisfy mood-regulated goals and needs. These included: entertainment, revival, strong sensation, diversion, discharge, mental work, and solace. A number of the themes regarding mood and emotion regulation identified within the current study overlap with the regulatory strategies described in the aforementioned study. The most prominent overlap occurred within the strategies of diversion, discharge, mental work, and solace. See Tables 4 and 5.

Table 4

Seven Regulatory Strategies

Regulatory Strategy	Typical Mood Before	Typical Musical Activity	Typical Changes in Mood
Entertainment	No specific moods, feeling ok, sometimes boredom	Mainly listening, music is usually in the background	Lifting up spirits, maintaining positive mood
Revival	Stress and treadmill, need for relaxation, need for energy	Mainly listening, but also singing, playing, writing songs, etc.	Feelings of reviving, relaxing, and getting energy
Strong Sensation	No specific moods	Any kind of musical activity, involvement is strong	Intensity and attention become stronger, sometimes thrills
Diversion	Anger, sadness, *depression*, stress, disruptive and annoying thoughts	Listening, singing, playing, music is happy and pleasant	Forgetting about current negative mood
Discharge	Anger, sadness, and *depression*	Mainly listening, sometimes playing, music is aggressive or sad	Music gives form to the expression of current negative mood
Mental Work	Issues that require thinking, like personal conflicts, on mind	Listening, writing songs	Music promotes imagery, insights, clarification and reappraisal of experiences

(continued)

Regulatory Strategy	Typical Mood Before	Typical Musical Activity	Typical Changes in Mood
Solace	Sad and troubled	Listening, attention to lyrics	Feeling understood and comforted

Note. Adapted from "The Role of Music in Adolescents' Mood Regulation," by S. Saarikallio and J. Erkkilä, 2007, *Psychology of Music*, *35*(1), p. 96. Copyright 2007 by the authors.

Table 5

Number of Participants Consistent with Seven Regulatory Strategies

Regulatory Strategies	# of Participants with Responses Consistent with Strategy	Illustrative Quote
Entertainment	3	I mean, now I listen to music sort of to fill silence. When I am on my laptop I have music playing, just to listen to. It definitely has a lot of meaning to me, but now it's a lot about what it sounds like, just enjoying the sounds.
Revival	0	
Strong Sensation	2	It's an environmental thing because when you are alone you can still go crazy, but when you are at a concert, you are with many like-minded individuals—you come together and celebrate that artist, honoring them, singing along to them, pumping your fist.
Diversion	5	I don't know, some songs, even if they are sad…I'll like…just kinda like get into it, and it'll kinda make me. . . forget about whatever I was dealing with it.
Discharge	6	I think even though it can sometimes evoke the negative emotions in me, I think afterwards it gives me a calming sense. It brings me back together. Yoga used to do that for me, when I was stressed out I would do Yoga; but now music does that for me. When I'm upset, I listen to a song. I'll get all emotional and let out those emotions. It's like hitting the reset button.
Mental Work	6	Yeah, it's more introspective, definitely. For me, I like to study the lyrics, listen to lyrics. Obviously I identify with that. I think about how it applies to me, why it applies to me. If they are negative lyrics, see if I struggle with that, why do I still struggle with that. Especially if it's a love song or something, because I've had really bad relationships in the past where I know a lot of it was my fault, but I never really thought about it.
Solace	5	It's like talking to someone who has the same problem as you and being comforted by it.

Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) identified "diversion" as "pleasurable music and enjoyable music activities" that "helped the adolescents to forget about undesired states of mind" (p. 98). Though this did not directly align within a specific theme, diversion can be recognized as a type

of coping skill, and a number of the emerging young females in the study shared that they

utilized distraction as a means of coping with negative moods. Participant 104 shared:

> Participant: I don't know, some songs, even if they are sad…I'll like…just kinda like get into it, and it'll kinda make me. . . forget about whatever I was dealing with it.
>
> Interviewer: So it kinda . . . it offers you like a distraction?
>
> Participant: Yeah.
>
> Participant 106 shared that she listened to music as a way to improve her mood during a

period where she was experiencing loneliness. She stated:

> Participant: It just kills the silence, and then you're there . . . listening to something that's meaningful and it gets you thinking, and it keeps your thoughts going, and then your mind is not like focused on everything that's here . . . kinda gives you something else other than here
>
> Interviewer: Like a different perspective . . . ?
>
> Participant: Yeah, kind of like . . . it does make you think of something else, and it distracts you, and it distracts you in a good way.

Participant 106 appeared to utilize this strategy in particular to cope with unwanted mood states.

During a break-up, away from her family and friends, a time she described as lonely, she

reported:

> Participant: I listened to it all the time, all the time—everything I did. If I wasn't on the phone talking to someone, I'd be listening to music.
>
> Interviewer: How did it help you, if it did?
>
> Participant: I wasn't in reality—
>
> Interviewer: You weren't in reality?
>
> Participant: Because I was listening to music and thinking about the music.

Participant 109 also acknowledged that music allowed her to think of other subjects in order to

improve her mood, "Dark Cabaret kinda made me think about other things other than the down

side of life." Similarly, Participant 101 shared, "It made me feel better usually when I played happy music," while Participant 103 noted, "I would also listen to really, really heavy metal to calm down because . . . I don't know why, it's so oddly calming to me."

Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) defined *discharge* as utilizing music as a way of "expressing and releasing emotions (p. 99). Discharge is a similar to this study's concept of catharsis, which is defined as using music as an emotional release. The researchers identified that the typical mood prior to discharge is that of anger, sadness, and depression, with the change coming in that music gives "form to the expression of current negative mood" (p. 99). As noted earlier, six emergent adult women acknowledged listening to music as a means of emotional release, particularly during times of stress or when they were experiencing anger or sadness. For example, Participant 107 shared:

> Yeah, sometimes if I'm not in the best of moods and maybe something happened to remind me of a night together, some falling out that I had, it will just overwhelm me with those emotions of sadness, and I'll be able to release it, whether if it's through crying, or that feeling of being really, really upset.

In addition, with regard to discharge, Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) also described music as "a reflective surface through which sad emotions could be expressed" (p. 99). Participant 103 frequently alluded to using music as a vehicle for emotional expression, "I think, like I said before, it was hearing somebody express themselves. I was never good at expressing myself when I was down, so hearing somebody else do it was nice, it was a release in a way."

Though there was no explicit association between Saarikallio and Erkkilä's (2007) regulatory strategy of *mental work* and themes described in this study, six of the nine participants reflected experiencing this phenomenon. Mental work is seen as a way to encourage and facilitate "imagery and contemplation" as well as the lyrics' "arousing thoughts, ideas, and

feelings" (p. 100). Participant 105 often made reference to themes present in emo music and how they could inspire reflection, as opposed to more mainstream music. She stated:

> I would say this kind of music makes people think more, because pop songs and other songs like that, they are nursery rhymes. They say the same words ten times, with a catchy melody. But this one, you have to think about why they are saying it. Of course pop mainstream songs have messages, but they are kind of like the same thing. With this one, not everything is about anarchy, not every song is about a break up, so you think about what they are saying, why they are saying it, and how it applies to you. If it doesn't apply to you, if it's a break up song and you are in the happiest relationship ever, you still kinda listen to the music, and you are just like, "This song will come in handy one day." So you can put it in the back of your mind, put it in your back pocket, "This song will come in handy one day."

Participant 102 also pointed to the importance of lyrics and how they can promote contemplation:

> Yeah, it's more introspective, definitely. For me, I like to study the lyrics, listen to lyrics. Obviously I identify with that. I think about how it applies to me, why it applies to me. If they are negative lyrics, see if I struggle with that, why do I still struggle with that. Especially if it's a love song or something, because I've had really bad relationships in the past where I know a lot of it was my fault, but I never really thought about it.

Participant 104 recognized how contemplating on ideas and concepts via music could impact her mood. She reported:

> Yeah, I think it has helped improve how I see things—helps me be more positive. It helps me put things into perspective and realize that I have all the power in deciding what my mood is, and how that impacts how I look at things, the tasks I have to do.

The participants expressed the importance of lyrics in different ways. Participant 107 shared that lyrics are imperative in terms of her relationship to a song, "The first time I listen to a song, I don't have my headphones in, I'm not doing anything so that I can pay attention to every word. I have to pick up the lyrics and I have to look them up online and see—while I'm listening to the song—what the words are, that's very important to me. That's how I'm able to relate to music. " Whereas Participant 109 spoke more about a specific situation, noting the importance of lyrics encouraging others not to judge people on the basis of appearance, as she connected the

song to frequently being judged by others because of the way she dressed. While Participant 106

referenced music as a way to gain new insight regarding larger issues:

> Participant: Because they sing about society, and then . . . of course we all belong to society, we are all part of it, but you are stepping outside and you look at it, it's different, too. I don't know how I can explain myself—you can step out for a moment, you know? And these songs do that.
>
> Interviewer: Step out of yourself?
>
> Participant: Step out of society as a whole, like sing about it—they sing about different themes, you know?
>
> Interviewer: What impact does it have on you?
>
> Participant: I feel like it helps you grow, I think I t makes you like . . . sometimes if you don't know what they are talking about, you look it up. It's to be aware of the things they talk about, and definitely you relate to it, and just . . . you want to keep listening to it, and sing it out loud.

The final regulatory strategy that was seen amongst a number of participants was

"solace." Solace is seen as music that makes an adolescent feel "understood and comforted," or,

more specifically, they felt "the songwriter had faced up to feelings, worries and experiences

similar to their own, and that made them feel understood and comforted" (Saarikallio & Erkkilä,

2007, p. 101). This strategy aligns with the current study's theme of acceptance and

understanding, which is within the super-ordinate category of Themes Related to Self. The

young adults not only personally identified with the music and the artists, but they were able to

feel understood and accepted as a result. Five of the emergent adult females in the current study

identified as having utilized emo music in this manner. Participant 108 described some emo

songs as "reassuring," while Participant 102 reported, "What I am doing makes sense—these

people understand where I am coming from." Participant 109 simply stated, "It's like talking to

someone who has the same problem as you and being comforted by it."

There were a couple of ways that the emerging adult females in this sample described having listened to emo music that was not directly referred to by Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007). Firstly, five participants reported they not only felt a personal connection and understood by emo music and artists, but because of this, they in turn felt empowerment and hope. For example, Participant 107 shared, "You feel empowered because you like this music," while Participant 108 noted how music made her realize, "kinda like forget about everybody else, you are more important and things like that. Just assuring me that no one's opinion matters more than mine." Participant 109 identified how music allowed her to "get through" difficult situations in her life because it "made me feel like other people were going through the same thing." Participant 102 stated, "I was very insecure about everything, and I had the lowest self-esteem, and I found music . . . which was a crutch at that point. It was extremely helpful." She went on to say it "just helped me deal with my insecurities, and deal with my lack of self-esteem because it gave me self-esteem."

Finally, several participants identified that at one point in their lives, whether during adolescence or currently, they have chosen music that makes them feel down, sad, down, and at times nostalgic. Eight of the participants acknowledged this was the case, three of them stated they only did so during adolescence, two shared they did so both during adolescence and currently, and three reported they currently still at times, chose music that made them feel down, sad, or nostalgic. The participants had varying reasons for choosing to listen to music that pulled for negative emotions. Some participants described sad music as a vehicle for catharsis and emotional release. Participant 108 acknowledged listening to sad songs after a breakup because she was "heartbroken." She shared, "I think it let me cry it out and put me back up." Participant

102 also reported listening to emo music that made her feel sad or down after the end of a

relationship. She reported,

> I think just the perpetual listening of a certain song just helps you kind of get over it. Because I know if I listen to a certain song nowadays, like over and over again, I get sick of it. So maybe it's like, "I'm gonna listen to this, I'm gonna listen to this. It feels right, it feels right!" and you are like, "Oh, God this song! I am so over it." So, maybe if you listen to that song over and over again, emotionally you'll feel that way too, like, "Okay I'm ready to move on."

Participant 109 described listening to sad songs as akin to "venting." She went on to say, "With

sadness, it lets you get it out. It's like having a good cry." Participant 107 shared that during

adolescence, she listened to sad songs as a means to connect and relate, whereas currently she

did so "in a healing way, " and stated that she would feel sad during the duration of the song, but

afterwards would feel better. Similarly, Participant 103 noted currently listening to songs that

made her feel down as both a means to connect and an emotional release. Participant 106

reported she chose to listen this type of music as a means of relating. She stated:

> When you are sad and let's say you are going through some break up, and you listen to a song and it explains how you feel, and the song is still depressing, and the song is complaining, too, I think, with you, and then you keep listening to it. It doesn't make you feel better, but it helps you relate.

There were two participants who stated they only chose music that evoked negative

emotions during adolescence. Participant 101 was unable to recall why she did so, describing this

process as, "My enemy that I kept inviting in." Participant 104 believed it was a way to gain

attention from others. She shared, "I know for sure it was a choice, but I don't know why. I think

it was a way of looking for attention, but I didn't realize no one could hear the attention that I

was trying to get."

Research Question 4: In what ways do emerging adult females associated with the

emo subculture understand and make meaning of their music preferences? All the

participants reported either currently or at one point in their lives having utilized music as a way to cope with unwanted feelings. Miranda and Claes (2009) identified three separate types of coping with regard to music: problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping, and avoidance/disengagement coping.

Table 6

Number of Participants Consistent with Three Coping Styles

Coping Strategy	# of Participants	Illustrative Quote
Problem-focused coping	6	Yeah, I think it has helped improve how I see things—helps me be more positive. It helps me put things into perspective and realize that I have all the power in deciding what my mood is, and how that impacts how I look at things, the tasks I have to do.
Emotion-focused coping	9	It has a big role in my mood when my mood is not what I want it to be. When my mood is upset or angry, I'd listen to more of a positive message, upbeat song, or listen to stabilizing music.
Avoidance/Disengagement coping	3	It just kills the silence, and then you're there . . . listening to something that's meaningful and it gets you thinking, and it keeps your thoughts going, and then your mind is not like focused on everything that's here . . . kinda gives you something else other than here

Problem-focused coping was described as "oriented towards resolving or minimizing the impact of a stressor" such that music listening was used "deliberately in order to reflect upon the resolution of stressful situations" (Miranda & Claes, 2009, p. 218). This type of coping appears to be akin to Saarikallio and Erkkilä's (2007) regulatory strategy of mental work in that music is used as a means to promote insight or clarification of experiences the individual may be struggling with. As was noted previously, six of the participants acknowledged utilizing music in

this way, they stated music allowed them to be "introspective," and noted it helped them "improve how I see things," and "it makes you think."

Emotion-focused coping was illustrated as an emotion regulation strategy, music as a way of "regulating or reducing negative emotions generated by a stressor" (Miranda & Claes, 2009, p. 218). As was documented previously, Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) reported identifying seven emotional regulation strategies, four of which the participants in this study acknowledged utilizing, specifically: diversion, discharge, mental work, and solace. In addition to these four strategies, the participants noted they found music helpful as a means to promote courage and empowerment. The participants described feeling empowered, " some crediting music with helping them become "a strong individual," while others shared the messages of "don't give up" and "keep going" helped them persevere. Finally, as was mentioned, eight of the participants noted that at one point in their lives they had deliberately chosen music that made them feel down, sad, or blue. They shared varying reasons for doing so, some stating music was used in this way as a vehicle for catharsis and emotional release, others stated it was a means to connect to someone else who had felt the way they did, and one admitted during adolescence utilizing it as a way to receive attention.

Finally, Miranda and Claes (2009) identified avoidance/disengagement-coping as a way of "denying the stressor or engaging in withdrawal from taking action" (p. 218). Young adults would "listen to their favorite music to avoid thinking about problems" (p. 219). This is most associated with Saarikallio and Erkkilä's regulatory strategy of diversion. Three participants acknowledged utilizing music at one point in their lives as a means of distraction. Participant 106 described this means of distraction in a positive sense, Iit distracts in a good way," while 109 alluded to using this method as a means of gaining an alternative perspective in terms of other

aspects of life, rather than the negative ones. Participant 104 reporting using music as a way to distract herself, but did not provide further information as to whether or not it was done so in a positive manner or as a means of avoidance.

Though all the participants acknowledged music was an important way of coping with unwanted feelings or situations, their understanding of their music preferences went beyond that. A few of the participants made note of the differences between how they utilized music during adolescence as compared to their current functions. They were able to describe the function music served then, how harmful it could be to their mood, what they've learned, and how they have changed. For example, Participant 107 reported in high school purposefully listening to music to feel down, which would result in continued negative feelings. She stated:

> I think when I was little—with the whole "teen angsts" and nobody gets me—stuff like that. And I'd be like, "I just want to go feel sad." I think, again, the whole image thing of growing up, people would call me emo, so I'd be like "You call me emo? I'll show you emo."

She stated she "misunderstood stuff like that," though noted that at the time she was seeking a personal connection from someone, whereas currently she using music "in a healing way." She reported:

> I don't seek out music to make me feel upset, and if I do it's in a healing way. Not in an "Oh, I just want to be upset, so let me go," and "I don't want to resolve any feelings, I just want to be upset," which now it's like, "Let me now go and set my feelings for these 3 minutes and 30 seconds," and afterwards I feel better.

Participant 102 identified music and the clothes and makeup that were associated with the 'emo subculture' provided her with a "pseudo-confidence." She reported:

> That whole scene gave me the armor to give that like, "Don't mess with me" vibe. You know, I was scared. It's a fear—all that anger is related to fear. And as a young person, that's how I dealt with it.

She went on to say she has worked on improving her self-esteem and now recognizes how external influences can affect her internally:

> Now I have a better control over the way exterior things influence me. It can be a person, it can be music, sometimes it's hard to control the way something makes you feel. But music, sometimes, with the trigger thing, I am much better of it. If it reminded me of my ex, I would just not think about it. I have the choice to dwell on it, or let it pass over me and focus on what's happening right now.

Similarly, 104 shared:

> Participant: I think I've learned to use it more to my advantage. With the last question, a happy song makes me more happy. Then, when I'm sad, I'll avoid those songs and use happy songs to make myself happy.
>
> Interviewer: So you've learned how to affect your mood in the way you want it to be?
>
> Participant: Yeah, and keep myself positive.

Research Question 5: What commonalities and differences emerge among young women who listen to music categorized as emo? A number of similarities emerged amongst the participants. Several of the participants expressed their appreciation for the arrangement of emo music, its composition, musicianship, and structure. Participant 103 in particular had a strong affinity for how this music sounds, its versatility and resonance. After being asked what draws her in to this music, she stated:

> The fact that they are so versatile and that they can do heavy metal, and then they have the song "Dear God"—which is almost country sounding—and then they have "Street"—which is almost punk sounding—and then they have really sweet sounding songs. And just how amazing and credible they all are musically. My brother is a musician—and he is a drummer, too—so he really looks up to the Rev.

She went on to compare the differences between rock music and mainstream pop music:

> Participant: Jut the feeling of it. It's a different emotion than popular music. Popular music is more happy sounding usually. Rock and metal is more solid sounding to me, and it's more real and filling—having a hard time explaining that.
>
> Interviewer: What makes it filling?

Participant: Sort of when you can imagine feeling it in your chest, when you listen to it on your own computer and you turn up the bass really high, and if you can feel the music, that's filling. Whereas you can't really do that with popular music quite as much, you don't feel it physically.

Interviewer: Physically and emotionally?

Participant: Both, but even if you can actually feel the bass, when you go to concerts and the bass is thudding, that I really like because it's a full sound.

Similarly, Participant 105 shared being drawn to the "guitars" and "violins and orchestras," while Participant 106 noted she enjoyed "Their drums and the guitar. I'm just in love with the sound of each individual instrument." Participant 102 described an affinity for "the music dynamics" and the fact that "the music isn't subdued at all." Participant 108 reported that she enjoyed the music's arrangement because it reflected her life, in a way. She stated, "I really like the fast pace of it, only because that's how I like to live my life—it's always constantly changing, not slowing down very much—and I like the intensity some of the songs bring."

Another similarity that emerged was the participants' acknowledgement of the importance of fashion as it relates to music. Seven of the participants identified fashion playing a significant role. Participant 108 explained the relationship:

Interviewer: Do you think there's a relationship between music and fashion?

Participant: Yeah, I think it kind of goes with the territory. Especially now, a lot of people go to Hot Topic. I love Hot Topic—they have band t-shirts that I love to wear. A lot of the bands that I listen to now get promoted by certain stores, certain clothing lines. They are all kind of similar, whether they are dark or have designs, so obviously your favorite singer wears these kinds of clothes—you want to wear similar clothes. So it's kind of alike a triangle: band member, clothing, and you—and then it's all connected together.

Similarly, Participant 107 stated that there are people who "really embody" this connection, "dress like the music—it's a part of who they are." She reflected on how it's a way to connect to the music community:

It's just the style that comes with it, and you feel a little more connected. If I saw someone wearing a letlive band t-shirt, and I had no idea, I'd probably walk up to them and be like "Oh my god, hi. I like that band. What's your favorite album?"

Participant 108 made a similar comment. She stated, "When I see people—say someone wears a t-shirt of a band I like—I'll go up to them and say I like their t-shirt and start talking to them, and kinda relate. Fashion and the clothes one wears in this community is akin to a badge, a way to let others know where you stand. Participant 108 explained, "The fact that I wear a lot of band tees, I can express the genre I associate myself with." Participant 105 also reported that this style of music is "exemplified by Hot Topic"—a popular clothing store with a large selection of alternative fashion. Participant 105 noted that fashion is a way of letting others know about yourself, "because you can't go up to someone and make a long list, type a resume of your personality and what you are about, so you do that by your clothes and your music." Participant 101 also noted the relationship between music and fashion. She stated,

Well definitely in the emo sort of scene, that there's definitely a relationship. Pretty much most of the listeners—some people are just "Average Joe"—most of the listeners try to emulate the singers, with the hair and all that.

Participant 103 also reflected how fashion tends to be a badge by which others identify what music community you belong to. She reported:

It was obvious in high school who listened to what type of music. All the metal heads wore the jean jackets with patches all over them, and they tended to have piercings. Whereas people who listened to popular music wore—I don't want to say normal—but the "norm" was they would go to Forever 21 or something like that. The people who liked rock definitely went to Hot Topic.

Perhaps one of the more poignant similarities that arose between the participants was their opinion of the word emo. None of the nine participants acknowledged labeling themselves as emo. However, they all reported having been labeled emo by others at one point in their lives. It is possible that the reason no one identified themselves as emo was because of the stigma

associated with the term. Participant 102 explained that the popular stereotype for the term was

as someone who was "pathetic, or a loser," Participant 103 reported that people associated with

this genre were stereotyped as being "all sad and want to harm themselves." Participant 107

stated:

> The classic stereotype is that the people who listen to this music, they never want to be happy, they always want to be sad, they want to lock themselves in a room, wear dark makeup—everything under the sun—it holds very little truth.

> Similarly, Participant 108 reported, "Obviously someone who cuts themselves,

depressed, always smoking, looking for attention." Participant 106 noted that others stereotype

this genre as "That they cut themselves" and "They are weird, they wear black, their hair is to the

side." Several of the participants reported feeling upset, angry, or hurt at having been labeled

with this stereotype, most typically during adolescence. Participant 108 described feeling like an

outsider, like she wasn't accepted. She described a particularly difficult situation for her:

> One situation that I always remember: I had this friend, I would consider her to be my best friend at the time. Then one day she just flipped and I remember being on one side of the classroom and she was on the other side with another school. This was where it all started. I remember in the back she was saying, "Oh she is so emo," and really saying it loud so that everyone could hear, and I turned around and saw them starting at me, and it's kind of when it started. Then my first boyfriend, the reason why he broke up with me was because of my music, saying it was too dark. It's so dumb. I never understood it then. I just felt that when we talked about it, it's just the way I dress. I don't cut myself, I am not emo, and I hate the word because of the way people attached it to me. Just recently I realized that the music that I listen to doesn't necessarily mean that—emo doesn't mean that you are a cutter or you are super depressed. There are a lot of emotions coming from the songs that you listen that are really deep or not.

> Participant 102 reported that she "absolutely hated' being called emo and that it "made

me so mad to the point I would just shut down." Participant 107 shared feeling sadness because

of the negative attention she received associated with the term, while Participants 101 and 104

reported feeling confusion.

Several of the participants acknowledged that music associated with the emo subculture was primarily made by male artists and bands. However, despite the differences in gender, eight of the participants stated that they were able to relate to the music even though they themselves were female and generally expressed that they were able to do so because the lyrics and the messages were applicable to both males and females. Participant 109 described the music and the subculture as "gender neutral," while Participant 104 noted that the meaning does not necessarily have to be taken so strictly," I think I can relate to whatever. I think because I relate to whatever the song is saying." Participant 108 explained, "I think they make it general, they never say men are this or that, they never stereotype it for each gender" and "It's not really targeted to one group at all, just for everybody." Similarly, Participant 106 shared, "But you don't think about it. If I like what it says and then I feel like it says what I want to hear, and how I feel—so it's personal for me, so I don't care if it's a guy or a girl." Participant 105 pointed to the importance of words rather than to the gender of the artist, when answering a question if it was difficult to relate to the music because of gender, she stated, "I don't really think of it as a gender thing, it's more like 'I like your words.'"

Finally, another similarity that emerged amongst the participants the reported presence of a depressed mood state at some point in their life. Seven out of the nine participants endorsed experiencing depression, several during adolescence. Participant 103 shared, "I think it was just the high school thing, sort of struggling, learning a little bit more about who I was, dealing with classes, dealing with people." Similarly, Participant 109 stated, "In high school, yes. That was more . . . that wasn't so much because of the music. That was because I was getting beat up." Participant 101 also acknowledged experiencing depression in middle school, which she ascribed to, "Puberty. I didn't feel like I fit in." Participant 106 reported feeling depressed when she first

entered college, "I was in the middle of a breakup thing with someone, and also my dog went missing, and then when I was alone in Merced, I had no family." Participant 102 endorsed struggling with depression on a number of occasions; she described her depressed mood in adolescence, "In the past, my depression was not so much about music, it was me being insecure as a person and wanting to be validated—and the scene music and rock n'roll music, and being able to perform my own music, was a way of getting validation from people so I felt worth something as a person." Participant 108 reported, "They weren't very long, but I remember twice when I was depressed and sometimes I didn't even know why." Participant 104 endorsed once experiencing a prolonged period of depression, "I think it was one time. I don't remember how long ago it was—I was just sad." She attributed this to, "Someone was messing with my emotions, with me holding on."

A number of differences emerged amongst the participants. There were vast differences in preferred genres amongst the participants—or rather, how the participants labeled and described their preferred genres. While all the participants endorsed listening to alternative rock, pop-punk, and/or hardcore, distinctions emerged within these categories. Yet, while each participant tended to describe the music they listened to using a number of different descriptors, they all admitted to being called emo by an external source at one point in their lives. For example, Participant 109 endorsed listening to goth music, which is distinctly different aesthetically, both music and style wise, from the ska and punk-rock that Participant 106 enjoys, yet both acknowledged being labeled as emo by others. Participant 102 described the type of music she listened to as, "Rock, post-hardcore, pop-punk, classic rock, grunge, pop" while Participant 103 described her preferred music as, "Classic Rock, Alternative rock, metal." Participant 105 reported she listened to, "Alternative/Punk Rock," Participant 106 described her

music as, "Reggae, ska, punk, metal, and skacore." Table 7 demonstrates the variety of labels

and artists—of course, with some overlap—the participants acknowledged listening to, all of

which was associated, via the participants' listening habits or appearance, as emo by an external

source.

Table 7

Participants' Preferred Genres and Artists

Participant	Preferred Genres	Preferred Artists
101	Alternative Rock, Hip-Hop, Childhood Pop/Disney songs	Café Tacvba, Janelle Monae, Ana Tijoux, Beyonce, Tegan & Sara, Girl in a Coma, Outkast
102	Rock, Post-Hardcore, Pop-Punk, Classic Rock, Grunge, Pop, Some Rap	The Used, Falling in Reverse, My Chemical Romance, Blink 182, AFI, Black Sabbath, System of a Down, Green Day, Panic at the Disco, Fall out Boy, The Doors, Led Zeppelin, Paramore, No Doubt, The Beatles, Sublime, Marina & the Diamonds
103	Classic Rock, Alternative Rock, Metal	Led Zeppelin, Avenged Sevenfold, Foo Fighters, Queen, A Day to Remember, Metallica, AC/DC, Green Day, The Rolling Stones
104	R&B, Pop, Hip-Hop	Fall out Boy, Three Days Grace, System of a Down, Chris Brown, Bruno Mars, Arianna Grande, The Weeknd, Taylor Swift
105	Alternative, Punk Rock, Korean Pop	Green Day, Panic At the Disco, The Killers, Metallica, Fall Out Boy, EXO
106	Reggae, Ska, Punk, Metal, Skacore, Spanish music	Social Distortion, Sublime, Pepper, Black Flag, Rancid, Operation Ivy, Avenged Sevenfold
107	Hardcore, Post Hardcore, Alternative	letlive., AFI, Deftones, HIM, The Used, Memphis Mayfire, Hatebreed, I The Mighty
108	Punk Rock, Rock, Alternative, Pop Rock, Punk, Metal, Hardcore, Post-Hardcore	Green Day, My Chemical Romance, Sleeping with Sirens, The Used, Memphis Mayfire, letlive., Mayday Parade, A Day to Remember
109	Post-Punk Industrial, Pirate Metal, Punk, Goth Rock, Psychobilly, Dark Cabaret, Darkwave, Dark Ambiance	Creature Feature, The Creepshow, Voltaire, Thoushaltnot, Seeming, Midnight Syndicate, Mindless Self Indulgence, Dread Crew of Oddwood

Another difference that arose was around current listening preferences. Though many of

the participants acknowledged having broadened their music preferences in recent years, most of

them reported that they continue to primarily listen to music associated with the emo subculture. However, there are two exceptions. As can be seen in Table 7, Participant 101 and Participant 104 reported currently listening to other genres not associated with the emo subculture (pop-punk, hardcore, alternative rock). During the brief phone screen utilized to determine eligibility for the study, both participants acknowledged that they listened to either alternative rock, pop-punk, and/or hardcore, in addition to meeting the other necessary criteria. However, when completing the background questionnaire, Participant 104 reported that the genres she listened to most often were "R&B," "Pop" and "Hip-Hop." Participant 101 did acknowledge listening to "Alt. Rock" in her background questionnaire; however, prior to beginning the interview, she reported that she listens to alternative rock only "30 to 50%." Another difference that emerged specific to these two participants was their never having attended a concert associated with music associated with the emo subculture. However, it should be noted, they did not expand upon their reasons for nonattendance, and both also stated they had never attended concerts by any artists or musicians from other genres.

Chapter 5: Discussion

This qualitative study aimed to explore experiences and conceptualizations of music preference among young adult females who listen to music that has been commonly labeled as emo and the relationship to emotional processes, identity development, and self-concept. The study sought to deepen the conceptual understanding of the emotional functions of music, particularly as it related to emergent adult females associated with the emo subculture. It may be that certain music preferences and music subcultures are associated with problem behaviors and/or internalizing distress in youth, particularly females (Lacourse et al., 2001; Martin, Clark, & Pearce, 1993; North & Hargreaves, 2008). The emo music subculture, in particular, has typically been associated with themes of depression, self-injury, and suicide (Sands, 2006; Simon & Kelly, 2007). Therefore this study sought to develop an understanding of the role of music as a part of the psychological functioning of the individual, particularly during such a critical period of development.

Analysis of the data addressed five research questions which explored: (a) what patterns and themes emerged in young adult women associated with the emo subculture with respect to their music listening practices; (b) how music preferences influence identity development; (c) what ways emerging adult females utilize music recognized as emo with regard to emotion or mood regulation; (d) what ways emerging adult females associated with the emo subculture understand and make meaning of their music preferences; and (e) what commonalities and differences emerged among young women who listen to music categorized as emo. Major themes included: (a) themes related to mood, (b) themes related to self, and (c) themes related to others. The major theme of mood contained four subthemes: (a) emotion related coping, (b) emotional trigger, (c) catharsis, and (d) empowerment and hope. The major theme of self

contained two subthemes: (a) personal connection, and (b) accepted and understood. Finally, the major theme of others contained two subthemes: (a) negative attention, and (b) social bonds and community. This chapter includes discussion of the themes within the concepts of utilizing music categorized as emo as emotion-focused coping, the connection to the music, the emo stereotype, and significant similarities amongst the participants. In addition, methodological assumptions and limitations are addressed, along with clinical implications, emerging hypotheses, and directions for future research.

Emo Music and Emotion

Research has demonstrated that music listening is a common and effective means for mood regulation (North et al., 2000; Thayer, Newman, & McClain, 1994; Wells & Hakanen, 1991). With regard to the current study, all participants reported utilizing music as a way to cope with stressful situations and negative emotions. For example, one participant likened it to therapy, describing music as a means to help her improve her mood. This was consistent with research, specifically Miranda and Claes (2009) and their concept of emotion-focused coping. As was previously reported, Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) examined the role of music in adolescents' mood regulation and found seven emergent regulatory strategies that reflected patterns of employing music in order to satisfy mood-regulated goals and needs. These included: entertainment, revival, strong sensation, diversion, discharge, mental work, and solace.

Consistent with this research, participants reported utilizing music to regulate their mood via diversion, discharge, mental work, and solace. Five participants reported utilizing emo music as a means of diversion, or a way to distract from current unwanted mood states. One participant in particular appeared to be drawn to this method, specifically during a period in her life that she described as difficult and lonely. She described music as a way to escape her reality, something

else to focus on. Six participants acknowledged using emo music as a discharge of emotions, a regulatory strategy consistent with this study's subtheme of catharsis. Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007) noted that youths who listened to music in order to alleviate negative moods initially felt worse, though they may afterwards have experienced some improvement. Adolescent females who utilize music listening as a vicarious release of negative emotions have been shown to report fewer suicidal risks (Lacourse et al., 2001). Consistent with this research, participants described emo music as a way to vent, an emotional release. Emo music may evoke negative feelings, but this may be quite purposeful. Through the powerful and purposeful experience of negative emotions, several of these young women noted they could also heal from them. The literature surrounding catharsis is mixed; however, there is data to support that individuals can utilize sad music to facilitate a cathartic release (Garrido & Schubert, 2011; Rottenberg, Bylsma, Wolvin, & Vingerhoets, 2008; Van den Tol & Edwards, 2013). Eerola, Peltola, and Vuokoski (2015) found that listeners who utilized music in this manner were associated with being more reflective, though those who listened mostly for pleasure were also found to derive similar benefits. Six participants reported using music for *mental work*. A few participants referenced lyrics as a means of facilitating introspection and a way to change their perspective for the better. A number of participants cited music categorized as emo as an instrument of growth, by introducing new ideas and themes into their life. This is consistent with the literature, as several studies have also previously suggested that music may function as a kind of self-therapy and help people to identify feelings, work through conflicts, and regain control over psychic processes (Behne, 1997; DeNora, 1999; Laiho, 2004; Larson, 1995; Lonsdale & North, 2011; Maher, Van Tilburg, & Van den Tol, 2013; Ruud, 1997; Sloboda, 1992; Sloboda, Lamont, & Greasley, 2009). Oliver (2008) and Kim and Oliver (2013) suggested that individuals experiencing sadness might choose

to listen to expressively sorrowful music in order to gain insight and find meaning in the emotional event that was experienced. Finally, with regard to Saarikallio and Erkkilä's identified regulatory strategy of *solace*, five participants identified using music in this manner. This regulatory strategy is akin to the current study's theme of acceptance and understanding. This is consistent with the literature, as previous studies have shown that music is often perceived by the listener as an understanding and valued friend (Laiho, 2004; Saarikallio, 2010; Sloboda, 1992).

There were two ways that emerging adult females reported having used music in a way not directly referred to by Saarikallio and Erkkilä (2007), perhaps because they may be unique to the emo subculture. Firstly, nearly all of the participants acknowledged that at one point in their lives choosing music that made them feel down, sad, and at times nostalgic. Most of the participants reported that this occurred primarily during adolescence. There are several recent studies that indicate people choose to listen to sad music when experiencing sadness or negative affective states (Hunter, Schellenberg, & Griffith, 2011; Matsumoto et al., 2007; Saarikallio & Erkkilä, 2007; Schellenberg, Peretz, & Vieillard, 2008; Van den Tol, 2012).There were varying reasons the participants described for doing this, some as a means of emotional release, others as a way to feel understood, and one simply did not know why. Some studies have found that individuals may be more likely to choose sad music following interpersonal losses (Eerola et al., 2011; Lee, Andrade, & Palmer, 2013). Eerola et al. (2015) took this to suggest that interpersonal and autobiographical aspects are important and central to individual's motivations for choosing to listen to sad music. Emo music has largely been stereotyped as music filled with dark and depressing themes (Sands, 2006; Simon & Kelly, 2007). Indeed, as many of the participants acknowledged choosing music that evoked similar feelings, there may be a grain of truth to this generalization. Furthermore, most of the participants reported having at one point in their lives

experienced prolonged periods of depression. However, participants also reported utilizing music categorized by others as emo as a source of empowerment and hope. All of the participants reported having received some form of negative attention due to their music preferences or their appearance. Therefore, young women experiencing depression and receiving negativity from their peers may have looked to music as a source of comfort, a guiding light. A number of participants described this music as a catalyst for empowerment and hope, a vehicle for positive change. One participant consistently referred to this type of music as a strong source of encouragement and hope, often hearing the message of "Don't give up, keep going." Perhaps one of the reasons that these participants were able to relate to this message was, in part, because of the messenger—the artist's—own experiences' with negative attention and emotions. Emo music, unlike most mainstream music, is not afraid to speak out about topics, emotions, and thoughts mostly kept secret. In doing so, they have the power not only to offer messages of empowerment and hope, but also a much needed connection to someone having gone through the same journey, which will be covered in the next section.

A Way to Connect

Every participant noted that they felt as if one of the main aspects behind being drawn to emo music, whether currently or during adolescence, was that they felt a sense of personal connection. The participants described this music as something that they could relate to, identify with, and as something familiar. This connection was one of the main reasons some participants, at times, purposefully chose music they knew had the ability to make them sad or down. One participant explained, "I just listened to sad songs, because I think it's sometimes nice to hear something that you can relate to, even if it doesn't make you feel better." As was noted previously, several of the participants acknowledged having at one point experienced periods of

depressed mood, and every participant reported having experienced negative attention from others. It is possible this music served as a way to connect to someone else who may have experienced similar feelings, that in that moment of pain there is some comfort knowing that someone else has felt this way, too. Studies have shown that people tend to seek out social contact when experiencing sadness (Gray, Ishii, & Ambady, 2011), and that sad music can function as a means of receiving a form of social contact with a friend (Lee, Andrade, & Palmer, 2013). Whether it is a feeling or a situation, someone else has been there and is relating their experience via music. Yet, it can go beyond that. Many participants reported not only feeling that connection, but as a result of it, feeling accepted and understood. Music categorized as emo may be a source of affirmation and empathy for listeners. A number of studies have noted that empathic responses are involved in an affinity for sad music (Vuoskoski & Eerola, 2012; Vuoskoski, Eerola, Thompson, & McIlwain, 2012). As a result of knowing someone else has been through a similar journey, the listener is comforted and may feel validated. Previous studies have shown that music is often perceived by the listener as an understanding and valued friend (Laiho, 2004; Saarikallio, 2010; Sloboda, 1992). Schwartz and Fouts (2003) proposed that music serves as a source of validation for young adults by assuring them that they are not alone in their emotions, and that their feelings are real. Consistent with this reach, one participant described her listening experience as, "It's like talking to someone who has the same problem as you and being comforted by it." While the comfort of empathy and acceptance an important component, emo music goes beyond commiserating over tales of woe. The message can sometimes be an active one, one that communicates empowerment and hope to its listeners who have experienced negativity and difficult situations. Some participants acknowledged feeling reassured by the music that things would get better, that these artists and bands had fought through these battles

and came out ahead. Through hearing this message, listeners of emo music may be given hope and thus, become empowered to change their own situation for the better. It is possible they are able to do so because of this connection; this support and understanding via music that ultimately can be, for some, an agent of hope and change.

The Emo Stereotype

Emo music is a punk genre characterized by lyrical honesty and intimate self-reflection that allow for the possibility of the listener to connect to the music on a deeper level (Williams, 2012). Most emo bands dislike the moniker and its pervasive use in popular culture; they reject the label for the social stigma and controversy surrounding it (Greenwald, 2003; Williams, 2012). Emo has been associated with the stereotype of an emotional, sensitive, angst-ridden individual, who may be seen to be at risk for depression, self-injury, and suicide (Porretta, 2007; Sands, 2006; Young et al., 2014). Much like the bands themselves, listeners of the genre do not like being associated with the moniker. None of the participants in the present study acknowledged labeling themselves as emo. When asked to identify what the stereotype was, the participants used such descriptors as "pathetic," "loser," "someone who cuts themselves'," and "they never want to be happy, they always want to be sad." It is little wonder no one wants to be associated with the word. However, every participant reported that at one point or another, they have been labeled emo by an external source. Several of the participants reported feeling upset, angry, or hurt at having been labeled with this stereotype, most typically during adolescence. Several acknowledged that the term was meant as an insult, and all endorsed receiving negative attention due to the music they listened to or the way they looked. As a result of this unwanted attention, some participants ended up feeling alone and distinctly different. One participant explained that at the time, she believed she had to change herself in order to be accepted. So

some of the participants reported resorting to change their appearance and music preference. These participants reported they changed largely because they wanted to fit in and no longer be bullied by others. However, a couple of these participants stated that as time progressed, they found themselves coming back to this music. One participant reported she sought it out during a period of stress as a means to relax. Another participant noted as she became more comfortable with herself she began to make more authentic choices with regard to music and style, based on her opinion and not those of others.

A number of participants—whether or not they felt pressured to alter their appearance and music preferences at some point—described utilizing music categorized as emo as a means of creating social bonds, friendships, or relationships. Each one of the nine young women interviewed reported they had received negative attention from others at some point in their lives because of the music they listened to or their appearance, which was associated with that type of music. Six of the young women acknowledged ultimately creating social bonds and/or finding community based around this music. This is consistent with music research, as expressing one's music preferences individuals are indicating that they may share similar attitudes, values, and beliefs with other members of their group (North & Hargreaves, 1999). One participant reported finding comfort in being around "like-minded" individuals without "feeling judged." This sense of community based around music preference, specifically emo music, may function as an oasis of sorts for individuals with a history of receiving negative attention from peers and others associated with the "mainstream." It is possible that by being around others with similar interests and beliefs, one can at last feel affirmation and acceptance, which in turn may facilitate self-growth. A few participants reflected that this music and the community surrounding it helped them see that they were not alone and as a result, they were able to be comfortable with simply

being themselves because they were not afraid of being judged. Therefore, it may be that emo music, via the artists and other like-minded individuals in the emo community, promotes acceptance of self and of differences; many individuals in this community have, at one point, felt the consequences of being different, and as a result have learned to be more cognizant of what it means to truly be yourself.

Identity

Not every participant followed the exact same path to the young women they are today, nor did they describe themselves in the same manner. There does not appear to be a prototypical emo journey, much as there is no prototypical human journey. Nevertheless, there were some commonalities, which may hint at what draws young adult females into the emo subculture.

Several of the participants expressed their appreciation for the arrangement of emo music, its composition, musicianship, and structure. This may suggest that young women who gravitate towards emo music and its associated subculture place more of a significant importance on the different, complex components of music as compared to their peers who prefer mainstream music. This may hint at a greater amount of energy spent in the different facets of music consumption, which leads to music itself possibly having a larger role in their life experience. In other words, they are more aware of the music as a whole, how it affects them and what they can learn from it, rather than it simply being a catchy tune and nothing more.

If music does indeed play a larger role in their life experience and identity, it may be seen in other aspects outside of just music consumption. A number of the participants acknowledged the importance of fashion as it relates to music. Several explained that they were able to tell if others were into similar music tastes based on the clothes that they wore, particularly band t-shirts. Frith (1981) suggests that musical subcultures form around particular styles because "all

adolescents use music as a badge" (p. 217) that communicates their values, attitudes, and opinions to others. North and Hargreaves (1999, 2000) found evidence that adolescents' music preferences appeared to reflect an attempt to fit their self-concept with their perceptions of those who usually listened to that style of music. Like Frith, they described music as a badge that individuals use to make judgments of others, but also simultaneously functioning as a way to express their own self-concepts. Therefore, individuals who listen to music categorized as emo may gravitate towards other aspects of the subculture, specifically fashion, as a way to communicate to others their interests, values, and opinions. The emo style is distinctive: studded clothing, dyed hair, pierced body parts, tattoos, colorful makeup, and a variety of other components of style. It is loud in its proclamation of difference from the mainstream, thereby making it relatively simple for those within the subculture to recognize each other in public settings.

The classic emo stereotype includes the characteristics of depression and self-harm (Sands, 2006; Simon & Kelley, 2007). While none of the participants endorsed ever having self-harmed, most of them did acknowledge having experienced prolonged periods of depression at some point in their lives. None of the participants described their experience of depression as a core facet of their identity, but rather as a difficult experience they overcame. Regardless, given the lyrical honesty of the genre and the distinctive appearance of those in the subculture, it may be that such experiences can be more openly discussed with others in this community and that these people are somewhat easily identifiable. In other words, in the emo subculture, feelings are not something to be hidden, but to be expressed, and it is clear to whom one can express them to. Therefore, it is possible that it is not the depression that is what is important to the community, but rather the freedom and comfort to share life's difficulties with each other—the *freedom to be*

vulnerable. It may be that what the adherents to the genre are drawn to is a community where vulnerability is not devalued, but embraced and celebrated. A number of the participants made note of the lack of judgmentalness in their music communities, which allowed them to be more authentic to themselves and others. This community may function as a place of belonging and social support where young women who identify with the genre can feel secure and comfortable wih themselves. It may be that this sense of comfort promotes self-growth, ultimately supporting these young women in their identity development. Though the term "emo" in itself still remains derisive—particularly with regard to the mainstream—the emo subculture and the community surrounding it may provide a secure environment of like-minded others and an identity that its members can feel attached to and comfortable with. This connection to a community may function as an opportunity for young women to feel comfortable enough in expressing their vulnerabilities and with the community's support, feel empowered and strengthened to be more authentic to themselves and their identity.

Methodological Limitations

The limitations present in this study include the following. Due to the small sample size and narrow geographical recruiting location, the ability to generalize the results to the larger population is limited. Specifically, the participants' experiences may not be reflective of the larger population of young adult women associated with the emo subculture. Additionally, most of the participants were recruited from a local university. This may have created a sampling bias towards more educated emergent adult females. Young women with lower levels of education were not well represented in this study. Furthermore, there may have been a selection bias towards higher functioning members of this community, as none of the participants acknowledged current or past incidents of self-harm. A recent study found that "alternative

teenagers" (which included the subcultures of emo and goth) self-injured more frequently and were 4 to 8 times more likely to attempt suicide than their non-Alternative peers (Young et al., 2014). Therefore, it is possible that young adult women who have current or past experiences with self-injurious behavior did not respond to the recruitment materials and therefore were not well represented in the study. Additionally, all participants in the study are female. As such, the results cannot be generalized to the experiences of the larger emo community. Finally, sexuality was not a prominent theme amongst the study's participants, which is interesting to note given the developmental stage and the explicit sexual content that tends to permeate popular music. Though there is sexual content in some emo music, the participants did not report it as playing a central role to their experience of the genre.

In addition, the lack of anonymity inherent in the face-to-face interview process may have introduced a number of limitations. Firstly, participants may have experienced a decreased willingness to be open and honest regarding their personal experiences. Furthermore, it is possible that verbal cues exchanged in this dialogue of the interview may have communicated a perception that certain responses were considered acceptable or unacceptable. Interviewees may have felt compelled to shape their responses based on what they perceived would be most helpful to the interviewer or what they believe sounds best (Krueger & King, 1998). Additionally, since the interviewer is familiar with many of the artists and bands within the emo genre, the participants may have looked for or experienced verbal and nonverbal cues suggesting that the interviewer could identify or resonate with their experience.

Additionally, the researcher's personal biases based on her experience and knowledge of the emo subculture was a potential limitation. It is possible that the interviewer's own personal experiences may have led her to concentrate or target personally familiar themes or inadvertently

exclude themes or experiences that have not been well-known or familiar with the interviewer. Though the researcher tried to identify her biases and maintain awareness of them via reflexivity during the collection, coding, and interpretation of the data, there may be the possibility that unconscious biases have had some influence on the research process.

Finally, the construction, and possibly the content of the interview protocol may have served as a potential limitation to the study. The researcher found that many of the questions led to redundancy in responses by the participants, many noted they felt they had already answered the question previously. This suggests that the interview could have been further edited to decrease redundancy and include alternative questions that may have further clarified or gained a deeper understanding of the concepts being addressed.

Clinical Implications

Though the *dangers* of music are well documented (i.e., Columbine and other similar school shootings), and its associated stereotypes well known, most people do not pay much attention or take much action beyond this. The emo kids remain as targets for the mainstream, their voices largely unheard beyond the blogosphere. This research study focused on exploring the life experiences of nine young adult women associated with the emo subculture. As previously mentioned, the emo stereotype is that of a depressed, lonely individual, who may or may not self-harm. While none of these young women reported self-injurious behavior, several of them did acknowledge past periods of depressed mood. Therefore, this study highlights the grain of truth that may be found in the popular stereotype; however, this is no way gives power or credence to the derogatory cliché, but rather highlights the implications behind it. It is important for therapists and those close to individuals involved in the emo subculture to be aware

and understand the possible presence of an underlying mood disorder or other psychologically relevant concerns that can and should be further explored in order to better assist the individual.

Additionally, the findings of this study highlight the importance of music in the lives of young adults, particularly females, which may be relevant in terms of self-expression and the ability to communicate psychological distress. A number of participants made note that emo music gave words to what they were unable to express, gave voice to their life experiences. Therefore, therapists of young adult women associated with the emo subculture can utilize music as a powerful agent in understanding their client's worldview and psychological needs, ones that they may be struggling to express.

Emerging Hypotheses and Direction for Future Research

Several hypotheses emerge from this study that have implications for future research.

Hypothesis 1. Young adult females with a preference for music commonly labeled as emo, utilize this music as a means of emotional-coping, personal connection, and introspection. Every participant acknowledged either currently or at one point in their lives having utilized emo music both as a way to cope with stressors or difficult situations, and a means of personal connection to another individual who was experiencing similar emotions or situations to their own. In addition, a number of young women appear to employ this type of music as a vehicle for introspection. The direct effects of utilizing this specific type of music, particularly at different points of development, lends to a direction for future research.

Hypothesis 2. Emergent adult females with a preference and identification with music associated with the emo subculture may indicate a possible mood or anxiety disorder, or other psychological distress. As has been mentioned, there exists a negative stereotype of individuals belonging to the emo subculture, which includes, among other things, associating members with

depression and self-harm. Though none of the participants reported ever having engaged in self-injurious behavior, several of these young women acknowledged having experienced prolonged periods of depressed mood. It is unclear if these periods were clinically significant; therefore, further research is warranted. The existing stereotype belittles the possible seriousness such diagnoses can have. Further inquiry into the specifics of such an association between depressed mood and emo music can shed light as to the mechanisms underlying the relationship and would have great implications for understanding the manifestation of such a relationship in the lives of these young women.

Hypothesis 3. Music subcultures, particularly the emo subculture, offer the opportunity for young adult women to create social-bonds through music and enter into a community of like-minded others, which can promote self-growth. Many of the participants reported that music helped them engage with others with similar music tastes, particularly as a means of getting to know someone they were unfamiliar with. A few participants reported that in addition to promoting social bonds, they were able to find their way into communities centered around their music preferences. For the participants that had suffered negative attention by their peers, this community offered something akin to a safe haven, which ultimately helped them grow "out of their shell" and become more comfortable with expressing themselves. The impact of this connection with others, specific to the emo community, is an area for further study.

Discussion. Based on statements made by participants in the study that warrant discussion, taken along with their background, several other future directions for research are indicated. For one, the time in their development during which the participants most listened to and utilized this music for their emotional needs—adolescence—is an important area to look into further. While all participants acknowledged still listening to this type of music, several noted

that they had moved on to include other genres and were not as strict in their preferences as they may have once been. Although the literature has addressed the importance and impact of music across various developmental stages, the inquiry has not been specific to emo music. Further research could be helpful in identifying the different ways young women approach and utilize emo music at different points in their development. Additionally, this study reflected different levels of involvement within the emo subculture amongst the participants. Several participants acknowledged their involvement not only in listening to the music, but described an affinity for the fashion consistent with the genre—clothes, band t-shirts, makeup, piercing, tattoos, etc. Many of the participants also reported attending concerts of their favorite bands and participating in online forums and discussions associated with this type of music. However, there were differences in involvement amongst the participants. For example, two participants reported they had never attended a concert by artists associated with this genre. Therefore, additional research looking into the varying levels of involvement in the subculture and its impact amongst its participants could be beneficial. Another potential direction for future research is examining how emo music is utilized for emotion regulation and identity development in a higher risk sample. As previously mentioned, one of the limitations of the present study was that there appeared to be a selection bias towards a higher functioning, well educated group of young women. Therefore, further research is warranted to explore whether or not some of the same patterns seen in this sample would be reflected in a higher risk group or if emo music and other aspects of the subculture would be utilized in a different manner. Finally, this study focused solely on the journey of young adult women within this genre. Further research is needed exploring the similarities and differences across genders in order to gain a more in-depth understanding of the emo subculture and the experiences of its members as a whole.

Conclusion

Music holds an important role in the personal and social lives of individuals in contemporary cultures (North et al., 2000; Schwartz & Fouts, 2003; Ter Bogt et al., 2003). Affective experiences have been shown to be central reasons for music consumption and musical activities (DeNora, 1999; Laiho, 2004; North et al., 2000; Sloboda et al., 2001; Zillmann & Gan, 1997). In addition, studies suggest that music subcultures function as a badge that communicates their values, attitudes, and opinions to others (Frith, 1981; North & Hargreaves, 1999). The purpose of the present study was to deepen the conceptual understanding of the functions emo music and its associated subculture in the lives of young adult women.

Music is ever changing, the popularity of artists comes and goes, tastes and preferences change, teenage fan girls grow up. However, emo, in one form or another, has been present since at least the mid-1980s. It has long since been a genre committed to expressing the struggles of the human experience, particularly that of young adulthood. Because of this commitment to emotional honesty, the genre and its proponents have been stigmatized and typecast as depressed, sad, lonely individuals. This dissertation both questions the effects of this stereotype and seeks awareness for those who may in fact be experiencing depressed mood. We in the mental health field recognize that depression and self-injury are not to be taken lightly. If popular media and mainstream society continues to negatively evaluate this music and its subculture, music that can be—and often is—the main means of coping for many young people, important opportunities to provide help and support can be missed. Thus, further, research is strongly encouraged.

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APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Notice

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

July 9, 2014

Martha Orozco

Protocol #: P0514D02
Project Title: Music Preference and Its Effects on Emotion Processes and Identity Development in Young Adult Females: An Examination of the 'Emo' Subculture

Dear Ms. Orozco:

Thank you for submitting your application, *Music Preference and Its Effects on Emotion Processes and Identity Development in Young Adult Females: An Examination of the 'Emo' Subculture*, for expedited review to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB appreciates the work you and your advisor, Dr. Harrell, completed on the proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. As the nature of the research met the requirements for expedited review under provision Title 45 CFR 46.110 (Research Category 7) of the federal Protection of Human Subjects Act, the IRB conducted a formal, but expedited, review of your application materials.

I am pleased to inform you that your application for your study was granted **Full Approval**. The IRB approval begins today, July 9, 2014 and terminates on July 9, 2015.

Your final consent form has been stamped by the IRB to indicate the expiration date of study approval. One copy of the consent form is enclosed with this letter and one copy will be retained for our records. **You can only use copies of the consent that have been stamped with the GPS IRB expiration date to obtain consent from your participants.**

Please note that your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the GPS IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For **any** proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a Request for Modification form to the GPS IRB. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for expedited review and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB. If contact with subjects will extend beyond July 9, 2015 a **Continuation or Completion of Review Form** must be submitted at least one month prior to the expiration date of study approval to avoid a lapse in approval.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact me. On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

6100 Center Drive, Los Angeles, California 90045 ▪ 310-568-5600

Sincerely,

Thema Bryant-Davis, Ph.D.
Chair, Graduate and Professional Schools IRB
Pepperdine University

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives
        Mr. Brett Leach, Compliance Attorney
        Dr. Sherry Harrell, Faculty Advisor

APPENDIX B

Recruitment Flyer

APPENDIX C

College and University Administrative Contact Information

Santa Monica Community College
Department of Psychology
(310) 434-4276
Lisa Farwell
Department Chair
farwell_lisa@smc.edu
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General Inquiries: psych@calstatela.edu

California State University, Long Beach
Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
FO5-111
(562) 985-8147
Can submit electronic inquiry via:
http://www.csulb.edu/divisions/aa/research/our/contact/

APPENDIX D

Recruitment Script for Personal Networks and Possible Participants

Recruitment Script for Personal Networks

"My name is Marta Orozco. I am a psychology doctoral student at Pepperdine University. I am contacting you in regard to my doctoral dissertation, which is being supervised by Shelly Harrell, Ph.D. The study seeks to gain a better understanding on subgenres of rock music, such as hard rock, emo, alternative, and pop punk as it relates to young women's emotional processes and identity development. Volunteers will be asked to participate in one interview, which will last approximately 90 to 120 minutes, to share their views and thoughts about music. They will be compensated an iTunes gift card worth $20 for their time. It is my hope that the information collected from this study will contribute to the literature and increase visibility and understanding of this population's emotional and developmental needs. I would greatly appreciate your help in helping me spread the word. "

Recruitment Script for Participants Recruited Outside a Concert (with Flyers from Appendix A)

"Participate in research looking at music and mood. Get a $20 iTunes giftcard for your time!"

APPENDIX E

Introductory Letter Provided To College or University Psychology or Research Departments

Date

To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Marta Orozco. I am a psychology doctoral student at Pepperdine University. I am contacting you in regards to my doctoral dissertation, which is being supervised by Shelly Harrell, Ph.D., and to inform you of an opportunity for students at *(name of college or university*) to volunteer to participate in my research project being conducted in the Pepperdine University Mental Health Clinic or at a location of the participant's choosing. This study has been reviewed and approved by Pepperdine University Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board.

The study is examining music preference and its effects on female adolescent identity development and how they experience emotion as it relates to music. Volunteers will be asked to participate in one interview, which will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes, to share their views and thoughts. They will be compensated an iTunes gift card worth $20 for their time. It is my hope that the information collected from this study will contribute to the literature and increase visibility and understanding of this population's emotional and developmental needs, in the hopes of increasing future funding and interest in research. I would greatly appreciate your help in helping me spread the word.

I would like to request if it would be possible to obtain permission to distribute and post flyers at designated areas at *(college or university).* Please let me know if this is a possibility and any steps I need to take in order to do so. If you or any one else has additional questions or concerns the contact information for the researcher is listed as
██████████████████████████.

Thank you for your time and help.

Sincerely,

Marta Orozco , M.A.   Shelly Harrell, Ph.D.
Pepperdine University   Professor of Psychology
Doctoral Student

APPENDIX F

Informed Consent

I_____, agree to participate in a research project being conducted by Marta Orozco, M.A., as part of her dissertation requirements for the doctoral degree in clinical psychology at Pepperdine University Graduate School of Education and Psychology. I understand that this project is being conducted under the supervision of Shelly Harrell, Ph.D., Clinical Training Director and Professor of Psychology.

I understand that I have been asked to participate in a research project that is designed to study the concept of music preference as it relates to emotion and identity development amongst adolescent and transitional age females.

I understand that I have been asked to participate in this study because of my preference in music. I understand that my participation requires that I be between the ages of 18 and 21 and that I speak English fluently. I understand that my participation in this study will require me to participate in an interview and fill out a form asking me brief questions about myself that should take no longer than 10 minutes to fill-out. The form will ask for my age, ethnic background, and questions related to my music preference. I understand that the interview will run between 60 to 90 minutes in length. I understand that the interview will be either video or audio taped in order to assure accuracy.

By signing this form, I understand that my involvement in the study and completion of the study is strictly voluntary. I also understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time with no adverse consequences. I also have the right to refuse to answer any question I choose not to answer.

I understand that I will be compensated for my time in the form of a $20 iTunes gift card. I also understand that there are some possible risks for participation in this interview such as boredom and fatigue. Some individuals may feel uncomfortable answering questions or offering input about their life experiences. I understand that I have the right to refuse to answer any question that makes me uncomfortable. Additionally, I understand that there might be circumstances in which the researcher may decide to discontinue my participation in the study.

I understand that there are no direct advantages to participating in the study. However, the findings of this study will be used to help people in the field of psychology better understand how young females utilize music to meet their needs, specifically females who listen to music characterized by the following genres: pop punk, hardcore, and alternative rock. The study seeks to explore the concept of countercultural music that has been labeled as emo as it relates to emotion and identity in young adult females,

I understand that the researcher, Marta Orozco, M.A., will take all reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of my answers and my identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this research. Only the research and her supervisor, Shelly

Harrell, Ph.D. will have access to the video/audio-tapes and transcripts collected from the interview. The information that is collected will be kept in a secure manner for five years and destroyed once it is no longer required for research purposes. I understand that, while the information I provide will be kept confidential, there are certain limitations to confidentiality according to state and federal law. These exceptions are the suspected abuse of a child, abuse of an elder or dependent adult, or if a person wished to seriously harm him/herself, someone else, or someone's property. In these instances, the researcher is required to report the situation to the proper authorities. I understand that the author of this study is obligated to seek consultation from the Institutional Review Board at Pepperdine University on any ethical issues that may arise.

I understand that I may be contacted via a brief telephone follow-up if the investigator, Marta Orozco, M.A., needs clarification of any information that was discussed during the interview I understand that Marta Orozco, M.A., is willing to answer any questions I may have regarding the research study and I can contact her by email at ██████████████████████. I understand that I may also contact Shelly Harrell, Ph.D. at ████████████████████ if I have other questions or concerns about this research. If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, please contact Thema Bryant-Davis, Ph.D., Chairperson of the Graduate School of Professional Schools Institutional Review Board, Pepperdine University, Graduate School of Education and Psychology, 6100 Center Drive, Los Angeles, CA 90045; (310) 568-2845.

By completing and signing this consent form, I am indicating that I have read and understood this form and agree to the terms of study participation.

_____   _____

Participant Signature   Date

_____

Marta Orozco, M.A.

APPENDIX G

Brief Screening Questionnaire

Since this is a research project, I need to make sure that the people interested are eligible to

participate in the study. Please answer the following questions by circling "Yes" or "No."

1. Do you listen to either pop punk, hardcore, or alternative rock music?

    YES   NO

2. At what age did you begin to listen to this music? _____

3. Do you participate in music related activities, such as going to concerts, buying music magazines,

    discussing music in online forums, etc.?

    YES   NO

4. At what age did you begin to participate in these activities? _____

5. Would you consider music to be an important aspect of your life?

    YES   NO

6. Have you ever been labeled as emo by someone?

    YES   NO

7. Do you consider yourself to be emo or identify with this subculture?

    YES   NO

8. Are you willing to talk about your ideas and experiences in an interview setting?

    YES   NO

9. Have you tried to harm yourself (cutting, scratching, burning, hitting, etc.) or made a suicide

    attempt in the last 12 months?

    YES   NO

10. Have you ever been given a diagnosis of schizophrenia or another syndrome that involves

    symptoms of psychosis?

    YES   NO

APPENDIX H

Alcohol and Substance Use Screening Tool

Brief Screening Instrument for Alcohol or Substance Abuse

Directions: The questions that follow are about your use of alcohol and other drugs.
Your answers will be kept private.

If the respondent indicates "NO" to question 1 or "YES" to question 2, then the remaining questions can be skipped. Either response would make the participant eligible to participate the study.

During the last 3 months:

1. Have you used alcohol or other drugs? (Such as wine, beer, hard liquor, pot, coke, heroin, or other opioids, uppers, downers, hallucinogens, or inhalants)
YES   NO

2. Are you currently receiving treatment for alcohol or substance abuse? (Such as Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous, Cocaine Anonymous, individual counseling or therapy, or a treatment program.)
YES   NO

3. During the last 3 months, have you, or anyone close to you, felt that you use too much alcohol or other drugs?
YES   NO

4. Have you tried to cut down or quit drinking or using alcohol or other drugs but where unable to do so?
YES   NO

5. Has drinking or other drug use caused problems between you and your family or friends?
YES   NO

6. Has your drinking or other drug use caused problems at school or work?
YES   NO

7. Have you engaged in any violent or risk-taking behaviors while under the influence of drugs or alcohol (such as physical fights, driving while intoxicated, etc.)?
YES   NO

8. Has drinking or other drug use caused any health problems (such as passing out, heart racing, sweating, seizures, vomiting, etc.)?
YES   NO

APPENDIX I

Script for Ineligibility

Researcher: I would like to thank you for your time and effort in completing the pre screening measures for this study. However, at this time you do not meet eligibility for the current study. Regardless, I would like to extend my thanks. Also, if you should need any help or would like someone to talk to, I can give you a list of health and mental health resources. Would you like this? (*If individual says "yes," mail or e-mail Appendix O).* Again, thank you for your time and if you have any further questions, please contact me at ███████████████████████. Or you may contact Shelly Harrell, Ph.D. at █████████████████████ if you have any other questions or concerns.

APPENDIX J

Emergency Protocol

IF AT ANY TIME, THE INDIVIDUAL DESCRIBES EMERGENCY ISSUES SUCH AS SUICIDALITY, OR IF THERE ARE CONCERNS REGARDING THE INDIVIDUAL'S SAFETY:

1) Obtain location from individual:
   - "It seems like you're under a lot of distress right now. It is important to make sure that you're safe and I can get you the help you need. Can you tell me where you are right now?"

   If subject appears hesitant, continue to validate and encourage aid.
   - "I just want to make sure that you're okay and safe. Whenever there is a risk to someone's safety, it's important to get the needed support. Is it okay if I call someone to check in with you?

   If subject is still unwilling, remind them of the consent form they signed and the risks to confidentiality.

2) After obtaining location from individual, contact PET Team while subject remains on the line.
   - **ACCESS at 800 854-7771**

3) Remain on the line with the individual until the PET Team arrives.
4) Follow up with individual within 24 hours.

APPENDIX K

Background Information Questionnaire

1. Identifying Number (given by researcher) _____

2. Age _____

3. Ethnicity/Cultural Background (circle all that apply):

　　　　African-American

　　　　American Indian

　　　　Asian/Pacific Islander

　　　　Hispanic/Latino/Chicano

　　　　White

　　　　Other

4. Approximately how much time do you spend listening to music per day?

　< 1 hour　　　　　　2- 4 hours

　　1-2 hours　　　　　4+　hours

5. What genre of music do you listen to most often?

　　　_____

　　　_____

　　　_____

6. Please list musical artists or bands which best exemplify your music preference:

　　　_____　　　　　_____

　　　_____　　　　　_____

　　　_____　　　　　_____

　　　_____　　　　　_____

7. Do you utilize music to aid you in some way during stressful or difficult periods?

<div align="center">YES   NO</div>

8. If so, please list songs which you tend to listen to during stressful or difficult situations:

   (song/artist):_____

   (song/artist):_____

   (song/artist):_____

   (song/artist):_____

9. Do you have friends or belong to a community (online or in person) that has similar musical interests as you?

<div align="center">YES   NO</div>

10. At what age did you "join" this community? _____

APPENDIX L

Interview Confirmation Letter

Date

Dear Participant,

Thank you for accepting the invitation to attend the interview. The purpose of this research is to understand your experiences and thoughts about music. Your participation in this study is valuable because this information will assist in developing ideas on how to improvement treatment needs for adolescents and young adults.

The interview will be led by Marta Orozco, M.A., a Pepperdine University Clinical Psychology Doctoral Student, to gain a better understanding of people's music preference as it relates to their emotional processes and identity development. I am eager to hear your opinions and ideas about your experiences to help guide and inform future directions in research.

The interview will take place on the (*floor #)* floor at the Pepperdine Community Counseling Center in (*depending on location chosen by participant*).* The interview will last approximately 60 to 90 minutes. Refreshments and snacks will be available. I would like to remind you again that the participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may withdraw from this study at any time, refuse to answer any questions, or end the interview.

Your scheduled interview time is for *time* on *date* at the Pepperdine Community Counseling Center in (*depending on location chosen by participant*) on the (*floor #).* Please remember that that you are encouraged to bring audio of important or meaningful songs or lyrics to the interview. If you have additional questions, feel free to email me at ██████████████████████████████.

Sincerely,

Marta Orozco, M.A.

*If the participant has chosen an alternative location, then that location will be mentioned here instead.

APPENDIX M

Introduction Script

Introductory Script: *"Hello, today we are going to discuss your experiences with music. I will be administering an interview during which I will ask you a lot of questions about your experiences with pop-punk, hardcore, and/or alternative rock music. I'm interested in music that may have been labeled by others as emo and what exactly that means and what effects it can have. I am also going to be asking you about past and current feelings, behaviors, and activities that may have involved this type of music in some way. During this interview, it is possible that you may not like some of the questions that I ask, and that some of the questions may be personal or ask about things that may make you uncomfortable. You are free to refuse to answer any questions. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. Does that sound alright? Do you have any questions? "*

APPENDIX N

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Tell me a little bit about the music/song you brought in today.*
   a. What is special about it for you?
   b. What do you feel when you listen to it?
   c. Do you listen to it during certain times/occasions?
2. Tell me about some of your favorite music?
   a. What would you call this style of music?
   b. What is it about this music that draws you in?
   c. Is this the type of music that you would say you primarily listen to?
3. Tell me about the first concert you ever went to.
4. What's the best concert you ever went to and why?
5. Who would you most like to see that you have not seen yet?
6. How does a concert compare to listening to the same artist on your own?
7. How did you first get into music?
8. Tell me a little bit about your favorite musical artists.
9. What drew you to them?
10. What is it about these artists and/or songs that make them your favorite?
    a. Do the lyrics resonate with you personally?
    b. How so?
11. How long have you been listening to this type of music?
12. What were your musical preferences like during high school?
13. Have your musical preferences changed since entering high school to now?
    a. How?
14. Do you think you utilize (listen to) music differently now compared to before (in high school)?
15. How much do you listen to music on your own in comparison to listening to it with others?
16. Is there a difference in listening to music on your own versus when listening with others?
17. Did music ever help you during any particularly difficult situations?
    a. Can you tell me a little bit more about this event(s)?
    b. What were you listening to?
    c. What about music helped you during this time?
18. What role do you think music plays when it comes to your mood?
    a. Please describe.
    b. What about during adolescence?
19. Was there ever a time when you chose music that made you feel down?
    a. Please describe.
    b. What function did music serve for you?
20. Are there any kinds of music or bands that you choose to listen to because they make you feel blue, down, or even nostalgic?

        a. Please describe.

        b. What function did that music serve for you?

21. Have you ever found yourself pulled towards that type of music or did you find yourself avoiding it?

22. Have you ever experienced prolonged periods of feeling down, sad, or depressed?

        a. Tell me a little bit more about that.

        b. How did you utilize music during this time?

23. Have you ever self-harmed? (Cutting, burning, etc)

24. Do you know of anyone with similar music tastes that has self-harmed?

        a. Do you think that there is an existing stereotype for this kind of music and self-harm?

        b. **(If yes)** What are your thoughts on this "stereotype"?

25. Have you ever been labeled emo by others?

        a. If yes, do you agree with that or not?

26. What does the term emo mean to you?

27. People who may not know much about the emo genre, how would they stereotype it as?

28. Have you ever been misunderstood because of your music preferences?

29. Have you ever received negative attention from peers or others based on your choice of music or what you looked like?

        a. Can you please tell me about this experience?

        b. What was that like for you?

30. Have you seen others who may dress similarly to you or like the same type of music receive negative attention?

        a. If so, please describe.

        b. Why do you think they received this negative attention?

31. What would you like to say to people who may not understand your choice of music?

32. How would you describe your identity at this point in time?

        a. How has it changed?

        b. What has your journey been like? (Beginning adolescence to now)

33. How would you describe your individual style?

        a. What do you typically wear?

        b. How is it a personal representation of your personal individuality?

        c. Is your style similar to how it was in high school?

34. Do you think that there is a relationship between music and fashion?

        a. Can you tell me a little bit more?

35. How has music played a role in how you've developed as a person? As an individual?

36. What role do you think music has played in your development as a female?

37. Do you think there are differences between males and females in your music community?

        a. Please describe.

38. Many of the bands are mostly male, what do you think of that?

39. Is it ever difficult relating to the music you listen to because many of the bands are male?

40. What is it like being a female in the scene?

41. How do you think your friends influenced your music choices?
42. Have you bonded with others based on shared musical tastes? If so, please describe.
43. Do you think music has helped you improve in some way? If so, please explain.
44. Is there anything else you would like to say about music that you feel we have not covered?
    *Only ask if participant has brought in music/song to discuss

APPENDIX O

End Script

 "Thank you so much for doing this interview. I really appreciate the time you've spent sharing your feelings and experiences. For some people, it can be hard to talk about these things. How was it for you?" ***(Provide additional support as needed)***

"This information will help us gain a better understanding of people's music preference as it relates to their emotional processes and identity development. Do you have any questions or is there anything I can do for you?"

(Document subject's question(s))

1) IF THE SUBJECT INDICATES <u>NO</u> CURRENT DIFFICULTIES:
"Thank you again. Also, if you should need any help, you can always your doctor or a healthcare provider if you are experiencing a lot of stress and may be at risk to hurting yourself. Do you feel like you are okay right now?"

YES   NO

"Here's a list of resources. These are available for you to use them in the future if you feel like you need them."

(Document subject's response and make sure she has an emergency contact number. Give resources from APPENDIX I))

"Thanks again, your payment for completing the interview will be an iTunes gift card worth twenty dollars."

2) IF "NO" OR SUBJECT DOES FEEL UPSET/DISTRESSED.

"If you would like to talk to someone, I would strongly encourage you to call someone from the resource list or someone who you feel is a good source of support. Do you have someone you can call? "
(Document response)

IF AT ANY TIME, THE SUBJECT DESCRIBES EMERGENCY ISSUES SUCH AS SUICIDALITY, OR IF THERE ARE CONCERNS REGARDING THE PARTICIPANT:

"Do you have a doctor or a therapist we can call right now?"
If NO:
"Is there someone you can call in your support system that can come and pick you up?"
If NO:

"Let's look at the resource list and see which number is best for us to call right now"
Contact emergency numbers on the resource list. If subject is still distressed, contact PET Team.
ACCESS at 800 854-7771

APPENDIX P

Resources

EMERGENCY (Police, Ambulance)   911

Suicide Prevention Resource Center (SAMSA)   (800) 273-TALK
Servces Youth nationally
24 hours/7 days per week

Info Line   211
Serves California
24 hours/7 days per week

Department of Mental Health Access Line   (800) 854-7771
24 hours/7 days per week

Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health Services
550 S. Vermont Ave.
Los Angeles, CA 900220
(213) 738-4949
www.dmh.co.la.ca.us
Provides psychiatric inpatient services, medication evaluation, individual psychotherapy,
case management, and rehabilitative services.

Pepperdine Community Counseling Clinics
http://gsep.pepperdine.edu/clinics/

West Los Angeles   (310) 568-5752
Encino   (818) 501-1678
Irvine   (949) 223-2570

County of Los Angeles Public Health
Substance Abuse Prevention and Control
Call (800) 564-6600

Alcoholics Anonymous
http://www.aa.org/

Narcotics Anonymous
http://www.na.org/