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<https://doi.org/10.17077/etd.5v9c4ex6>

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IF YOU LISTEN, I'LL TELL YOU HOW I FEEL:
INCARCERATED MEN EXPRESSING EMOTION THROUGH SONGWRITING

by

Catherine Marie Wilson

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the
Doctor of Philosophy degree
in Music in the Graduate College of
The University of Iowa

December 2013

Thesis Supervisor: Associate Professor Mary Cohen

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Graduate College
The University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

PH.D. THESIS

This is to certify that the Ph. D. thesis of

Catherine Marie Wilson

has been approved by the Examining Committee
for the thesis requirement for the Doctor of
Philosophy degree in Music at the December 2013 graduation.

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This thesis is lovingly dedicated to Joseph,
Nicholas, Thomas, Anne-Marie, and Victoria.

“We gather here together with joyful hearts and mind,
 We raise our voices ever, our distant souls to bind.
To remember in this moment of friendship, love and joy,
 That music made together may one day heal mankind.”

—German chorale “Harmonia Mundi”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My most profound musical experiences have always involved others, acting in cooperative spirit, fulfilling a deep need to be connected in our humanness by collective thoughts and emotions. As a part of various musical organizations, I always perceived that I was a part of something larger than myself and felt deep joy in the commonality shared with others through making music. In this spirit, I wish to acknowledge those that shared my journey and guided my path.

I extend my deepest appreciation to my advisor, Dr. Mary Cohen, for her enthusiasm, intellectual expertise, vision, and creative insight. I would also like to thank my dissertation committee members, Dr. Kathryn Whitmore, Dr. Patricia Zebrowski, Dr. Mary Trachsel, and Professor Stephen Swanson for their guidance, encouragement, and support. When this committee first met to discuss this project, there was an unforgettable, inspirational excitement and synergy that sustained me as I searched for answers and grappled with findings.

I would further like to thank the participants in this study, and all of those who work with them. They gave much of themselves as we worked together. As I reached out to them, they reached out to me, and as a songwriting community, we created beautiful, original music.

Finally, I express my deepest gratitude to my family and friends, especially my husband Joseph, my mother, Dr. Emilie Sullivan, and my children Nicholas, Thomas, Anne-Marie, and Victoria. Your love and patience sustained me throughout this process. You inspire all I do.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Throughout human history, music has served as a coping mechanism when people have endured extreme hardships in life. Reports on the Holocaust, Japanese-American internment camps, and prison work songs are powerful testimonies that reveal the importance of music for oppressed populations enduring extreme hardships. While victims of the Holocaust and Japanese Americans sentenced to concentration camps and internment camps were not convicted of criminal acts, as are incarcerated adults accused of breaking a law, they were forced to endure similar living conditions, including overcrowded facilities, hostility, loss of property, loss of social status and dignity, and extreme stress (Adler, 2006; Waseda, 2005).

Music in Prisons

Music and songs in prisons evolved out of a necessity to express the pain of prison experience and as a means of survival (Adler, 2006; Harbert, 2010; Hirsch, 2012; Perkinson, 2009; Tarius, 2008). Harbert (2010) explored the notion of “prison music” not just as a musical style, but also as an interactive, musical experience. Harbert reported that music has a unique place in prison, and that today, inmates rap in fields, sing in gospel choirs, play in country bands, and write songs of every imaginable genre.

Cultural transmission and meaning. Music in prisons has served many functions, including reducing tension and animosity, providing a creative outlet and a positive way of expressing emotions, increasing empathy for other participants as human beings, giving participants a sense of peace, and helping inmates work under difficult conditions (Alexander 2010; Perkinson, 2009; Tauris, 2008; Van de Wall, 1936). Perkinson (2009) examined the role of prisoner self-expression in the destabilization of

the harshest penal regime in American history—convict leasing—which developed more extensively in Texas than in any other state. Convict leasing, an extension of slavery, was a system of penal labor practiced in the South beginning with the emancipation of slaves at the end of the Civil War until the practice ended in Alabama, in 1928. Convict labor was provided to private parties, such as plantation owners and corporations. The lessees were responsible for feeding and clothing the prisoners, most of whom were African-American. Often, the prisoners were given physically demanding tasks and were expected to work in brutal conditions. To pass the time and synchronize the work, the prisoners often sang.

Prison field songs never directly confronted authority; however, it helped harmonize prisoner perspectives in ways that encouraged more overt subversion (Perkinson, 2009). African-American convicts drew on slavery's cultural memory to compose thousands of field hollers and work songs. Bluesy field hollers served a variety of purposes, such as setting the work pace and synchronizing dangerous tasks such as group wood chopping. Yet African-American prison music was more than commonsensical; work songs often had multiple, latent meanings. With its lyrics about hard bosses, cruel treatment, long sentences, loves lost, and spectacular crimes, prisoner ballads also enabled inmates to share their sorrows, revel in past exploits, and verbalize defiance (Jackson, 1972).

As an example of the multiple layers of meaning in prison songs, consider the work song “Great Godamighty.” As workers labored in the fields to the steady rhythm of the song, the song on one level was helping to accomplish the “master’s task.” When an angry supervisor rode up on the squad of workers with a “bull whip in one han’, cowhide

in de udder,” the lead singer, often the squad’s strongest hand, would urge his fellow workers to pick up the pace: “Better go to driven.” A second level of meaning occurred during the moment of confrontation, when the workers depicted the mercilessness of the angry supervisor through the call and response lyrics: “Cap’n let me off, suh!” Great Godamighty! “Woncha ’low me a chance, suh?” Great Godamighty! “Bully, low’ down yo’ britches!” Great Godamighty! “De Bully went to pleadin’,” Great Godamighty! “De Bully went to hollerin’,” Great Godamighty! According to Lomax (1947), the lead singer’s call and the workers’ response gained a cumulative momentum, with more voices urgently joining in each time as the lead singer pleaded their case (pp. 159–161). The singers would finally surrender to “hollerin’” when the leather whip came down on their bare backs (Lomax, 1947). The refrain “Great Godamighty” suggested that a higher power was judging the events as they unfolded, lending another layer of meaning. The severity of the prisoners’ critique, according to Lomax, was not lost on the guards, adding another layer to the complexities of this song. “The goose pimples always come out along my spine when I hear niggers sing that song,” whispered a prison guard (pp. 159–161). Indeed, many prison songs have expressed multiple levels of meaning that were understood by both the performers and the listeners (Harbert, 2010; Lomax, 1947).

Historically, songs have also played an important role in prisons in countries other than the United States. In Spain, the gypsies, sometimes referred to as “Rom” have been victims of discrimination, and have wound up in Spain’s prisons. Gonzalez (2003), in his landmark study of Rom prison songs, recorded musical styles and lyric themes, and identified suffering as a prevalent theme in the prison flamenco songs. Topics of these songs included detainment, incarceration, sentencing, and authorities wielding power

over the Rom. Other themes depicted everyday prison life, distinguished by surveillance, inspections, mistreatment, exclusion, and cultural marginalization. According to Gonzalez, these songs provide deep insight into a marginalized group of prisoners, revealing an informal “submerged justice system,” reflecting the values of the Rom in conflict with the Spanish norm.

On a trip to Ireland, Tarius (2008) visited the Cork Old City Gaol (jail), receiving a historical glimpse of the harsh realities of prison life. In Ireland, over 100 years ago, being poor was associated with being criminal, and many of the poor who were arrested for petty crimes were shipped to the island prison Van Diemen's Land, which is what Europeans first called Tasmania. Here, over 12,500 convicts from Ireland and England lived under unspeakably harsh conditions. The songs of these prisoners during the 19th century speak of their difficult journey to the island and the hardships of Tasmanian prison life. More than one out of four people died at sea on the journey to Tasmania. Survivors labored to build their own cells. Twenty- five thousand women and girls were transported to jails in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land. Their songs told of their struggles:

They chained us two by two and whipped and lashed along,
 They cut off our provision if we did the least thing wrong.
 They'd march us in the burning sun until our feet are sore,
 So hard's our lot now we are got to Van Diemen's shore.
(Australian Folk Songs, 2007)

The songs of humans in captivity. Humans held in captivity for whatever reason have often used music as a way to deal with hardships, to bond, and to express difficult emotions in both individual and group settings (Adler, 2006; Flam, 2002; Tarius, 2008; Waseda, 2005). Several studies have suggested that people living amidst comparable

conditions of hardship often write song lyrics with similar thematic material. In studies that analyze song lyrics with populations facing specific life challenges, common themes and metaphors describe a particular feeling or emotion, such as a “black cloud” depicting depression, or “rain” to depict sadness or crying (Anderson, 2012; Ippoliti, 2009; Jurgensmeier, 2012; Thompson, 2009; Vander Kooij, 2009).

Issues Associated with Incarceration

Popular presentation of prison life is often surrounded with spectacle, and media representations of prisons do little to promote understanding between those living within the prison walls and those living as free citizens. Exotic depictions of a “criminal class” dramatize the horrors of prisoner behavior and prison life. While these televised dramas may or may not be accurate, incarceration is indeed a distinct subculture; unfortunately, racially oppressed and impoverished members of society are often the most familiar with the culture of incarceration (Alexander, 2010; Caldwell, 2007; Western, Kleycamp, & Rosenfeld, 2006). In addition to race and poverty, reports suggest that young delinquents often have other medically defined physiological disorders that require specialized interventions, including Conduct Disorder (CD) or Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD). Among the prison population, Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) frequently accompanies Conduct Disorder (CD) and Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD) (Rio & Tenney, 2002). Moreover, many young delinquents do not have functional, supportive families and have been harshly parented. The parents of these young delinquents are often living outside of societal and legal boundaries themselves, and they often have social deficits (Rio & Tenney, 2002).

Understanding how to express one's emotions in a healthy, socially acceptable way is a skill that is often lacking among prison populations (Gallagher & Steele, 2002; Rio & Tenney, 2002; Thaut, 1989; Watson, 2002; Wyatt, 2002), and songwriting may offer a psychologically safe way to express deeply felt and difficult emotions (Anderson 2012; Dalton & Krout, 2006; Grockle, Bloch, & Castle, 2008; Hatcher, 2004; Ippoliti, 2009; Jurgensmeier, 2012; McFerran, Baker, Patton, & Sawyer, 2006; Vander Kooij, 2006; Viega, 2013). Prison life is overwhelmingly stressful, the primary stressors including lost income, loss of freedom, diminished status, lost relationships, and crowded conditions. Because prison culture is socially complex and therefore difficult for those who are new to the system, inmates often struggle with taking on the identity of a prisoner while losing their former identity as a free citizen. While this is especially true for new prisoners, all inmates struggle with complex feelings and fears, such as fear of victimization (Maitland & Sludder, 1996), and they often have profound feelings of anxiety when they think of life after prison (Gallagher, 2001; Harbert, 2010; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams, 2006).

A loss of freedom means that opportunities to make individual choices in prison are minimal (Alexander, 2010; Tarius, 2008). Making positive choices among the few that are available is a valuable skill, and the incarcerated often need to learn how to make such choices when interacting with others, or when deciding how to spend their leisure time. Fulford, Reed, Thaut, Van deWall, and Watson assess that musical practice provides opportunities for incarcerated people to make positive choices (Fulford, 2002; Reed, 2002; Thaut, 1989; Van deWall, 1936; Watson, 2002). The essential elements of musical practice involve a poetic juxtaposing of freedom and restraint: music-making

entails individual choices, and self-restraint is necessary in the expression of meaning within the aesthetic constraints. Songwriting research suggests that the feeling of mental freedom when engaging in music-making may be beneficial for those who are incarcerated (Rovit, 2005; Waseda, 2005). Music therapy reports indicate that incarcerated songwriters are positively affected by the opportunity to make choices during songwriting (Fulford, 2002; Reed, 2002; Watson, 2002), but it is not yet known to what extent learning how to make choices through songwriting carries over into other aspects of life.

Research suggests that songwriting helps people express their emotions and that songwriting is a therapeutic and educational catalyst (Anderson, 2012; Hatcher, 2004; Jurgensmeier, 2012; Sena-Martinez, 2012; Sena-Moore, 2009; Viega, 2013). Not only does songwriting facilitate cognitive functioning and processing of difficult emotions, but it also organizes a historical account of one's psychic journeys through discovery and recovery (Dalton & Krout, 2006). Songwriting as part of an educational intervention for prisoners could enhance their ability to express themselves emotionally, and provide tools for making positive choices and decisions within a limited context (Hakvoort, 2002; Thaut, 1989; Watson, 2002).

Problem Statement

While a number of studies consider processing and expression of emotions through songwriting among populations facing emotional, cognitive, or circumstantial challenges, I am unaware of studies that have researched the emotional expression of songs written by people who are incarcerated, or the influence of participating in songwriting while incarcerated. Understanding how songwriting could be a pro-social

outlet for reflection, making choices, and expressing emotions while incarcerated would be helpful for music educators, music therapists, and others who work with forensic clientele and incarcerated students.

Purpose for Research

The purpose of this study is to gain a greater understanding of what emotions are expressed through original songs written by men who are incarcerated, and how songwriting as an outlet for emotional expression influences the men. Through this research, I examine how Alan Waterman's (1990) theory of the Personally Expressive Personality contributes to the findings of this study, and I further explicate how songwriting is a personally expressive activity for these men. In addition, I discuss pedagogical methods used to facilitate songwriting, and how Mary Cohen's Theory of Interactional Choral Singing Pedagogy (2007a) contributes to this research. Axel James was a very prolific participant who wrote 32 songs during the span of his incarceration. I examine his lyrics to understand changes in his emotional expression over time through his writing, from the beginning of his incarceration in 2008 to his transfer to a treatment facility in 2011.

Research Questions

Regarding the participants in the Songwriters' Workshop:

1. What emotions are expressed in the lyrics of songs written by incarcerated songwriters?
2. What emotions are expressed during the group discussions of the Songwriters' Workshops?

3. To what extent does Waterman's theory contribute to the understanding of personal expression for these men?

4. How does Cohen's theory contribute to the teaching and learning processes used in this study to facilitate songwriting?

Regarding case-study participant Axel James:

1. How does his expression of emotion change over time during his incarceration?
2. What role does songwriting play as Axel imagines his future and his eventual release from prison?

Definitions

The following definitions will apply to this research context:

MPCF: Midwest Prison Correctional Facility; this is a pseudo-acronym for the research site.

MPCC: Midwest Prison Community Choir; this is a pseudo-acronym for the prison community choir at the research site that includes female and male volunteer singers from the community and male incarcerated singers.

Participant: An incarcerated songwriter participating in the Songwriters' Workshop.

Songwriters' Workshop: A group of instructor-facilitators and incarcerated songwriters that meet once per week within the research site.

Songwriting: Engaging in a form of human expression that combines writing lyrics with elements of music, such as melodies, rhythms, and expressive components. For this study, the lyrics will be used for analysis with respect to the original songs composed.

Emotion: “A complex pattern of changes, including physiological arousal, feelings, cognitive processes, and behavioral reactions, made in response to a situation perceived to be personally significant” (American Psychological Association, 2013).

Overview of the Conceptual Framework

Alan Waterman (1990) proposed a theory of “psychological individualism,” which is the conceptual framework for this research study. Waterman analyzed personal expressiveness by examining its connections with three concepts that have occupied the theoretical research attention of psychologists: (a) intrinsic motivation, (b) flow, and (c) self-actualization. His analysis was influenced by the work of psychologists Day, Berleyne, Hunt, Deci, and Ryan, who studied intrinsic motivation; Csiksentmihaiyi who researched flow experiences; and Maslow, who studied self-actualization. Waterman suggested that intrinsically motivated activities are said to be their own reward; in other words, intrinsically motivating activities are to be engaged in for their own sake rather than for an extrinsic reward. He also noticed that individuals are selective when choosing intrinsically rewarding activities; not all people find the same activities intrinsically motivating or satisfying. Csikszentmihalyi (1975), in analyzing individual selectivity of intrinsically motivating activities, referred to the enjoyment of the cognitive-affective experience as “flow”; Csikszentmihalyi implied that the flow experience is inherent reward for intrinsically motivating activities. Waterman (1990) suggested that the experience of flow emerges from a balance between the individual’s skills and the challenges provided by the environment. When both skills and challenges are relatively high but achievable, a flow experience may be the perceived reward. Waterman further

suggested that intrinsically motivating activities in which individuals experience a sense of flow lead to self-actualization.

Maslow (1968) defined self-actualization as “ongoing actualization of potentials, capacities, and talents, as fulfillment of mission (or call, fate, destiny, or vocation) as a fuller knowledge of, and acceptance of, the person’s own intrinsic nature, as an increasing trend toward unity, integration, or synergy within the person” (p. 25). Self-actualization may refer to the most extensive and complete form of intrinsic motivation, in comparison with common experiences that are less challenging, and are therefore milder (Waterman, 1990). “Activities will be experienced as personally expressive to the extent that they engage and serve to further the development of an individual’s particular potentials, capacities, and talents” (p. 51). According to Waterman, activities that a person most values, that advance his or her potentials, capacities, and talents, are most intrinsically motivating and experienced as most personally expressive.

Waterman (1990) suggested that the roots of the concept of personal expressiveness can be traced to the philosophical tradition of eudaimonism, which is an ethical theory that extends at least as far back as classic Hellenistic philosophy. According to Waterman, the theory of eudaimonism propels people to recognize and live in accordance with the daimon or “true self” (p. 52). Two classical Greek injunctions, “Know thyself,” and “Become what you are” are underlying constructs of Eudaimonism. While the daimon is seen as universally achievable for all people in varying forms and degrees, an assumption is made that there are activities for which each individual actualizes personal potential. It is by engaging in these activities that he or she will have a sense of greater self-expression and self-fulfillment than through other endeavors. While

eudaimonia and hedonic happiness appear to be interrelated, the advances in skills and/or purposes that are an integral part of eudaimonia are not essential to experiences of hedonic enjoyment.

Research studies indicate that well-structured, high quality music programs in prisons have had positive psychological and social outcomes. These programs have been shown to help reduce tension and animosity among the prisoners (Lee, 2010; Tarius, 2008; Van de Wall, 1936). Alan Waterman's (1990) theory of "psychological individualism" in which he suggests that a personally expressive personality pattern integrates ideas based on four traditions, appears to reflect individual experiences and findings of songwriting research. According to Waterman, a personally expressive personality can include one, some, or all of the four traditions: "(a) a sense of personal identity, (b) self-actualization, (c) an internal locus of control, and (d) principled moral reasoning" (p.47).

Waterman (1990) also states that personally expressive activities include one or more of the following experiences:

- (a) an unusually intense involvement in an undertaking, (b) a feeling of special fit or meshing with an activity that is not characteristic of most daily tasks, (c) A feeling of being complete or fulfilled while engaged in the activity, and (d) an impression that this is what the person was meant to do. (p. 47)

Research suggests that songwriting is an all-consuming activity that could contribute to the participants' sense of personal expression (Anderson, 2012; Jurgensmeier, 2012; Morin, 2008; Stephenson, 2001; Tobias, 2010; Viega, 2013). Songwriting usually demands intense engagement and involvement of the participants, and a sense of being consumed with the activity at hand often gives participants a feeling of fulfillment as they engage in the songwriting process (Citron, 2008; Cohen & Wilson, 2012; Sena-Martinez,

2012; Tobias, 2010). These findings point toward Waterman's theory of psychological individualism.

The Prison

The research site for this study is a large, medium-security Midwest prison that houses approximately one thousand men. All of the men in the general population have jobs within the prison, and the university with which I am associated has educational partnerships with the prison. Through these partnerships, the men have opportunities to participate in the Prison Community Choir, the Songwriters' Workshop, the Writers' Workshop, the Job Club, the Book Club, and parenting classes inside the prison. Often, the men who participate in the Songwriters' Workshop also participate in the Writers' Workshop, an educational venue that provides opportunities for the men to enjoy writing, share writing, and improve writing skills.

The Prison Choir and Songwriters' Workshop

The Midwest Prison Community Choir, made up of women and men living outside the prison ("outside singers") and incarcerated men ("inside singers") who self-select to participate, began in February of 2009 by Dr. Mary Cohen. Cohen decided to use "outside singers," to provide opportunities for inside and outside singers to interact with one another and to achieve a fuller, four-part choral sound made up of both men and women. Cohen noticed that the combination of outside and inside singers seemed to provide high-quality musical and social experiences for both the outside singers and the incarcerated singers, and participants would frequently reveal in open-ended questionnaires how much they were enjoying singing and interacting in the choir (Cohen, 2012a).

When the choir began, Cohen established a reflective writing component paired with a book (*On Writing* by Stephen King) for participants to think about the choral experiences in between rehearsals (Cohen, 2012c). These writing reflections were mandatory for a group of graduate students who sang in the choir, and optional for the other participants in the choir. In the summer 2009 season, rather than pairing a book with the reflective writing component, the emphasis was on writing original lyrics. In the fall semester when the writing component shifted back to a reflective writing component paired with a book (*We're All Doing Time* by Bo Lozoff), a few inside singers continued to turn in lyrics to original songs, and they requested that Cohen create music to go with the words. Cohen found that it was difficult to collaborate with the lyricists without being able to meet with them individually. After the prison administrators requested the choir only meet during the fall and spring academic semesters, Dr. Cohen started the Songwriters' Workshop in the summer of 2010 as a way to focus on songwriting through interactive experiences. In this setting, the men shared their ideas and original pieces. The Songwriters' Workshop also became a musical resource for the prison community choir. When a songwriter had finished a piece, it might be performed in a concert setting by the prison community choir in an upcoming choir season. Occasionally, outside singers composed songs that the prison community choir performed. Men in the Songwriters' Workshop performed original songs at summer concerts that concluded the summer Songwriters' Workshop sessions. Prison staff members, inside singers, and outside singers attended these summer performances.

My Role as a Songwriting Facilitator

I started working as a facilitator with the Songwriters' Workshop in the fall of 2010, and continued through the summer of 2012, assisting in the design of group music-learning experiences for the men, often facilitating vocal improvisation activities. I also provided lyrical and musical guidance as individuals or groups worked to write original songs. Singing in the Midwest Prison Community Choir from January of 2011 to June of 2012 also helped me to be familiar with the participants and the research site.

The Songwriters' Workshop

The Songwriters' Workshop meets once per week on Tuesday evenings during the fall and spring academic semesters for 45 minutes per session. During the summers, the songwriting class time is extended to 90 minutes because the choir is on summer vacation. The classes are usually structured so that the first 10 minutes are spent developing musical skills, the next 15–20 minutes are spent writing new ideas or improving old ones, and the last 15 minutes are used to share the original works that members of the group wrote and are ready to present. The group uses the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process (Lerman & Borstel, 2003) to provide strength-based feedback to each other as they work through the creative process of writing their songs, and this is usually done as a group with a facilitator, usually Cohen or me, guiding the response process.

Through the use of writing prompts, rhythmic studies, melodic improvisation, and relative solfa, the participants often learn enough about music to be able to write their musical thoughts for future revision, sharing, and performance. This writing may be very simple, from words on a page with lines above the words, indicating the melodic contour

of the piece, to more complex, with pitches and rhythms notated on staff paper.

Participants seem to enjoy writing songs of many musical styles, to include rap, country, ballads, rock and roll, and even choral pieces reminiscent of post-Romanticism. Ballad style songs have been the most popular.

Goals. Generally speaking, songwriters usually want to develop a song concept, construct lyrics that rhyme, create a memorable song, and enjoy the art of songwriting. To that end, the Songwriters' Workshop in the Midwest Prison had the following goals:

- Develop a concept for a song.
- Construct lyrics with a form and rhyme scheme.
- Recognize rhythmic and melodic motives that make a song memorable and use them to create a song.
- Perform the original song for or with a group.
- Enjoy and find meaning in the art of songwriting and sharing.

An essential part of the Songwriters' Workshop is to foster creativity by giving relevant, meaningful feedback to each participant.

The songwriting process. In general, the songwriters begin creating original songs original by writing lyrics, and then the music. Further steps include adding some expressive elements, and finally, sharing the song with others. Once a songwriter is ready, he volunteers to read the lyrics or perform his song, sometimes with help from others, or more often, alone. The Liz Lerman Critical Response Process (Lerman & Borstel, 2003) provided a tool to reflect in a nonjudgmental way on original material and focus the discussion on the needs of the songwriter.

An Overview of the Literature Review

Through the review of literature, I discuss the many implications of music making for people living in prison, and I highlight the need for further research regarding songwriting for those who are incarcerated. Because songwriting with prisoners is the focus of this study, I review literature relevant to music, songwriting, and incarceration. I examine the literature in five sections: (a) The Implications of Songwriting, (b) Understanding the Lives of the Incarcerated, (c) Implications of Music Programs for the Incarcerated, (d) Songwriting while Incarcerated, and (e) Researcher Concerns.

An Overview of the Methodology

In Chapter Three, I describe the qualitative paradigm of the study, including the research site, the participants, and one case-study participant, Axel James. I examine my role in the research process as a participant/observer, and discuss the data sources that I use, the ways in which the data are collected, and how I analyze the data to create an interpretive theory.

This qualitative study used the natural paradigm of a real-world situation inside a men's prison. Grounded theory methods, including initial coding, focused coding, and memo-writing were used to analyze the collected data. Data sources examined included lyrics of 47 participant-written songs and 32 additional songs, written by Axel James; facilitator- and participant-written observations and reflections; transcriptions from four 60-minute songwriting sessions, and 29 sound files from a live, participant-performed concert. Throughout the analysis process, I entered the data into HyperResearch, a computer program that is designed to help organize and code. Other qualitative research

considerations are discussed in Chapter Three, such as the use of multiple sources of data to assure the validity and reliability of the study, consideration of my researcher subjectivity, and ethical considerations that are relevant to the context of this research.

Limitations and Delimitations

The findings from this study on the phenomenon of expressing emotion through songwriting while incarcerated are limited to the particular correctional facility and population that was being studied. The analysis of the emotional content in the songs is limited to the participant-written lyrics and concert sound-files. While I have spent adequate time (32 weeks) within the facility to know the writers, I was not there on a daily basis to understand the everyday aspects of life while incarcerated. I was the only investigator conducting this study, and while I am took precautions to assure that I accurately interpreted the data by using multiple sources, it is possible that I may have misinterpreted the emotion that a particular songwriter wanted to convey.

I only studied incarcerated songwriters in order to understand the phenomenon of incarceration, and although overlap with other populations of songwriters may occur, such non-incarcerated populations are beyond the scope of this study. My analysis consisted of grounded theory methods. While music therapy studies are cited in this study, this is not a music therapy study.

Possible Implications for Music Education

The findings of this research study further the understanding of facilitating creative musicianship, improving songwriting pedagogy, and empowering self-expression through songwriting. The participants in this study wrote songs as individuals, and in collaboration with others. Sometimes they wrote pieces as a unified group. This

study also further contributes to the understanding of group learning and social relationships in an educational setting, as well the motivational effects that belonging to such a group may have upon an individual learner. Such information could be important not only to educators, but also to individuals who desire to seek new skills or improve existing ones.

CHAPTER TWO: THE LITERATURE REVIEW

Researchers are investigating various aspects of music-making in prisons, but few studies have considered songwriting opportunities for incarcerated writers. There is limited research that documents the emotional expression of incarcerated songwriters. Furthermore, I did not find any studies that investigate the expression of emotion through songwriting, and how that expression affects the writers. Within this literature review I discuss implications of songwriting, challenges of those who are incarcerated, effects of music for people in prison, songwriting while incarcerated, and my concerns as a researcher. My goal in discussing this literature is to give a sense of perspective and awareness of the cognitive, expressive, and emotional aspects of songwriting, as well as daily challenges of prison life for inmates. Such background information provides understanding to this research project.

The Implications of Songwriting

Arts-based programs link songwriting with a wide variety of academic, social, and emotional functions among populations, including children (Gfeller, 1987; Morin, 2008; Roberts, 2006; Smith, 2000; Satterwhite, 1991; Stephenson, 2004; Tobias, 2010), those who are terminally ill (Anderson, 2012), victims of trauma (Hatcher, 2004) those suffering from mental disorders (Groke, Bloke & Castle, 2008; Vander Kooij, 2009), homeless adolescents (Jurgensmeier, 2012), underserved urban youth (Viega, 2013), and adults of all ages (Alvarado, 2012; Bakan, 1999; Barba, 2005; Ippoliti, 2009; Krout, Baker, & Muhlberger, 2010; Sena-Martinez, 2012). These studies suggest that songwriting opportunities which are flexible enough to meet learners' varying physical, emotional, and cognitive needs can enrich the songwriters' lives and give greater depth

of understanding to the creative process, social interactions, and human relationships. In addition to these influences upon our understanding of creative processes and social interactions, researchers have investigated links between songwriting and cognition.

Songwriting and cognition: A connection. Cognition of particular events, situations, or circumstances and how these elements were related to “the self” in Western culture has been essential in understanding how to express oneself in a socially acceptable way, and this ability has often been linked to the concept of self-esteem (Markus & Kitayama, 1991). Research using songwriting as an educational or therapeutic intervention implies that songwriting improves a variety of cognitive skills, including reading and language skills (Gfeller, 1994; Smith, 2000), basic cognitive functioning (Hong & Choi, 2011), and recognition of human relationships (Silverman, 2011). Research also implies that songwriting facilitates productive working relationships between patients and therapists (Silverman, 2011).

In addition to its influence on these skills, songwriting also shapes the learning processes of reading and writing. John Smith (2000) and James Cantor (2006) both discuss the usefulness of songwriting in teaching students of varying ability levels to read and write. Smith states that learning letter names and sounds, phonemic awareness, print conventions, background knowledge, vocabulary, decoding, and writing can be supported through songwriting activities. Repetitive and cumulative songs additionally reinforce learning, as students develop familiar songs with their original, fresh lyrics (Gfeller, 1994; Smith, 2000). Smith (2000) and Cantor (2006) both report that their students developed positive self-esteem through writing songs, and that performing the songs for an audience further deepened their learning. The songs provided powerful

expressions of the writers' experiences, as well as an opportunity to explain and interpret their current circumstances (Cantor, 2006; Smith, 2000). Studies suggest that songwriters enjoyed sharing their original work (Anderson, 2012; Bakan, 1999; Cantor, 2006; Fulford, 2002; Roy, 2009; Smith, 2000). For adults diagnosed with dementia, the cognitive areas of language, memory, and orientation as measured by the MMSE-K showed improvement following songwriting activities (Hong & Choi, 2011). Hong and Choi's (2011) research suggests that songwriting oriented activities may be a useful music therapy strategy for improving the cognitive functions of the aged with dementia.

Both Hong and Choi (2011) and Yang (2009) state that although cognitive functioning slightly decreases in an aging population, the decline can be minimized through psychosocial therapies, such as life guidance, recreation, music therapy, occupational therapy, horticulture therapy, reminiscence therapy, and a host of other enjoyable activities. Unfortunately, aging prisoners do not often have access to cognitively stimulating, socially-oriented activities, and this could mean more pronounced effects of cognitive aging for the prison population (Adhay, 2003; Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams et, al., 2006). Studies suggest that group songwriting provides opportunities for positive social experiences (Anderson, 2012; Jurgensmeier, 2012; Morin, 2008; Viega, 2013). Group songwriting has been shown to be an effective tool for promoting discussion, information sharing, and educating people living under similar conditions, challenges or illnesses (Hong & Choi, 2011; Silverman, 2011).

Silverman (2011) conducted a study to determine if group songwriting for hospitalized psychiatric patients who had been diagnosed as mentally ill could be

effectively used as a means of discussing and learning about coping skills in order to deal with the afflictions of mental illness. Silverman's results indicate that group songwriting about coping skills can be as effective a psychosocial intervention as traditional talk-based psycho education when teaching psychiatric inpatients how to proactively manage their mental illnesses.

The Smith, Hong and Choi, Yang, and Silverman studies give us some insight into the cognitive implications of songwriting. Statistics regarding the prison population suggest that prisoners have a higher incidence of difficulty with both the intellectual and social dimensions of cognition (Herrington, 2009; Rio & Tenney, 2002). To further complicate matters, the average prisoner has only 11 years of formal education as compared with 13 years for the general population, and this educational deficit exasperates the slowing of cognitive functioning (Alexander, 2010; Western, Kleycamp, & Rosenfeld, 2006; Rio & Tenney, 2002). Research indicates that songwriting is not only a positive social activity, but also a meaningful, expressive, and creative outlet for writers, furthering their intellectual and social education, and sense of satisfaction from writing an original song (Anderson, 2012; Alvarado, 2012; Bakan, 1999; Barba, 2005; Hatcher, 2004; Ippoliti, 2009; Jurgensmeiser, 2012; Morin, 2008; Satterwhite, 1999; Sena-Martinez, 2012; Stephenson, 2001; Tobias, 2010; Viega, 2013). Often, the first step in creating a meaningful song is to write lyrics in the form of a poem (Satterwhite, 1999). Research suggests that poetry helps a writer to reflect and express deep felt emotion, and poetry is useful in examining emotional expressions.

Lyrics add dimension to poetic expression. When a songwriter renders a situation or a feeling into poetic form, the song says something unique, something that

could not have been said in any other way (Satterwhite, 1999). The original feeling or the emotion is intensified by the act of consolidating the thought into poetic form. Cahnmann (2003) suggests that writing poetry involves a balance of freedom and constraint; poets use structured forms to support their creative play. Writing poetry calls for a heightened sense of language; the poet must consider the sounds of phonemes, prosody, and tone, and coordinate these with syntactical structures of word order and semantics (verbal meaning). Phrases and sentences are ordered to create images, meanings, logic, and narrative (Cahnmann, 2003; Leavy, 2009). Cahnmann (2003) also suggests that regular and irregular rhythms, such as patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables, may have special meaning in a given situation; end stops, punctuation, white space, and short lines focus visual and auditory attention, heightening the word impact. When discussing poetry and its possible emotional effects upon both the poet and an audience, “poetry is a risky business” (p. 30). She also goes on to say, “Through poetic craft and practice, we can surprise ourselves and our audiences with new possibilities” (p. 34).

Leavy (2009) expresses sentiments similar to Cahnmann’s regarding expressive elements of poetry. She mentions that poems are highly attentive to space, which includes breaths and pauses, and words are used sparsely to create a feeling (p. 64). In other words, poems use language, rhythm, and space to create sensory scenes where meaning emerges from the careful construction of both language and silences. “In this way,” Leavy writes, “a poem can be understood as evoking a snippet of human experience that is artistically expressed in a heightened state” (p. 64). Leavy also mentions that poetry evokes multiple layers of meaning. Poetry defies singular

definitions because what is absent in the text is just as important as what is present; poetry mirrors the complexity of identity, and the difficulties of recognizing who we are and who we want to be. According to Leavy, evokes emotional responses; sometimes uniting humankind, other times, causing disparity as it captures the human condition and social realities, while reaching broad audiences.

Besides the structured complications that poetry brings to the song texts, elements of music, such as pitches, rhythms, and phrasing, further complicate poetry. Highly regarded for his work on music and human conceptualization and behavior, the ethnomusicologist Alan P. Merriam (1923–1980) in a 1964 study claimed that language clearly affects music in that speech melody sets up certain patterns that must be followed, at least to some extent, in order to be understood by the listener (Merriam, 1964). Merriam explained that song texts often have cultural meanings, and that songs often clearly reflect the culture of which they are a part: “Through the study of song texts,” Merriam writes, “it may well be possible to strike quickly through the protective mechanisms to arrive at an understanding of ethos of the culture, and to gain some perspective of the psychological problems and processes peculiar to it” (p. 201). Song texts can be used and/or created for a variety of cultural reasons, including relieving psychological tension, or for correcting erring members in a society (Merriam, p. 207). Song texts can be *post-facto*, that is, arising out of situations that already exist. These types of songs may be historical or neutral, commenting upon everyday situations or dramatic works, perhaps a commentary on a scandal, such as a robbery or a torrid love affair. Songs can also express unsatisfactory social conditions, paint a vision of the future, or crystallize new demands of an undermined population (Ippoliti. 2009;

Merriam, 1964). Examples of songs that were used to bring about social change include Bob Dylan's 1963 hit, "Blowin' in the Wind," and "We Shall Overcome," a hymn of the civil rights movement that has special significance for many as demands for desegregation resounded throughout the United States (Merriam, 1964, p. 207).

Songs of social justice can be traced back through our country's history as slaves, textile workers, migrant workers, farmers and laborers all sought better living conditions. Through a song, individuals or groups express deep-seated feelings that are often not perceptibly verbalized in other contexts (Merriam, 1964, p. 191). Frequently, the text of a particular song may seem quite innocuous at a literal level, while at a figurative, latent level, understood by the audience, it may be revolutionary (p. 195).

Sometimes groups of songwriters have come together for the purpose of writing about social justice, and educating society on social issues (Cantor, 2006; Ippoliti, 2009; Roy, 2009). Carol Roy (2009) wrote that the group known as Raging Grannies reached out through humorous songs to educate the public and challenge authorities on social values such as peace, justice, and the environment. Roy found that the Grannies used satirical songs as their main tool of communication, and that protesting social conditions through songwriting often released the tension and depression attending the isolation of "trying to fix the world alone" (p. 307). Songwriting and singing also strengthened the Grannies' sense of determination, commitment, and group solidarity.

Cantor (2006) expressed a similar sentiment regarding the songwriting process, stating that student songwriters applied learning and created something new from their individual perspectives that expressed empathy for the characters and situations they sang about. The support that the songwriting students received from each other further

helped facilitate their learning as they created new songs. Through songwriting Cantor taught his students to think and write critically about social justice. The songs of the Raging Grannies and Cantor's students suggest how songwriters have functioned as social and cultural minstrels. Both groups tackled contemporary, difficult, contemporary issues and shaped them into a perspective that allowed listeners to consider these concerns in a broad way.

The writings of Cahnmann, Cantor, Ippoliti, Leavy, Merriam, and Roy have broadened my knowledge regarding how poetry, song lyrics, and their literal and latent meanings can affect issues of social justice. Their work also provides insight into the complexity of lyrics, human behavior, and psychological issues. Because a higher portion of the prison population is afflicted with cognitive, situational, social, and mental challenges, I discuss how songwriting can be an expressive outlet for those who are grieving, facing difficult experiences, and coping with mental illnesses.

Songwriting as an expressive outlet. Frumi Cohen, Robert Krout, Felicity Baker, Ralf Muhlberger, and Angela Kinney all have something in common: they have helped students express themselves through songwriting. Krout, Baker, and Muhlberger are music therapists, Angela Kinney is a counselor, and Frumi Cohen is an elementary school music teacher who has taught music and theater for over 30 years. Cohen discusses songwriting as a method she uses in a music classroom setting (Cohen, 2011a), in which a group-written song helps students collectively express themselves in a humorous way. Songwriting research is consistent with her report (Morin, 2008; Satterwhite, 1999; Stephenson, 2001; Tobias, 2010; Viega, 2013).

Research suggests that collaborative and group songwriting is a powerful experience, and writers enjoy the support of one other. Wanting to understand how technology could be used in a music therapy training program, Krout, Baker, and Muhlberger (2011) studied the integration of Skype and electronic technology into the music therapy curriculum to help music therapy students gain skills as songwriters. Data consisted of student reflections regarding their perceptions of online songwriting. The researchers concluded that despite the problems of using technology, the participants found it helpful to engage in the songwriting process with other students, and reported satisfaction and joy in the process of engaging with other distance learners. Student perceptions of collaborative, online songwriting revealed that for many students, engaging in songwriting with peers was a powerful experience. Prior to the study, most students had expressed anxiety about their songwriting abilities, and they were nervous about writing and sharing songs. With time, students developed relationships, and became very comfortable with collaborative writing. Despite the difficulties of communicating online, the students reported that they would rather learn collaboratively online than in an isolated setting. The research of Anderson (2012), Stephenson (2001), Tobias (2010), and Viega (2013) also suggest that collaborative songwriting is emotionally supportive and powerful. Songwriting participants further agreed that writing songs with peers gave them the opportunity to interact socially, and gain a new awareness of their fellow writers.

How does songwriting impact those who have psychological issues, and how are these people able to express themselves through songwriting? The research of Kinney (2012), Groke, Bloch, and Castle (2008), McFerran, Baker, Patton, and Sawyer (2006),

Thompson (2009), and Vander Kooij (2009) provides some insight. When Kinney (2012) asks an adolescent male songwriter we'll call Christopher, "What does your writing mean to you?" Christopher responds, "My life." Kinney's case study of Christopher, a young African-American male, discusses the importance of a community after-school program that gives this student an opportunity to write songs. Christopher spends a great deal of time at a community center, the nonprofit Music Resource Center, writing songs and recording his music. Through songwriting, this young participant is given an opportunity to explore very complex feelings and situations. Songwriting gives him a chance to reflect upon and express his opinion as he processes the crime and violence that he witnesses around him, and he is able to critique much of what is taking place in his community. Rather than seeking refuge in a street-life orientation as his brother had before him, Christopher finds a place of safety within the walls of the MRC, and a way to express what is troubling him (Kinney, 2012). These findings are consistent with the research of Hatcher (2004), Jurgenmeier (2012), Morin (2008), and Viega (2013).

Groke, Bloch, and Castle (2008) suggest that group songwriting experience positively affects severely mentally ill patients, improving their quality of life, through pleasure in the creative process, and enjoyment of group-oriented socialization. A lyric analysis of songs written by the profoundly mentally ill clients included the following themes: concern about the world and the environment, the difficulty of living with mental illness, the strength needed to cope, religion and spirituality as sources of support, the healing quality of living in the present, and joy gained from working as a

team. The therapists were struck by how affirming the experience of songwriting was to the participants (Groke, Bloch, & Castle, 2008).

Cynthia Vander Kooij (2009) was also intrigued when she began to notice that songs by her music therapy clients who suffered from serious mental illness were thematically similar. Hope, identity, empowerment, and making social connections were themes that related to healing. Clients used metaphors throughout their lyrics that represented recovery or periods of wellness, including “freedom,” “peace,” “embracing life,” and “light.” Lyric-themes about times when illness was controlling patients’ lives included hopelessness, lost identity, loss of control, and social isolation. Vander Kooij also found that metaphors such as “rushing floods,” “constant battles,” “hell,” “a black hole,” or a “black death” were used to represent patients’ struggles with illness. Such findings provide a window to the personal experience of mental illness.

According to Thompson (2009), metaphors have been used therapeutically to encourage people to look more deeply at the relationship between the reality of their actual life experiences and the manners in which they describe their lives. Thompson (2009) explored metaphorical themes in music therapy settings. She also examined two case examples in which music therapy clients used metaphors in writing two short, original songs in two separate open music therapy group sessions offered in a psychiatric hospital. Through the discussions and the writing process, clients discovered that they had common experiences and backgrounds, and as they reflected upon the metaphors they had used in their songs, they examined both the literal and the symbolic meanings. Thompson found that many of the clients came to realize that they did not have to “make do” with their circumstances. The metaphors helped them to objectify

their problems and reframe their thinking, and thus reshape their experiences.

Thompson concludes, “the use of metaphor in a group songwriting allows clients the freedom to re-construct their desired future narratives collectively” (p. 9).

The studies mentioned found similar themes and metaphors in the lyrics written by people living with various challenges, and they illustrated how the lyrics of original songs give us some insight into the songwriter’s identity and self. These studies further tell us how identity of the participants was impacted by illness, and how the relationships formed with others coping with similar circumstances affected the writers in a group setting.

How is identity influenced by other human relationships that are not within the bounds of the therapeutic session, relationships that may be perceived as controlling or perhaps difficult? In a study by McFerran et al., 15 adolescent girls with anorexia nervosa contributed 17 original songs they had composed during music therapy sessions for lyric analysis. A modified content analysis approach was used, classifying each lyric as one of six themes determined from relevant literature and the music therapists’ clinical experiences (McFerran, Baker, Patton & Sawyer, 2006). Common themes among these adolescent patients included identity (28%), especially the sub-theme of ‘exploring new behaviors, positive self-talk’ (12.5% of the total) (McFerran, Baker, Patton, & Sawyer, 2006, p.401). Sixty-four lyric units explored relationship dynamics, including relationships with mothers, fathers, families, pets, peers, boyfriends, and others. The therapists hypothesized that the dominance of the identity theme may be explained by the way in which anorexia nervosa has been theorized to assist adolescents in managing their emerging sense of self. Some the young girls felt their maternal

relationships had caused their difficulties, while others described their mothers as ideal parents with whom they strongly identified (p. 401). Another strategy that these girls sometimes used in describing relationships with their mothers was apologizing; the girls outlined their difficult behavior and sought forgiveness for the stress they had put upon their relationships with their mothers (McFerran, Baker, Patton, & Sawyer, 2006). Through apologizing, the young patients were expressing remorse, specifically remorse for their behavior.

Emotional expression and self-understanding. Research suggests that songwriting may serve as an emotional release, and that over time, the writer may gain a sense of psychological safety that enables him or her to express difficult emotions, such as a sense of being overwhelmed, or a feeling of deep grief, guilt, loss, or remorse (Anderson, 2012; Hatcher, 2004; Ippoliti, 2009; Jurgenmeier, 2012; Sena-Martinez, 2012; Viega, 2013). In recent years songwriting with younger children has become increasingly popular as a way to help these young clients understand traumatic events, process their grief, and express their emotions. Through songwriting interventions, counselors have been able to help children develop a greater understanding of how their difficult feelings impact their daily lives, and provide guidance as they increase their emotional self-awareness. Through songwriting these young clients learned to release their emotions in positive ways (Jurgenmeier, 2012; Miles, 1993; Morin, 2008; Roberts, 2006; Worden, 1996; Viega, 2013). Research also indicates that songwriting reduces anxiety, and helps troubled children to understand their world while validating their emotions; furthermore, songwriting assists the counselor in understanding what is troubling a child, enabling the counselor to help children to process their thoughts and

explore alternatives for internal change (Jurgenmeier, 2012; Miles, 1993; Morin, 2008; Roberts, 2006; Worden, 1996; Viega, 2013).

The grieving process is often filled with difficult emotions for both children and adults (Anderson, 2012; Dalton & Krout, 2006; Hatcher, 2004; Roberts, 2006; Worden, 1996). Roberts (2006) describes a music therapist's role in helping a client engage in the bereavement process by getting the clients to tell their stories, in order to process the loss, express grief, accept the loss, and move on with life. Children and teenagers often need support and interventions that are familiar, enjoyable, and age relevant. Roberts describes a home-based music therapy program, and also demonstrates the efficacy of songwriting for these young people. In this context, songwriting enabled the bereaved children and teenagers to explore, share, and express their grief by singing their stories. Encouraging clients to tell their stories through original songs encourages them to regain a sense of control, and consequently, make adaptations for positive change.

Dalton and Krout (2006), who developed and implemented the Grief Songwriting Process (GSPW) with bereaved adolescents in a music therapy setting, analyzed lyrics to understand how the teens were coping with their loss, as well as to understand the core concerns of these grieving youngsters. The adolescents were invited to join a grief songwriting group where they collectively wrote original lyrics to songs that focused on each of the five grief areas: understanding, feeling, remembering, integrating, and growing. The creation and performance of these songs positively impacted the group of songwriters, and they performed their songs with conviction and pride. The group provided a safe space for them to share their difficult emotions and

process their grief, and the group songwriting process, overall, allowed each individual to share in his or her unique journey from grieving to healing.

Songwriting has also helped young adults process strong emotions, fears, and develop a sense of self (Riley, 2012). While teaching songwriting classes for undergraduate students, Riley (2012) explored the personal development of undergraduate liberal arts students that grew out of songwriting interactions. The goal of the classes was to help students learn how to express their feelings through songwriting in a supportive, collaborative environment. The results of Riley's study were overwhelmingly positive. Her research suggests that songwriting appeared to facilitate student development by enabling emotional stability, providing a vehicle for both self-expression and self-discovery. Through songwriting, the students also seemed to experience therapeutic benefits and discover a way to emotionally process and overcome various challenges in their lives: having a seriously ill parent, or difficult romantic relationships, a fear of change, moving away from home, or fear of not succeeding, and deep emotional issues in general.

Songwriting has also been found to help graduate music therapy students process their emotions and cope with stress. Baker and Krout (2012) identified musical, professional, and personal outcomes when students participated in songwriting experiences with their peers. The students in their study developed a deeper understanding of the therapeutic potential of songwriting, including its capacity to express mixed emotions, and their professional clinical skills were enhanced, particularly those of insight and reflection. Learning about the self was also evident in their identification of their own strengths and weaknesses, the way they responded to

stress, and their understanding of songwriting as a tool for managing their own emotional states. In addition, the writers discussed how the findings could relate to and be applied within music teacher education training to reduce anxiety and stress.

Summary. The music education and music therapy studies and publications cited in part one of the literature review discussed the expression of emotion through songwriting, using songwriting as a strategy to help cope with everyday stressors, deep grief, relationship issues, and the stresses of urban life. The studies also discussed the cognitive, social, expressive, and emotional implications of songwriting. It seemed that songwriting had many positive implications, and that those who are incarcerated could possibly find some benefit from having the opportunity to express themselves through songwriting. Part two examines the contexts of people who are incarcerated and their issues related to psychological wellbeing, fear of victimization, and formal education limitations.

Lives of the Incarcerated

People living in prison cope with conditions that are often not part of everyday living in free society. Overcrowding, limited personal privacy, and restricted social opportunities are only a few of the challenges that prisoners face. Because the participants of this study are incarcerated, I discuss these challenges in the following sections.

The concept of prisonization. Just as there are various cultures among citizens in the free world, separate subcultures of those larger cultures exist, including the culture of incarceration. Within this subculture, prison culture varies from one correctional facility to the next (Caldwell, 2007). Donald Clemmer (1940) studied the general

dynamics of social relationships within prisons. Clemmer introduced the concept of “prisonization,” which he defined as the assimilation process in which inmates more or less identify with and adhere to, “in greater or less degree. . . the folkways, mores, customs, and general culture of the penitentiary” (p. 299).

The prisonization process affects every inmate to some extent (Clemmer, 1940). What are the origins of this prison culture? Unfortunately, prison culture is rooted in racism and poverty, and it has several distinctive features as a social structure of diverse sub-cultures (Alexander, 2010; Caldwell, 2007; Western, Kleycamp, & Rosenfeld, 2006).

Members of society who are racially diverse and do not have money are often much more familiar with the culture of incarceration (Alexander, 2010; Ficken & Gardstrom, 2002; McConville & Baldwin, 1982; Western, Kleycamp & Rosenfeld, 2006). Frequently, those who have been incarcerated also have cognitive, psychological, and social issues (Alexander, 2010; Ficken & Gardstrom, 2002; Reed, 2002; Watson, 2002). Often, incarcerated youth have been diagnosed with Conduct Disorder (CD) or Oppositional Defiant Disorder (ODD). There are other confounding issues in the prison population, including Attention Deficit and Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), which often accompanies CD and/or Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) (Rio & Tenney, 2002). To further complicate matters, many delinquent youths do not have functional, supportive families and have been harshly parented. The parents of these young people are often living outside of societal and legal norms and boundaries (Rio & Tenney, 2002).

Lack of skills that would enable one to earn a living wage was also a factor in both the culture of incarceration and the incarceration rate (Alexander, 2010; Alexander, 2012; Herrington, 2009; Walker, 1987; Western, Kelycamp, & Rosenfeld, 2006). During times of economic turmoil, economic disadvantage not only increases the numbers of the general population of the incarcerated; it also increases the inequality within inmate populations. Western, Kleycamp, and Rosenfeld (2006) studied the effects of wages and employment on men's prison admission rates between 1983 and 2001. They analyzed African-American and Caucasian men of specific age groups and educational levels, and found that incarceration and lack of education were positively correlated. In other words, if one did not have any skills that would help to secure a job, it was more likely that one would be incarcerated. Western, Kleycamp, and Rosenfeld (2006) further noted that during economic hardship, nearly all inmate population growth was among men without a college education. They also studied the effects of wages and employment on both African-American and Caucasian men. They found that lower wages and lack of employment increased incarceration rates in general, but the African-American male was at significantly higher risk for incarceration, especially during times of economic hardship.

As he was crying out for social justice, Malcom X claimed that if you were born in America with a black face, you were born in prison (Davis, Gaynes, & Davis, 1995). Censuses of correctional facilities have shown that the imprisonment rate of African-American men is seven times higher than the imprisonment rate of Caucasian men (Alexander, 2010; Alexander, 2012). According to Michelle Alexander (2012), by

targeting black men through the War on Drugs and decimating communities of color, the U.S. criminal justice system functions as a contemporary system of racial control.

Buzz Alexander (2010) also noted the discouraging connection between race and incarceration rates; he showed that 62% of the youth at Boysville, a home for young male delinquents in Michigan, were African-American. Seventy-five percent of the youth sentenced to adult prisons were minorities, 40% of prisoners in state prisons and jails were African-American, and 20% are Hispanic.

To further heighten public concern, incarceration rates are higher in the United-States than they have ever been. (U. S. Census Bureau, 2012). According to the U.S. Census Report of Law Enforcement, Courts and Prisons (2012), more people serve time in United States prisons than in the United States Armed Forces. California alone incarcerates more people than France, Great Britain, Germany, Japan, Singapore, and the Netherlands combined, and the U.S. with 5% of the world's population has 25% of the worlds' prisoners (International Centre for Prison Studies, 2013). Although overall crime rates have been declining since 1933, harsher sentences for drug-related crimes have filled correctional institutions (Ficken & Gardstrom, 2002), and the "three strikes and you're out" rule means that as a nation we are incarcerating more older adults than ever, often for crimes committed long ago (Paglen, 2005; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009). In the 1980s, the trend to have minors tried as adults also contributed to a rise in the prison population. With so many people currently incarcerated, it is critical for our society to understand the concerns of those who are in prison and figure out how to work with them to build skills for life outside of the prison walls.

The harsh realities of incarceration. The living conditions of incarceration, including over-crowded facilities, lack of privacy, living with others who may be possibly violent and dangerous, a highly inflated prison economy, and lack of opportunities for healthy social relationships often make prison life difficult to endure (Alexander, 2010; Alexander, 2012; Caldwell, 2007; Paglen, 2005; Tarius, 2008). Some prisoners harbor thoughts of suicide, or worry about friends who may attempt suicide to escape the hardships of incarceration (Cooper & Berwick, 2001). Certainly, the prison staff is concerned by the attempted suicides of prisoners; additionally, prisoners may fear victimization by other aggressive prisoners (Maitland & Sludder, 1996), and a large percentage of prisoners are frustrated by cognitive and intellectual disabilities (Herrington, 2009; Rio & Tenney, 2002). Along with these difficulties, prisoners often are worried about a lack of educational qualifications (Gallagher, 2001; Herrington, 2009; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams et al., 2006), or have no hope for their futures (Cashin, Potter, & Butler, 2008). Losing relationships with loved ones, such as spouses or children, is often an additional painful reality of incarceration (Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Tarius, 2008; Williams et. al., 2006).

The concerns of prisoners are further magnified as the incarcerated population ages, and older prisoners may have tremendous difficulty dealing with their prison roles and daily routines (Gallagher, 2001; Harrison & Bendetti, 2009; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Wahidin, 2004; Williams, 2006;). Often, performing everyday tasks, such as climbing to a top bunk, or dropping to the floor for alarms may be extremely difficult, if not impossible. Mobility aids for older adults, such as

handicapped toilets and handrails, do not exist in most prisons (Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams et. al., 2006).

To complicate matters for older, incarcerated adults, the prison staff may not recognize their healthcare needs, nor care about the medical treatment of the older prisoner (Williams et. al., 2006). Younger, stronger inmates often victimize older prisoners, and terminal illness and end-of-life concerns are painful realities of growing old in prison (Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Wahidin, 2004; Williams et. al., 2006). Some states, realizing that older, terminally ill inmates pose very little threat to society, have taken initiatives to release elderly prisoners; however, the older, long-term prisoners often have great apprehension about leaving prison. The harsh reality they face may be a life of extreme poverty without healthcare or a place to live (Gallagher, 2001; Petersilia, 2003). Without outside support or a social network of any kind, many older prisoners, upon their release could face an impoverished, lonely life (Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009).

Psychological well-being and attempted suicide. Psychological well-being (Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams et, al., 2006) and attempted suicide is a primary concern for both prisoners and prison staff (Cooper & Berwick, 2001; Maitland & Sludder, 1996). Cooper and Berwick (2001) studied three groups of male prisoners, identified by previous research, for whom the incidence of suicide is high. They determined that both institutional and individual factors contributed to levels of anxiety, depression, and psychological well-being. Psychiatric history, religion or spirituality, feelings of regret or guilt, lack of close friends outside of prison, lack of interest in sporting activities or hobbies, and no meaningful leisure activities were

associated with higher rates of depression, anxiety, and psychological morbidity, a state in which health is affected by psychological stress. The severity of environmental hassles and worries were also a key factor that affected prisoners' psychological well-being. Not having educational qualifications to find employment upon release from prison also impact prisoners' psychological well-being.

Alternatively, activities and meaningful pastimes are positively correlated with increased psychological well-being. However, the prisoners who had formed close friendships with others and/or were sustained by a religious faith, and/or and had a positive relationship with the prison staff had higher incidences of depression and anxiety (Cooper & Berwick, 2001). Cooper and Berwick (2001) suspected that these prisoners were often more troubled by guilt. This finding does not concur with those of Maitland and Sludder (1996), who suggest that incarcerated individuals who have a social support system within the prison and frequently attend religious services are better able to cope with the pains of imprisonment.

Victimization. Victimization is often an overwhelming concern among younger inmates (Caldwell, 2007; Maitland & Sludder, 1996) and older adults (Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chadha, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams et al., 2006). Maitland and Sludder (1996), upon studying the general wellbeing of youthful inmates, suggest a very strong correlation between fear of victimization and general wellbeing (Maitland & Sludder, 1996; McCorkle, 1993). Constant threats of victimization can result in psychological disturbances in the inmates, and physical symptoms of illness can also be a result (Maitland & Sludder, 1996; McCorkle, 1993). Unfortunately, nonviolent prisoners usually experience higher rates of victimization than violent prisoners, and according to

Maitland and Sludder (1996), the degree to which an inmate fears victimization is the strongest predictor of his mental health.

Lack of education and job skills. Prisoners often do not have as many years of formal education as the general population (Alexander, 2010; Caldwell, 2007; Herrington, 2009; Western, Kleycamp, & Rosenfeld, 2006). According to Herrington (2009), very little research has been done to explain the cognitive and intellectual needs of those who are incarcerated. Investigating further into the numbers of prisoners with borderline intellectual disabilities that may have gone unnoticed by school systems or the justice system may provide insights into the needs of the incarcerated population.

Intellectual disability and incarceration. In recent years, some academic debate contests the extent of the co-occurrence of intellectual disability (ID) and criminality. Findings from previous studies examining this link have been inconsistent. Herrington (2009), commissioned to research the prevalence of intellectual disability of the prison population, used a stratified random sampling frame, collecting data from 185 incarcerated males between 18 and 21 years old. Participants completed a semi-structured research questionnaire, and took the Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test (Second Edition) (KBIT2) and the Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scales (Second Edition) (VABS2) (Herrington, 2009). Herrington's study showed that ten percent of these young men had an IQ composite of 69 or below, pointing to a significant impairment in their cognitive functioning. The data also revealed that an additional 10% had IQ composite scores between 70 and 74, and 14% between 75 and 79. However, none of the samples had an Adaptive Behavior Composite (ABC) score of 69 or less, although 15% scored between 70 and 79 on the ABC measure. While none of the samples could be classified as having

an intellectual disability in strict diagnostic terms, 4% scored 69 or below on the KBIT2 and in the borderline (71–79) range on the VABS2, 4% had borderline ABCs and IQs between 70 and 74; and 3% had borderline ABCs and IQs less than 79. In other words, these findings indicate a point prevalence of borderline ID of 11% (Herrington, 2009).

These results suggest that intellectual disabilities of this group were prevalent and easily hidden in mainstream criminal justice settings—that is, many of these incarcerated participants had an intellectual disability on the cusp of a diagnosis, and therefore slipped through the cracks, when they possibly could have benefited from specialized services. Herrington further argues that a prison system set up for a population with an IQ of 100 when the average IQ is 85, is unlikely to be fully effective in achieving its aims (Herrington, 2009). With borderline intellectual disabilities and a lack of job skills, many prisoners suffer from a sense of hopelessness (Cashin, Potter, & Butler, 2008).

Little hope for a better life. Cashin, Potter and Butler (2008) suggest that many prisoners experience a sense of overwhelming hopelessness, and they note that other studies regarding inmates and hopelessness have shown that prisoners with a history of self-harm score much higher on hopelessness scales than demographically matched peers with no history of reported self-harm (Mills & Kroner 2005; Palmer & Connelly 2005). As previously mentioned, other researchers have suggested that prisoners are more likely to attempt suicide and self-harm than the general population (Cooper & Berwick, 2001). Research has also suggested that hopelessness was a potent measure in general, and it was more highly correlated with suicide and suicidal intent than depression (Beck et al., 1974).

Further complications of prison life. Prison life is complicated, and concerns are magnified by overcrowded conditions (Alexander, 2010; Caldwell, 2007). According to Gallagher (2001), Maitland and Sludder (1996), McCorkle (1993), Snyder, van Wormer, Chanda, and Jaggers (2009), and Williams et al., (2006), many prisoners fear for their own physical and psychological safety and worry about their futures, whether they are younger or older inmates, male or female. The opportunity for healthy social relationships is also minimal when one is incarcerated, and normal relationships with members of the opposite sex are extremely difficult (Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chanda, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams, 2006). Often, prisoners feel alone, with no one in whom to confide, to love or to trust (Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chanda, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams et al., 2006). The living conditions of incarceration often discourage socialization, communication, or emotional expression, and the culture of incarceration usually does not provide for opportunities to express thoughts, feelings, or intense emotions (Gallagher, 2001; Snyder, van Wormer, Chanda, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams, 2006).

Research indicates that opportunities to engage in healthy social experiences and educational offerings could have positive implications for those who are incarcerated (Gallagher, 2001; Gallagher & Steele, 2002; Maitland & Sludder, 1996; Rio & Tenney, 2002; Snyder, van Wormer, Chanda, & Jaggers, 2009; Williams et al., 2006; Wyatt, 2002). In the next section, I discuss music therapy programs, general/instrumental music education programs, and choral music programs, and the impact of those musical experiences on incarcerated people.

Implications of Prison Music Programs

Research indicates that a wide array of music programs have positive implications for prisoners, including a variety of music therapy programs, general music classes, and choral opportunities. Some of the effects of these music programs for those who are incarcerated include opportunities to develop pro-social skills (Hakvoort, 2002; Reed, 2002; Wyatt, 2002), the chance to engage in everyday socialization (Cohen, 2012c; Cohen, 2010; Roma, 2010; Silber, 2007), the opportunity to be expressive (Anderson & Overy, 2010; Brewster, 2010; Fierro, 2010; Roma, 2010), and increased self-esteem (Cohen, 2010; Roma, 2010; Silber, 2007; Watson, 2002). The following studies and reports highlight various types of music programs for prisoners, and discuss the implications of these programs.

Music therapy programs for forensic clientele. Music therapists use various strategies with forensic patients, including singing, playing instruments, improvising, analyzing lyrics, and songwriting. Often, music therapy is an accessible medium for patients of all ability levels, from the lower functioning, to those with advanced skills (Reed, 2002; Wyatt, 2002). Whether in a group setting or in a private therapy session, music therapy interventions are often not only highly adaptable, but also enjoyable and emotionally satisfying for participants (Coding, 2002; Fulford, 2002; Gallagher & Steele, 2002; Rio & Renney, 2002).

Anger management. Hakvoort (2002) described how anger management could be embedded into a music therapy program to serve the needs of forensic clients. She found that music was a useful tool in helping forensic patients understand and feel their anger while providing a safe emotional distance between the therapist and the client.

Hakvoort (2002) offers three case studies in which she discusses the crimes of each of the prisoners, and explains her perspective of the underlying reason for the offense, often a lack of control over a situation. Understanding that the client needed to stand up for himself, she would intentionally push the client emotionally through musical improvisation strategies to a point of extreme agitation, and the client would have to tell her to stop. For example, while she and the client improvised together using drums, Hakvoort intentionally played sounds that she knew the client did not enjoy to help him understand how he perceived anger, and how to assert himself in a way that was productive and not harmful to others.

Using improvisational strategies during music therapy sessions was also a successful strategy to help male adult sexual offenders learn skills of healthy intimacy, social skills, pro-social behavior, anger management skills, and awareness of emotional expression (Watson, 2002). Techniques used with forensic populations in the treatment process drew from rhythm-based strategies, community drum circles, and improvisation. Staff observations and resident self-reports indicated progress toward various social goals that reduced the risk of recidivism, while increasing positive self-concept.

Incarcerated clients with mental disorders. Research indicates that music therapy programs have positively impacted forensic clients with mental psychoses. When engaging in music therapy strategies with juvenile delinquents and mentally disordered prisoners, Wyatt (2002) provided clinical guidelines for successful facilitation of music therapy sessions: holding attention of juvenile clients by using a variety of interventions; using caution when selecting recorded music for sessions; setting consistent limits on

behavior for the protection of the group members; utilizing proportional interventions to redirect behavior; using percussive instruments, such as the djembe, conga, and metallophone; reframing negative exchanges to engage adolescents in the therapeutic process; avoiding power struggles; providing structure as needed; and being honest with the teens. Wyatt also suggested various interventions to use with juvenile delinquents including music trivia, lyric analysis, drumming resources, and improvisation.

Reed (2002) wrote that the goals of music therapy programs for mentally disordered forensic patients included recovery and health, assisting the patient to increase adaptive behavior, helping the patient to improve coping skills, finding ways to help the patient increase self-esteem and independence, and helping the patient to learn progressive elimination of maladaptive behaviors. Music therapy strategies used with the patients included listening to soul and rock, participating in a gospel choir group, making music with an improvisation group, improvising rhythms, and other special activities. Findings suggested that many of the forensic participants who were isolated and socially impaired felt empowered through music therapy interventions and programs to improve their overall functional levels. According to Silber (2007), the goals of music education programs are not therapeutic, but the outcomes often are. In the next section, I describe observations and findings of reports and studies of prison music education programs.

Music education programs. Research and reports suggest that incarcerated participants, through engaging in music programs, experienced better social relationships with others, a satisfying pastime, improved self-esteem, and a pro-social sense of self-expression (Anderson & Overy 2010; Brewster, 2010; Codding, 2002;

Fiero, 2010; Harrison & Bendetti, 2009; Medonca, 2010; Rodriguez et. al., 2010; Shieh, 2010; Woodward, Sloth-Nielsen, & Mathiti, 2008). The following section discusses the findings of these educational opportunities for those who are incarcerated.

General music programs. Findings of research studies and reports within U.S. prisons suggest that general and instrumental music programs for those who are incarcerated help them to develop a focused work ethic and better self-esteem (Brewster, 2010; Fierro, 2010). The California Arts-in-Corrections program began in the 1980's (Brewster, 1983). Twenty-five years later, Brewster (2010) conducted extensive interviews with six ex-prisoners who had been participants in the program, and he found that the music programs within the Arts-in-Corrections program taught these men how to have a disciplined, focused work ethic, which led to their increased self-esteem. The men reported that the AIC changed their experience of "doing time," and it helped them to overcome racial barriers, as well as give them a psychological safe-space in an otherwise hostile environment. These findings are similar to Fierro's, who wrote that within the prison environment, inmates often segregated themselves. However, during music classes the inmates felt free to mingle. Fierro's (2010) report suggested that music classes help participants develop a sense of community.

Studies of general and instrumental music programs conducted outside of U.S. prisons also suggest that participating in music while incarcerated facilitates the development of a focused work ethic, a sense of creativity, better relationships with others, and improved self-esteem. Research also shows that inmates' increased involvement and participation in educational endeavors while in prison combats re-offending (Medonca, 2010). Woodward, Sloth-Nielsen, and Mathiti (2008) studied

DIME (Diversion into Music Education) youth intervention programs in Cape Town, South Africa, and Tampa, Florida. In the study, young delinquents participated in a percussion ensemble. The results of the study showed a recidivism rate of 9.09% after the first six months of involvement in the program, but that rate lowered to 0% after 12 months of participation. Participants in the program reported other benefits such as a sense of achievement, love for the music, increased concentration and attention spans, increased productivity during their free time, and improving communication skills with others (Woodward, Sloth-Nielsen, & Mathiti 2008).

Research projects and reports of Gamelan ensembles in England and Scotland, songwriting in Scotland, and music classes for mothers and their babies in Spain have been shown to be beneficial in various ways (Anderson & Overy, 2010; Medonca, 2010; Rodriguez et. al., 2010). Medonca (2010) reported that an unusually high number of prisoners who participated in prison Gamelan projects go on to participate in more traditional education while in prison, and this finding concurs with those of Anderson and Overy (2010), who examined music and art classes as a way to engage young Scottish delinquents in the educational process. Self-esteem increased among the music participants, and results indicated that participants sought out more educational experiences while incarcerated during and after the project (Anderson & Overy, 2010). Music education opportunities for incarcerated mothers and their babies have also helped strengthen the maternal/infant bond, as well as assist the mothers in learning good parenting practices (Rodriguez et. al., 2010).

Both Medonca (2010) and Anderson and Overy (2010) suggest that participation in music while incarcerated leads prisoners to seek out additional educational

opportunities. Perhaps the most important aspects of all the above mentioned studies and reports regarding music programs for prisoners are the emphases on positive social implications and relationships with others. Choral singing experiences also provide the incarcerated a chance to interact with others and express emotions through music and text. Next, I introduce the findings of investigators who have studied choral singing within the prison context.

Choral experiences. Research suggests that singing in a chorus while incarcerated provides prisoners with positive social experiences and an expressive outlet. The South African concept of Ubuntu “encompasses the issues of human dignity and respect with the understanding that an individual’s human dignity is wrapped up in the dignity and humanity of others” (Liebmann, 2007, p. 438). Perhaps this concept can help us further understand the individual as well as the social aspects of choral singing for those who are incarcerated. I discuss the effects of singing in prison choirs in the following section.

A contemporary pedagogy for prison choirs. There are a limited amount of published studies and reports on prison choirs and the implications of participating in such organizations while incarcerated. Realizing that research was needed to understand choral pedagogy in the prison setting, Cohen (2007a) investigated questions relevant to building a theory of choral singing pedagogy in prisons using Christopher Small’s concept of “musicking.”

Small (1998) understood music as an action and as a communal activity, rather than an object, and he coined the term “musicking” to propose a paradigm shift in how we think about musical meanings within contexts of performance and ritual. In other

words, musical meaning is drawn from both the sonic and social experiences of music-making, including the relationships among sounds and people, and the processes of exploring, affirming, and celebrating one's ideal relationships through musicking. According to Small, "to music" is to take part in any capacity in a musical performance, whether by performing, listening, rehearsing, practicing, writing, or dancing, and it affords people the means to explore, affirm, and celebrate their sense of ideal relationships. Small's theory emphasized contexts, and relationships, emphasizing meanings among sounds, situations, and people—thus giving his hypothesis merit for developing a theory of choral singing within the prison context (Cohen, 2007a). Based upon Small's concept, Cohen's theory for choral pedagogy within a prison setting proposed that if choral singing were facilitated in a manner that accommodated the word factor and the somatic factor appropriately, choristers could experience assessable growth in a number of different realms (Cohen, 2007a). Cohen's theory had implications not only for choral ensembles in the prisons, but for other choral contexts. Cohen's investigation emphasized the importance of social interaction during choral singing within the prison context. Other researchers have also focused upon social aspects of participating in prison choirs.

The choral rehearsal and the safe space. Cohen (2007b; 2009), Roma (2010), Richmiller (1992), and Silber (2007) report that often, the choral rehearsal in a prison setting became an occasion where incarcerated participants felt they could take psychological risks, form bonds with one another, and be expressive. Harrison and Bendetti (2009) reported that incarcerated choral singers achieved mental freedom by creating music that was meaningful. Other incarcerated choir members have also

experienced psychological, social, and expressive influences through musical participation. Research and reports suggest that the members of the UMOJA Men's Chorus, the East Hill Singers, the Soul of Red Wing, and the Rock Castle Chorus developed a sense of group cohesion, camaraderie, and interconnectedness, regardless of race, religious affiliation, or class (Cohen, 2012b). According to data collected from choir directors, choristers within these groups felt that they had a safe haven, possibly a family unit, apart from the difficulties of everyday prison life (Cohen, 2012b).

Silber (2007) studied the effects of participation in an Israel women's prison choir. Silber's research suggested that the choral community provided an alternative social context for the incarcerated singers who were in an otherwise oppressive and stressful environment. According to Silber, the rehearsals provided a positive social vehicle for interaction and opportunities to take emotional risks—a necessary step for meeting the therapeutic needs of an often deeply troubled population. Silber suggested that inmates' participation in the choir community enabled them to form new bonds, accept criticism, listen, and express emotion.

Research involving prison choirs that include both inmate singers and volunteer community or "outside" singers has been a recent topic of interest among music educators. Cohen (2009) also suggested that the choral rehearsal became a protected space in which participants could experience personal transformation and growth. Cohen used the Friedman Well-Being Scale and open-ended written responses from incarcerated participants to measure their wellbeing and examine choral singers' experiences of rehearsing with a prison choir and performing in two different concerts. She reported a lack of significant differences between experimental and control groups of inmate singers

when the control group was in the audience of the performance. However, she found significant differences between experimental and control groups in the second experiment when the incarcerated singers left the prison to perform in a public concert. Cohen's study also suggested that behavior among the inmate population became more pro-social with the inclusion of outside volunteer singers within the prison choral setting; the men were at first hesitant to interact with the outside volunteer singers, but they became more interactive as the study progressed.

While social interaction in a choir that included both volunteer community singers and incarcerated men was often described as enjoyable, sometimes opportunities to build relationships and develop social acceptance between individuals was limited because of the prison context (Cohen, 2012a). One community volunteer singer commented that while he enjoyed singing with the men, the relationships were superficial, possibly because volunteer training by the prison stressed the importance of not discussing personal information with inmates. Under these circumstances, the volunteer indicated that the relationships between the incarcerated singers and volunteer singers were limited (Cohen, 2012a, p. 51).

Increased self-esteem through choral singing. Research indicates that self-esteem of incarcerated participants that is balanced between worthiness and competence increased through choral singing (Cohen, 2011b). Cohen (2011b) measured changes in community singers' attitudes toward prisoners and documented changes in prisoner singers' perceptions of their social competence. Results indicated that the community members' attitudes towards inmates increased significantly after three months of rehearsals and one performance. Two noteworthy categories that emerged from data-

analyses of the open-ended answers were relationships with others and self-gratification.

The following five subcategories regarding relationships with others surfaced from prisoner singers' data: feeling respected, getting along with others, making friends, connecting to something outside prison, and improving family relationships. This study and other studies (Cohen 2007b; 2009; 2012; Roma, 2010; Silber 2007) suggest that singing in a choir while in prison may boost participants' self-esteem and improve social skills.

Not all research findings regarding choral singing while incarcerated have been positive. Cohen (2012a) reported an incarcerated singer's reflections regarding the challenges of narcissistic personalities within the choir:

The biggest downside to the choir, as far as I'm concerned, is that I see men who are in prison basically because of behaviors dictated by over inflated egos continue to feed their self-centeredness. . . Encouraging someone to step up and perform may be forcing them out of a shell of shyness or self-pity. It may also, in his mind, validate his belief that he is better than those around him. It's a swampy mess that I think needs to be in the back of our minds. (p. 52)

Elvera Voth, a prison choir conductor, recalled a comment from one of the incarcerated members of her East Hill Singers, "Do you have any idea what it feel like to be given a standing ovation when you've been told all your life that you're not worth a damn?" (Cohen, 2010, p. 152). Voth noticed time and time again how the process of preparing for a choral performance and the immediate feedback from members of the audience made a direct, positive impact on how the incarcerated singers perceived themselves.

Singing as a way to express the self. Additionally, research suggests that within the setting of a prison choir, some song selections stand out to the participants as particularly meaningful, with texts that may help them to cope with the daily struggle of

their incarceration (Cohen, 2008; Roma, 2010). Cohen (2008) examined themes of songs as well as possible reasons why a particular song might be meaningful to imprisoned men using content and textual analysis to examine words, phrases, and themes. Analyzing data collected from prison choir directors, she found that most of the songs that had particularly poignant meaning for the prisoners shared common themes such as hope, confidence, and faith. Other meaningful songs shared themes of regret, survival, yearning, and despair. All seemed to relate to the ability to survive the difficulty and the culture of incarceration. Other elements of the choral experience that possibly contributed to the importance of songs for the participants included the experience of learning to sing and to make music, as well as positive social interactions with others and a feeling that participants had a social support network.

Research cited above suggests that choral singing provides both a social and emotional outlet for participants who are incarcerated. The Songwriters' Workshop studied for this research organically evolved out of the prison choir, in which participants enjoyed the expression of emotion that they have experienced through making music together (Cohen & Hickey, 2012; Cohen & Wilson, 2012). In this instance, participants wanted to deepen their experience and express their original thoughts by writing their own music. The next section discusses prison songwriting programs.

Songwriting While Incarcerated

Most songwriting studies involving prisoners are music therapy case studies, and these studies suggest that songwriting has the potential to positively affect forensic clientele. Implications of music therapy, music education, and ethnomusicology

research on songwriting for those who are incarcerated included developing a new skill, gaining a sense of satisfaction from the songwriting process, finding satisfaction from pursuing detailed work over a period of time, improving one's ability to plan tasks and solve problems that require multiple steps, increasing pro-social skills, gaining a greater respect for others, finding a productive use of leisure time, and relaxing in a pro-social way (Fulford, 2002; Gallagher & Steele, 2002; Harbert, 2010; Rio & Tenney, 2002; Roma, 2010; Sheehan, 2010). Publications also suggest that songwriting is a psychologically safe way to express emotions (Cohen & Hickey, 2012; Cohen & Wilson, 2012; Elsila, 2005; Harvey, 2010; Palidofsky & Stolbach, 2012; Roma, 2010; Tiernan, 2010; Sheehan, 2010; Wolf & Wolf, 2012), and that incarcerated songwriters often derive a sense of increased self-worth from the activity (Cohen & Hickey, 2012; Harvey, 2010; Roma, 2010; Sheehan, 2010).

Songwriting techniques. Songwriting methods, techniques, and procedures are quite varied depending upon the songwriters and their particular situations and levels of experience. Teachers, therapists, and forensic writers who participate in songwriting activities in correctional facilities and prison psychiatric hospitals use strategies to fit the ability levels of the inmates (Baker & Wigram, 2005; Elsila, 2005; Fulford, 2002). Very capable inmates may choose to write both the music and the lyrics of their songs (Baker & Wigram, 2005; Fulford, 2002). For beginning songwriters, teachers and therapists may give the choices, rhyme scheme for lyrics, tempo selection, dynamic level, instrumentation, and style. Various songwriting techniques are often satisfying and engaging for songwriters as well as for therapists and teachers, such as creating a parody,

or using a fill-in the blank form with a pre-composed tune and lyrics (Baker & Wigram, 2005; Fulford, 2002; Rio & Tenney, 2002).

Songwriting and processing emotions. Research and reports suggest that songwriting provides a means to process difficult emotions while incarcerated (Harbert, 2010; Harvey, 2010; Palidofsky & Stolbach, 2012; Roma, 2010; Sheehan, 2010; Wolf & Wolf, 2012). Both Palidofsky and Stolbach (2012) and Wolf and Wolf (2012) found that songwriting for young juvenile inmates was a way to express and understand the tumultuousness and traumas of their lives. Often, the goal of songwriting programs for young inmates is to encourage them to understand that they are persons with potential (Palidovsky & Stolbach, 2012; Wolf & Wolf, 2012).

Palidofsky and Stolbach (2012) suggested that in most juvenile justice settings, interventions intended to address the effects of trauma have often been unavailable to incarcerated youth, most of whom have endured multiple traumatic events. Palidovsky and Stolbach described the evolution of an innovative theater program for incarcerated adolescent girls, in which the youth worked collaboratively with theater professionals to create, develop, and perform original musicals based on their experiences. Palidovsky and Stolbach also examined the links between traumatic events and incarceration through the voices of the girls as they wrote lyrics for songs that were deeply honest, moving accounts of the traumas that had shaped their lives. Palidovsky and Stolbach conclude that creative lyric and script writing that was centered in trauma-focused interventions had positive implications for the young girls, including emotional processing of past traumatic events, and how increased awareness of those events might

positively shape their current decisions. Through new understanding of their past experiences, the girls realized that they could reshape their futures.

Wolf and Wolf (2012) described a project in which Carnegie Hall, through its Musical Connections program of the Weill Music Institute, collaborated with New York City's Administration for Children's Services, the Department of Probation, the Department of Education District 79, and other New York City agencies to think about how participatory music-centered programming can support young people who become wards of the juvenile justice system. Between 2009 and 2012, Carnegie Hall sponsored 10 creative projects, eight within secure detention facilities, and two in non-secure detention settings. These programs have served more than a hundred young people as well as entertained audience members, including staff, peers, and families. On average the young people in the programs engaged in songwriting, instrumental playing, producing, and performing during a two-week session that culminated in a concert for other residents and staff, as well as the production of a CD. The purpose of the projects was to teach music, produce an ensemble performance, and allow the incarcerated youth to realize that they are persons with potential. According to the researchers, the collaboration had not been in operation long enough to observe long lasting effects of the two-week programs, but the coordinators and volunteers hoped that through music participation, the youth could begin to view their futures in a positive way.

Both Palidovsky and Stolbach (2012) and Wolf and Wolf (2012) described music programs that are based upon music participation with others, and this point is consistent with Cohen's concept of an interactional choral singing pedagogy (Cohen, 2007a). Other studies reported how group songwriting for incarcerated participants

improves social skills, and self-esteem, as well as provide an outlet for emotional expression.

Songwriting, self-expression, and community. Music therapists generally agree that having a socially acceptable way to express oneself is often a goal for forensic clientele. Research suggests that improving the ability to state one's needs in a way that is not harmful to others reduces the risk of recidivism (Hakvoort, 2002; Watson, 2002). Therapists note that forensic patients have engaged in criminal behavior because they felt out of control, for whatever reason (Hakvoort, 2002; Watson, 2002). In a case study involving forensic adolescent males with anger management issues, Rio and Tenney (2002) found that songwriting not only helped delinquents to both process difficult emotions, and learn coping methods, such as expressing themselves in socially acceptable ways. Studies further suggest that through songwriting, forensic patients can learn to have better relationships with others, including the therapist (Gallagher & Steele, 2002; Rio & Tenney, 2002).

According to Gallagher and Steele (2002), songwriting was a favorite group music therapy activity for prisoners in a substance abuse/mental illness treatment program. Through group songwriting, patients in this program were able to enjoy socializing with one another, express their feelings, give each other advice and encouragement, and tell stories of recovery.

As with music therapy songwriting programs for inmates, limited research and reports detail the implications of music education-based songwriting programs for prisoners. Of the publications that exist, the observations and writings of those who facilitate songwriting with prisoners are positive (Cohen & Hickey, 2012; Cohen &

Wilson, 2012; Elsila, 1995; 1998; Roma, 2010; Tiernan, 2010; Sheehan, 2010). Roma (2010) described how inmates' participation in a prison chorus affected their daily life in prison and their self-perception, as well as how musical performance of an inmate-composed choral repertoire affected the choir as a community, including relationships within the chorus, relationships with other prisoners, and external community connections. She reports that choral singing and songwriting can be transformative for inmates, and that choral singing and songwriting can help inmates to develop spiritually, emotionally, artistically, and socially. She also describes a sense of pride among the inmates having the opportunity to give their creative efforts back to the community through the production and sales of CDs containing original songs.

The theme of community building through group songwriting occurs throughout these cited articles numerous times. In Tiernan's (2010) reflections on her experiences as a community musician working with young delinquents in Limerick, Ireland, she reports that active, collaborative community learning went beyond curricular learning, and that both facilitators and students felt a sense of artistry and common purpose.

In a written narrative of his experiences facilitating songwriting at a correctional institution in Michigan, Elsila (1995; 1998) described the challenges of songwriting with inmates, including difficult personal dynamics, the prison bureaucracy, and prison industries. Rather than offer a lecture-style music class, he created a dialogical songwriting workshop, giving students the opportunity to create their own meaning. Elsila suggests that songwriting was a strong vehicle for questioning society, as well as a positive way to express some very difficult emotions.

Cohen and Hickey (2012) examined the practices of musical learning in two different prison settings: a US juvenile temporary detention center, and a US adult male prison. The researchers found that engaging participants in learning through inquiry while providing communal support, approval, and celebration of successes and relationships—that is, a function-based approach to musical learning is not only feasible, but beneficial. Again, the sense of community building and human relationships was at the very core of the successes of these prison music programs—music, in general, providing a creative space in which individuals can deepen the exploration of feelings. Sheehan (2010) reported that songwriting connects listeners with feelings and events in the lives of the writers and creates community through interactions with others. Participants were consoled not only by sharing their stories in original songs, but also by the affirmation of other participants.

The publications above not only suggest that incarcerated songwriters build a sense of community through songwriting, but also that such programs might improve self-esteem for many of the participants. Understanding how educational opportunities could affect those who are incarcerated, and how these experiences could possibly reduce recidivism rates is often a long-term goal of arts-based prison programs (Alexander, 2010; Watson, 2002). Providing those who have been relegated to institutions and banished from society with an outlet that assists them in feeling whole rather than fractured is another long-term goal of such programs (Alexander, 2010; Watson, 2002). Accounts of former inmates suggest that participating in arts-based programs while incarcerated has helped them experience improved self-esteem and

aided them in their success following their release from prison (Brewster, 2010; Harvey, 2010).

Former inmate, Laresse Harvey (2010), suggests that a comprehensive re-integration process that included writing, poetry, music and drama could help to reduce recidivism and produce productive citizens. Harvey claims that creative thinking through artistic activities could possibly help prisoners survive the hustle and bustle of everyday life challenges beyond the prison walls, and she felt that individuals could learn how to use the creativity they had developed while incarcerated to keep them from returning to prison. Speaking from experience, she wrote, “I am a part of what ‘The Arts’ can offer ... HOPE ... CHANGE ... SECOND CHANCES” (p. 129).

While incarcerated at the York Correctional Institution for five years, Harvey (2010) participated in various arts-education opportunities. She attributed her success after time spent in prison to her arts-based prison educational experiences. She reported that her life was transformed through those experiences.

Prison has traditionally discouraged individuality in any form. The prison population is often in flux; some individuals are released, others transported to different facilities, or are sent to solitary confinement quarters, further complicating prison social opportunities and relationships. Songwriting may provide incarcerated participants the opportunity and means to be expressive and connect with others through sharing their thoughts and stories as they create songs. The opportunities to make interpersonal connections and build a sense of community could be of great benefit to incarcerated human beings who are often viewed as mere numbers and statistics by the correctional system.

Researcher Concerns

While research indicates many positive implications of listening to music and making music with others, not all interactions involving music with forensic clientele contribute to wellbeing. Music can affect individuals and society both positively and negatively, and those who work with forensic clientele need to be aware of the negative implications of music and its potential effects upon the incarcerated population. The following section discusses research findings relevant to music exposure and its influence upon gatherings of people, increased incidence of suicide, influence upon criminal behavior, and its larger implications for incarcerated participants.

Effects of music on groups of people. The effects of music upon a gathering of people or an audience may be of concern for music facilitators working with prisoners. Caper's (2010) findings suggest that music may have profound effects upon gatherings of people. As Aaron Copland (1940) wrote, "The quickest way to a person's brain is through his eyes, but even in the movies the quickest way to his heart and feelings is still through the ear" (p. 7). Merriam (1964) also suggests that a common musical experience could affect individuals by making them dissatisfied with their living conditions or unhappy enough with the current state of events that they unite to protest, riot, or fight. Understanding how music affects groups of people could help educators, therapists, and those who work with incarcerated people to create effective and meaningful music experiences and songwriting opportunities for those who are incarcerated.

Cautions regarding prison music programs. Brain research and neurological studies suggest that music taps into pathways of the brain that operate differently than language (Hobson, 2006; Patel et, al, 1998; Thaut, 2005). Furthermore, research suggests

that music can shape and mold both psychological and physical behavior (Buchanan & Johnson, 2009; Burgard, 2006; Gardstrom, 1999; Mayer, 2005; Meyer, 1956; Hodges & Sebald, 2011), and that music can even spur collective action (Adler, 2006; Merriam, 1964; Meyer, 1956; Waseda, 2005). Facilitators in correctional institutions need to consider carefully the kinds of music programs that will be offered for forensic clientele. Research suggests that musical experiences, such as listening, singing, playing instruments, and songwriting can influence people both positively and negatively, depending upon the circumstances (Gardsrtom, 1999; Merriam, 1964; Meyer, 1956; Stack, Krysinska, & Lester, 2008; Van de Wall, 1924; 1936). Therefore, understanding the needs of those who are incarcerated, as well as the professional qualifications and limitations of the facilitator(s) are of utmost importance. Music could either enhance the lives of those who are incarcerated, or it could cause them to be more agitated by their circumstances.

According to Lee (2010), William Van de Wall (1924; 1936) was highly respected, and spoke at national and international levels for prisoner rehabilitation and education rather than restitution. An early advocate of music education and music therapy, he examined the value of music in hospitals, mental institutions, and prisons, to assess its worth as a vehicle for transforming abnormal behavior. Van de Wall notes that inmates often become cynical and negative if their social education is not closely monitored. He mentions that education in correctional facilities must penetrate the core of the inmate's mental and social attitudes. If an inmate is not given a chance to develop social and emotional skills, Van de Wall warns, he could develop into a much more dangerous person, compliant on the outside, but only to fulfill egocentric goals that are

festering inside (Van de Wall, 1936). He advises that supervision and facilitation by a competent leader must be a high priority in the correctional setting, and that music opportunities must not be haphazard (Van de Wall, 1936).

If we heed the insights of Van de Wall, it would seem important that music for incarcerated participants not aggravate their feelings of hopelessness, thoughts of suicide, or their fantasies of criminal behavior (Gardstrom, 1999; Mills & Kroner, 2005; Stack, Krysinska, & Lester, 2008). Research suggests that suicide has been linked to various sub-cultures (Stack, Krysinska, & Lester, 2008). If a musical stimulus is pro-suicide, incarcerated members of various sub-cultures, especially those who may be experiencing feelings of hopelessness or psychological disturbances, could possibly be at a higher risk of committing suicide.

Suicide risk and suicide songs. The effects of music on suicide risk have been a neglected topic in suicidology, and it is not presently known to what extent music may influence an individual who is contemplating suicide (Stack, Krysinska, & Lester, 2008). Stack, Krysinska, and Lester report that the influence of music on suicide might be contingent on societal, social, and individual conditions, such as economic recessions, membership in musical subcultures, and psychiatric disturbance. They speculate that from a sociological perspective, some musical subcultures might attract persons at risk of suicide. Through the promotion of cultural symbols and artifacts including concerts, clothing, distinctive hairstyles, and albums, musical subcultures pull like-minded persons together and provide institutional supports for interaction and the reinforcement of sub-cultural values and behaviors. These subcultures may be more prone to suicidal tendencies (Lester, 1987; Stack, Krysinska, & Lester, 2008). Because the prison

population has a higher rate of attempted suicide than the general population (Cooper & Berwick, 2001; Mills & Kroner, 2005), it would be advisable for music facilitators to monitor the musical and artistic experiences of prisoners (Van de Wall, 1936).

Music exposure and criminal behavior. Research reveals that music can affect one's physical and psychological faculties. Can music affect or influence criminal behavior? In seeking an answer to this question, Gardstrom (1999) examined young juvenile offenders' perceptions of the relationship between exposure to music and their criminal behavior. Seventy-two percent of the respondents reported that the music they listened to influenced the way that they felt some of the time, while only four percent reported a connection between their offending behavior and their choice of music. Those in this four percent supported excitation-transfer theory, or being motivated by the music to commit a crime. Possibly, the listener may have already been thinking of committing a crime, and listened to a song that further spurred these thoughts. One young listener reported that when he was thinking of committing a crime, a particular song gave him the courage to actually do it (Gardstrom, 1999).

While only a small percentage of those who engage in unlawful behavior are influenced by certain kinds of music, music educators in forensic settings should be aware that exposure to music could cause an excitation-transfer response. Especially in facilitating songwriting with participants who may be at a greater risk of experiencing an excitation-transfer response, facilitators may want to encourage song topics that do not include fantasies of suicide or criminal behavior.

Larger effects of music on prisoners. According to Adler (2006) and Waseda (2005), music can stimulate individuals to engage in collective action. They maintain that

acts of synchrony, such as singing or playing music together, or possibly listening to music together can motivate individuals not only to feel a group allegiance, but also to feel a devotion to a common cause. These common musical experiences could cause a group of people to feel more patriotic or more spiritual. Musical experiences could further give them a sense of hope and unity, and possibly cause them to seek justice using both violent and nonviolent means, such as in the Civil Rights protests, or the war efforts in World War I and World War II (Adler, 2005; Waseda, 2006).

Taking into account that music experiences can psychologically and physically influence people in profound ways, we need to look at the larger implications of music education for those who are incarcerated, including correlations between music and motivation. Research suggests that under both normal and challenging circumstances, adults want to feel as though they are partners in their educational processes, and they generally want to have an active role in their learning (Hong & Choi, 2011; Kump & Krazovec, 2007; McMurran, Thelosi, & Sellen, 2006; Schindler, 1999). Understanding how we can provide creative, positive interactive music opportunities may further motivate incarcerated participants to take an active role in their learning, and contribute to the collaborative learning environment.

Purpose for Research

The purpose of this study is to gain a greater understanding the emotions expressed by incarcerated songwriters, how emotions are expressed during group songwriting process, and the influence that this opportunity for emotional expression has upon incarcerated songwriters. Lyrics from 79 songs written by a group of 17 males incarcerated in a Midwest prison will be examined. One of the songwriters, Axel James,

was extremely prolific and had written lyrics for 32 songs over a period of four years, from 2008 to 2011. His songs will be examined as a case-study within this research project. To that end, this study examines the following research questions:

Questions Regarding the Songwriters' Workshop

1. What emotions are expressed in the lyrics of songs written by the incarcerated songwriters?
2. What emotions are expressed in the group reflections of the songwriting process?
3. To what extent does Waterman's theory contribute to the understanding of personal expression for these men?
4. How does Cohen's theory contribute to the teaching and learning processes used in this study to facilitate songwriting?

Questions Regarding Case-Study Participant Axel James

1. How does his expression of emotion change over time during his incarceration?
2. What role does songwriting play in Axel James's imagined future and eventual release?

CHAPTER THREE: THE METHODOLOGY

In order to gain a greater understanding of how incarcerated songwriters express emotions through the pieces they write and how this opportunity influences them, I examined and coded 47 songs written by a group of 17 males incarcerated in a Midwest prison. I also further examined and coded 32 songs written by a prolific songwriter, Axel James, as a case study.

In this chapter, I describe the qualitative research methods. I also describe the research site, the participants, and explain how they were selected. I examine my role in the research process as a songwriting facilitator/participant/observer, and discuss the data sources used, and the ways in which the data were collected.

I explain how the data were coded to create an interpretive theory through memo-writing, and how I synthesized the findings to contribute to Alan Waterman's theory of the Personally Expressive Personality. Furthermore, I discuss my use of multiple data sources to further substantiate validity and reliability of the study, which include participant and facilitator reflections written between September 2010 and May 2011, four recordings of songwriting sessions made during February and March 2011, and 26 recordings—including 16 spoken introductions and 13 writer-performed songs—during an informal concert. I consider my researcher subjectivity, as well as ethical considerations that are relevant to the context of this research.

Design of the Study

This qualitative study uses the natural paradigm of a real-world situation inside a men's prison. This study gives insight into the phenomenology of emotional expression through songwriting during incarceration. Modified grounded theory methods are used to

analyze the data (Charmaz, 2006). While I used ethnographic methods (observer reflections and observations) for data collection (Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 2009; Sunstein & Chiseri-Strater, 2012), I was not inside the prison long enough to develop a truly emic perspective of prison life and culture. The understanding that I gained from long-term weekly interactions and observations in the prison with the incarcerated songwriters was essential in understanding the phenomenology of songwriting in prison.

Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater (2012) describe any group that shares language, stories, rituals, behaviors, and values as “sub-culture,” and individuals often belong to a dizzying array of sub-cultures. Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater describe culture as a “slippery term” that implies a variety of definitions, when viewed from a variety of perspectives. They define culture as “an invisible web of behaviors, patterns, rules, and rituals within a group of people who have contact with each other and share a common language” (p. 3). They further describe culture as local, humanly constructed, and highly variable, and emphasize the importance of looking for culture when field working, stating that culture can be found in the language, artifacts, rituals, and behaviors of the group. Qualitative researchers have suggested that keeping the prison sub-culture in mind when collecting data would be helpful in analyzing the context of the study (Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 2009; Sunstein & Chiseri-Strater, 2012).

While undertaking basic fieldwork for this research project, I attempted to notice elements regarding the prison sub-culture within the facility and how it affected the songwriters. If the participants had specific learning challenges, noticing strategies and interventions that could assist them as they engaged in songwriting processes provided greater instructional insight. The prison sub-culture is a complex one, and an

ethnographic approach best offered flexibility in a very regimented and bureaucratic setting.

Context of the Study

The site selected for this research is a male U.S. medium security state prison in the Midwest that houses approximately 1,000 incarcerated men. All prisoners, male or female, who will serve a sentence longer than 365 days in the state are classified at this prison entry point. Each prisoner is tested at the classification center for psychological conditions, medical conditions, his or her designated security level according to crimes committed, and his or her general intelligence. Following classification, prisoners may be assigned to stay at the facility, or they may be reassigned to other correctional facilities. Prisoners living at the facility who are capable of working have various jobs, and some of these jobs include taking care of patients.

I am familiar with the research site both as a facilitator in a Songwriters' Workshop and as a member of the prison choir. I have also attended five prison choir concerts. The prison administration allows the songwriting program to be a part of inmate leisure and education activities. The university with whom I am affiliated has an educational partnership with the prison, and the prison staff is generally supportive of educational opportunities for the inmates.

The Midwest prison is a very large facility, with large parking lots, towering barbed-wire fences, and an industrial-sized, private loading dock that is not visible to those outside of the complex. This dock is the site for receiving new prisoners into the facility. The front of the receiving area appears deceptively small; but from the back, what looks like miles and miles of buildings—thick bars on all windows—houses

approximately one-thousand incarcerated men. Correctional officers wearing brown uniforms can often be found smoking outside in a designated area near a picnic table to the south of the visitors' doorway. A tall guard tower stands to the left. At night, bright, stadium-like lights emblazon the prison yard and grounds.

Research site is the testing room. To reach the testing room, I pass through two large, separate, iron doors called sliders that open and shut with loud clanging sounds, spaced about 50 feet apart. Bright fluorescent lights provide steady illumination in the entryway corridors, which smell of Pine-sol, the floors waxed to a high shine. Even though the testing room used for the songwriting workshop is sparsely furnished it is very clean. Its cinderblock walls resonate with sound, the fluorescently lit space is painted a bright white, and there is no chalkboard or whiteboard. Eight heavy wooden tables with mismatched, plastic chairs (some cracked), are arranged in a specific formation for testing purposes. The incarcerated students rearrange all furniture for the particular needs of a class or rehearsal, and must always return each piece to its proper formation when the meeting is over. Two motivational posters on the walls offer encouragement: "Keep trying!" and "You can do it." A warning sign reminds inmates: *If you do not test beyond the sixth grade level, you will be required to attend classes.* A few healthy green plants near the two windows on the east wall add some color to the otherwise clinical-looking space, and there are several computers for educational purposes in the north and west corners of the room.

Sometimes those participating in the Songwriters' Workshop are allowed to use instruments with supervision. These include an upright black piano and a bench, and an instrument cart with two guitars, a banjo, an electronic keyboard, and several simple

unpitched percussion instruments, including egg shakers, a triangle, a guiro, and a tambourine. All of the incarcerated men wear blue jeans and a dark blue t-shirt, or a gray sweatshirt with white tennis shoes. Some are allowed to wear gray sweat pants if they have a medical condition that warrants the need for less restrictive clothing than denim. Facilitators and volunteers are not allowed to wear jeans or blue shirts in the prison, in case a staff member should mistake them for a prisoner. Open-toed sandals, sleeveless shirts, shorts, skirts above the knee, tight fitting clothing, hooded sweatshirts, or anything that could be perceived as suggestive are also prohibited apparel for prison volunteers.

The only women who reside in the prison are those who need specialized medical care, and most of the time, pregnancy is the reason that a woman might have an extended stay at the facility. I often see groups of pregnant women walking down the hallways or sitting in the chapel reading area in groups, dressed in navy blue surgical scrubs. Once the baby is born, she or he will be given to the prisoner's family while the mother serves her sentence; if no family member is deemed fit to raise a child, the newborn will be turned over to social services for placement in foster care.

Distractions during the Songwriters' Workshop. Many distractions are daily routines of the prison while the Songwriters' Workshop is in session, including the following:

- Phone calls to summon prisoners for appointments.
- Personal summons for appointments or unscheduled conferences.
- Calling for "pill lines," that is, summoning all prisoners who are on medications to form a line in order to receive their medication.

- Count time, which is when corrections officers come in and count all of the prisoners to make sure that they are all present and accounted for.
- Rolling carts with food trays headed to resident housing units (according to the treatment coordinator, prisoners eating in common dining areas are more likely to engage in violent behavior, so the prisoners now eat in their housing units or shared bedrooms).
- Rolling stainless steel carts with four-inch diameter wheels that carry laundry, heavy equipment, or furniture; the echo of the carts as they roll by the cinderblock walls is so loud that it is difficult to hear conversation inside the testing room, even if the door to the room is shut.

Occasionally, there may be a lockdown (when all doors are locked for a certain period because a prisoner or several prisoners require the attention of multiple staff members). When a lockdown occurs, an announcement of a code blares through the loud speaker, and correctional officers quickly come to close and lock the doors of our rehearsal space until the crisis is over.

The participants. I facilitated the Songwriters' Workshop, designed as an enjoyable and educational opportunity for the prisoners at the research site, and it was already in place at the time of my research. I purposefully selected this group of participants because of the amount of interest the workshop generated, and because I had an informal awareness of what emotions the incarcerated men might express while songwriting. Also, I was already familiar with the workshop and the participants. At the time of my research, 17 men ranging in age from 21-72 participated in the Songwriters' Workshop. Most of the songwriters were also members of the Prison Community Choir:

a choir that included both female and male volunteer participants who live in the surrounding communities outside the facility, known as “outside singers,” and volunteer male participants who lived inside the prison, referred to as “inside singers.”

The Midwest Prison Community Choir began practicing in February of 2009. After the summer choir season of 2009, the prison’s warden requested that the choir, which included the outside volunteers, not meet during the summer months because staff were needed for outdoor seasonal activities. During the summer of 2009, the choir focused on lyric writing, and performed three original songs on the August 2009 concert. Through the fall of 2009, the men voiced their frustrations at not having the knowledge or skills to write their original music for future editing and enjoyment. They wanted to learn more about how to write both lyrics and music. Dr. Mary Cohen created the Songwriters’ Workshop during the summer of 2010 as a solution that accommodated year-round musical learning without the prison staff required to supervise the choir’s mix of inside and outside singers.

Data Collection Methods

With the permission of the Midwest Prison and The University Institutional Review Board, data were collected from the Songwriters’ Workshop over a 35-week period that included a summer session of nine 90-minute workshops, a 13-week fall session of workshops of 60 minutes each, and a 13-week spring session of workshops of 60 minutes each. Data collected included the following:

- Weekly written reflections from three facilitators (a professor, an undergraduate student, and me) of the Songwriting Workshops; reflections were written within 24 hours following the workshops.

- Transcriptions of four spring-session Songwriters' Workshops; I transcribed the four recordings from an Edirol stereo recorder that was used during the spring sessions of the Songwriters' Workshop.
- Participant narrative data, to include occasional, voluntary written reflections, as well as open-ended questionnaires completed during the concluding workshop of each of the three songwriting sessions.
- The lyrics of 47 songs for which participants gave me permission to include in the study.
- Case-study participant Axel James provided an additional 32 songs, which dated back to the beginning of his incarceration, in 2008
- Audio recordings of 16 spoken introductions preceding the performance of songs, usually spoken by the songwriter, and 13 songs performed by the songwriter or a group of songwriters and choir members

To record the workshop sessions, the research team had to obtain permission from prison officials to bring the Edirol recorder. I made the recordings during the middle of the spring songwriting session, when it was possible to obtain the necessary permission, have the prison staff fill out the corresponding paperwork, and inspect the recorder. When the prison was understaffed, and unable to process the recorder for entrance into the facility, I was not able to record songwriting sessions.

Coding and Examining Data

According to Charmaz (2006), grounded theory is a method of conducting qualitative research that focuses on creating conceptual frameworks or theories through building inductive analysis. In other words, the analytic categories are directly grounded

in the data. I employed grounded theory practices to code and examine data from the workshop and the case study. Codes assigned to segments of data were based upon expressions of emotion, and the codes themselves are emotion words, such as “anguish,” “regret,” or “hope.” The coding consisted of two phases: initial coding, in which I study and code fragments of the data, specifically words, lines, segments, and incidents for emotional content, and focused coding, in which I studied larger segments of data, specifically paragraphs and complete sets of song lyrics.

Following the initial and focused coding phases, I refined the codes by further examining and comparing them to the data, combining synonyms, checking for accuracy, and renaming ambiguous codes. In some coding instances, I looked for situational consistencies that occurred within the data; for example, because self-improvement seemed to be a frequent occurrence within the “determination” coded data, I examined the emotion code “determination,” and noted how many of these instances included specifically “determination to improve.” Comparing the data within the written context and comparing codes was essential in providing further insight in assigning codes to broad emotion categories. For example, if I saw the code “anticipation,” I further examined my coding of anticipation to see what events are being anticipated. Was it anticipation of romantic love, a celebratory event, or perhaps a fearful occurrence? If it was a fearful occurrence, I recoded that segment of data into the “fear” code so my large code groups of happy, sad, and coping/other were as accurate as possible. I further examined data by writing informal analytic notes about the codes and the instances of emotional expression within the larger categories of happy, sad, and coping emotions in order to continually compare, reflect upon, and interpret the data.

Coding of participant-written lyrics. After collecting the songs, I entered all song texts into Hyperresearch, a computer program that helps researchers to code, organize, and examine qualitative data. I filed each song within a larger study folder as case files so I could examine them separately, compare them to each other, or examine them in groups or as a whole. I included the year each song was written in all case titles so I could examine songs from a particular year and compare them with other years. After organizing the data, I analyzed each of the participant-written songs by first coding each line, phrase, or segment from which an expression of emotion could be inferred. Next, I examined larger segments of the lyrics, such as verses and refrains in order to code the larger emotional meaning of each of those sections of the song. Finally, I gave the entire song a code that was reflective of the dominant emotion expressed in the lyrics. During this initial process, I used a total of 109 emotion codes, resulting from 769 coding incidences. As I thought more deeply about each song and compared it to other participant-written songs, I wrote reflective memos to gain further insight regarding the emerging analysis (Charmaz, 2006).

I further refined the codes by combining synonyms and renaming ambiguous codes, coming up with a final 65 emotion codes. For example, I examined the content of the codes “pain” and “anguish” to determine if I could merge these incidences into a single code, and decide that they were synonyms; no coded instances of pain included physical pain. I looked at the codes “detachment” and “indifference” to understand if these codes needed to be separate, or if they could be combined into one code group. In the coded instances, detachment referred to a situation in which the writer chose to detach himself from a particular person or situation, and indifference was an emotion about

something or someone. In these instances, I decided to leave the categories as separate codes. I also looked at codes such as “love for parent,” “love for spouse,” and “love for child” and combined them into the code “love,” noting specifically how many incidences within the “love” code were for a parent, child, or a spouse. Following the coding and synthesizing process, I generated a frequency report of all codes for further analysis. Using this report, I grouped each code into three broad emotion categories: happy, sad, and coping emotions. Noticing the occurrences of codes, I further looked for possible connections or tensions between two or more emotion codes.

While facilitators often assisted in the creation of music for a particular set of lyrics, a few songs were composed in their entirety by a participant songwriter. These songs include “Lord Send a Dozen Angels,” “United,” “The Leprechaun,” “Home to You,” and “The Bio-Bill Blues.” I examined musical elements of these songs using LaRue’s (1997) basic components of style analysis, which are sound, harmony, melody, rhythm, and growth. I considered how these musical factors contributed to the emotional expression of these songs.

Analysis of written observations and reflections. As with the participant-generated lyrics, I first entered all of the facilitator and participant-written observations and reflections into Hyperresearch in order to organize the data. This particular data set was organized into three case files: participant-written reflections and observations, facilitator-written reflections and observations, and combined observations and reflections. As with the song lyrics, I analyzed the facilitators’ and participants’ written reflections and observations first, in smaller segments, to code an expressed emotion. I found that for this study, in general, song lyrics were “thicker” with emotion than written

reflections; that is, while song lyrics may have expressed an emotion in a single phrase, written reflections often expressed an emotion using a sentence or several sentences.

There was more detail relevant to the context of the song or workshop setting within the reflections or observations that was not given within the song texts, but the content was of a descriptive rather than emotional nature.

Following the initial coding process, I further looked at larger segments of data, including paragraphs or an entire reflection/observation, and assigned codes to larger segments that demonstrate emotional expression. Each observation and reflection was labeled with a code that conveyed the dominant emotional expression of the given piece of data. If a particular coded incident generated a strong emotional response, I wrote memos to further probe the relationships between the incident and the emotional expression. I further compared the reflections and observations to understand if there were instances of situational similarities or differences that may be of interest in understanding an expressed emotion; for example, when comparing the “embarrassed” code to the “unsure/feeling silly” code, in all instances these coded incidences were written about a class situation in which participants were playing facilitator-directed games in order to refine their music skills. I decided to combine these incidences into the “embarrassed” code.

Initial coding revealed 54 emotion codes that were refined to a final 39 codes. The codes were then grouped into three emotion categories: happy, sad, and coping emotions. Following the coding phase, I looked at participant-written reflections/observations and facilitator reflections/observations separately to understand the differences and similarities in expression of emotion between the two groups. Because I noticed

differences in facilitator emotional expressions between the fall 2010 workshop and the spring 2011 workshop, I further divided facilitator reflections by date into two groups: fall 2010, and spring 2011 for further examination. I generated five frequency reports of emotion codes for this data set for comparison: all reflections/observations, facilitator reflections/observations, participant reflections/observations, facilitator observations/reflections for the fall of 2010, and facilitator reflections/observations for the spring of 2011. I further probed to find similarities, emotional tensions, and connections in the reflections/observations.

Analysis of transcriptions of songwriting sessions. After collecting recordings of four complete Songwriters' Workshop sessions and transcribing them into a word document, I entered the transcriptions into Hyperresearch study file, with each of the transcripts as a separate case file listed by date for examination as a single unit, and for comparison with the other transcripts. This analysis process gave me the ability to look at each transcript and see if emotional expression changed as the spring Songwriters' Workshop progressed. The class transcriptions included class activities, performances, and conversations. Next I assigned an emotion code to segments of data within the transcriptions, including several sentences or a paragraph (Charmaz, 2006; Sunstein & Chiseri-Strater, 2012). After coding the transcriptions, I refined the initial coding by checking coded incidences for accuracy, comparing and combining code names that were synonyms, and renaming ambiguous codes, reducing the initial code list from 35 to 29 emotion codes. The 29 remaining codes were then categorized into three broad emotion groups: happy, sad, and coping emotions. Finally I generated a frequency report of all codes in this data set. Because an individual composing a song in the workshop situation

is a more open forum for interaction and discussion when compared with an individual composing a song in a more private environment, the range of emotional expression in the workshop setting was further examined in comparison to the other collections of data (lyrics, reflections, and informal concert recordings).

Coding of recorded introductions and songs. Both music and speech are often regarded as effective means of emotional expression (Scherer, Wallbott, & Summerfield, 1986; Gabrielsson & Juslin, 2003). According to Juslin and Scherer (2008), cues regarding emotional communication during speech include linguistic expression of the emotion by the speaker, acoustic cues, the proximal perception of these cues—such as sound intensity, that convey the emotion—and inference of the expressed emotion by a receiver.

A total of 16 songwriter-spoken introductions and 13 songs performed during an informal concert were coded for emotional expression. Several factors were taken into consideration throughout the coding process, including mean pitch utterance, speech rate or rhythm, speech contour, variance, phoneme durations, syllabic accents, hesitations, text, and context. According to Oudayer (2003), emotion in speech can often be identified by various characteristics; when expressing anger, the pitch utterance is often high, there is a wide degree of pitch variation, the spoken rhythm is fast, spoken syllables are often accented, and the last syllable of the phrase tends to have a falling contour. Stress is characterized by a raised mean pitch and pitch range, and increased intensity and hesitation (Cowie & Cornelius, 2002). Happiness is often characterized in speech as high in pitch and variance with a fast rhythm. Though few syllables are accented, the last word is accented, and the contours of all syllables are usually rising (Oudeyer, 2003). Sadness

is evident by low pitch and variance, slow rhythm, falling contours at the ends of phrases, and wide variance of syllabic durations; interestingly, when expressing sadness, speech rate for males often increases while speech rate for females often decreases. Comfort is depicted through high pitch, but not as high as happiness, slow rhythm, high variance of phoneme durations, very few accented syllables, and rising contours (Oudeyer, 2003).

I first transcribed the recordings of 16 live, writer-spoken introductions and 13 writer-performed songs during an informal concert at the prison, and then entered them into Hyperresearch for organization and coding. Next, I listened to the recordings slowly to code the emotion conveyed by the vocal tone, repeating segments for comprehension, if necessary. I considered the vocal pitch, rate, jitter, hesitations, silences, syllabic enunciations, and text. As I listened, I coded smaller segments of data, including phrases, sentences, or several sentences. I then coded larger segments of data, specifically, complete introductions, song verses, and refrains for a categorical emotion code. This process revealed 42 initial codes for emotional expression, which I further refined to 33 codes after checking the codes for accuracy with the recordings, combining codes that were synonyms, and renaming ambiguous codes. Finally I classified codes into three broad emotion categories—happy, sad, and coping emotions—to find connections between the data sources. I generated a frequency report of all codes and incidences to help me further examine and refine the data. Because the class transcriptions and sound files were both within group settings, I further compared these data sets for differences and similarities.

Case-Study Participant Axel James. Because Axel James was a prolific writer with a professed need to write, he was examined as a case study. Axel had been writing

songs since he was a child. He continued to write lyrics throughout the duration of his incarceration, before the Songwriters' Workshop was offered at the prison. He had written 32 songs between the years of 2008, when he first arrived at the prison, to 2011, when he was transferred to another facility. He gave me permission to examine his songs.

Upon collecting his songs, I first entered them into Hyperresearch as a large-study file, saving each song as a case file with the year it was written in the case title. I then initially examined small segments of his songs, specifically lines and phrases, and assigned these segments emotion codes. Next, I looked at entire verses, refrains, and songs, giving them emotion codes. As with the other data sets, I further refined the 108 initial codes, checking them against the data for accuracy, combining codes that are synonyms, and renaming ambiguous codes, for a final total of 65 emotion codes. These codes were then classified into three broad emotion categories: happy, sad, and coping emotions. Finally, I sorted his songs out by year for comparison of emotional expression over time. I generated frequency reports of emotion codes for all years, as well as a total case-study report. I further examined his songs by year, looking for emotional tension, connections, and situations in which he expresses a particular emotion or emotions.

Analysis of data following coding phases. After I analyzed all of the data types, including lyrics, observations, reflections, transcripts, recordings, and the case study, I further examined the data sources for incidences of emotional expression and compare them to each other, relating the categories of emotional expression to subcategories in order to sort and synthesize the codes. This coding provided insight and gives coherence to my analysis. Through writing memos, I further examined how the data and various categories are related to each other.

Constructing an Interpretive Theory

Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) and Charmaz (2006) discuss alternative definitions of theory that emphasize understanding rather than explanation, and this theoretical understanding is interpretive. The very understanding gained from the theory rests upon the theorist's interpretation of the studied phenomenon. Interpretive theories give priority to discerning patterns and connections rather than to linear reasoning (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012; Charmaz, 2006). Classical sociological theory, as discussed by Ritzer and Goodman (2004), assumes abstract and general concepts, and illustrates this view. Characteristics of interpretive theory call for imaginative understanding of a studied phenomenon, and they assume emergent, multiple realities. Interpretive theories also assume indeterminacy; facts and values are inextricably linked; truths are provisional; and social life is an ever-evolving process (Charmaz, 2006). According to Charmaz, interpretive theories aim to do the following:

- Conceptualize and understand the phenomenon; in this study, I seek to understand emotional expression of songs written by incarcerated participants.
- Articulate theoretical claims pertaining to scope, depth, power, and relevance of the phenomena; for example, what is the range of emotional expression when the participants discuss songwriting within the context of the workshop in comparison with the songs they write?
- Acknowledge subjectivity in theorizing, as well as in the roles of negotiating, dialoguing, and understanding.
- Offer an interpretation of the phenomena.

Through further memo-writing, I constructed a theory regarding understanding emotional expression with incarcerated participants that is interpretive rather than merely descriptive. I sorted and integrated the memos based upon emotion content. These strategies gave an initial framework upon which to construct my interpretive theory and relate my findings back to Waterman's theory of the Personally Expressive Personality.

Validity and Reliability

Triangulation using multiple sources of data for both the workshop and the case study, including song lyrics, participant and researcher generated observations and reflections, four transcripts of workshop sessions, and recordings of 16 writer-spoken introductions and 13 writer-performed songs added to the validity of this study (Charmaz, 2006; Merriam, 2009; Sunstein & Chiseri-Strater, 2012). Comparing the various forms of data allowed me to view the emerging results from a multi-dimensional perspective. Member checking, or simply asking participants if my analysis is correct, minimized the possibility of misinterpreting the emotional analysis of the song lyrics (Merriam, 2009). In order to member check, I wrote letters with self-addressed, stamped return envelopes to five participants who are still in the corrections system, and ask them if my perceived findings are correct. Four of the men responded to my letter by writing back. One of the men, who had been ill, and had writing difficult because of his arthritis, spoke with me during a Songwriters' Workshop session in November of 2013. These men were in the Songwriters' Workshop for the duration of my study. My adequate engagement in the data collection process to understand the phenomenon of expressing emotion through songwriting further ascertain to the reliability of this study (Merriam, 2009).

Ethical Considerations

Songwriting often involves taking a deeply felt emotion and processing it into a lyrical and melodic structure, something that is meaningful to the writer. It is possible that a songwriter may have suffered psychological pain from writing about something particularly stressful, or by discussing a sensitive topic with others in the context of songwriting. Some possible consequences of my choices to ask a songwriter a particular question, or probing a writer for his response or perspective included hurting the songwriter's feelings in an unintended way. It is possible that I may not have responded in the way that the writer would have liked, or gave him as much time or attention as he would have enjoyed. During group songwriting discussions and response sessions, other songwriters may not have given an individual participant the type of feedback or assistance for his original work that he would have wanted. Inadvertently, I may not have given him the feedback for his song that he might appreciate. I considered these ethical questions carefully as the songwriting workshop progressed.

Other situations regarding psychological risks of promoting psychological expression raise possible ethical concerns. If a song written by a participant was too controversial for the prison setting, the songwriting class could have been terminated, and the songwriters would no longer have the workshop as an educational, creative, and emotional outlet. It is possible that a victim of one of these songwriters may have been greatly disturbed upon hearing a song written by the incarcerated writer. The song may bring healing, or intense psychological pain and anger. Other ethical considerations that needed to be carefully considered regarding this qualitative study included group discussion benefits and risks to informants, the surfacing of unanticipated painful and

possibly debilitating memories, or a participant either knowingly or unknowingly seeking therapy rather than self-knowledge (Merriam, 2009). Participants may have shared feelings that may later cause them embarrassment could result in psychological pain.

Facilitator involvement sometimes poses ethical issues (Sunstein & Chisera-Strater, 2012); if I perceive that a corrections officer is treating a prisoner poorly, I remain uninvolved and do not state my opinion unless I am concerned about the prisoner's safety. I remember at all times that the songwriters are convicted criminals, a detail that is easily forgotten in the context of sharing personal writing. Succinctly stated, I am a music teacher, not a therapist, nor a corrections officer, and I do not want to interfere with the psychological aspects of incarceration with which I have no expertise.

My Researcher Subjectivity

As mentioned above, the facilitators, Cohen, Liam, and I, have worked with this group of incarcerated songwriters, and the relationships that we have built over time involve respect, artistic trust, and mutual enjoyment of the songwriting process. Together we have created and maintained an atmosphere that is friendly, casual, and highly productive. The men have described the workshops as a place where they felt they could “be themselves.”

When I first started working with these incarcerated songwriters, I did not know what to expect. I wondered if they would try to manipulate facilitators for attention, or if they would have difficulties working together. I was concerned that they might tease each other about chosen song topics, or highly emotional lyrics. I was fearful that possibly a songwriter might be bullied by those who live in the prison because of something he may have revealed during a Songwriters’ Workshop session.

My experiences as an educator have shaped my perspective of the value of songwriting. I have taught for 20 years in both public and private schools and found that songwriting can be of great comfort for some very troubled students. Over the course of my teaching career, I have noticed that students struggling with family issues and chronic or terminal health conditions have discovered that songwriting is a way to release or cope with pain and anxiety.

Songwriting is at times highly emotional and personal. For that reason, as I recorded my field notes and observations, I wrote in first person to capture the singular context of songwriting, which often includes subject matter involving human interaction and emotion. Frequently, we feel safe voicing in song what we store deep in our hearts, what we may possibly be ashamed or afraid to voice in any other way. Continuously examining and analyzing the data to understand how expression of emotion influences the participants over time, as well as continually monitoring the teaching and learning processes helped me understand the phenomenon of writing songs while incarcerated. As individuals work over time to create songs, emotional expressions unfold sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly. Each participant's uniquely expressive written journey, whether it is a reality or a fantasy, took shape in a song. My reflecting on the writers' needs was necessary in comprehending the various difficulties the men encountered in the writing process as they strove to create original work.

The goal of this research is to gain an understanding of the emotional effects of songwriting among those who are incarcerated. Through examining the case study, I reveal how a participant's outlook for his future can change over time as he engages in the songwriting process. Understanding how songwriting can be an effective social and

educational outlet for those in captivity to cope with their circumstances and express their emotions may benefit both those who are incarcerated, and music educators who endeavor to provide creative and expressive learning outlets for our students.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS—THE SONGWRITERS’ WORKSHOP

In this chapter, I present the results of my analysis of data collected during the Songwriters’ Workshop related to the first four research questions regarding: (a) the emotions expressed in the lyrics of songs written by the incarcerated songwriters, (b) the emotions expressed in the group reflections of the songwriting process, (c) how Alan Waterman’s theory contributes to the understanding of the songwriters’ emotional expressions, and (d) how Cohen’s theory of Interactional Choral Singing Pedagogy applies to pedagogical strategies used to facilitate songwriting. The findings are presented in four sections: (a) The Lyrics, (b) Written Reflections, (c) Class Transcripts and Recorded Sound Files, (e) Pedagogical Strategies, and (d) Findings Reveal Importance of Interactive Opportunities. I further subdivide these sections into themes that related to emotions revealed in the data sets during opening coding, focused coding, and memo-writing.

Findings of the analysis reveal that symbolic language was a means of expressing the context of incarceration, and emotional tensions and connections were also expressed in the lyrics. I notice that the writers most frequently expressed emotions in their songs changed from 2009 to 2011, and their writing became more expressive. I give possible reasons for these changes as well as participant responses. I further discuss what the writers revealed about their songs in transcripts, reflections, conversations, and concert sound files.

While some of the men wrote songs for intrinsic reasons, findings of this analysis indicate that the social aspects of the Songwriters’ Workshop further motivated the men to participate and write songs. Men that were comfortable writing as well as men who did

not consider themselves to be good writers were inspired to write songs as they interacted with other participants. In Chapter Six, I further elaborate on the importance of the social aspects of the workshop and suggest theoretical explanations.

The Lyrics

I answered the first research question, “What emotions are expressed in the lyrics of songs written by the incarcerated songwriters,” by coding the data of the 47 participant-written songs. Initial coding reveals that the incarcerated participants expressed mostly happy emotions in the songs that they wrote, and they primarily wrote happy songs. Of 774 coded expressions, 371 were coded as happy, 285 sad, and 118 coping/other. I used 65 codes to describe participant emotions, shown in table 4.1, *Emotion Codes of Lyrics*. The variance of emotion expressed revealed 28 codes in the happy category, 26 in the sad category, and 11 in the coping/other category. Coding entire songs based upon the dominant emotions expressed reveals 21 happy songs, 14 coping/other songs, and 12 sad songs.

Even though the majority of the 774 coded emotional expressions are happy, the most coded expression of emotion is desperation from the sad emotions category, with 54 coded incidences. The most frequently occurring emotions are shown in Table 4.2,

Most frequently occurring emotions. Further analysis through memo-writing about the contexts of the lyrics revealed that desperation was often expressed in song concepts involving incarceration. Furthermore, examining individual songs and the emotions coded within them showed tension between desperation and love, tension among regret, anguish, and love, and tension between longing and hope. Wonder and humor seemed to be ways to cope with incarceration, and songwriting seemed to be a

way for some of the men to express the pain of addiction. The following paragraphs describe codes of desperation and symbolism and occurrences of emotional tension and connections, followed by examples regarding how wonder and humor are expressed in reducing the tension associated with incarceration.

Expressions of desperation. The desperation emotion code is found in songs within all three of the categorical song code groups of happy, sad, and coping emotions. Twenty songs include a desperation code, and of those songs, 16 song concepts involve incarceration. In the following section, I discuss expressions of desperation in the incarcerated context.

Symbols of desperation. The men used highly symbolic language to write songs about incarceration that expressed desperation. Frequently, everyday objects, such as a grain of sand, a large machine, fences, or spiritual beings take on multiple meanings with both internal and extraneous qualities. A grain of sand may represent a tiny object that can destroy a machine, or a person that can restore a sense of humanity. A fence may represent both physical and psychological barriers, and an angel may be an otherworldly being, or a person that shows kindness and compassion.

Simon Power's song "Grain of Sand" voices desperation and a plea for help. In his song, Simon describes how the prison system can slowly chip away at inmates' humanity, making them feel as though they are no longer human beings worthy of any dignity or respect. The song tells the story of a great machine that is no longer functional because somewhere, a tiny grain of sand seeps in. As Simon explains it, sometimes, all it takes is a grain of sand, and he once again feels human, no longer like a number in the

Table 4.1. *Emotion Codes of Lyrics (N =65)*

Happy	Sad	Coping Emotions
Wonder 45	Desperation 54	Determination 20
Hope 45	Longing 44	Retrospection 20
Humor 36	Regret 39	Acceptance 16
Love 37	Anguish 21	Courage 14
Thankfulness 18	Fear 19	Indifference 14
Pleasure 17	Sadness 13	Detachment 12
Joy 16	Wistfulness 13	Humility 8
Respect 16	Boredom 11	Comfort 6
Anticipation 15	Loneliness 11	Overwhelming emotion 4
Surprise 14	Uncertainty 11	Caution 3
Delight 13	Anger 7	Arrogance 1
Happiness 12	Doubtfulness 6	
Relief 10	Impatience 6	
Excitement 9	Inadequacy 6	
Pride 7	Disappointment/self 3	
Trust 7	Disenchanted 3	
Comfort 6	Disgusted 3	
Irony 6	Nervousness 3	
Satisfaction 6	Weary 3	
Empowerment 5	Ambivalence 2	
Kindness 4	Pity 2	
Peace 4	Shame 2	
Contentment 2	Stress 2	
Compassion 1		
Enthusiasm 1		
Infatuation 1		

Table 4.2. *Most Frequently Occuring Emotions in Lyrics*

Happy	Sad
Wonder 45	Desperation 54
Hope 45	Longing 44
Humor 36	Regret 39
Love 37	Anguish 21
Thankfulness 18	Fear 19

criminal justice system, no longer viewed as “just another convict.” Simon described his thinking during a discussion in the Songwriters’ Workshop on February 15, 2011:

There are days that we have here, where we feel like the system is just trying to grind us up. It’s a big machine, and one little thing can happen that can bring all of that to a screeching halt. Sometimes it’s a CO knowing me by name and saying hello to you. You know, that can stop a whole day of, you know, it can frame everything that they tried to do to dehumanize us and do away with it. So whether it’s incidence, or people that are the grains of sand, it’s basically a call for somebody to intervene from time to time in our lives, in order to keep us from being processed by this place.

In other words, the “grain of sand” is metaphorical for the kindness of another human being, and the “big machine” that is destroyed by the grain of sand is a metaphor for the dehumanization processes of incarceration. Verses six and seven illustrate the demise of the “great machine,” and a plea of desperation for the listener of the song to “please be a grain of sand for me.”

Verse six:
The great machine cries out in pain,
And struggles to run on in vain.
Its awesome power comes to naught,
Disrupted by one tiny grain.

Verse seven:
Within this tale a moral lies
‘Bout all such things that men devise.

So hear me now my heartfelt plea,
Held captive by the D.O.C.,
Please be a grain of sand for me.

The tall, barbed-wire fences surrounding the prison are a continual visual reminder of incarceration. Over time, the men seem to conceptualize the fences as both external and internal realities, and the fences become a symbol of both physical and psychological barriers. Stewart Holdridge's 2009 song "Man Behind the Fence" is an account of his prison experience. He reveals that as he was writing the song, the external fences made him think of his internal fences, namely, the broken relationships with his family. His song expresses desperation and longing to go home, boredom with the prison routine, and regret for his situation:

A man behind the fence, his name doesn't matter,
He looks through the fence wondering if freedom will come.
When will he be with his loved ones?
When will the day come when they finally take him home?

He wakes up at five A.M. and gets ready for a new day,
Six-thirty comes around and he hears count time, count time, count time.
So he sits upon his bunk and waits for the guards to come,
Then he waits and wonders when count's going to clear.
Finally he hears the count is clear, count is clear.

He picks up his card and signs out for the work day,
Puts in another day, makes a couple of bucks.
He goes back to his room and writes his family,
Goes to the dayroom and watches some T.V.,
Then a friend says, "Let's play a game, let's play a game."

He decides to go outside, he starts to walk around.
Sees a guy playing ball, so he stops to watch.
He looks around but he focuses on the fence,
Wondering how he got himself into this mess.
He starts to think on how he hurt his family,
Will his loved ones ever forgive?

Ricky Brady also expresses desperation within the incarcerated context using the symbolism of the fences.

Lord, we have been looking and trying to find the way outside.
 You alone understand the things we are hiding from ourselves and all the others.
 We say we love:
 You alone must show us how to change from the inside.

The world is so angry,
 They just can't forgive us,
 That's why the fences are so high.
 The cars are pulling up out front,
 The ones we love are trying to come inside,
 Not knowing the hurt that goes on
 Inside the fences.

Lord, I finally listened
 And heard you calling my name.
 I have come a long way
 In that calling you gave.
 Your words are hiding in my heart
 And on my tongue every day,
 For that's the only way to change
 From the inside.

I'm doing slow laps on a short track,
 Watching time go by.
 I'm doing slow laps on a short track,
 Watching the world go by.
 As we work to change
 From the inside.

Emotional tension. Of the 16 songs about incarceration, 10 songs expressed love for spouses, lovers, children, and parents. Emotional tension between desperation and love is frequently voiced in the lyrics of these men; they are concerned that a loved one will abandon them while they are incarcerated. While the primary intent of these love songs is to express love, the latent meaning states, “please don’t leave me.” Findings further reveal emotional tension among regret, anguish and love, and tension between longing and hope. When the men expressed love in a set of lyrics, they also frequently

expressed regret and anguish. When they articulated hope within a song, they also commonly expressed longing.

Desperation and love. The song “Mary, Mary” is a love song written by Simon Powers and Mason Miller both for and about Mason’s wife, as a gift for their “re-marriage,” as he explained it. They married in 2010, while he was in prison, and he promised to re-marry her under better circumstances upon his release. As he discusses his song with the group, he expresses his gratefulness for his wife, and his concern that she will still love him once he is a free man. The words of the refrain speak of desperation for her love, and his wonder at how she could love him:

Mary, Mary,
 My heart is in your hands.
 I’m not trying to possess you,
 Or making rash demands.
 I’m just longing for a future
 With the only girl who understands,
 And I find your love extraordinary, Mary.

In this refrain, the words “my heart is in your hands” and “I’m just longing for a future with the only girl who understands” express desperation for her continued love. He cherishes her, he wants to be with her forever, and he sees her love is a miracle. Thoughts of her love give him joy, even though he is incarcerated. When Powers helped Miller to write the words, they both agreed that they wanted to write a song about love gone right.

Besides songs for spouses about romantic love, the men also wrote songs for their children as expressions of love. Emotional tension between desperation and love is evident in these songs. Christopher Goodman, a man who identifies himself as a devout Christian, wrote both the music and the lyrics to the song “Lord Send a Dozen Angels” as a prayer that he would sing in his mind nightly before he went to bed. The song tells of

his guilt at not being with his family as he serves his time in prison. Before he performed his song for the other participants, Christopher briefly discussed his concerns and fears for his family. He expressed deep gratitude for his wife, who he says is managing to hold everything together despite his absence.

Specific lyrics and musical elements of “Lord Send a Dozen Angels” express desperation, care, love, and regret. The tempo is medium, approximately 60 beats per minute. The harmonies are simple and repetitive using the tonic, subdominant, dominant, and supertonic chords. The melody progresses mostly in a stepwise pattern, rising to a climax in the second half of the third line of each stanza, with a motive of two steps and a minor third skip. The texture of the rhythm is simple and uncomplicated, with sustained notes completing each phrase on final words, such as home, alone, light, and fight. Musical growth in this piece is perceived through directional motion toward the climax in each stanza of this ballad:

Lord, send a dozen angels to my family back home,
Didn’t mean to leave them there, standing all alone.
An angel to give them comfort, and angel to give them light,
An angel to bring them all your peace, an angel that can fight.

Many years ago I made the mistake of my life,
Had to pack up really fast, left my kids and my wife.
Runnin’ didn’t suit me, so I turned myself in,
Sitting here in prison is right where I’ve been.

Lord, send a dozen angels to my family back home,
Didn’t mean to leave them there, standing all alone.
An angel that can teach them, an angel to be their guide,
An angel to bring them to you, Lord, an angel to provide.

A man, he sits in prison, there’s nothin’ he can do,
But pray aloud to you, dear Lord, and that’s just what I do.

I pray for their protection, each and every night,
Surround them with your angels Lord, protect them with your might.

Lord send a dozen angels to my family back home
 Didn't mean to leave them there standing all alone
 An angel with compassion, an angel who is wise
 An angel who can dry their tears, and an angel to help them rise.

Oh so many years have passed, I'm finally going home,
 Didn't recognize the kids, just see how they have grown.
 Standin' my arms around them, gazing at our home,
 God open up our eyes to the angels he had shown.

There were twelve thousand angels, as far as the eye could see,
 Each and every single prayer the good Lord granted me.
 Couldn't count their number, but somehow I just knew,
 God sent his angels every night and so their numbers grew.

Lord I asked for a dozen angels for my family back home
 Didn't mean to leave them there, standing all alone.
 I thank you for your angels, And now that I'm back home,
 I wonder if you'll spare a few to stay while the others roam.

Lord I asked for a dozen angels for my family back home
 Didn't mean to leave them there, standing all alone.

After Christopher performed his song during a workshop, many participants responded with an “Amen,” or a nod. Several of the men also stated that they had similar feelings, knowing that their wives, ex-wives, or former lovers were forced to raise the children alone because “daddy is in prison.” Christopher’s song expressed the concerns of many of the men who were present.

Steve Keller, a father of five, often spoke about his children with whom he has had no contact for over 13 years as of the fall of 2013. In a September 2013 letter, Steve revealed that he has written boxes of poems and letters to his children that were too emotionally painful to send. He further stated that he didn’t have the confidence to express his pain with others before his song “My Love Always” was sung by the prison community choir during a fall 2010 concert. Steve’s song expresses desperation to have a

relationship with his children, and love for them. He hopes that if his children ever hear his song, they might forgive him and look beyond the past.

Verse two:

Cherished memories we've shared, to lose your love I could not bear.
Life is not always fair, I pray you know that I still care.
So please forgive my sins, look far beyond all that may have been,
That is where you are bound to find my love always.

Following Christopher and Steve's songs, other incarcerated fathers wrote songs for children. "Amelia Renee" and "To My Daughter" are songs written for infant girls by their dads. These fathers express both desperation and love in their songs.

A young father, Jason Young, who has never seen his infant daughter, wrote *Amelia Renee* hoping that Amelia's mother might let her hear the song and know that he cares about her, even though he is in prison. The lyrics from verse three, "I'm sorry I have been gone for so long. I'll admit I was acting selfish all along, but now I need my family with me more than anyone would believe," are a plea for love from the woman that Jason would like to eventually marry. In his lyrics, Jason expresses hope that the mother of his child will let him see his child, and that the child will not reject him once he is released from prison.

Regret, anguish, and love. The woven themes of regret, anguish, and love appear in a variety of scenarios, including songs about infidelity, love gone wrong, and regret over having disappointed parents and other loved ones. While there is an emotional connection between anguish and regret, it is often juxtaposed by love. Often a writer feels deep love for someone that he disappointed or let down.

The song "United" was written by Tony Grey. Tony was a pastor before he was incarcerated, and he has formidable knowledge of Biblical scripture, which is evident in

his lyrics. “United” is about overcoming struggles associated with infidelity, and it is written from the male perspective of having broken sacred marriage vows.

The lyrics and musical elements express infatuation, love, regret, and anguish. Tony chose a compound meter for this piece that naturally flowed with the language. The song is in a major key. The legato melody often progresses in steps, and Tony uses a regular melodic motive of scale degrees three, four, and five to begin each verse. Throughout the song, Tony creates variations of this motive. The tempo is moderate, giving the performer a chance to reflect upon the text. The song climaxes in the chorus with an increase in tempo:

Verse one:

Open my eyes and what do I see?
Beauty beyond words here before me.
Lost in a glance forgetting my line,
I then take her hand firmly in mine.
Caught by her eyes a sea of blue,
Soon we'll be one, no longer two.

Verse two:

Some get distracted bored and lost,
Tempted to look and don't count the cost,
So much is out there that could be fun.
Why would you want to stay with this one?

Chorus:

Some want to run, some want to shout,
But why give up, when there's no doubt?
While there's a cost, to do what's right,
Some unions you'll learn are worth the fight.
“Two's better than one,” it once was spoken,
“But a card of three stands is not easily broken.”

Verse three:

But when eyes open anew to see.
I'm not the one I want to be.
I want to run, but can't hide the shame.
It's all her fault, you know she's to blame.
It's hard to work when there's so much pain,

What love will grow, when there's no rain?

Verse four:

Standing before God, it's a new game,
Convicted forgiv'n called a new name.
A price was paid to cover the same.
She's a precious gift, whom once I blamed.
Life's not easy this side of Eden, united now.

Stewart Holdridge wrote “In My Mother’s Eyes” as he recalled the expression on his mother’s face the day he was arraigned and taken away to prison. In the lyrics of verse two, he expressed deep regret and anguish for the emotional pain he caused her:

Though the look you gave made me hang my head in shame,
I know the trust you had in me is now gone for now.
But I will try to ease all of your pain,
Through the Lord I now make this vow.

In the bridge, Stewart expresses love for his mother, and promises to never hurt her again as he did on the day he was convicted and taken to prison:

Bridge:

I will never hurt you like I did on that day.
I want the look you give when I do right,
The look of love that is like a sunray,
The look that keeps the dreams away at night.

Tag:

In my mother’s eyes.

Simon Power’s song “Crystal Reflections” expresses the emotions of love gone wrong. In the beginning of the song, he expresses the wonder of a new, romantic love relationship, while the refrain expresses anguish and regret. In verse four, it almost seems as though he is expressing indifference in lines three and four, “We swept up the remains to put in the garbage can, left behind to go shopping again.”

Verse one:

In the beginning our love seemed like a crystal;
 Facets so clean casting rainbows around.
 Precious and costly, a valued possession;
 The lightest of touches produced a sweet sound.

Refrain:

But all I have left now are the crystal reflections,
 Mem'rys of love that are stored in my heart
 Under the scars caused by razor-edged slivers,
 Shards of the love that we shared at the start.

Verse two:

Then our sweet love became everyday stemware;
 Used and reused 'til the gleam became dim;
 Common as jelly jars stacked on the counter top,
 Spotted and dusty with chips on the rim.

Verse three:

Time passed us by and we put all the love we had,
 Just like old crystal high up on the shelves;
 Closed behind doors and used only for company,
 New to some others but not to ourselves.

Verse four:

Finally our love broke. It shattered like crystal,
 Imbedding the sharp edges deep in our skin.
 We swept up the remains to put in the garbage can;
 Left behind to go shopping again.

Tag:

Crystal reflections are what I have been living on;
 Crystal reflections are all that remain.

David Williams wrote the song “Missing for So Long” for his two young sons. In his song, he expresses regret and anguish over not being there for his boys, and in verse one, he says that he let them “fall.” Throughout the song, David expresses love for his sons, and hopes that someday he can get to know them, even though he will not be free until his little boys are grown men. When David discusses them, he admits to not having seen him for three years since the beginning of his incarceration.

Verse one:

You reach for my hand, it wasn't there.
It's been missing for years.
One day it was there to help soothe away your fears,
The next it wasn't and I let you fall.
And I'm sorry that . . .

Chorus:

My guiding hand can't help you along,
It's been bound and hidden, missing for so long.
Gone and not there, you need to be strong,
To not lose hope, and hope it's not long.

Verse two:

I wrote you a letter, the other day,
'Cause you're on my mind.
I wish I was there to help you when you fall down.
I'm sorry I won't be there till you're a man,
That was not my plan.

Chorus:

My guiding hand is praying for you now,
It may seem bound and hidden, missing for so long.
Gone, and not there, you need to be strong,
To not lose hope, and hope it's not long.

Tag:

I pray it's not too long.

Other songs also expressed tension among feelings of regret, anguish and love.

"Nothing," "First Meeting, Last Leaving," and "The Man That I Am," are all songs about love gone wrong, while "No Days Like the Holidays" expresses regret and anguish over spending the holidays in prison while thinking about loved ones at home.

Longing and hope. Twenty-one songs include coded expressions of hope, and frequently, songs with expressions of hope also express longing. Songs that include both of these codes are "Mary, Mary," "All I Want," "Light," "Rain Dance," "Sing a Song," "A Song" "Bright Horizon," "Dear Younger Me," "My Dream," and "Tapestry."

Themes of these songs range from hope and longing for love, finding pleasure in nature and a longing to enjoy the outdoors, and longing and hope for the future.

Christopher co-wrote “Light” with another prisoner who was not in the Songwriters’ Workshop. Christopher, Walter, and Cohen co-wrote “Tapestry.” Although these songs express joy, they are in minor keys, giving them a unique musical texture. These songs express both longing and hope. The song concepts look to the future, and the texts evoke a sense of mystery for life. Verse one of “Light” expresses love and peace, while the bridge expresses longing, acceptance and hope. The refrain, “Luz del cielo, luz del cielo, luz del cielo (Spanish, meaning “light of heaven”)” is a peaceful meditation for calmness, peace, and love:

Verse one:

A shining ray of calm and peace,
A glowing font of love.
A silent place for me to be,
A quiet light above,
Light above.

The bridge expresses longing for a better life:

Bridge:

I can’t spend my life in the darkness,
I can’t spend my life in pain.
The power of good to harness,
The light of life to gain.

Refrain:

Luz del Cielo, Luz del Cielo,
Luz del Cielo.

When Christopher and Simon introduced the song to the other participants, the men enjoyed what they described as a “warm feeling” when they all sang it together. They felt that the minor key perfectly expressed a sense of longing and peace while adding an element of mystery. In the past, the men had usually expressed happiness in songs by

choosing major keys for harmonic and melodic syntax. Using a minor key in a joyful song context provided an opportunity to aurally process happy emotions in an unexpected, pleasurable way.

“Tapestry” reflects upon the circle of life, and weaves relationships, events, and mystery into lyric form. It speaks of life as a tapestry that is woven as we live; at the end of our lives, we pass our tapestry down to our children, who will weave it into a tapestry of their own. This song is about the perpetual nature of life, and how our lives are continued in the lives of others:

On the day we were born
 Cosmic fibers were spun into thread,
 Before we were carried back home
 From our hospital bed, wound on the spools
 Which supply life’s perpetual loom,
 Added to fibers brought forth from our dear mother’s womb.

Day after day we keep weaving
 The tapestry of our lives,
 Assisted by our children, our good friends,
 Our lovers, or wives,
 Created from the threads
 Of the moments that make up our days,
 Gathered from the highways and the byways,
 And the lesser-known ways.

Upon hearing the song, the men remarked that the words express wonder, longing, and hope for the future. They also stated that the minor key further gives the song sense of longing to meet those who will come after us once we are no longer living.

Emotional connections. Through focused coding and memo-writing about individual sets of lyrics, I found emotional connections among retrospection, determination, and hope, and hope, wonder, and happiness. In other words, if the men wrote a song that expressed hope, it frequently also articulated retrospection and

determination. If they expressed happiness, it often also expressed wonder and happiness. I discuss these connections in the following sections.

Retrospection, determination, and hope. Tarius (2008) discusses hope as being a difficult emotion to express while incarcerated. Songwriting was one way for the men in the Songwriters' Workshop to express hope. Often when they expressed hope, the songs also expressed determination and retrospection. Songs that included expressions of retrospection, determination, and hope are "Bright Horizon," "My Dream," and "Dear Younger Me." "Bright Horizon" and "My Dream" reflect upon letting go of the past and looking forward to life with a fresh outlook. "Bright Horizon" uses the symbolism of the bright horizon to give deeper meaning to a fresh start, and the sunset to represent letting go of the past:

The sun is a rising revealing a bright horizon,
 Beginning of a brand new day,
 Another chance to change my way.
 I'll put my fears and cares to rest,
 While I try my very best
 To let yesterday be done
 And let the sun set on my past.

Letting go of the past and looking to the future is also expressed in "My Dream," Verse one:

Verse one:
 I've got this dream that lives inside of me,
 The sum of all my hopes and fears, a passion longing to be free.
 A work of art right from the start, a melody within my heart.
 Perhaps one day I'll open up and let it out for all to see,
 This very special dream of mine that lives inside of me.

Writing prompts and discussions also inspired the men to write hopeful songs. In response to Cohen's facilitator-directed writing prompt to create a set of lyrics based upon what participants would write to themselves if they could send a note back in time,

Simon wrote the lyrics to “Dear Younger Me.” After he wrote the lyrics to the piece, Simon realized that even if he couldn’t send the letter back in time to his younger self, he would like young people to hear the words to his song for the advice, hope, and comfort they offer. Before the prison community choir performed his song, he introduced it, stating the following:

One of the prompts we got this summer was due to something that happened over in Illinois at a female juvenile facility where there is also music being produced, and also some stage shows, and they did a thing called “Dear Younger Me.” And they sang. We obtained the lyrics for this, and one of our writing prompts was to write something as if we were writing to our self as a younger person. Giving advice, warning of perils in the path. So I wrote a really long letter to myself, warning my younger self where all the pitfalls were. After I did that, I sat down and took some, some general advice that I would give myself if I were able to talk to myself, you know, 40 or 50 years ago.

Verse two gives advice and encouragement, and the bridge expresses hope, assuring the young listener that “it can be better for you than it was for me”:

Verse two:

Keep and seek your dreams,
I know it’s harder than it seems,
Find someone to lend a hand,
And when you’re right then take a stand.
Admit to your mistakes,
You’re sometimes wrong, it’s just the breaks,
Find the place where you belong,
What doesn’t kill you only makes you strong.

Bridge:

In the end you will see,
It can be better for you than it was for me,
'Cause my words will help along the way,
And for the rest of your life I'll daily pray.

Refrain:

Dear younger me,
I've finally made it through as you can see,
So now I'll pass on back to you
The things I think will get us through,
'Cause we only get one chance at life's dance,

Yes we only get one chance at life's dance.

A sense of retrospection, determination, and hope is also evident in the song *I Imagine*:

I imagine that I could do the things I didn't do,
 I imagine I could travel the roads I've missed.
 I imagine that I had the knowledge that I have now,
 I imagine that I never let you slip away.
 I imagine a world of perfection,
 I imagine.

Humor, wonder, and happiness. Findings revealed that the emotions of humor, wonder, and happiness are emotional connections in the lyrics of the men. All of the songs that were classified as humorous are happy, and they often included elements of fantasy and wonder. Sometimes they also included elements of adventure.

“The Leprechaun,” a song for Saint Patrick’s Day, was written by the oldest Songwriters’ Workshop participant, Walter Smith, and his friend Christopher. Walter is soft-spoken, in his 70s, and a highly requested and respected visual artist among the inmates. He and Christopher, when writing together, seem to enjoy writing lyrics with more whimsical themes and adventure fantasies. Their song “The Leprechaun” is the story of the leprechaun’s gold. The tale is written with a sense of folklore, fun, and wonder. The melody and rhythm of this piece is in a folk-like style. It is moderately fast, and melodic motives include descending patterns on antecedent phrases. Consequent phrases end with an ascending pattern on scale degrees one, two, and three, descending to one, seven, and one. Notes are sustained at the ends of phrases on the words son and leprechaun, and the song climaxes on the phrase “It seems that riches have always been sought by those that are young or old.” These musical elements add to the happy emotions of this piece:

Refrain

Molly dear Molly would you spin me a yarn,
 About Ireland's mystical son,
 He's small and elusive and magical,
 And he's known as the leprechaun.

Verse three

Many have tried to find the secret of
 Where he hides his gold.
 It seems that riches have always been sought
 By those that are young or old.

When Walter and Christopher presented their song for the other participants, the others were delighted with a song for St. Patrick's Day, and they were excited to perform it. They smiled as they thought of other ideas for holiday songs, or about mystical characters.

The song "Smoky Bill and Tom McWhether" also combines humor, wonder, fun, irony, and fantasy elements. The writers of this story expressed great joy in writing this "tall tale," as they called it, about these two ornery cowboys in a poker game:

This is the story of Smoky Bill and Tom McWhether,
 Both rootin' tootin' gamblin' men who rode hell-bent for leather.
 They met one night in the pecos light run by Johnny Behind the Deuce,
 And their stacks of gold on the table rolled as they played them fast and loose.

Tom stood pat on five cards flat, and Smoky he took three,
 When Tom shoved in his stack of tin Bill said, "That I'll have ta see!
 In a deathly hush an ace-high flush Tom showed who could ask for more,
 But the shadow of doom fell across the room as Bill spread his aces four!

A blinding flash, a deafening crash, and the crowd saw big Bill reel,
 Through the fog 'an smoke, McWhether spoke, "You've cold-decked your last deal.

"You dealt 'em fast, but that's your last, and now you'll burn in hell,"
 He laughed aloud to the shuddering crowd as Smoky slumped and fell.
 Not as fast but with his last, Bill stiffened and jerked his gun,
 Again the blaze, 'an the fog an' haze, as the two colts spoke as one!

Then Smoky Bill lay stark and still while Tom swore a bitter oath,
 "Hold on a minute Bill, it gives me a chill that the Devil has sent for us both."
 "You he got but he raised the pot, and I'm caught on the end of a bluff,

I've filled my hand and I have'ta stand, but I reckon it ain't enough.
 And that's the story of Smoky Bill and Curly Tom McWhether,
 Who side by side crossed the great divide and went to hell together!

In discussions with Walter, he told me that he really enjoyed reading fiction stories about the old west, and his song characters frequently took on the personas of these cowboys from long ago. He stated that his writing helped him to deal with the boredom of being in prison and enjoy his free time.

Some songs that express humor, wonder, and happiness are particularly silly. Jessie Hamblin developed the idea for the song “Zero-Track Mind” when he was challenged with a writing prompt of “one-track mind.” As he puts it, This is another one of those [ideas, pause] that came out of Mary’s book. She had this book of rhymes? Rhyming words, and I challenged her with one-track mind. Then I came up with zero-track mind, and she said, “I’m challenging you [to write a song], so, here it became, and it all started out as a joke, as did one of my other ones.

From this writing prompt about the one-tracked mind, he and Luke Wise wrote the humorous lyrics to “Zero-Track Mind”:

Some will do their best if given a little time,
 To get inside the head of a zero track mind.
 There’s those who lag behind, let it be yours to choose.
 A zero track mind is very hard to lose.

Other participants, upon hearing Jessie and Luke’s words began laughing and making jokes about the Zero-Track Mind.” Some thought that it expressed the same sentiments as John Lennon’s “Watching the Wheels,” a hit on the pop charts from 1980. Others experimented with more silly song ideas, hoping to come up with a new song.

Humor as a Way to Cope With Incarceration

It seems that the men would frequently use humor to cope with incarceration and make light of their situation. Sometimes they would write humorous parodies or original

songs that discussed their daily struggles or missing a loved one. Sometimes humor was expressed at having to do tasks that most people would perceive as disgusting. The men enjoyed discussing humorous song topics, and would look for opportunities to create songs with an element of comedy.

Looking forward to his release from prison, Simon Powers wrote “Home to You” as a song for his wife. His lyrics express his boredom, impatience, and anticipation of romance in a humorous way. This song is a modified blues-form song, played at a moderately fast tempo in a common meter in a 50’s rock style. The harmonic movement is uncomplicated and linear. When Simon performed the piece, he sustained notes at the ends of all phrases, and he emphasized the words “honey-bear” each time he sung them, which are a reference to his wife. He reached a dynamic climax at the end of each verse, where he would smile and improvise a little bit on the guitar. In this particular piece, the musical elements of the song are what let a listener know that this song is funny. Verse two reveals Simon’s excited expectations:

Oh when I waked up this morning.
 I only had thirteen more.
 Each hour seem to go slower
 Than the one that went before.
 I’m not sure that I kin make it
 Through one more endless day;
 This last week lasted longer
 Than the whole time I bin away.
 But I’ll soon be there my honey-bear,
 Yes I’ll soon be there.

When other participants heard Simon’s song, they felt that the blues-style that Simon had chosen for the piece perfectly expressed the blues of being in prison with a touch of humor and fun anticipation.

While the parodies “Don’t Worry, Be Happy” and “Gee, Warden Craig-ee” are humorous, further examination of the texts reveals that both of these songs are written as ways of coping with the hardships of incarceration. There is an element of desperation expressed in these two parodies. Verses four and five of “Don’t Worry, Be Happy” discuss denials from the parole board and serving hard time:

Verse four:

Parole board can make your life much better,
Unless you get a knock-down letter,
Don’t worry, be happy.

Verse five:

Cuz if we worry that our time will go hard,
So cling to God until you’re discharged,
Don’t worry, be happy.

Throughout the parody “Gee, Warden Craig-ee,” desperation is also expressed, and feelings of vulnerability are revealed:

Verse one:

Dear kindly Warden Craig-e, you gotta understand.
We are stuck here in prison, which puts us in your hand.
Our mothers are heartbroken, our fathers really care.
Golly, Moses naturally we’re scared!

Humorous songs often began as parodies. The songwriters’ group wrote new words to the song “Gonna Build a Mountain,” using the traditional tune and changing the words. The lyrics express not only humor, but also determination to build a better future from a “rotten past,” as shown in verses six and seven:

Gonna build a sports car, from my old Ford
Gonna build a sports car, that I can’t afford
Gonna build a sports car, gonna build it fast
Don’t know how I’m gonna build it, but I hope it’s gonna last.

Gonna build a future from a rotten past
Gonna build a future that I know will last

Gonna build a future, I'm gonna build it well
 I don't know how I'm gonna do it, but I'll have a story to tell.

As participants were writing this song, they laughed a lot as they shared ideas for lyrics.

They enjoyed dreaming about building all kind of outlandish objects, fantasized about winning the lottery, or inventing something completely new and “striking it rich!” They even spoke of becoming very successful.

William Smiley wrote “The Bio-Bill Blues” as a humorous, blues-form song that expresses pride in his job at the prison, one that others might perceive as disgusting.

William cleans up biohazard waste in the prison and disposes of biohazard wastes in the red biohazard boxes. In other words, if someone vomits or has an accident on the floor, it is highly likely that William will be called to clean it up. As William tells the audience before the July 2011 informal concert of the songwriting workshop,

My name is William Smiley, and as the program said, Bio Bill. That's what I've got nicknamed, 'cause of my job. I work in security, and I kind of wear three hats in security. I'm also a janitor, I'm a runner, which goes down to the units and gets the guys and brings them back down to the units and back and forth, acting like an escort. And the third thing is, one hour a day, I pick up biohazards on the unit here, and all the units. I hit all of the units in about an hour, and seven days a week I do that. So this is my little Bio Bill Blues.

Musical elements of William’s song contribute to its humorous feeling. The repetition of rhythmic and melodic elements on repeated instances of text emphasize the action of the song, telling listeners that William is proud to be “rollin’ right after noon count.” Phrasing and rhythm proceeds in a linear fashion until an emotional climax in verse four, when William is swearing that his story is true. The final phrase of the song, “My name is Bio-Bill, and I’m a member of the G.P. crew,” are enthusiastically spoken, and the phrase continues to crescendo until the final cadence. William’s song tells his story:

Verse one:

We go out a rollin' right after noon count
 I said, we go out a rollin' right after noon count
 Go to my closet, get that red cart out.

Verse two:

My red cart and me, we go out every day.
 I said my red cart and me, we go out every day.
 We travel the halls, keeping Sugardale safe.

Verse three:

You see them old germs, don't like me at all
 I said you see them old germs, don't like me at all
 Puttin' on the gloves, they begin to fall.

Verse four:

Now, you've heard my story, I swear it's true
 I said now you've heard my story, I swear it's true
 My name is Bio-Bill, and I'm a member of the GP Crew!!

As the guitar introduction began for the performance of William's song, he put on a pair of gloves and a biohazard mask, just as he would if he were preparing for work. He made sure to raise his hands to the sides of his body at elbow height as a surgeon might before an operation, and his glove-donned hands and masked face were intentionally visible.

The audience roared! He then pulled his mask down and began singing as the elastic dangled around his neck. The audience was delighted with his humorous gesture, and many of the participants expressed gratitude that they didn't have his particular job; they were happy that he didn't seem to mind his job, and that he even took pride in doing it well!

Songwriting to Process Pain of Addiction

Some of the men, including Brian Lewis, Axel James, and Steve Keller, mentioned that songwriting helped them cope with addictions to alcohol and drugs. "Release the Darkness" is a painful account of Brian's struggle with alcoholism. Before

Brian was incarcerated, he couldn't stop drinking, and his struggle almost caused him to take his own life. Nothing could satiate his need for alcohol, and lots of it. In a casual conversation about his song, he says that he has replaced alcohol with coffee, and he revealed, in a written reflection, that he finds more satisfaction in songwriting than he ever did in alcohol. The lyrics of verse three describe his attempted suicide and the desperation he felt:

He cries "What is there for me,"
Is contempt in every eye,"
He yells at no one as he screams,
"Lord can you hear my cry,"
He slowly falls to the floor
With a gun held in his hand,
Can he find a way,
Is there comfort to accept?

Brian says that he hopes to "stay clean," and he never wants to feel the way he did as an alcoholic, ever again. Further stories of songwriting as a way to express the pain of addiction are discussed in Chapter Five, with examples from case-study Axel James's songs.

Emotional Expression over Time

Some of the writers had been creating lyrics on their own before Dr. Cohen began facilitating the Songwriters' Workshop during the summer of 2010. They gave me permission to examine their early songs as well as those from the workshop. Through the coding process, I noticed that emotional expressions in their songs changed over time. It seems that the song written after the Songwriters' Workshop was established are emotionally more expressive and raw. Changes are shown in Table 4.3, *Emotional Expressions Over Time*. Songs written between 2009 and 2011 are listed in Table 4.4, *Titles of Songs Written 2009–2011, The Songwriters' Workshop*.

I attribute this shift in the emotional expressions of the lyrics from 2009 to 2011 to the generally supportive nature of the songwriters' group. Participants felt as though they could speak their minds and discuss their problems around each other without fear of psychologically being hurt. Facilitator involvement could also play a role in the expressive shift; the facilitators generally had a positive, energetic attitude, and they

Table 4.3 Emotional Expressions Over Time

2009	2010	2011
1. Indifference	1. Wonder	1. Desperation
2. Longing	2. Love	2. Longing
3. Closeness	3. Desperation	3. Hope
4. Regret	4. Hope	4. Regret
5. Love	5. Anguish	5. Wonder
6. Boredom	6. Regret	6. Determination

exuded a passion for songwriting. Facilitators also encouraged regular and frequent interaction, as shown in the class transcriptions. Participants' candid expression was encouraged. Another factor may be that as the writers gained experience, they learned that strong emotions create a powerful song that speaks to listeners; the more honest the emotion, the more it affects listeners.

Men Reveal the Importance of Interaction

In order to understand the changes in emotional expression from 2009 to 2011, I wrote letters to five of the participants in September of 2013 who were still in the criminal justice system. In each letter, I included a self-addressed, stamped envelope. My letter revealed a summary of the findings, and asked the men if the findings were

accurate. If the men thought that the findings were accurate, I asked for possible causes. All of the men reported that the findings were accurate. Four men wrote about the findings by responding to my letter, and one man who found writing painful because of arthritis spoke to me about my findings during a Songwriters' Workshop session. All of the men revealed that the interactive aspects of the workshops motivated them to write songs. Lengths of written responses ranged from two hand-written pages to eight hand-written pages. The conversation with the participant troubled by arthritis lasted approximately 10 minutes. The letters and the conversation emphasized the importance of the interactive aspects of the workshops.

The fall 2013 letter from Steve Keller discussing my research findings stated that he thinks the writing changes over time because "life happens." He said that facilitators provided an opportunity to write songs, and that the men simply wrote about events in their lives. He further stated that the men often wrote about people and concerns that were in the forefront of their minds, and for him, it was the broken relationships with his children. He thinks that the biggest reasons for the changes in writing from 2009 to 2011 were due to having the opportunity to write with a group, receiving facilitator encouragement, and life- events and perspectives changing for the men.

In a September 2013 letter, Christian Goodman states that without the workshops, the writers tend to stay in their individual ruts, and write about the same things all the time. In his opinion, the writing prompts and input from the volunteers changed all of that, and writing songs and poetry has helped participants connect who they were with who they are now. In writing songs, Christian feels that he and others have a chance to speak vicariously to people who may want nothing to do with them, or to loved ones who

have passed. One of the most meaningful aspects of the Songwriters' Workshop, according to Christian, is that the men have opportunities to perform their work for an audience. Personally, he feels that his songs are not complete until someone else has heard them, and he states a need to share his songs.

Simon Powers wrote prolifically while participating in the Songwriters' Workshop until his transfer to another facility in the summer of 2011, for treatment before his release from prison in 2014. In a similar September 2013 letter, Simon also reveals that writing in a group helped him to become a better writer and to more deeply express his emotions. He says that interaction with the other writers and facilitator guidance made all the difference in the world in his writing. He further states that the musical choices, writing prompts, and routines of the workshop helped him to be more productive and positive. He enjoyed getting ideas from others, and being able to share his work with others was motivating and inspiring. He laments that in his new facility, the absence of educational routines has negatively affected his writing. He admits that he grew socially and emotionally while in the Songwriters' Workshop, because of the opportunity to write and reflect about life. He says that in the past, he denied that his musical choices affected his behavior, and he now sees that they greatly affected him. Currently, he is trying to establish his own routines in order to maintain his writing skills, and he hopes that the skills he has gained while in the Songwriters' Workshop will help him to build a better future.

These letters, collected in the fall of 2013, 14 months after the data collection had ended, emphasize the important social aspects of the Songwriters' Workshop. Most of the men revealed that facilitator guidance and group interactions helped them to be better

writers and have an outlet for expression. The participant-written reflections, facilitator-written reflections, and the class transcriptions provide further insight.

Lyrics of songs as personally expressive. In the participant-written songs, all lyrics show instances of personal expression, whether it is a love song, a humorous song, or a song about incarceration. These instances of personal expression are characteristic of Waterman's theory of the Personally Expressive Personality (1990). Simon's lyrics of "Dear Younger Me," "I Imagine," and "Bright Horizon" express self-knowledge of his potential and hope for his future, suggesting self-actualization (Maslow, 1968). From interactions with the men, as well as their emphasis in descriptive letters to me, it seems that sharing and discussing their songs with others is a primary reason for their participation in the Songwriters' Workshop. In other words, they enjoy having an external outlet for personal expression, and social reasons are strong motivators to write new songs. Some of the men had written songs before the Songwriters' Workshop in 2009, but most participants wrote their first songs in the workshop. Because the social aspects of the Songwriters' Workshop seem so important to the men, they are discussed in the following sections.

Written Reflections

To describe the emotions expressed in the group reflections written by 10 participants, Cohen, Liam, and me, I examine these reflections and the Songwriters' Workshop transcriptions. Open coding reveals that the men and we facilitators were often retrospective of the songwriting processes. The most frequently expressed emotions in the written reflections are in Table 4.5, *Most Frequently Expressed Emotions*.

Table 4.4. *Titles of Songs Written 2009–2011, The Songwriters' Workshop*

2009 Songs	2010 Songs	2011 Songs
In My Mother's Eyes	Cherished	Amelia Renee
All I Want	The Leprechaun	To My Daughter
No Days Like the Holidays	Light	Just to Say
The Man Behind the Fence	Don't Worry, Be Happy	Winter
	I am a Person Who	Bio-Bill Blues
	I Don't Care if the Rain Comes	Mary, Mary
	Inside the Fences	Gee, Warden Craig-ee
	Rain Dance	Gonna Build a Mountain
	The Man that I Am	The Rose of Oakdale
	My Love Always	The Fourth of July
	Nothing	Sent to Germany
	Mud Pies	Missing for So Long
	Crystal Reflections	Sing a Song
	Tapestry	Keeping Us Apart
	Lord Send a Dozen Angels	Wake With a Smile
		First Meeting, Last Leaving
		Dear Younger Me
		It's Not Easy
		Grains of Sand
		Bright Horizon
		Home to You
		I Imagine
		My Dream
		Zero-Track Mind
		Release the Darkness
		United

Table 4.5. *Most Frequently Expressed Emotions*

Happy	Sad	Coping
Amazement	Anger	Determination
Appreciation	Confusion	Humor/prison procedures
Confidence	Disappointment	Overwhelming emotion
Enthusiasm	Dislike	Confusion
Hope	Embarrassment	Retrospection of process
Fascination	Empathy/lack of confidence	
Joy in participating	Fear	
Love	Frustration	
Pride	Inhibition	
Psychological comfort	Pain/prison experience	
Relief	Psychological discomfort	
Satisfaction	Tension	
Wonder	Struggle-prisoner treatment	
	Uncertainty	
	Wistfulness	
	Worry	

Overall, there is a greater range of emotional expression in the lyrics of the participants when compared to written reflections. I use a total of 65 emotion words to code the songs of the participants, and I use a total of 36 emotion words to code the written reflections, as shown in Table 4.6, *Emotion Codes of Written Reflections*. Findings of the reflection analysis through focused coding and memo-writing reveal emotional tension between psychological discomfort and determination to learn, and satisfaction and frustration. Connections are found between satisfaction and joy in participating, and among determination, satisfaction, and joy in the songwriting processes. The following sections discuss emotional tension and connections.

Table 4.6. *Emotion Codes of Written Reflections*

Participant/Facilitator Reflections
Retrospection/process 44
Determination 42
Joy in participating 25
Psychological comfort 17
Psychological discomfort 17
Uncertainty 16
Satisfaction 15
Happiness/Friendliness 10

Emotional tension. Focused coding and memo-writing about the emotion codes reveal emotional tension between psychological discomfort and determination to learn, as well as tension between satisfaction and frustration. In other words, if the men or facilitators expressed psychological discomfort in a given reflection, determination to learn was often expressed within the same reflection. If satisfaction were expressed in an individual reflection, frustration often proceeded or followed in the examined reflection. These emotional tensions are discussed in the sections that follow.

Psychological discomfort and determination. The feeling of psychological discomfort was most often experienced because a music-learning activity was new for participants, and they were not sure what to expect. During the fall 2010 workshop sessions, we often began with Dalcroze-based movement activities and vocal improvisation games. The men expressed some discomfort with these activities. Simon's reflection states a lack of familiarity and psychological comfort coupled with a determination to learn: "I enjoyed our first week. I found the improvisation techniques

new and interesting, but I could tell that several of the men were uncomfortable. I hope we don't lose any." Stewart also admits to being uncomfortable with new activities, and writes "I want to accomplish getting the words from my head and putting them on paper." Steve also expressed similar discomfort: "Though I enjoyed our first workshop, it was at times a bit uncomfortable as we were required to step outside our comfort zones. This is a necessary aspect of becoming or learning to become creative, but is often very difficult for those not accustomed to doing so." Axel James in a September 2010 reflection, provided a possible reason why the men might feel psychologically uncomfortable: I sense a cloud of shyness amongst the group. It's not something that's easy to explain. It could be the varying degrees of experience between us, or just the fact that in prison you have so few private experiences that you become secluded. I know for me personally, I have no problem talking in front of a group but when it comes to singing on two pitches I have a hard time being comfortable.

In response to the facilitator-directed prompts: "I choose to participate in the Songwriters' Workshop because," and "Between our first session and our second session I will," Luke also expresses some psychological discomfort and determination to write new material:

I chose to participate in this Songwriters' Workshop because I enjoy learning as well as music writing. Singing and playing. If I only learn one thing in this session, that would be one more than I know now. Between our first session and our second session I plan to practice applications learned in previous sessions and possibly develop questions for the next session.

Christian responds in the following way to the same prompts: "I chose to participate because I am a glutton for punishment! Also because I love the music and the people involved with these classes, choir and writing. In between I plan to get all of the reading done, review solfege, get the writing done." Simon expresses a desire to learn more about music notation: "I choose to participate because I want to improve my ability to read

music and learn notation so I can write on my own. In between I plan to try to find some lyrics I have written.”

Satisfaction and frustration. Examination of the written reflections reveals emotional tension between satisfaction and frustration. The men often expressed satisfaction in learning a new skill while acknowledging that acquiring it was a challenge. When reflecting upon learning a new skill, Christian wrote: “Last week’s workshop showed me that the solfege is finally sinking in. I still find it easier to do with the group or alone rather than solo in front of the group.” Walter also writes about new learning: “I’ve learned to read music fairly well now, or at least better than I did before our first music writing class.”

Expressions of frustration leading to satisfaction were often the result of combined efforts in assisting a participant. Liam, a young, undergraduate facilitator, shared this reflection on how the songwriters’ group helped Brian to create a melody for his song:

Brian started with a melody for the first line. His line had a definite shape and rhythm, but I had a little trouble notating it. It was not clearly in a major key, but I could not figure out what mode it could have been—maybe mixolydian. We all sang it together until we felt more or less comfortable and then Terry added the second line. It seemed like a genuine response to what Brian had come up with.

Liam further shared feelings of frustration about learning how to teach music, followed by this expression of satisfaction about his own learning as a workshop facilitator: Not only is this my first time visiting a prison, this is the first time I have been a leader in any such music making class. I feel privileged to have this opportunity and after just a few weeks have found this to be a very rewarding experience. I hate to admit it, but the two occasions I have had to lead activities might have been more educational for me than they were for the rest of the group.

Sometimes expressions of satisfaction are followed by expressions of frustration over prison regulations or procedures. In a fall 2010 reflection Christian expresses satisfaction over improving his improvisational skills. In the same reflection, he also expresses a sense of frustration at not having an instrument. Apparently, someone broke some strings on the guitars stored in the testing room the previous year, so the prison staff denied access to guitars for an unspecified amount of time. Christian, expecting that they will be returned any day, writes:

We are still waiting for the strings we bought four months ago so that we can start using the art room guitars again. I have tried repeatedly to get the activities coordinator to bring them to North Unit so that we can get the guitars strung. I hope that changes soon. It would make working on songs so much easier if we could stop by the art room when it was open and grab a guitar.

After a particular spring workshop session, I expressed the following feelings of satisfaction:

As a music educator, I walked away from the experience feeling better than when I had arrived; I felt as though I had shared a part of my art in an atmosphere of support and trust with others that wanted to deeply understand the music that was inside their souls, and let the song that beckoned from within come forth and take on a life of its own.

My reflection the following week expressed deep frustration and sadness over prison rules. It was a regulation that a corrections officer must escort us to our destination, for our safety and the security of the inmates. One evening, I needed to leave early. As I was preparing to leave, a corrections officer seemed annoyed at having to escort me back to the entrance. My journal reads:

I was told by a correctional officer in a clipped tone, ‘You’re on your own getting out of here. If something happens, you better scream loudly.’ ‘Okay, See you,’ I hastily replied, as I quickly exited the room, walking alone in the fluorescent-lit hallways, passing male prisoners who looked surprised to see a female walking alone. I scurried to the large, iron gates that would close loudly with a crash, one behind the other, as I made my way to the security entrance from which I came only 45 minutes earlier. I gave my volunteer badge to the officer and bid him ‘Goodnight, see you soon.’

As I drove away, I wondered why the correctional officer had been so short with me: maybe a busy night, maybe a difficult day. Maybe he saw me as a burden to his already heavy workload. I kept trying to push out of my mind the thought that he really didn't want us there, didn't want people to disturb the routines of the prison, didn't want anyone to come in to help the incarcerated learn new skills, didn't want anyone around that might treat them as human beings, didn't want anyone around that might harbor the hope that the prisoners could actually become productive citizens.

Often, I remember driving the two and a half hours home from the prison in silence, thinking of the incarcerated men and their families, and all of the accompanying hardships and difficulties. Children without fathers, some children with an absent father because they were violated or abused by one of these men; women and children living in poverty because some of these men couldn't resist drugs, alcohol, and bad decisions. I thought about these men, living without some of life's most precious human values: a sense of purpose, friendship, and self-worth.

Another reflection of mine expressing both satisfaction and frustration reads:

I appreciate the sincerity of these men, and their desire to learn. It is so satisfying for me to facilitate songwriting for those who are so willing, and sometimes it is hard for me to believe that these men are incarcerated. In reality, most of these men have been divorced by their spouses, disowned by their friends, and shunned by their children. And I can't say that I blame those wives, friends, and children. My mind screams that the men committed terrible wrongs, but more wrongdoing won't help or heal the situation. Furthermore, prison industries and the government use them for financial gain while providing substandard healthcare at best, meager or no wages, and little training or counseling to help them successfully reenter society. "What *will* solve the problems each man faces? What about his family and those he victimized?" I revolve the question around and around in my mind as I drive, my head and heart still back in the prison rehearsal room, writing and singing songs about the painful and raw, the ironic and hopeful. Within the context of songwriting, the condemned, the offender, the felon, the convict, the sinner, or whatever name one attaches to him, has a human face and human needs: to be accepted, needed, and even loved.

Whether it is learning difficulties or issues associated with incarceration, frustration and satisfaction were expressed within the same reflection. If satisfaction is expressed in a particular reflection, it was often followed by an expression of

frustrationThe following sections discuss emotional connections found within the written reflections.

Emotional connections. Focused coding and memo-writing on the emotions expressed in the written reflections of the men and us facilitators revealed emotional connections between joy of participating in music-making and determination, and connections among determination, satisfaction, and joy in the songwriting processes. In other words, if the men or us facilitators expressed joy of participating in music-making in an individual reflection, usually determination was also expressed within the same reflection. If joy in the songwriting process was articulated in an individual reflection, then determination and satisfaction were frequently expressed within the same reflection. Emotional connections are further described in the following sections.

Joy in music-making and determination. The men expressed joy in participating in music-making along with determination, often because they love music and want to learn more about it, or because they enjoy the company of the other writers. Axel James articulated joy and persistence to create new lyrics in the following statements:

I really liked the song exercise. I have always made up lyrics to songs. In the kitchen where I worked I would especially make new lyrics for songs that received an exaggerated amount of airtime. It was always something fun to do and would lighten my mood if I was feeling salty.

Sometimes, participants' accounts of joy and determination are followed by statements that are deeply personal, as Steve's reference to his past and comparing it to his current experiences:

As long as I had a few drinks in me I was all right. Singing without the benefit of alcohol is a new experience for me, and still makes me a little nervous. I have sung a few solos here. When I hear a song I really like, I just love to sing it over and over again.

Liam, the young undergraduate student-facilitator, also expressed determination and joy in the process upon facilitating a small-group activity:

I also liked the small group activity. It took a minute or two for the group to begin really sharing and working together. When we first started talking, I asked, ‘Alright who has any ideas?’ Somebody replied, ‘I don’t know, you’re the boss,’ I said ‘No, we all are.’ Then Christian Goodman piped in, ‘Prison policy is we aren’t allowed to be the boss of anything.’ I laughed, but there seemed to be more to his statement than a light joke. Anyway, we eventually produced a melody that had some input from all members of the group.

Liam’s statement not only indicates joy in the learning and music-making process, but also the increasing comfort level that the men were developing with each other. While the men were enjoying themselves joking about prison policy, they seemed to let us know that they were not used to leading activities because of their status as prisoners.

Determination, satisfaction, and joy in songwriting. The men were often retrospective about the pedagogical processes, and they often expressed determination, satisfaction, and joy in their reflections. Christian offered the following idea to facilitating learning how to improvise:

I was thinking about the idea of developing improvisational skills. We have a whole bag full of rice filled plastic eggs and percussion instruments that could be of some use in the class. There is also a bag with Sound Shapes (essentially drumheads) that we could bring to class. It also occurred to me that we could bring in either the keyboard or the electric guitar to play with. It would take very little instruction to describe a box pattern on the guitar and pass it around.

Facilitators also expressed determination, satisfaction and joy in the workshop process. Often, facilitators would create games to practice new music skills. Here, Dr. Cohen is discussing an improvisational game:

The best two improvisation sequences were when we interacted with dialogue. Then they listened to one another and responded musically and textually with appropriate, interesting, and creative answers. They really seemed to be genuinely enjoying themselves. It seemed like the free-style singing gave them an outlet to let go and be silly. It was a pleasure to watch them express themselves.

My reflection about the same improvisational game reads:

When participants improvised using the notes sol and mi while creating a story, they were able to come up with some clever thoughts and funny truths (about the pizza served on the inside, working in the kitchen, singing about heaven, and television usage, how few TV's were available, and how some of them liked/disliked football, sports). All participants were engaged and having a good time. Upon further reflection, I will try to incorporate other games, fun improvisational thoughts, and ways to be creative.

In this reflection, I expressed determination to facilitate music learning, satisfaction, and joy. These reflections also suggested the importance of the social dimensions of the workshops, and social dynamics take on even greater significance in the findings of the analyses of the workshop transcripts and sound files. The following sections provide further detail.

Transcripts and Concert Sound Files

Analysis of the transcripts and concert sound files reveals that although the men express less emotional variation in a workshop or concert setting than they do in their song lyrics, they frequently demonstrate psychological comfort in the routines and rituals established over time. This level of comfort potentially empowers them to express overwhelming emotion in their conversations about music, in the performance of the music, and in the opportunity to present their music for an audience. Humor, joy in making music together, and pride in other participants and audience members hearing original work is frequently expressed. Emotion codes of the transcripts and sound files are in Table 4.7, Emotion Codes of Workshop Transcriptions and Sound Files.

Psychological comfort and conversations. Pineau (1982) discusses comfort as corresponding to everything contributing to well-being, and he discusses psychological comfort as complex, produced by the environments and styles of life to which an

individual must adapt. Analyses of the workshop transcripts and sound files reveal that the men became more psychologically comfortable with each other over time. Using the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process, they were able to share their thoughts about each other's original work in a way that was non-judgemental and productive. The process, along with the structure of the workshops, further enabled them to have meaningful conversations about their song concepts, and new songwriters were often encouraged to share work by more experienced writers.

Table 4.7. *Emotion Codes of Workshop Sessions and Concert Sound Files*

Workshop Transcriptions	Concert Sound Files
Encouragement/invitations to share 108	Humor 20
Psychological comfort 52	Comfort in spiritual 18
Determination to learn/facilitate 25	Happiness/sharing memory 13
Respect 20	Gratitude 13
Humor 15	Pride in accomplishment 10
Support/pedagogical help 15	Regret 9
Woe 11	
Uncertainty 11	
Wonder 10	
Overwhelming emotion 8	

When Simon shared his song “Grain of Sand” with the other participants, they reflected deeply upon his lyrics and shared their thoughts. Their exchanges showed their psychological comfort with each other as they dialogue about the piece. In this verbal exchange using the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process (Lerman & Borstel, 2003), Christian discussed Simon’s song, and he related it to an incident from several years earlier, when an inmate was sent to solitary confinement for writing a piece that the

prison administration deemed as insubordination. Christian cited the verse he was concerned about in Simon's song "Grain of Sand"—“So hear me now, my heartfelt plea, held captive by the DOC. A prisoner of their huge machine, please be a grain of sand for me”—and reflected, “It's not as seditious as I thought when I first heard it. That's the only thing about it [He paused at length].” He then continued to discuss his concern: “Around here guys have gone to the hole for saying something that they thought was insightful [he pauses again] for inciting anything, for writing anything [he hesitated]. There was a song reported called ‘Snitchetts’ [hesitation] but this [hesitation].” Christian voiced some worry for Simon through his telling us of the writer who had been sent the hole for writing a song called “Snitchetts.” He seemed nervous about the words that Simon had written, thinking that Simon's lyrics could be misinterpreted by the prison staff. Christian felt psychological comfort in discussing this incidence with the group, even though the topic was difficult and controversial.

Simon expressed psychological comfort as he asked the others what kind of song style would be good for his lyrics. Addressing the participants, he asked,

Well, I have questions about the style that we're going to do it as a song, what style do you think would be good for it, and if there is something that you would change? I'm not above changing lyrics that I've written if it fits something musically, or like Christian said, if there's something inappropriate somewhere, it could be changed or sung differently. I'd take suggestions on that. Nothing that I've ever written is set in stone.

It seems that the participants were much more comfortable with each other during the spring semester of 2011 than they had been during the fall of 2010.

“Inside the Fences,” a song by Ricky Brady, expresses the difficulties of incarceration. During conversations about this song through the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process, the men expressed deep sadness. Christian discussed the lyrics:

So many times when guys first get here, the hurt goes away, but the whole world is angry, really angry, and when you first get here, and then there are people that don't cope with being here. So that is so real here to me. I'm glad to see that in the song. That is a part of the experience of being locked up here.

Simon further continued to express sadness:

I have an opinion about some of the lyrics. I especially really like this line here that says, 'the ones we love are trying to come inside, not knowing the hurt that goes on inside the fences.' If they get on the visiting list, of course, they will come inside. There is another fence, which is us that they cannot get inside of us, they cannot experience what we have experienced here. They think they can, because they come in and you know, maybe they come to a choir concert or they sit in the visiting room for five hours to visit. But in reality, they don't see everything that goes on here. And they don't see what goes on inside of us. And, I'm just taking this from past experience over my life, you know, my wife, she would like to understand what I feel, what I feel about her, but I don't think she does. There's a lot that all of us have that is always going to be a part of us. It's never going to get out of us.

As the discussion continued, more men expressed their sadness. Walter added the following thoughts:

Along that same line, I think if the public could experience what we experience on a daily basis, being locked up and having such a structured life, and you don't really have the choices that you have on the outside, that they would have a different opinion of convicts or inmates or offenders. However you want to label that. But they have the, I don't know, it seems like a stigma, that all convicts are just no good. That you should just throw them in a trash pile, you know. Everybody shouldn't think that way.

These expressions of sadness are also an account of the relationships that the men have developed with each other through singing, writing, and sharing together. They felt a sense of trust with each other, which, according to Tarius (2008) is unusual in prison.

Psychological comfort and overwhelming emotion. Feelings of psychological comfort often gave participants the freedom to express overwhelming emotion. Upon hearing the song "Sent to Germany," many participants were overwhelmed with emotion. Some were tearful; for others, speaking voices resonated with more vibrato than usual, or the pitch of their voices was higher and faster than normal as they discussed the piece.

Here, Daisy, one of the young undergraduate volunteer participants, was telling the men what the song means to her as she participated in the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process (Lerman & Borstel, 2003):

You were talking about it's more meaningful, because not only are there kids whose parents aren't coming home. I have classmates and not really any close friends, but they're going off to war and that wasn't something that you, that I grew up expecting, or that I ever really thought about, like it was in history books. Veterans were old people [lots of laughing] you know, veterans were like, were like somebody's grandparents or you know, maybe their dad if they were older. [LOTS of laughter] SORRY! But that's what I thought when I was in high school, and now these are my classmates. And it's a lot different than I ever thought it would be. And just sort of a way to connect with the past generation, like you are talking about your father that way. But gosh, people my age and their fathers are soldiers.

Walter, who had been alive during World War II, also had something to say about the emotional impact of the song:

You may have been too young to remember Ernie Pile. Do you remember who he was? Ernie Pile? He was a war correspondent during WW II, and he was my uncle on my mother's side, and I was probably 12 when he told us some stories, and the stories he told were [long pause] you couldn't help but cry, I mean, I don't care how brave a man you are, or macho [pause]. I saw a movie one time where this kid comes home with his pockets full of pocket-book novels to read, and as soon as he got out of the landing boat on the banks he was dead. That quick. And he never got to experience nothing. He had the fear of going there, but these kinds of stories were the ones that my uncle told us about when we were young. And he wrote a lot of stories that were nationwide, and he took a lot of pictures. And a lot of the pictures were really compelling. I know what he means. I thought that the song he had, "In my Mother's Eyes" was a powerful piece, but this one even more. I don't mean worse, but I mean as far as being powerful, this one really grabs you.

In his song "Golden Cross of Light," written for his wife, Christian expresses overwhelming emotion as he seeks comfort in the spiritual. As he tells the audience about his song, his voice is low, and sometimes he speaks quickly, as if to explain the pain of the situation without having to dwell upon it for too long:

It's good to see some familiar faces, some new faces. This particular song was important to me because my wife hasn't heard it yet, and it's about her. When she was a little girl, she had a really bad home life, and she would run away and go sit in the swings to get

away from home. And one time when she did that, she was praying, she was a good little Catholic girl, if that means anything to anybody, and she saw this [pause] cross up in the sky. So that's what this is about, let's see if we can get it out [it was emotionally difficult for him]. The problem with writing songs you care about is sometimes they don't come out too good.

Even though some songs fill participants with overwhelming emotion, they seem to really enjoy these songs and respect the work that goes into creating them.

Overwhelming emotion and psychological comfort were also expressed in the concert sound files from the summer of 2011. In his introduction to “Sent to Germany,” Stewart expressed pride and respect for his father. He also expressed overwhelming emotion and regret that he never told his father how much he loved him:

The song you are about to hear was written to honor my father, Anthony Holdridge. My father served in World War II between 1942 and 1944. My father and I had a lot of stuff planned when I graduated and he retired. But that never happened, because a year after he retired, he had a triple heart bypass, and a year after his bypass, he started showing signs of Alzheimer’s, which finally took his life in 1985. What I’m trying to say is that I never told my dad how proud I was of him [voice cracks at the end of the phrase]. Through the song “Sent to Germany,” I’m honoring my father and expressing all the love I felt for him but never told him [voice cracks again on “love I felt for him”].

Stewart’s voice became very emotional, and it sounded as though he was having difficulty speaking without crying as he said, “what I’m trying to say is that I never told my dad how proud I was of him.” The performance of his song was also highly emotional, expressing pride for his father’s service and bravery. As he read the poetry of the verses nestled within the song, his voice shimmered:

Refrain:

My father was a good man,
For this I do know, a lad of only twenty,
In the army he did go,
To fight for his country
In a land far away from home,
He found himself in Germany,
So young and all alone.

Verse one:

There one fateful day,
They went out on patrol,
Suddenly bullets were flying,
The men lost all control,
Taking deadly fire.
The radio man fell dead.
He saw the terror in their eyes,
He saw despair and dread.

Verse two:

Father found his fellow men,
The sun was going down.
He led them through the rocks and trees,
They didn't make a sound.
The enemy was everywhere;
The darkness stole their sight,
They knew that death and destiny
Awaited them that night.

Verse three:

Courageously defying fate,
Determined to survive,
My father led them through the night,
He brought them back alive.
When his commander heard the news
And saw that it was true,
He looked my father in the eye
And knew what he must do.

He called his men up,
For he had something to say.
About a boy who showed himself
To be a man that day.
He called my father forward
To accept what was his right,
He pinned on him the silver star
For his bravery that night.

Closing refrain: (the audience was invited to sing the refrain the second time)
 Glory, Glory Hallelujah,
 Glory, Glory Hallelujah,
 Glory, Glory Hallelujah,
 His truth is marching on!

Overwhelming emotion and opportunity to perform. Participants often expressed satisfaction in their accomplishments as they introduced their songs. They further expressed overwhelming emotion at having the chance to perform their songs for an audience. Here, Axel James expressed pride in his work, and overwhelming gratefulness for those who helped him:

Original songs have blossomed with the knowledge and compassion of Dr. Cohen. She has not only allowed our voices to blend, but our experiences as well. These experiences have changed me inside and out. I've developed a sense of community and society that I am sad to say I lacked before prison. It's caused me to return to values that I knew as a child. I've opened my eyes to scenes around me, and I've witnessed true generosity in the faces of these volunteers that choose to come in and sing with us. It's with their encouragement that I continue to better myself in a process I seek to never end. And with that, recently, so many amazing things have happened with my writing and poetry, all thanks to Dr. Cohen and this choir.

In this concert introduction to his song, Axel not only expressed gratitude; he also stated that the opportunity to participate in the choir and Songwriters' Workshop has changed him inside and out.

Humor and joy in making music. The transcriptions and concert sound files of the Songwriters' Workshop show many incidences of expressed humor. The men would often laugh at an outlandish idea, or sometimes they would joke with each other in a good-natured way. When discussing "Zero-Track Mind" the group's humor seemed to flow, as in this exchange: Christian said to the other participants: "Yeah, some believe me stupid, and I see the twist of it, because he's saying yeah, you think I'm stupid, yeah I can act stupid. I understand that." Simon responds: "I actually like it." Jessie then says, "Well, yeah, it's better than saying screw you!" The room erupted in laughter.

The participants really enjoyed performing for a friendly audience. The opportunity to share their work and interact is one of the reasons that the men choose to

participate in the Songwriters' Workshop. As they introduced their songs, some of them used wit and sarcasm to make the audience laugh, as Simon did in his introduction of the song "Mary, Mary" during the summer 2012 Songwriters' Workshop concert:

Good evening. At the risk of sounding a little like Casey Kasem, I'd like to give you a little background about the next song that we're going to do. My name is Simon Powers, and the guy standing next to me is my friend Mason Miller. Mason and I have a lot in common. We're both attractive young men in the prime of life [audience laughter—Simon is 57 and Mason is 23]. We both have fashionable haircuts [more laughter— Simon has very long hair and Mason's hair is short]. And we both chose to vacation here at the ever-popular Sugardale Spa and Resort [more laughter—Simon's sarcastic description of the prison].

Throughout this introduction, Simon expressed emotions of joy and humor. As Simon described himself and his relationship to Mason, the co-writer of the lyrics, he was sarcastically funny. His vocal tone was upbeat, and he paused just after he delivered humorous phrases, such as "young" and "attractive," "fashionable haircuts," and "The Sugardale Spa and Resort." When Simon described the love of Mason and his wife, his tone was lower and slower.

When introducing his song "Whispers from the Dawn" during the spring 2012 choir concert, Axel James joked about his sources of inspiration:

I joke around a little bit about writing, because I wrote about it during the NCAA softball championship [audience laughter], and I believe it was during the game Tennessee versus Hawaii that I wrote the stanzas and verses, and inspiration took over. And in the back of my mind was the suggestion, from the very beginning of this Sugardale Community Choir. Dr. Cohen asked us, 'if we had the chance to write our national anthem, what would we write?' Well, I chose to focus on a theme of hope and peace, freedom and love, and learning to care. So throughout the softball game, one of America's pastimes, in which I think Tennessee lost to Hawaii, I wrote the words to "Whispers from the Dawn."

Axel expressed humor and gratitude to share his original work with the audience.

When Stewart finally decided to write a happy song, he was excited to share it with an audience; however, it did involve leaving a comfort zone of sorrow for him: "I've

written three songs that were sad [long pause]. I promised that I was going to write a happy song this time. Well, this song is called “The Fourth of July” [pause]. I hope it goes right.” Stewart’s voice has some vibrato to it, indicating that he is slightly nervous and excited. He is excited and pleased to be sharing his original song that has a positive outlook, unlike his other songs.

The men also expressed satisfaction and pride in their work when they had opportunities to share them with an audience. William Smiley conveyed pride in his song and in his job as he introduced his piece, “The Bio-Bill Blues.” Axel articulated pride in his work when he introduced “Whispers from the Dawn.” Simon showed pride in his work when he introduced his song “Dear Younger Me.”

Pedagogical Strategies

Facilitators were collaborative and very detailed when planning learning opportunities and pedagogical strategies to use in the Songwriters’ Workshop. Cohen’s theory of Interactional Choral Singing Pedagogy (2007a) discusses the importance of interactive opportunities for personal, social, and musical growth within the context of a prison setting. Cohen further discusses the importance of purposeful pedagogical strategies and activities. The men often expressed satisfaction with the structure and pedagogical strategies, and although they sometimes voiced frustration at not being able to understand a particular pedagogical focus quickly, they often reflected upon how various learning strategies helped them to become better musicians or create meaningful songs.

Learning solfedge was difficult and sometimes frustrating for some of the men. Their written reflections revealed that understanding how relative solfège melodically

functioned took at least eight weeks of challenging practice. They further admitted that practicing solfège was sometimes tedious, but once they understood how to write a melody using solfège, it was worth the effort. Christian Goodman in a fall 2010 reflection wrote the following statements:

My roommate and I had a long discussion about using the solfège. He's against it and feels that it slows things down. I suggested that it is a good tool to help learn new songs. I couldn't convince him of that.

Christian later stated the following in a spring 2011 reflection "The solfège has helped me a lot even though I still make a lot of mistakes. Other participants revealed similar sentiments in their written reflections.

Facilitators realized that solfège was difficult for the men, and facilitators would frequently reflect upon pedagogical activities to make improvements to the teaching and learning process. In a fall 2010 reflection, Cohen reveals the following:

The initial task [solfège learning] was to hum on sol and mi, and all of them took a turn. Once they successfully took a turn at that, they seemed OK with the other individual tasks we asked them to do. I think all of them can match pitch. We also sang the solfège major scale, and all of them were successful at that (at least with the group). When asked to make up a melody using solfège syllables, they were unsuccessful. Rather than matching the correct syllable to the correct pitch, they sang a melody with any of the solfège syllables on any tune they wanted. They did, however, sing a tune, but just did not make the correct connections between syllable and pitch.

Facilitators communicated with each other frequently to find solutions to teaching and learning challenges. In a fall 2010 reflection, I responded to Cohen's observations with the following statements:

After I thought about it, having so many new elements to use at one time can be overwhelming. It would probably be better to use known or prewritten text rather than having to think of 3 elements (rhythm, text, and notes) all at once. In fact, we can break it down further to first create a rhythm, repeat it several times, and then improvise on notes using predetermined text.

The men were sometimes uncomfortable with pedagogical activities that were games and involved elements that they might perceive as silly. In a fall 2013 reflection, Steve Keller stated the following:

It seems that as grown men, we find it hard to regress to a place of playing games in order to express ourselves, while attempting to learn new concepts. As for myself, I feel that basic instruction on how to do a thing works best for me, as well as observing others do what it is I am wanting to do... I'm not against stepping outside my own comfort zone, yet it is embarrassing at times, for myself, as well as those observing me.

Cohen responded to his concern by writing to facilitators, by stating in capital letters, "BE SURE TO EXPLAIN THE WHY OF ANY ACTIVITY THAT HAS ANY ELEMENT OF SILLINESS." Facilitators wanted the men to be comfortable with the pedagogical strategies, and we didn't want them to decide not to participate because they felt embarrassed.

Songwriting was new for some of the men, and they expressed gratitude for having the opportunity to participate in the Songwriters' Workshop. The men also revealed that they noticed improvement in their songwriting in their fall 2013 letters. Because the data showed that interactive aspects of the workshops motivated the men to write songs, I explain in this section how our Songwriters' Workshop operated. I further discuss how participants gave feedback and managed judgments using the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process, and I describe strategies we used to assist struggling songwriters.

An essential part of the Songwriter's Workshops was to foster creativity by supporting and giving relevant, meaningful feedback to each participant. In our situation, findings revealed that a supportive atmosphere where the men can discuss their works with others produced substantial song quantity and quality.

Fostering psychological comfort. Establishing an atmosphere in which writers perceived that they could share ideas and get assistance in creating original work was an important part of the Songwriters' Workshop. The workshop sessions helped facilitate the learning process by providing a sense of structure and purpose for each meeting. As a facilitator, I considered the needs of songwriters as well as pedagogical strategies to assist when they felt that they were not progressing, and I helped create a general format for songwriting sessions. The processes of songwriting involved taking some emotional chances, including risks that included discussing controversial song topics as well as generating novel concepts (Marrade, Gibbons, & Brinthaup, 2007). Facilitators strove to establish an atmosphere that was supportive of each writer's unique processes, and help participants generate new ideas. Facilitators also wanted to give the men a means to provide honest and useful feedback when critiquing each other's original work.

The songwriting process. In general, songs were written by first having participants create lyrics, then music. Further steps included adding some expressive elements, and finally, sharing the song with others. I describe these processes in the following paragraphs.

Creating the lyrics. To begin creating lyrics, a participant usually took a personally meaningful thought or idea, and wrote about it for a specified period of time. Once the writer decided that he had adequately expressed his idea, he developed it into a metrical form or poem. The poem created often felt like an intensification of the original thought, and often, the lyrics were generalizable to similar situations. For example, when a writer had written a lengthy paragraph about never having seen his newborn daughter, the idea that he may use to describe this in song form was "So little and so sweet, never

have I met you." Other participants found that they could relate to these lyrics, because some of them also had not been able to see their children. In writing metrical lyrics, writers often used a rhyming dictionary and a thesaurus helpful. Facilitators often assisted by discussing the lyric ideas with the men, and offering suggestions when asked.

Creating the music. Once the lyrics were satisfactory to the songwriter, they worked to compose melodies, harmonies, and musical form. Some of the lyricists would ask a facilitator to create the music, because writing the lyrics was what they enjoyed doing most of all. Other participants would seek facilitator assistance in creating parts of the music, or in deciding upon a particular style for a song. In order to get a better grasp on a preferred style, the songwriter often listened to recordings he enjoyed to get ideas on how to structure his song, possibly with verses, a chorus, and perhaps a bridge. Usually, he further experimented with and discussed a song style with others, and experimented with his lyrics in his preferred style. Through this process the writer often started to get a feeling for how he wants his song to sound, and he began choosing a tempo, key, phrasing, overall feeling, and structure. If instruments were available, playing parts of the song were sometimes helpful in assisting the writer to clarify his thoughts; sometimes instruments were not available in the prison. When no instruments were available, relative solfège was a useful tool for deciding upon pitches for melodic contour. Often, by using his voice, a songwriter outlined his melodic ideas using solfa pitches. If he had trouble figuring out or writing the melody, another more experienced songwriter or facilitator often assisted. Group interaction in this process was very helpful; if the group sang the melody and the writer listened, the phrasing and shape of the melody often became clearer in the writer's mind.

Creating the expressive magic. Once a song was written, the songwriter usually started to think of ways to make it even more expressive, how to make the piece depict the exact feeling he wanted to convey. He determined where the song should climax, and dynamic levels of particular verses, phrases, and words. He also thought further about phrase shaping, and how to lead up to climax in an expressive way. At this point in the process, there were many choices for the songwriter to make, and thinking about how to emphasize the lyrics using musical elements to make them more personally expressive and meaningful was often a time-consuming task. Instrumentation and harmony were also considerations. Were there parts to be sung as a solo, or as a group? The extent that the songwriter wanted to explore these possibilities for his piece contributed to his level of personal expressiveness and satisfaction, as worked to make his song an aural reality. Walter, in a written reflection, stated that he wanted to write the lyrics, but wanted facilitators to write the music. He was satisfied being a lyricist, and was happy with facilitator created melodies. Ricky, in contrast, stated that he wanted to write lyrics only; however, when facilitators created music for his lyrics, he was unhappy with the music. His February 2011 reflection states the following: It seems that all our lyrics end up with the same melody and the words are just stuck in to make them fit.”

Sharing the Music. Once a writer has his original lyrics or music to a point where he wanted feedback from other writers, he volunteered to read his lyrics or sing his piece, sometimes with help from other participants, or more often, alone. Generally, the other writers were very supportive of each other’s work, and they regularly applaud following a debut reading or performance of a new piece. Workshop session transcriptions show that the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process was useful for discussions on an individual

participant's work (Lerman & Borstel, 2003). The process involves three parties: the artist, the facilitator, and the participants. The Liz Lerman Process helped to manage participant feedback, and keep the comments helpful, nonjudgmental, and relevant.

The Liz Lerman Critical Response Process was developed as a way to engage in the process of critiquing artistic work (Lerman & Borstel, 2003). There are four steps to the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process:

1. Statements of meaning: Responders after listening to the lyrics, rhythm, or melody of a song share what was meaningful, evocative, and/or interesting
 2. Artist as questioner: Artist can ask responders questions about the work that they just heard, and the responders answer the artist's questions. The facilitator moderates to keep the group on topic.
 3. Neutral questions from responders: the responders may ask questions about the song that are neither positive nor negative, for example, "How did you choose the theme for this piece?"
 4. Opinion time: the opinion that a responder may wish to express is subject to permission from the artist. The format for a statement of opinion in this model is expressed in the following way: "I have an opinion about _____. Would you like to hear it?"
- The Liz Lerman Critical Response Process has been embraced by many artistic disciplines, and the process facilitates dialogue between artists, peers, and audiences while nurturing the development of the artist and enhancing the learning and communication of both facilitators and participants (Lerman & Borstel, 2003). The songwriters and facilitators in this study using the Liz Lerman Process learned a great

deal not only about songwriting and each other, but how they process emotions while writing songs. While discussing his song “Grain of Sand” using the Liz Lerman Process, Simon Powers articulated these thoughts:

There are days that we have here, where we feel like the system is just trying to grind us up. It’s a big machine, and one little thing can happen that can bring all of that to a screeching halt. Sometimes it’s a CO knowing me by name and saying hello to you. You know, that can stop a whole day of, you know, it can frame everything that they tried to do to dehumanize us and do away with it. So whether it’s an incidence, or people that are the grains of sand, it’s basically a call for somebody to intervene from time to time in our lives, in order order to keep us from being processed by this place.

In discussing the same piece, Jessie Hamblin stated the following:

No matter what you use, what tempo or whatever, when you use words where people can actually visualize, you know, the sands and the machines and all, it’s put together in a way that you can actually imagine, visualize, it gives you a representation of what it means.

Once the writers shared a song and further refined it, they often had an opportunity to have their piece sung for a concert audience, either in a summer workshop concert, or in a Prison Community Choir concert.

Sharing the song with an audience. Once a songwriter had completed an original song, the Midwest Community Prison Choir may perform the piece, depending upon programming and timing constraints. Participant’s concert reflections suggest that this is a very positive and validating experience for the men, and they enjoyed sharing their work in this venue. The writers often spoke of being overwhelmed with positive emotions following this experience, and they found it both valuable and memorable. In a fall 2013 letter, Simon recalls the following experiences:

It [his song “Dear Younger Me”] drew me more positive reactions at the last concert than any other piece of music I performed. Monoths have passed, and I am still accosted in the hallways of the prison by inmates I barely know, telling me how much they liked the song.

Songwriting problems and solutions. Facilitator reflections of the songwriters workshops suggest that developing and improving songwriting skills took both time and practice. As I examined the writers' earlier works from 2010 and compared them to songs written in the spring of 2011, I found that 2011 songs were emotionally expressive, and the texts and melodies show improved writing skills both textually, and musically. Strategies facilitators used to assist writers when they struggled are discussed in the following sections.

A wandering concept. Sometimes a writer struggled with developing a concept for his song; without a clear song concept, the song would wander and lack cohesion. The song concept was a distillation of what the writer wanted the song to say: the clearer the concept, the clearer the meaning of the song. For example, a writer chose to write a love song, he needed to envision the type of love he wants to describe. To continue this example, if he wanted to write about the idea of two people in love, he needed to further define the love relationship. Would the song be about a love relationship that continues, one that was in the past, or possibly of hoped-for love? What would the two people in the song be like? Would they want to shout about their love to all who care to hear about it, or would they want to keep their love a secret? Could the song concept be narrowed to one particular trait or feature? Meaningful songs often narrowed large subjects down to a focal point, giving the listener a photographic impression, making the song characters indelible and the song memorable, such as Mason Miller and Simon Power's "Mary, Mary."

If a songwriter did not have a song concept in mind, free-form writing from a picture or verbal prompt sometimes helped to generate more specific ideas. Reflecting

upon relationships was usually very fertile ground for discovering great songwriting material, as was discussing life occurrences and events with others. The songwriters often discussed song concepts, and as a facilitator, I tried to be sensitive to the speech and body language of the writer, and when he had an idea in which he seemed to be very interested, I encouraged further exploration by asking questions about his concept, or by verbally noticing other unique features or ideas of the lyrics as the song text developed.

Achieving balance. Constructing lyrics with a form and a rhyme scheme were imperative to achieving a song that was balanced. A lopsided song, one that used only verses, or choruses, that did not have an obvious climax, would potentially bore listeners and was unsatisfactory to the writer. As a writer was creating the lyrics, he was often making some decisions relevant to the song form, so that the overall balance of the song was kept in mind as it was being created. Usually, once lyrics had a form and a rhyme scheme, rhythmic and melodic motives started to take shape, and the writer often began to generate motivic ideas based upon his preferences.

To understand song balance, I encouraged listening experiences, especially for new songwriters. Listening to a wide variety of songs and labeling song parts, such as verse, chorus, or bridge often helped to further clarify the concept of balance. Listening further gave some of the writers a sense of form for a set of lyrics that he might have in mind. Drawing lines in the shape of song phrases also helped writers to visualize balance. Most songs had a symmetry that could be visualized through drawing phrase shapes; comparing the visual representation of verses to the bridge and chorus helped writers to see where symmetry was possibly lacking.

Overwhelmed by choices. Songwriting involved quite a number of variables all working together to create an expression of human emotion. Sometimes the infinite number of variables and choices overwhelmed a writer, and sometimes a writer would feel stuck and frustrated. This data revealed that when a songwriter began the process of writing a song, he would often encounter difficulties in the following areas:

- Being overwhelmed by the infinite possibilities and directions that he could take while writing a song;
- Difficulty expressing the emotion of the song artfully in poetic form;
- Producing a song with a lack of cohesion and meandered, rendering it not memorable; and
- Difficulty generating rhythmic and melodic ideas that worked with the text to accurately express the intended emotion

Sometimes a writer would write a set of lyrics that did not rhyme, but he was afraid to change the lyrics even though they did not fit into a regular song form, lest it not be exactly what he wanted to say. One songwriter asked a facilitator to create a melody for his song, and he ended up not liking the music, but did not have the assertiveness or social skills to tell the facilitator what he was thinking. This particular writer seemed to sulk for quite a while, and would write anonymous reflections to facilitators expressing dissatisfaction, but he never stated clear reasons for his sadness.

Writing Parodies. For participants who were overwhelmed by writing both lyrics and music for a song, or had never written a song before, free-form writing, as mentioned above, often generated solid ideas for song topics. According to facilitator-written reflections, writing parodies was often a good place to begin learning to write songs;

through writing parodies, new songwriters learned about song form and rhyme without having so many variables that they felt overwhelmed. Sometimes a song chosen to create a parody didn't work well. For example, when a facilitator suggested that the group create a parody of "My Country 'tis of Thee," some of the men had trouble coming up with ideas, because they had such strong associations with the original piece. Facilitators found that choosing songs that did not have strong associations for participants made writing the parody much easier.

A parody was sometimes approached by using a fill-in-the-blank method, or by creating an entire set of new lyrics. According to facilitator-written reflections, using a rhyming dictionary and a thesaurus, new songwriters were able to create a humorous parody without becoming frustrated, and the facilitators had the opportunity to informally emphasize important elements of a song, including various structures as the parody was taking shape. When writing parodies, we sometimes used songs that were in the public domain to ensure that no special permissions would be needed before performing the work. Many writers enjoyed creating a parody because of the humorous aspects; the original song usually had meaning for the audience, and the new words combined with the associations of the old song often humored audiences, who would laugh, much to the delight of the participants. Examples of humorous parodies written by the songwriters include the following songs "Don't Worry, Be Happy," "I Don't Care if the Rain Comes Down," and "Gee, Warden Craig-ee."

Rhythmic and melodic difficulties. When melodic or rhythmic structures were of concern, I often emphasized the use of a memorable, short rhythmic or melodic motive that would give the song cohesion and make it recognizable for a listener. A motive could

between one and eight notes. If the songwriters were struggling with creating musical motives, I would often suggest using some original lyrics to create musical motives of various lengths, and then choosing a motive upon which to shape the song. Various short motives with ascending and descending patterns often gave lyrics shape and meaning beyond the textual, and I often suggested the use of motives to paint the text. As an example, the song “The Bio- Bill Blues” uses a descending motive of a minor third to emphasize the germs “falling.” Participant-written songs show that learning how to freshen a worn motive by using upper appoggiaturas, lower appoggiaturas, passing tones, lower and upper neighbors, repetitions, and changing the range or mode gave songwriters a way to rework material that was built on the same idea to add memorable variety, such as the ascending motives developed in “A Song” by Jason Young. Another example of learning how to rework motivic material could be seen in Stewart Holdridge’s song, “The Fourth of July.” When Stewart first conveyed his melodic ideas for this piece, he used a descending major third in the melody quite a bit, but the melody was not memorable for him. Once he started to use the descending major third motive during specific points of his text, followed by upper and lower neighbor tones preceding it, the melody began to take shape.

Often, writers had difficulty expressing the emotion of the song artfully, and in poetic form. If a songwriter was comfortable discussing his work with others, it was sometimes helpful to have the writer explain to other participants how the song made him feel, or exactly what he wanted to say through the song, and then asking other writers if the lyrics accurately conveyed what the writer was trying to say. Having the songwriter look at his lyrics in small increments and rephrase his thought to accurately reflect the

meaning he wanted to convey often resulted in clearer emotional expression and poetic artistry. Helpful tools when engaging in this deep polishing process included paper, pencils, a dictionary, rhyming dictionary, and a thesaurus. Other resources that were extremely helpful included other supportive participants for candid feedback. Once a set of lyrics is complete, I often had writers check to make sure that the following ideas expressed the intended emotion of the song:

- Title: was it interesting, and was it used several times throughout the song to capture the song concept/idea;
- Hook: This is a rhythmic or melodic motive that a listener will remember after the first hearing. Was it repeated often, and did it accurately express the intended emotion;
- Opening Grabber: Were the first words of the song intriguing, and did they generate interest, i.e.; “On the day we were born, cosmic fibers were spun into thread”;
- Was the song focal point evident early in the song? The first fifteen seconds of a song are critical; rambling loses a listener;
- If the song was contemporary, did it use contemporary language? I often encouraged searching for new phrases in magazines and newspapers; and
- Was the song longer than necessary? A song should not be rushed, but it also shouldn’t go on and on.

Meandering songs. Producing a song that meanders, lacks cohesion, and is not memorable was a frequent outcome for a beginning songwriter. In this case, the song was what I would consider incomplete, needing further refinement. Often, the writer had a

good idea, and there were several good rhythmic and melodic ideas stated, but the writer had a difficult time narrowing his ideas into something memorable. In this particular case, I would ask questions about the song to gage the writer's level of satisfaction with it, and suggest taking a single motive and shaping future musical material from it. Often, a writer would know when a song needed refining; he was not sure what to do next. Simplifying the piece was often the answer in these situations, providing repetition and form. Often when reworking material, participants found it helpful to work together as they refined ideas.

According to the data analysis for this group of incarcerated writers, interactive opportunities to learn about songwriting provided the participants with a sense of satisfaction and enjoyment. Many of the men admitted that the songwriting process was not easy and sometimes tedious. Sometimes they became frustrated with the amount of time it might take to create their song, but often, once they had written a song, they were satisfied with their results, and they were very excited to perform their songs in a concert. Brian Lewis, in a spring 2011 written reflection described writing songs as "more addictive and satisfying than alcohol." He had just finished writing his piece "Release the Darkness," and had heard the prison choir sing it for the first time, in preparation for the concert.

Importance of Interactive Opportunities

Findings of this study show that the men expressed a great range of emotions in their lyrics. Their songs were personal reflections of their feelings and experiences, supporting Alan Waterman's theory of the Personally Expressive Personality. Some writers were particularly involved in the songwriting process, and report that they spend a

lot of time outside of workshop sessions writing songs. These participants reported that they gained a sense of personal fulfillment from songwriting.

While the findings of this study support Waterman's theory of the Personally Expressive Personality, they also reveal that the men participating in the Songwriters' Workshop found ways to be expressive as individual songwriters and as collaborators, or as a group in a prison community setting of songwriters. Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater (2012) describe a community as a group of people in a certain geographic location, or of a certain race, class, gender, religion, profession, beliefs, traditions, rituals, shared experiences, or ideals. As mentioned in the literature review, the African concept "Ubuntu" encompasses "issues of human dignity and respect with the understanding that an individual's humanity is wrapped up in the dignity and humanity of others" (Liebmann, 2007, p. 438). The analysis of written reflections and class transcriptions show that the men became more comfortable with each other and with facilitators over time, and they were psychologically comfortable enough in the workshop setting to participate in emotional, insightful conversations, and form collaborations and friendships. Through these conversations they gained a sense of trust and respect as individuals and as they organically formed a songwriting community. Besides being songwriters, incarceration was a shared living reality among all of the participants, and conversations about incarceration using the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process (Lerman & Borstel, 2003) contributed to their comfort interacting with each other. A spring 2011 reflection following a workshop session revealed my thoughts:

I was struck by how the Liz Lehrman response process facilitated very open conversations about life in prison, the challenges, and the emotions that are felt by these men. The lyrics of their songs show feelings of deep pain on many levels, and the

"cohesive theme" is that we are all human, and at least on that level, we should all share a connection.

Liam noticed similar characteristics of the participants' interactions. A spring 2011 reflection of Liam's states the following:

Luke Wise discussed that he has more friends in prison than he ever had in his life outside. He said he was "basically all alone on a 200 acre plot" and had few visitors other than the customers of his shop (I can't remember if he was some sort of mechanic or if he sold cars parts or something else). During his first two years in prison he remembered being quite aggressive and often violent. He was sent to "the hole" frequently for misbehavior. Eventually he mellowed out and realized it might be a good thing to be on good terms with other inmates.

Another spring 2011 facilitator- written about conversations facilitated using the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process states the following:

I was moved by so many participants expressing that eye contact and a smile made them feel like a human being, not like an animal. Walter and Jessie especially had things to say about what a smile with eye contact meant to them. Again, Walter made a reference to garbage, saying that he did not feel like trash when someone made eye contact with him and smiled. Luke's writing about people needing him for the simple things in his work every day made me think of lyrics about friendship, hands, serving others. . . He said that the day had been exhausting for him, but he seemed satisfied with his work.

In their letters, the men revealed that the social aspects of the Songwriters' Workshop were motivating factors for them to participate and write songs. In a September 2013 letter, Axel wrote me that while he enjoyed writing lyrics before he was in the Songwriters' Workshop, participating in the workshop further encouraged him to write, process his drug addiction, and have a hopeful outlook for his future. Steve Keller described that he did not think that many of the men were passionate lyricists or songwriters, but they participated in the workshops because it gave them an outlet for emotional expression, and to communicate with others; in his case, he is hoping that his children may one day hear his songs. In an October 2013 letter in which he is responding

to my questions regarding the findings of this study, he stated that “Life happens to each one of us, and some of us respond by writing, while others store it up inside of them.” In writing about his participation in the Songwriters’ Workshop, he further revealed that, “Without the workshops, there would have been no feasible outlet for a select few of us to express ourselves poetically or musically.”

Christian, in a September 2013 letter about the Songwriters’ Workshop, explained that songwriting helped the men connect who they were with who they are now. He also stated that it is an opportunity to speak vicariously with others that want nothing to do with them. His letter stated the following:

I do believe that writing songs and poetry helped us connect who we were with what we are now. They give us a chance to speak vicariously to people who don’t want or can’t have contact with us, as well as the loved ones that have passed on.

He also noticed that writing songs is not enough; for him, there is a compulsion to share what he has written. Christian believed that a song is not complete until it is sung for an audience. He further acknowledged that he wants to feel that what he has created is worthwhile. He said that he felt pathetic when he gives in to the need to share his work with anyone who will listen, and he admitted that it is harder to find someone who will acknowledge his work in prison. His fall 2013 letter revealed his thoughts in the following statements:

I’ve also noticed that writing songs just is not quite enough. There is a compulsion to share what we have written. For me, a song isn’t complete until it is sung to an audience. For others, it’s enough to have people read their work. Part of it has to be the need to feel that what we have created is worthwhile. It’s the same with my drawings. I’m aware that there is some deep-down need to share my work, and I feel so pathetic when I give in to the need to show my work to someone, anyone, that will acknowledge it.

Christian further stated that the cheerfulness and the mindset of the volunteers made a huge difference for him. He also admitted that he has not written as many songs as he did

before the Songwriters' Workshop, because he is often helping another songwriter to create an original piece.

Simon, in an October 2013 letter, explained that the Songwriters' Workshop helped him to process his emotions and re-envision his future. He stated that boredom and indifference is a problem for many in prison, and the Songwriters' Workshop helped participants to enjoy their free time as they think of new songs. According to Simon, boredom and indifference were tools used by the Department of Corrections to break the will of prisoners. Simon believed that the routines are meant to be monotonous, and because the men were so bored, they would fight for blood over a seat in the television room. As he puts it, "The sameness of every day, every meal, every piece of clothing, every regimented hour, day after day week after week, stretching on into years is enough to drive some men to madness." He stated that my analysis of the 2009 songs as usually expressing boredom and indifference was correct. The creation of the Songwriters' Workshop in 2010, he wrote, alleviated his boredom, and that of the other men who also chose to participate.

While Simon thought that boredom is a Department of Corrections tactic to break the will of the men, the prison administration was concerned with prisoner boredom. In a conversation with a prison administrator, the administrator revealed to Cohen that he was concerned with inmate boredom, realizing that boredom lead to inmate behavior issues. This administrator acknowledged that it was important for the prisoners to be involved in activities that included opportunities for positive social interaction and personal growth.

The prison administration reports that Sugardale prison uses Evidence-Based Practices to facilitate inmate rehabilitation, and they are concerned with prisoner

boredom. In other words, the prison staff acknowledges that inmates are sent to prison as punishment for crimes committed, not to be punished. According to administrators at Sugardale, prison programming is designed to provide the incarcerated men with the opportunities to participate in rehabilitative programming, basic education, life skills, work experiences, and mental health and medical treatment, in order for them become productive and participating members of the public upon release. Issues related to providing quality programming to alleviate inmate boredom include having available prison staff, volunteers, and funding.

Participant responses revealed that extrinsic, social motivators are important for many participants. However, not all expressions in the letters were positive. Christian wrote in his fall 2013 letter that he was conflicted about the process of some of the men involved in the workshop who, in his opinion, took advantage of others by scribbling a few incoherent lines, and then expected him, or another writer to make a song out of it. He revealed his thoughts in the following statements:

I'm a bit conflicted about the process of men involved in the workshops who, in my opinion at least, take advantage of others. I feel violated and burdened by the men who scribble a few incoherent lines, and then expect me, Mary, or someone else to make a song out of it. I'm not at all sure that the kindest thing is to create something from nothing so that these men can put their names on it. Certainly, I understand that this might be a confidence builder for these men, but confidence in what, or who?

As Christian's letter revealed, not all social interactions during the workshops were perceived as enjoyable. However, findings of this study show that the majority of the social interactions of the workshops positively affected the men. As previously mentioned, Sunstein and Chiseri-Strater (2012) described a community as a group of people in a certain geographic location, or of a certain race, class, gender, religion, profession, beliefs, traditions, rituals, shared experiences, or ideals. Sunstein and Chiseri-

Strater further stated that communities could develop over time through a group of individuals sharing living conditions and routines. Communities could be large, and include people living in cities or towns, or communities could be small, such as families, or individuals who had come together for a common purpose—a group of hospital volunteers, students in a classroom, or a regular gathering of quilters.

The findings of this study reveal that through interactive songwriting, rituals, and routines of the Songwriters' Workshop, these men became a community over time. They developed writing collaborations and friendships, and they expressed concern for one another. Furthermore, they expressed a sense of collective purpose and common emotions through their social interactions and collaborations, and they even felt a sense of collective-actualization and mutual fulfillment as they realized how artistic they were as a group. The analyses of the letters and transcriptions reveal that the songwriting community influenced individuals, and individuals influenced the songwriting community. Through songwriting, the men re-envisioned their futures as a group and as individuals. I further probe the social aspects of the Songwriters' Workshop and its influence on case study Axel James in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER FIVE: AXEL JAMES—HIS HIS PASSION FOR SONGWRITING

Songwriter Axel James is a very personally expressive, prolific writer of poetry, and he seems to thrive on expressing himself in written word. Because he expresses a deep, inner need to write, I examine him as a case-study. Through analyzing his writing, I gain an understanding about how Axel is personally expressive. He admits that he processes and expresses his emotions in his lyrics.

Axel was very open about his past, and he was usually good-humored and well spoken. He often expressed satisfaction and joy participating in the Songwriters' Workshop. In casual conversations, he voluntarily revealed that while in high school, he was very popular, a school jock, and a party boy. He always knew where the best parties were happening, how to get the girls, how to get large quantities of alcohol, and from whom to get the best mind-blowing drugs.

Axel James has written poetry since he was in elementary school. He remembers his fourth grade teacher telling him that his poems were not really very good, and this made him feel as though he should not share his writing with anyone. He continued to write throughout high school, but he hid his poetry in a notebook, and he never shared it with anyone. When his girlfriend found his poetry notebook and read it without his permission, he said that he felt "violated," as though his most private thoughts had been read, as though he had been "laid out" for public inspection. He felt he would be ridiculed and scorned if he revealed his writing to anyone, that he would be rejected and made the laughing stock of the football team, and, in fact, the entire school.

Ultimately, his fast, high life led to his drug addiction and self-destructive behavior. He was on a path to an early demise—evident by the nights unremembered

from drinking and drugs, the red and purple scars on his arms from an endless array of needles and toxic substances, by his eyes, sunken, and drawn into his face from a drug-induced haze, and his body, skin hanging on a bony frame. He spent any money he earned or stole on alcohol and drugs rather than on food. His song lyrics often mentioned his physical and emotional turmoil while he was using drugs, high and ecstatic one moment, deeply depressed and afraid the next.

In a 2011 reflection, Axel describes himself as a poet at heart, and he has a self-proclaimed “romantic view of poetry.” He enjoys “putting himself inside” the poetry or song, and he wants his writing to be “as its own entity, unblemished from outside sources.” He enjoys a “narrative” idea. He has a passion for his poetry, but not necessarily for poetry itself. Axel sees poetry as a “physical extension of his ethereal self,” and all of these thoughts that he has shared with me strongly suggest that he uses his poetry as a creative outlet, as a way to process and share his emotions, and as a way of seeking another identity besides that of “former addict,” “prisoner,” “offender,” or “societal nuisance.” In a fall 2013 letter, he reveals that through his writing, he finds resilience in the face of an oppressive prison culture: a sense of individuality, purpose, and hope for his future. Upon his release from prison, when he is no longer a captive—his debt to society paid in full—he hopes others will view him as a human being, capable of contributing to his family and community, and that he will live the life that those who believe in him envision for him: a life of acceptance, productivity, and love.

Emotion in His Lyrics from 2008–2011

The range of emotional expression in Axel's songs is similar to the combined total of the participants in the Songwriters' Workshop. Coding of Axels lyrics reveals 65 emotion codes: 25 happy emotions, 27 sad emotions, and 13 coping/other emotions. These emotions are shown in Table 5.1, *Emotion Codes Describing Axel's Lyrics*. Axel's emotional expressions change quite a bit over time. From 2008 to 2011 his emotions shift from being fearful and angry to being retrospective, hopeful, and excited. I discuss these observations in the next section, and they are shown in Table 5.2, *Axel's Most Frequent Emotional Expressions 2008-2011*.

2008: Fear the Most Frequent Expression

Overall, Axel's 2008 songs are sad. Of the 11 songs he wrote in 2008, eight have an overall emotion of sadness, two expressing coping strategies, and one is happy. Of 153 coded emotions, 81 are sad, 20 are coping, and 52 are happy. His 2008 songs and their themes are listed in Table 5.3, *Axel's Songs, 2008*. Axel's most frequently expressed emotion is fear, and his 2008 song concepts often include otherworldly, sinister characters. Through these characters, he further expresses inner conflict, and he seems preoccupied with death. In a 2013 letter, Axel states that his 2008 writing is full of fear, evil characters, death, and anguish from his addiction to intravenous drugs. I discuss his expressions of fear, preoccupation with the paranormal, and anguish of addiction in the following section.

Fear, paranormal characters, and anguish. In his September 2013 letter regarding my research findings, Axel stated that he had been taking intravenous drugs when he was incarcerated in February of 2008, and his fears and hallucinations deeply

influenced his writing. He further confirmed that he is the main character in his songs. “Angel on My Shoulder,” “Bone Orchard,” “Hell’s Flames,” “Someone’s Coming for Me,” and “The Pendulum Swings” all have themes of the paranormal, and “Angel on My Shoulder,” “Hell’s Flames,” and “Someone’s Coming for Me” reference the devil. “Bone Orchard” refers to being trapped in a place filled with bones and playing among them, while “The Pendulum Swings” discusses incidences of life happening as a pendulum swings.

Verse one of “Bone Orchard” discusses running through the bone orchard, escaping torture, and surrounding death:

Running through the bone orchard,
Escaping my own torture.
Virgil shows me the way
Through the flesh stained ivory gates.
The hallow winter wind howls all around,
Death arises from the ground.
Dementia falls from the hard withered branches,
Despair rolls across in massive avalanches.

The lyrics continue with demons crying out in primal angst, and paranoia becoming euphoric, and worth the pain as Axel continues to play in the bone orchard. Finally, there is a realization that the character misses “a soul that has depth, and he finally sees his demons where he is trapped forever in the bone orchard:

My demons scream out in primal angst,
My sacrifice holds them steady at the gates.
Safety thrives in this most solemn of exiles,
Paranoia is the euphoria and pain is worthwhile.

I take into the bone orchard all that it offers,
I run and play with no one to bother.
Inner becomes outer and dreams become real,
Everything I wish and hearts I can steal.

Yet something lingers in a chasm forgotten,

There's something here, something I've broughten.
 A life I've lived outside these great gates,
 Along with others I've jumped, screamed and played.

Through the bars I see the angels I've left,
 I miss the sounds of a soul that has depth.
 Then I see my demons alongside my torture,
 Forever I'm trapped in the bone orchard.

Table 5.1 *Emotion Codes Describing Axel's Lyrics*

Happy	Sad	Coping
Anticipation	Agitation	Acceptance
Closeness	Anger	Arrogance
Compassion	Anguish	Boldness
Confidence	Boredom	Comfort
Contentment	Conflict	Courage
Delight	Despair	Detachment
Empowerment	Desperation	Determination
Enthusiasm	Disappointment	Indifference
Excitement	Disbelief	Irony
Happiness	Disgust	Overwhelming emotion
Hope	Dissatisfaction	Patience
Joy	Distrust	Retrospection
Kindness	Doubt	
Love	Fear	
Peace	Frustration	
Pleasure	Hate	
Pride	Hopelessness	
Relief	Longing	
Respect	Loneliness	
Satisfaction	Regret	
Surprise	Sadness	
Thankfulness	Shame	
Trust	Stress	
Victoriousness	Uncertainty	
Wonder	Weariness	
		Wistfulness

Table 5.2 *Axel's Most Frequent Emotional Expressions, 2008-2011*

2008	2009	2010	2011
<i>11 Songs</i>	<i>10 Songs</i>	<i>6 Songs</i>	<i>5 Songs</i>
Fear 21	Wonder 19	Retrospection 16	Closeness 9
Wonder 12	Closeness 17	Hope 12	Excitement 7
Doubt 10	Anger 14	Trust 10	Comfort 6
Anguish 8	Anguish 13	Uncertainty 8	Joyful indifference 5
Conflict 8	Acceptance 9	Longing 7	Joy 5
Desperation 6	Despair 9	Conflicted 5	Love 4
Hope 6	Retrospection 9	Fear 3	Acceptance 3
	Regret 8	Courage 3	Anticipation 3

Table 5.3 *Axel's Songs, 2008*

Song Title	Song Concept
Angel on My Shoulder (sad)	Inner conflict/otherworldly wickedness
Apollo's Conquest (sad)	Art of war/Apollo killing his foe
Bone Orchard (sad)	Inner conflict/otherworldly wickedness
Elemental (sad)	Settling down
Hell's Flames (sad)	Self destruction/glimmer of hope
I Haven't Heard Your Voice (sad)	Missing lover
The Pendulum Swings (sad)	Lack of control over life passing
Someone's Coming for Me (sad)	Devil coming to take him away
Just One Look Away (coping)	Seeking understanding from others
Where I Come From (coping)	Traveling and going home
Aphrodite Calls (happy)	Love's intoxicating powers

Verse one of “Bone Orchard” discusses running through the bone orchard, escaping torture, and surrounding death:

Running through the bone orchard,
Escaping my own torture.
Virgil shows me the way
Through the flesh stained ivory gates.

The hallow winter wind howls all around,
 Death arises from the ground.
 Dementia falls from the hard withered branches,
 Despair rolls across in massive avalanches.

The lyrics continue with demons crying out in primal angst, and paranoia becoming euphoric, and worth the pain as Axel continues to play in the bone orchard. Finally, there is a realization that the character misses “a soul that has depth, and he finally sees his demons where he is trapped forever in the bone orchard:

My demons scream out in primal angst,
 My sacrifice holds them steady at the gates.
 Safety thrives in this most solemn of exiles,
 Paranoia is the euphoria and pain is worthwhile.

I take into the bone orchard all that it offers,
 I run and play with no one to bother.
 Inner becomes outer and dreams become real,
 Everything I wish and hearts I can steal.

Yet something lingers in a chasm forgotten,
 There's something here, something I've broughten.
 A life I've lived outside these great gates,
 Along with others I've jumped, screamed and played.

Through the bars I see the angels I've left,
 I miss the sounds of a soul that has depth.
 Then I see my demons alongside my torture,
 Forever I'm trapped in the bone orchard.

“Bone Orchard” shows a great variety of emotions: despair, fear, depression, anguish, compassion, conflict, doubt, acceptance, selfishness, longing, irony, and despair. I even find examples of joy, pleasure, and wonder in the phrases “I take into the bone orchard all that it offers. I run and play with no one to bother. Inner becomes outer, and dreams become real, everything I wish and hearts I can steal.

Axel expresses fear in “Hell’s Flames.” At the beginning of the song, the devil, in the form of an ever-present man, is accompanying Axel on his life journey:

Verse one:

I've walked along this path with my cross slung over my shoulder,
 I've made a choice to live this life, it's harder now I'm older.
 Side by side my friends can't see what the hell is happening to me.
 Grateful for the times I've seen, I wonder why they cut and make me bleed.

Verse two:

There's a man behind me swaying just slightly,
 Does he know just why he walks in stride,
 He's closing in upon me laughing ever softly,
 Face to face he looks behind my eyes.

In the song, the devil enjoys torturing Axel, and he mocks him, waiting for the day that he can steal his soul. Axel is waiting for death to calm and soothe him, and he sees his life as a living hell that can only be overcome by death. The song expresses fear, desperation, anguish, and conflict.

“Someone’s Coming for Me” is a song about being in prison and seeing the soul of the devil hidden within prison caretakers and staff. In the song, Axel envisions that he has been sentenced to death, and is experiencing his final moments as he walks down the hall to sit in the electric chair and be executed. The song begins:

Verse one:

Message through the grapevine, someone's coming for me.
 I hear the message through the grapevine, someone's coming for me.
 Here to kill a killer, and you know that killer's me.

Verse two:

Looking through the bars just to see what I can see,
 Said I'm looking through the bars just to see what I can see.
 I see the devil and the guard, just the same man underneath.

Verses three and four describe the walk to the electric chair:

Verse three:

Looking through the bars just to see what I can see,
 Said I'm looking through the bars just to see what I can see.
 It's the warden and the preacher taking quick steps right to me.

Verse four:

Walking down the hall as they try to make me believe,
 Got me walking down the hall as they try to make me believe.
 Hey preacher man, if I believe will you make the Devil pardon me?

Verses five and six tell of the devil coming to watch the execution:

Verse five:

Strapped in a chair and then who should come to see,
 When I'm strapped in a chair and then who should come to see?
 The Devil himself and he's sitting in a front row seat.

Besides fear, Axel expresses distrust, doubt, and irony in this piece. Axel also expresses paranoia as the lyrics unfold, as the devil is coming for him. Axel revealed that when he was first incarcerated in February of 2008, he sometimes felt as though he were going crazy; he was coming off of drugs, and he was only allowed out of his room for an hour or two per day, and interaction with others was very limited. He further admits that he wrote lyrics to process his thoughts.

In “The Pendulum Swings,” Axel discusses fate, and how it is seemingly beyond anyone’s control. He expresses fear in line three of verse two, and he gives the pendulum human characteristics, but it remains indifferent to human emotions:

Verse two:

Controlling the masses, exhorting the gaps,
 Possessed by no one, yet all it attracts.
 No safety in numbers, nowhere to run,
 It cuts at the strings till wisdom’s undone.

These lyrics conclude by stating that the pendulum swing can be felt through the “beating of your heart,” and the swinging of fate will continue until everything in the universe is consumed by a black hole. This song also expresses wonder over the pendulum and its swinging back and forth.

“Angel on My Shoulder” is a song that not only expresses fear and anguish, but also inner conflict. The image of the angel on the shoulder but the devil in the veins depicts an image of inner struggle:

Angel on my shoulder,
Devil in my veins.
Wicked is the laughter
That bleeds my hearing dry.
Long shadows in the night
Corrupt the fleeting dawn.

Poison is the atmosphere,
Smolders on the flesh.
Some may say the evil
That brings upon all the pain,
Was born of salted tears
From ancient mortal shame.

In his September 2013 letter, Axel stated that the angel on his shoulder was his guardian angel, and the devil in his veins was the intravenous drugs that he took to get high. He referred to the wicked laughter as the madness that swept over him when he was using. “That bleeds my hearing dry” was the way that he cut himself off from reality by using drugs. “Long shadows in the night that corrupt the fleeting dawn” referred to his nightly habits of addiction. The last verse that begins “Poison is the atmosphere, smolders on the flesh. Some may say the evil that brings upon all the pain, was born of salted tears from ancient mortal shame” was a reference to karma, and how we reap what we sow.

Axel expresses fear in the lyrics of “Apollo’s Conquest,” as scattering humans are desperate to get away from Apollo:

Burn down this tree to its festering roots,
Savagely declaring war on all the known truths.
Humanity scrambles about this way and that,
Debating on debating how to attack.

Time taps his foot, yet procrastination ensues.

Apollo waits not, he scourges through.
 Slicing his way with glorious hate
 Surgically wielding his carnivorous blade.

Bodies drop down and heads soar up high,
 He smiles and he laughs, death gleams in his eyes.
 Steaming and screaming the wrath comes on strong,
 All through the night 'til the blood curdling dawn.

The art of war has been sown upon this sunrise,
 The harvest of many indwelling and swelling with pride.
 Forget not the cry that silence can bring,
 Remember not the life of spoiled human beings.

The song expresses Apollo's excitement and joy at brutally killing humanity, and a reminder to forget the lives of spoiled human beings. In this piece, Axel is speaking of the wrath of the gods upon selfish humanity.

2009: Wonder and Anguish Most Frequent Emotions

Of Axel's 10 songs written in 2009, five of them were coded as sad, four as coping, and one as happy. Of 191 coded emotional incidences within these 10 songs, 89 were sad, 63 were happy, and 39 were coping/other. See Table 5.4 "*Axel's 2009 Songs*" for a list of 2009 song titles and their themes.

Axel's most frequently expressed emotion in 2009 is wonder, and in his lyrics, tension exists between wonder and anguish, conflict, and anger. In Axel's lyrics, he expresses wonder over how his life got so bad. The lyrics integrate a connection between wonder and nature, and in 2009 he starts expressing healing and recovery through lyrics that explore pleasure in nature. He begins to write about life choices, and his choice to change his future. I discuss wonder and tension in the following section.

Table 5.4 *Axel's 2009 Songs*

Song title	Song concept
18 and Life to Go (sad)	Best friend committing suicide
Good Time (sad)	Emptiness of life after a party
It's Been a Long Lonely Night (sad)	Loneliness after drugs/alcohol
Waging War on the Moon (sad)	Anger after a break-up
What Remains (sad)	Memories of the past
Reminiscing Rose (coping)	Metaphorical/roses dying/women as flowers
This Man (coping/other)	Looking at the past with acceptance
A Poem for Me (coping)	Poem of love/seeking acceptance
Answering Me (coping)	Love poem/coping with situation
Lotus Path (happy)	Healing
Crossroads (coping)	Choice to change/coping

Wonder and anguish, conflict, and anger. “It’s Been a Long, Lonely Night,” “18 and Life to Go,” “Good Time” and “What Remains” are all songs that express the emotional tension of wonder juxtaposed with the anguish of drug addiction, conflict, and anger. “Waging War on the Moon,” a song about love gone wrong, expresses tension among wonder, anguish, and anger on being betrayed by a lover. In his 2013 letter, Axel stated he processed difficult emotions through his songs, especially in trying to understand what his drug usage was doing to him.

“It’s Been a Long Lonely Night” is a song about the loneliness, regret, and disappointment in the morning after a night of drinking and intravenous drug use:

Refrain:
 It's been a long, lonely night,
 Strung out on the edge.
 All this pain and whiskey,
 Ain't doing' nothin' for my head.

Verse one:
 Sunshine breaking through the window,

Of my no-tell room.
 Now I'm up too early for free,
 On the underside of the moon.
 My chair by my table,
 Still got my heat in the seat,
 And the rim on top of that bottle
 Still got the taste of me.

Verse one expresses wonder at the way things are and how they got so bad, and anguish, and Axel seems to be disgusted with his decisions. Lines five through eight particularly express wonder at the recentness of his last binge, with the realization that he is lonely and depressed by his situation.

“What Remains” also tells the story of wonder, anguish, and regret. In a fall 2013 letter after Axel had been transferred to a treatment facility, Axel gave more details about the song “What Remains.” He described it as a retrospective funeral song, possibly to “set up [his] death.” He was looking at his past, realizing that he hadn’t done much good during his time on earth. In these lyrics, he is very sad, and he is taking a look at his life, realizing that when he dies, all that will be left are memories:

Verse four:

I left the ones that knew my face,
 To kill my chance of saving grace.
 Missing out on what has occurred,
 And going blind from what I’ve learned.
 I’m bound to Earth by love and truth
 In memories of all I do.

Throughout the lyrics, he expresses regret for past sins and wonder and anguish about the memories that would remain if he were to die.

“18 and Life to Go” is a piece about Axel’s best friend from high school who committed suicide. The lyrics express the closeness of their friendship, wonder that his friend could betray him after they had been so close, loyalty for his dead friend, anger

that his friend not asking him for help before he committed suicide, anguish over his death, and deep regret:

We were breaking all the rules just to prove that we were cool,
 And then you broke the golden rule and that's some shit I thought you'd never do.
 You lost my love, you lost my trust,
 That night you rolled me for them drugs.
 And from that table where we'd eat
 I took that beef into the streets
 No battle lines I wouldn't cross.

Fuck sticks and stones I broke your bones,
 Just to prove that I was boss.
 And then I saw that shit was senseless
 So I left it for the restless.
 Once we were friends in the past,
 Once were brothers faded fast.

I saw your name up in the paper
 And I couldn't stop the anger
 At the way it used to be.
 All the schemes we used to dream,
 You should've called me, should've found me,
 But instead you chose to leave
 Without a goodbye, without a why,
 Without a reason not to try.

So now it's just me running on empty with the shit you'd left behind,
 And I got nightmares every night that make my mind recall
 That now your life's a splatter pattern that you painted on your wall.
 DAMN.

We were common suspects in the subjects and the crimes of getting high.
 No matter wrong or right,
 We rode like thunder in the night.
 Stashin' our vodka in our locka,
 Rollin' smoke out in the lot.

Dressin' up to pimp our walk when we was struttin' at the spot,
 You told me we'd be brothers forever,
 As long as we stick together.
 Ain't no trouble we can't weather,
 And I'm here to tell you brother no one ever said it better.

All those times that I was lost, depressed and stressed and feelin' down,

I always knew I had a spot up in your house upon your couch,
 I loved your moms just like my own,
 Called your house my second home.
 The only place I could go and know I'm not alone.

That's how it goes when you are brothers,
 Of one mind but different mothers.
 Got my back, I got your back,
 And we throw down for one another.

It seems that Axel was hurt the most was when his friend did not call him, even though they had been alienated for quite some time, when his friend decided to take his own life. The end of the piece still expresses a feeling of closeness, though Axel was deeply hurt at having been betrayed for drugs, and angry over the suicide.

“Waging War on the Moon” is a piece about infidelity, expressing anger, disbelief, wonder, distrust, anguish, and longing. Verse two also expresses jealousy and despair:

Verse one:
 Sitting underneath that tree
 I gave you everything and the moon.
 I promised you love,
 I promised you me.
 I promised you I'd always be true.
 You took my hands,
 My lips to your lips.
 My heart, for the other half of my soul,
 Lost in the moonlight,
 Blind in the night,
 I believed you could make me whole.

Refrain:
 And now I've returned
 At odds with myself,
 Resenting how I gave into you.
 It's the start of the end
 Of me by your side.
 So tonight I'm waging war on the moon.
 I'll say goodbye for one last time.
 I'll say I love you even though you're not mine.

You take your life down any path you choose.
 But after tonight you can't have the moon,
 Because tonight I'm waging war on the moon.

Verse two:

How you doing with your other man,
 The one I saw you walking with?
 Does he know your ways?
 Does he know the games you play?
 Does he know you're a hellfire
 And a twice-over bitch?
 I'm one who knows 'cuz I've seen your soul.
 I've felt the pain that you make.
 But when all's said and done,
 I'd rather be him.
 For a battle with you is a battle I'd take.

The last three lines of verse two express love and despair in the midst of jealousy and rage: "for a battle with you is a battle I'd take." The song expresses deep pain over having been deceived: "but after tonight you can't have the moon, because tonight I'm waging war on the moon."

In "Good Time" Axel describes going out to find a good time drinking and getting high, but finding dissatisfaction with the constant search for the next "good time." The lyrics are retrospective of life as an addict, and they express wonder, dissatisfaction, anguish, disappointment, and despair:

Through the night I walk,
 Stalking a good time.
 As the hours pass I realize:

It did not remain at the bottom of a bottle:
 It evaporates like smoke as the joint ashes to its last exhale.
 The numbness through my body was not as good a time for me;
 Hollow laughter and empty tears is all I've hunted down.

Through the night I've walked,
 Stalking down a good time.
 And all I found is that I lost
 How to enjoy my passing days.

Through the text, it seems that the realization of dissatisfaction unfolded over time, as Axel kept searching for amorphous fun. In his lyrics, Axel expresses disappointment in the time that he spent on drugs, and he realizes that drug usage will leave him empty, hopeless, and possibly dead. He seems to realize that it is time to change his old habits and behaviors.

Beginnings of self-acceptance. Axel's 2009 lyrics begin to show self-acceptance. In the lyrics of "Answering Me," Axel makes peace with himself. In these lyrics, Axel is looking in the mirror, feeling wonder and a connection between his physical being and his conscience. Verses one through three express inner-closeness of body and mind:

Your finest moments will make me who I am,
One in one we are.
You are my constant truth,
The love you share will reach me through all time.
Look in the mirror and see me waiting there for you.

I know all the things they say to you
And everything you think you hear.
I've seen the pain within your eyes
And felt the shudders of your fear.

For you are the me inside my memories
The life that took me here.
We share our dreams in what our past will bring,
As we turn another year.

Remaining verses express his determination to follow a path of healing, to enjoy nature and music, and to build an honest life. It is as if he is encouraging himself, through his lyrics, to shape his life into something better than his former life of addiction.

Wonder, pleasure in nature, and healing. "Lotus Path" is the first time that we see a sense of wonder and healing in Axel's lyrics. This text is similar to "Reminiscing

Rose” in that Axel describes beauty in nature; however, in this piece, he describes being cleansed by the scent of the lotus flowers and the rain:

In a swaying field of blossoming lotus flowers
 I kneel, weeping as the beautiful scent cleanses my soul.
 I am experiencing a purification of an inner-me I knew not.
 As my tears fall from my chin they are swept away by the breeze,
 Darkened by the flowing ashes of my ancestors.
 In that gray-scale gust I hear their love;
 I feel their presence next to my soul as I inhale.
 Along with them, my mind soars to new heights.

The rain that has calmly trailed the wind bathes me in its celestial showers.
 My skin opens and absorbs the sweet nutrients of this eternal rain:
MY DROUGHT IS OVER.
 The atmosphere surrounding me swirls with the damp compassion of the Gods.

The tears swelling in my eyes,
 The drops of moisture remaining on the lotus
 Are taken back to the sky as the mighty sun reaps what must be returned.
 Its heat smothers that which has been reborn, solidifying a presence in the universe.
 Through my spine and into my mind the completing burst of sweltering love makes me
 whole.
 The path between the lotus flowers is there for me to take.

In this piece, Axel accepts his faults, forgives himself for his past, and decides to choose a path of healing: “the path between the lotus flowers is there for me to take.” His statement “my drought is over” is in capital letters in his manuscript. I retained the capitalization because I think that it is an important part of the emotion that he expresses, and through it, we see that his healing from addiction is becoming a reality. Following this line, he expresses compassion from the Gods.

A choice to change. In a September 2013 letter written from his treatment facility before he would be released from prison, Axel tells me that while he was incarcerated at Sugardale, he realized that he was at a crossroads in his life, and he needed to “trust his heart” to make the right decisions. He further writes that the “harvest moon” was a

reflection of one's harvest being a result of their past decisions. "You always gain knowledge and leave something behind when you choose a path," he writes. In "Crossroads," Axel is retrospective about his past and his choices, and he expresses self-trust, excitement, anticipation, and hope for his future:

Verse one:

There are moments in your life
When you need to make a choice,
As the crossroads are pressing down on you.
Leave the fears you have behind
As you take a step ahead,
For no one ever knows
Just how it will all end.

Refrain:

Go, Go!
Move onward with your life,
Slightly left or slightly right,
Let the heart that guides your love
Guide your days, and guide your nights,
Then your crossroads will never be mistakes.

Verse two:

The path behind your back
Has made you who you are.
And the next step
May change the way you see.
But your smile will still remain,
As you take a look around.
And yesterday's forgotten
When you move into the now.

Verse three:

The pebbles tell the tale
Of the road that brought you here.
And the wind sings
The song of your last choice.
And the harvest moon approaches,
As the end is drawing near.
Remember all the loved ones
That you hold so close and dear.

The prison community choir performed “Crossroads” during the summer 2009 choral season. During an interactive activity with the prison community choir after the August concert, Cohen had the singers discuss recently performed concert music by forming two circles that faced each other. The outside singers formed an outside circle and the inside singers formed an inside circle. Each minute for 20 minutes, the inside circle would shift to the left, and the pairs of singers, sitting, facing each other would discuss meaningful song themes. As outside singers spoke to Axel, they told him how much they had enjoyed his song “Crossroads,” and how much the song spoke to him/her. Axel revealed in a written reflection that it after this feedback session he realized his poems had become lighter in substance. He recalled being overwhelmed with emotion at this realization.

Axel was very honored and excited when the prison community choir sang “Crossroads” at a ceremony for inmates receiving their General Education Diplomas on June 28 of 2011, and both choristers and inmates remarked that the song exerted a powerful message for the future. As the men were planning the graduation ceremony, Simon suggested singing “Crossroads.” The other men unanimously agreed with Simon’s suggestion, remarking on how appropriate the song would be for the ceremony.

Axel’s songs from 2009 show a shift from being less fearful to more retrospective. He also did not write about as many evil mythological characters in 2009 as he did in 2008. In a September 2013 letter, he stated that he first came to Sugardale in February of 2008 and had to “move past his demons.” He further wrote that the choir, Songwriters’ Workshop, and the Writers’ Workshop helped him to move beyond his past and envision his future. He admitted that he always loved writing songs, but writing with other participants with the guidance of facilitators helped him to become more optimistic.

In 2010 he expressed retrospection as he further processes his difficult past. Through his song lyrics, he further explored the idea that he can make choices to change his future, and he expresses hope to build a better life.

2010: Retrospection Most Frequent Expression

Of the six songs that Axel wrote in 2010, three of them were given an overall code of sad, two an overall code of coping, and one an overall code of happy. Axel's songs and their themes are in Table 5.5, *Axel's 2010 Songs*. In his 2010 songs, Axel expressed retrospection as he processed his past. He still articulated a lot of anguish when he recalls his life as a drug addict, but he also began to realize that he could make choices that will affect his life and future. This realization gave him a sense of hope and determination. While "Take a Look at My Life," and "Torrents" speak of the past and the pain of addiction, "May the Stars Remember Your Name" and "Whispers from the Dawn" look to the future with hope.

Retrospection, looking to the future, and hope. Axel's expressed emotions in his 2010 lyrics are quite different from those expressed in 2008. In 2010, Axel realizes that in order to be happy and productive, he needs to change. His lyrics begin to reflect his thoughts.

Table 5.5 *Axel's 2010 Songs*

Song title	Song concept
Take a Look at My Life (sad)	Suicide attempt
Torrents (sad)	Regret
What Will I Do (sad)	Loneliness
May the Stars Remember Your Name (coping)	Missing nature/hope
Whispers from the Dawn (happy)	Hope

In “May the Stars Remember Your Name” Axel is retrospective as he expresses hope, peace, relief, joy, contentment, thankfulness, courage, love, and longing to see the stars.

In verse two, Axel speaks of his internal change and expresses feelings of good will and encouragement for humankind. He further expresses a yearning to see the stars after incarceration:

Verse 1:
 Once captive now I'm freed,
 Was blind, now I see
 The beauty of the night
 That's calling to me.
 Here I go on my own,
 The cover of darkness
 To carry me home.

Refrain:
 And the stars, and the stars,
 Remember, remember my name.

Verse two:
 Between the sunrise,
 Take a look deep inside,
 See the man that has changed,
 While alone in the night.
 I'll move right along on my own,
 As the night breeze wraps me up
 In his song.

Bridge:
 Love shining bright,
 Like the stars in the night,
 Answer the prayers
 That I send out tonight.
 Please answer my prayers
 For peace, love, and light.

Final Refrain:
 May the stars,
 May the stars,
 Remember,
 Remember your name.

When the choir sang the song during the spring of 2010, they added a final set of words to the end of the song: "And the stars remember my name." Writing this song greatly affected Axel, who in a concert introduction, stated:

A song I wrote the lyrics to, "May the Stars Remember Your Name," was taken to Chicago by a woman named Meade Palidovsky. And the theater of young incarcerated women incorporated it into a musical, "Mom and the Moon." Through them, it was put into the hands of the director of the Chicago Symphony, Riccardo Muti. And through him, into the hands of Yo-Yo Ma. It is simply amazing that these words that I wrote while in prison, just up yonder, had been performed by great musicians and wonderful people as well. And it's the fact that it reached out to them and spoke to them that we now share memories in these words that I have written that will go wherever we will.

Axel expressed his overwhelming gratitude for those who helped him write the song and gave him the opportunity to perform it. He further expressed gratefulness to the audience for listening to his song. In his 2013 letter, Axel told me that these opportunities to write and perform songs not only inspired him, but also changed his outlook on life.

"Whispers from the Dawn" expresses hope, joy, respect, trust, anticipation, optimism, and kindness, while finding beauty in nature to represent new possibilities and beginnings:

The innocence of night,
Giving birth to the day.
Close your eyes and let the sound soak in,
Feel it in your heart.

A worthy bearer of time,
Can teach us how to live.
A master of compassionate laughter,
Will show us how to give.

Whispers from the dawn,
Leading light of day.
If we can save ourselves from our dreams,
We'll find another way.

Selfless actions,
Miracles of hope.

A world together with war torn apart,
Room for us to grow.

A promise from a sunbeam,
Bathed in drops of gold.
Journey to a friendly shore,
Letting peace take hold.

Underneath crisp skies so blue,
Songs of nature astound.
Singing glories from eagles above,
Beauty painted out loud.

Listen for the call,
Urging you to rise.
A caring person in a world astray,
A better way to start.

Once again, Axel is retrospective as he expresses pleasure in nature. His language is metaphorical as he speaks of new beginnings, miracles of hope, and selfless actions. His words express self-actualization as defined by Maslow (1968) and principled moral reasoning (Waterman, 1990). Waterman's theory of the Personally Expressive Personality gives me some insight regarding Axel's need to be expressive and re-imagine his future through songwriting. In this song, Axel is encouraging others to also find "a better way to start." Axel's 2011 writing continues to express optimism for his future.

2011: Acceptance for Past and Excitement for Future

If incarcerated people have issues with chemical dependencies, they serve the majority of their sentences before completing formal treatment programs for their usage habits. They are usually transferred to a treatment facility when they have about 18 months left to serve. During the summer of 2012 concert season, Axel was transferred to another facility to begin his final treatment for substance abuse treatment before his

release. Between January and August of 2011, I collected the five final songs that he wrote as a participant in the Songwriters' Workshop. Titles to the songs he composed in 2011 are listed in Table 5.6, *Axel's 2011 Songs*.

Axel's expressed emotions in his 2011 songs are very different from those expressed in his 2008 songs, and he no longer frequently includes sinister, otherworldly characters. In "Down at the Bottom" he accepts his past and expresses determination to change, and "Good Morning" is a prayer for guidance. In "Watching Over Me" Axel expresses love and closeness to his great-grandmother, and "I'm Headin' to Nashville," a fantasy about becoming a country music star, expresses excitement and hope for the future. "Winter Delight" is a joyous piece about celebrating the holidays, and this piece even expresses hope for romance.

Table 5.6 *Axel's 2011 Songs*

Song title	Song concept
Watching Over Me (coping/other)	Loss of grandmother/feeling presence
Down at the Bottom (coping/other)	Hardship of prison/determination to change
Good Morning (coping/other)	Prayer for guidance
I'm Headin' to Nashville (happy)	Fantasy of becoming a country music star
Winter Delight (happy)	Anticipation of holiday celebrations

Acceptance of past and determination to change. As Axel further processes his difficult past from 2010 to 2011, he begins to show further determination to change. He wrote the rap "Down at the Bottom" in 2011 when he realized that his past choices landed him "down at the bottom." These lyrics express acceptance of his past, resiliency, and determination to improve:

Seven years in the joint
 But my life's in this pen,
 And it's flowing to this paper
 From my anger deep within.
 Every day a constant struggle,
 Every day they swinging knuckles,
 As I stumble in this gutter
 That's flooded with human nature.

There's no light within this tunnel
 Like a statue I am crumbled,
 But now I'm here so let's be clear
 From these shards I shall recover.
 And the night just fades away
 So I'm alone again today,
 But that is so much better
 Than the choices that I'd make
 If I remain.

Yet I refrain from certain acts,
 Those suspect lines within my past
 I walked a mile within these shoes,
 And all I got was cut and bruised.
 But now I'm here so let's be clear,
 From the former came the new,
 When I was down at the bottom,
 Change was all that I could do.

REFRAIN:

Down at the bottom
 Nothing left to do,
 Down at the bottom
 Nothing left of you.

When Axel performed this rap for the Songwriters' Workshop in July of 2011, his vocal inflections depicted anger, overwhelming emotion, determination, and hope. He strongly emphasized the words “every day” in verse one, as well as the phrases “yet I refrain from certain acts” and “but now I’m here so let’s be clear.” Axel also expresses disgust as he “stumbles through this gutter that’s flooded with human nature.” As Axel further realizes

that he can shape his future, he becomes excited as he thinks of new possibilities. He begins to write about those who are close to him, and he expresses comfort and love.

Connection between familiarity and love. “Watching Over Me” is a song that Axel wrote in memory of his great-grandmother. Axel was close to his great-grandmother, and he discusses his relationship with her in this July 2011 concert reflection: “She was one of the greatest people I’ve ever known and inspired me so much. That’s what I was thinking about when I wrote “Watching Over Me.” It’s how I feel now that she’s not here, but she still is.” In the lyrics, Axel again finds pleasure in nature as he writes of the presence of his great-grandmother:

Verse one:

I’m listening for you as the rain falls from up above,
I’m searching ‘cross the skies so I can see what you’ve become.

Refrain:

Because I feel you around every corner,
Because I feel you as my day is growing warmer,
And I miss you, oh I miss you,
‘Til I smile once again and I know you are there,
Watching, watching over me.

Verse two:

You hold me up when I am down and the light forgets to show,
You give me strength when I am lost and think I’m all alone.

Bridge:

I have your gifts that no one else can see,
Those special ones inside my memory.

Verse three:

I hear your laughter that I find throughout my day,
And in the sunshine that I use to guide my way.

The song expresses not only the love and closeness that he feels for his great-grandmother, but also the wistfulness of missing her. When the prison community choir sang the song during the Songwriters’ Workshop July 2011 concert, Axel was deeply

moved. In that moment of singing, he said that he felt overwhelming love for his grandmother, the choir and Songwriters' Workshop, and the audience.

Excitement for the future and joy. Axel begins to express excitement for his future with a sense of fun and joy in his 2011 songs. The lyrics of "I'm Headin' to Nashville" express excitement, hope, and determination about a fantasy of becoming a country music star. The song also expresses bold perseverance:

Refrain:

I'm headin' to Nashville
Through hell or high water.
Don't give a damn if I oughta,
I'm headin' to Nashville.

Verse 1:

Burnin' up from dusk 'til dawn
Playin' it right while living wrong.
I spent many a night
Alone with my guitar.

The lyrics of the song are carefree, about a dream. In his September 2013 letter, Axel tells me that he grew up wanting to be a veterinarian, then a teacher, and then a rapper. It wasn't until a few years ago that he began dreaming of being a country music singer/songwriter. Axel states that he finds something very homey about singing in a smoky bar, and allowing his inner poet/songwriter to let go and relax. "It's the enjoyment, the satisfaction," he writes. "To me, there is something organic in writing songs and poems. There is life in all its aspects right there, in ink and eventually in voice. It's fulfilling in a specific way." His letter tells of his intense involvement in songwriting, further validating Waterman's characteristics that personally expressive activities usually involve an intense undertaking. The letter also reveals his desire for an audience, and a social setting where there are listeners to hear his expressions.

Axel further expresses peace and joy as he looks to the future in “Good Morning,” the lyrics of which find comfort in the spiritual:

Verse 1:

Greet me warmly in my waking,
Oh father of the day.
Silence of yesterday and bringer of tomorrow,
Watch over me through your procession.
For I’ll often stray without your help,
Show me the steps I take walking underneath you.
Burn away my inadequacies as you deliver me to sister light.

Verse 2:

Remember me after you depart.
For I shall remember you, your colorful good-bye blazoned in my soul,
And how you saw me through space and time.
Grant me safe passage amongst the shadows that stretch their arms at your goodbye.
But most of all, be there tomorrow
And greet me once again.

The lyrics also express feeling kindness from the “father of the day,” a kind, otherworldly spirit. When writing about the paranormal, Axel seems to use a variety of spirit-beings, depending upon his context. He seems to connect the natural to the spiritual world, and he finds joy and peace in nature.

Emotional Changes 2008–2011

Axel admitted that his drug addiction influenced some of his 2008 songs that involve visions and otherworldly characters. These songs, written during his early days in prison, were from his detoxification period, and his early songs have darker, more self-destructive themes than his later works. Axel further revealed that his writing changed quite a bit over time, and findings of this study show that the social aspects of the prison community choir and the Songwriters’ Workshop were factors of these changes. Axel’s September 2013 letter stated that when he was first incarcerated in 2008, he was only allowed to be out of his room for an hour or two each day. He wrote that writing was

sometimes all that kept him from going crazy, and sometimes writing was an escape from reality. He sometimes had frightening dreams and visions of otherworldly figures, and they frequently formed the characters that appear in his early work. Axel's letter also revealed that joining the choir helped him to overcome his traumatic past: "In the progressing years, with the help of the choir, I was able to move past my demons and fears," he explains in his 2013 letter. He also acknowledged that sometime during 2010, he realized that he could change his future, and he began to view it in a positive light. His lyrics expressed his new attitude, through his writing, Axel had found peace and joy in his work, as described in his song "Whispers from the Dawn."

By 2011, Axel realized that he had a talent for writing prose and poetry, and it was through his experiences in the Songwriters' Workshop and the Writers' Workshop (a university prison partnership program to provide writing opportunities for incarcerated) that he began to think that he might have a future career in writing. Axel's September 2013 letter shows his belief in himself, and his determination to shape his future: Just to fill you in on what has passed, I earned 23 credits towards an associates degree in Liberal Arts from Prairie Lake College. I actually had to stop taking the classes so that I can take my substance abuse treatment. If all goes well, I'll be home late January or early February!⑩!

Obviously, Axel is excited to be released and start living as a free man.

Axel's Visions for His Future

Just before the 2012 spring concert, the prison administration told Axel that he would soon be transferred to his final destination, his treatment facility, from which he would be released within approximately 18 months. He relayed the news to me as we stood in the prison gymnasium, waiting for a Prison Volunteer Appreciation Program to begin. He told me that the facility to which he was being transferred was closer to his

family and his hometown. Now, his family and friends would be able to visit him more often. The two-hour drive to Sugardale was difficult for them, especially over icy roads in the wintertime. He said that he was also excited because the manager of the restaurant where he worked for \$14.00 an hour before his incarceration told him that he would be hired back any time he needed a job. He expressed hopes of using his writing to seek future employment, and he was delighted with how he had grown as a writer and a poet during his incarceration. Thanks to the prison's Writers' Workshop, he had developed a portfolio of varied styles and was no longer afraid to share his writing. He realized that he had a special gift, a gift from which he could forge a better future, seek out new opportunities, enjoy his leisure time, have a sense of satisfaction and purpose, and celebrate the essence of his creative, true self.

His smile and optimism were contagious. I was gratified knowing that this man, this convict, this felon, who at one time felt so downhearted, and hopeless that he attempted suicide, could find much to look forward to as he contemplated his future aloud. While I could see that he was scared and doubtful, the optimism expressed in his final conversation with me, and his fall 2013 letter evidenced a sense of inner motivation and resiliency, which were going to come in handy. It is not easy for former inmates to find jobs, and while they may have experienced inner changes during incarceration, the world into which they are released—the same world from which they were banned—often has an unforgiving attitude. That world usually expects a former convict to forever and always be a convict.

In 2010, Axel wrote a poem, "Skyline," for the members of the Prison Community Choir. After collecting all of the inside singers' signatures on the back, he

had the poem printed onto the front sheets of card stock, and he read it at the 2010 spring choral concert. Following the reading he gave each outside choir member a copy to express the inside singers' gratitude. Before Axel was transferred, he read his poem one last time at a Songwriters' Workshop. The words are as follows:

Inside a skyline of high wired fences,
There is a room.
By day it houses a revolving door of despair,
Yet for one night a week,
For two hours of my time,
I don't have to remember the need to forget,
Because I wish not to lose the memories we share.

For with me I keep every flowering smile,
Every encouraging nod.
You helped me to transcend the lethal clichés
Chained upon my wrists.
I hear a friend in every voice telling me to raise my chin,
I feel as though I have been given back a name,
Once stolen by a number.

You make me feel at peace with the man I am to be,
You accepted me for the soul that rests behind my eyes.
I send you thanks in every note I sing,
And I'm sorry for the ones off key.
It hurts me so when we say our goodbyes,
But please remember this:
You have done so much for me
By stepping through that door.

My Final Thoughts of Axel

After examining Axel's songs, having numerous conversations with him, and reading his heart-felt reflections, I feel as if I have glimpsed into his world: his painful past, his difficult recovery, and his determination to have a better life outside of the prison walls. My final thoughts of Axel are in a reflection I wrote in my journal on the evening of our final conversation in July of 2012 after the prison volunteer awards

ceremony, before he was transferred to his treatment facility. Axel talked with me for quite a while, revealing further details about his life and childhood. He spoke of his memories, the funny, the painful, about school, and about hope for his future. My reflection reads as follows:

In our conversations, Axel described himself when he was a young child as a busy kid and a pain in the tail that could never sit still. His fourth grade teacher told him that he was a bad writer. Although Axel loved to write, he felt as though he was not a capable person. He felt as though he was a bad student and a bad boy, worthless. As time went on he got into a little trouble, and then a little more trouble. At least, when he got in trouble, some adult might notice him—some attention felt better than nothing.

As a teenager he became a jock, a party boy, the life of the party. He started using alcohol and drugs; it killed his pain, and gave him the feeling of flying high. He was wild and self destructive, and he had a new, legendary reputation as a crazy, fun-loving, party animal. That would show everyone that he was a somebody, a somebody worth noticing.

His hard and fast lifestyle led to his eventual addiction to intravenous drugs. The drugs that once gave him the feeling of flying left him feeling fractured and conflicted. He felt a deep pain and sadness that he just would not leave him. Fractured, conflicted, and broken, he attempted suicide. His attempt was unsuccessful, and he spiraled further down to the bottom, stealing to support the addiction that would not leave him, the addiction from which he could find no peace. He felt dirty, like a slave to the toxic substances that he kept injecting into his body.

Axel eventually found himself in prison, incarcerated, a caged man, doing time, with a lot of time on his hands. He kept having hallucinations from the years he had spent on drugs, and he was confined to his room for 22-23 hours per day. He had nothing but time—time to think, time to go crazy, and time to think again. It seemed that there was nothing but time, and work, and more time. Time, time, TIME. He found time to be upset and angry, and time to hate himself and everyone else. Sometimes he wished that he could just scream and pound his fists into the walls of his room.

Eventually, Axel found time to write, and time to process his past. He wrote about his drug usage and his past, and he processed all of it some more. He found time to understand, and more time to write, for it was through writing that he felt as though he could express anything and everything. Axel also found courage to get help to process his past, and he found time to learn about himself and others. Axel found that with a little bit of help from others, he could express all that he felt, and they would also understand his pain. He expressed his deep sadness, his love, his anger, everything. Through his writing, Axel let his emotions go free, for through his writing, he could articulate his feelings and be heard.

One day, Axel heard his work performed at a Prison Community Choir concert, and he heard the people in the audience applaud. He had never felt that kind of approval from others before in his entire life, and he was overwhelmed with emotion. “Is this how approval feels?” he thought. The approval of others and writing helped his healing process, and he was inspired to write and share his songs. He wrote about his past, present, and future choices, and his determination and resilience in his lyrics. He also wrote about healing over time.

Slowly, Axel began to make choices to put his former lifestyle and painful past to rest, letting it go on a page covered with ink and paper. He was choosing to live, choosing to let it all go. He started to feel new, and he had energy for life that he had never experienced before. Through his writing he found deep meaning and satisfaction in his life. “This is better than drugs,” Axel revealed in our conversation. “This is so much more satisfying than needles.” Axel, through his words and expressions, once again felt human, once again felt whole.

In the future, when I think of Axel James, I’ll think of a man who had a great need to be to write, to be acknowledged for his accomplishments, a man who needed to be expressive. Through his writing, he processed his hurt and started to heal. Through his painful prison years, his writing was his salvation. I hope he finds another group of creative writers upon his release, a group where he can continue to feel personal growth and find joyful satisfaction.

CHAPTER SIX: DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to gain a greater understanding of how emotions were processed and expressed during the songwriting sessions, and the influence that this opportunity for emotional expression had upon incarcerated songwriters. In this chapter, I discuss how my research contributes to the understanding of Alan Waterman's theory, and how songwriting is a personally expressive activity. I also suggest how aspects of Mary Cohen's theory of Interactional Choral Singing Pedagogy pertain to songwriting within prison contexts. Because social aspects of the Songwriters' Workshop motivated the men to participate in the workshops and write new songs, I offer an interpretive theory of the expressive community. I discuss implications of songwriting in a social setting, and possibilities for collective actualization within socially –based music organizations. Lastly, I suggest topics for future research about songwriting, and group educational settings.

Waterman's Theory Contributes to Findings

The findings of this study can be further understood through Waterman's theory of psychological individualism; songwriting is a personally expressive activity. With the a number of varied opportunities for expression while writing songs, such as lyric, melodic, rhythmic, vocal, and instrumental choices, songwriting provides a creative outlet for expressive personalities on lyrical and musical levels.

In discussing Alan Waterman's theory in Chapter One, I described the characteristics of a personally expressive personality. Those characteristics can include one, some, or all of four traditions: a sense of personal identity, self-actualization, an internal locus of control, and principled moral reasoning.

In creating original songs, all the men expressed a sense of personal identity. In the song “Mary, Mary,” Mason Miller and Simon Powers identified themselves as husbands and lovers. Simon further identified himself as an incarcerated husband when he introduced the song at the July 2011 concert. Christopher Goodman also described himself as an incarcerated husband and father in his song “Lord Send a Dozen Angels.” Several of the men identified themselves as fathers in the songs they wrote: Jason Young wrote “Amelia Renee” for his daughter, and Steve Keller wrote “My Love Always” for his five children. Stewart expressed his identity as the son of a soldier in his song “Sent to Germany,” a song about his father.

Personal identifiers also extended into work-related roles. William Smiley identified himself as a biohazard expert in “The Bio-Bill Blues” while Walter Smith described himself as a man who enjoys novels and stories with “Old West” themes in his introduction and song “Drifter”: “This song was written by my love of Western novels and Western lore.” In his song, he described his personality as one that loves going to new places:

Refrain:

People say that I’m a drifter,
Never learned to settle down.
Always searching, always drifting,
Moving on from town to town.

Verse one:

Back as far as I can remember,
I was always a restless soul.
Yearning for those greener pastures,
Headed for some distant goal.
At a tender age I fled my homestead,
Got so tired of clawing deals,
I left to seek my future elsewhere,
Find the thrill that freedom yields.

Brian Lewis's song Release the Darkness and Axel James's song "It's Been a Long, Lonely Night" expressed their personal identities as people who have struggled with addiction. Ricky Brady identified himself as a prisoner in his song "Inside the Fences," as did Stewart Holdridge in his song "Man Behind the Fence."

Writers also expressed self-actualization, an internal locus of control, and principled moral reasoning. Maslow (1968) defines self-actualization as a fuller knowledge and acceptance of one's own intrinsic nature, as an increasing trend toward unity, integration, or synergy within the person. Simon Powers expressed this trend toward unity within himself in his songs "Dear Younger Me" and "Bright Horizon." Axel James expresses inner synergy through his songs "Down at the Bottom," "Crossroads," "Good Morning," and "Whispers from the Dawn." Axel further admits that songwriting helped him to realize his potential and view the world differently: "These experiences have changed me inside and out. I have developed a sense of community and society that I am sad to say I lacked before prison. I continue to better myself in a process I seek to never end."

Through their songs, Simon and Axel show an internal locus of control and principled moral reasoning. Axel refers to himself as a changed man in "May the Stars Remember Your Name": "Between the sunrise, take a look deep inside. See the man that has changed while alone in the night." Simon also refers to himself as a person changed in his song "Bright Horizon":

The sun is a rising, revealing a bright horizon,
Beginning of a brand new day, another chance to change my way.
I'll put my fears and cares to rest, while I try my very best to
Let yesterday be done and let the sun set on my past.

Tony Grey expressed principled moral reasoning in his song "United," when the main

character of his song decides to be faithful to his wife: “She’s a precious gift whom I once blamed. Life’s not easy this side of Eden, united now.”

Some writers describe their songwriting experiences as an intense undertaking, or a feeling that writing a particular song is exactly what they are supposed to do, and this is consistent with Waterman’s theory (Waterman, 1990). Christian Goodridge, Simon Powers, Axel James, and Walter Smith mentioned that while they were songwriting, they didn’t necessarily notice the passing of time, and this factor is consistent with Waterman’s descriptions of personally expressive activities as unusually intense involvements in an undertaking. Axel James freely discussed his love of writing lyrics, and feeling that writing is what he is supposed to do. In his September 2013 letter, Axel stated that he dreams of writing lyrics for a living, and he started taking writing classes at a local college while incarcerated. Simon Powers also described feeling totally immersed in writing when he is creating new song lyrics. Others indicated that songwriting was very fulfilling. As Christian Goodman says, “What could be better than sitting around with happy people, friends, talking about music, writing, and life?” In a conversation about songwriting, Jessie stated that he enjoyed learning new strategies. He expressed his thoughts with his characteristic, self-deprecating humor: “I might accidentally learn something. It gives me a chance to broaden my horizons and have a little more insight into the world of music.” The observations of these men align with Waterman’s theory of the Personally Expressive Personality. Through songwriting, the men identified specific roles and concerns in their lives, as well as hardships and potentials.

Not all writers, however, felt that songwriting was an effective means of expressing themselves. Songwriters with limited musical experience often had difficulty

creating a melody. An anonymous writer, in a personal reflection, wrote: “I really don’t know [what my goals are]. It seems that all our lyrics end up with the same melody and the words are just stuck in to make them fit.” Sometimes writers expressed psychological discomfort with facilitator-created games to improve musical knowledge: “I hope that I can get over the feeling of being out of place with this type of activity. It seems like I’m thinking in slow motion when we do something like this.” It took most of the participants three to six months to write an original song, and some of the men expressed frustration at the length of time it took to create a song. Other men became perplexed and frustrated with the detailed aspects of the song. Songwriting difficulties included not having a clear song concept, problems with accurately expressing oneself in lyric form, rhythmic and melodic issues, being overwhelmed by the large number of choices to make, and frustration when a song that seemed to wander, with no memorable qualities. While relative solfège was a useful tool for understanding pitches and writing melodies, often, using relative solfège was difficult for the participants. While trying to incorporate solfège into a new melody, they might sing the wrong solfège syllable on a particular note and write it down, thus rendering their melodic sketching inaccurate for future refining, inadequately conveying their melodic intentions. They might also decode a melody incorrectly during pedagogical exercises. These incidences gave facilitators insight regarding where more melodic and aural practice was needed.

There were a few social difficulties also. While most of the writers attended the workshops on a regular basis, sometimes, seasonal activities were a distracter for an individual writer, and facilitators might not see a participant for several weeks. Seasonal distracters included summer baseball, and the fall season of the television show, *Glee*.

One participant became quite upset, because he had been attending every workshop at every opportunity. When fall prison community choir concert music for 2011 was selected, some participants who had missed several workshops because they had been watching *Glee* had original songs featured in the concert. The participant who was upset by the lack of attendance by others in the workshops felt that those who had missed songwriting sessions should not have their original songs performed with the choir. Songwriting difficulties and social issues for some of the participants meant that songwriting was not always the positive, expressive outlet they were seeking.

Findings from this study suggest that songwriting served as a means of personal expression in multiple individualistic and social realities. This finding is consistent with the research of Anderson (2012), Hatcher (2004), and Viega (2013). Often, in group songwriting, individuals contributed in different amounts, but the song was still personally expressive for all contributors. The degree to which the song was personally expressive depended upon the level of contribution, and the amount of satisfaction a songwriter felt depended upon whether or not he felt that his or her personal contribution was understood by a listener or listeners. This idea relates directly to Christopher Small's concept of Musicking —that music-making served as a means to explore, affirm, and celebrate our sense of ideal relationships (Small, 1998). Performing the song for an audience, or having others perform it, and knowing that the audience understood the message of the song led to greater satisfaction and the celebration of idea relationships with others for the songwriter. Cantor (2006), Fulford (2002), and Moore (2011) reported similar findings. If a writer was not satisfied with his original creation, then his songwriting was not a satisfactory musicking experience, and the writer did not have the

opportunity to explore, affirm, or celebrate ideal relationships; this included the relationship he had with himself and the relationships he had with others.

Songwriting as a personally expressive activity allows the writer to immerse him or herself in a situation, story, or fantasy, and/or ponder a relationship. The art of writing a song involves taking a chosen concept and refining it into a poetic or lyric form (McFerran, Baker, Patton, & Sawyer, 2006). As the writer probes and refines the song's concept, he or she experiments with various words, phrases, and musical elements until the concept is clear and complete in the mind of the writer (Anderson, 2012; Hatcher, 2004; Ippoliti, 2009; Jurgenmeier, 2012; Sena-Martinez, 2012; Viega, 2013). The feeling of having completed the song gives the writer a sense of closure to the songwriting process (Roberts, 2006). Acknowledgement and approval from an audience is important for most songwriters, and songwriters express both gratitude for the opportunity to perform and pride in their original work (Roberts, 2006, Wolf and Wolf, 2012, Palidovski & Stolbach 2012). Songwriting allows writers to process intense situations into a "bare-bones" framework and view them differently (Jurgenmeier, 2012; Miles, 1993; Roberts, 2006; Viega, 2013). Because songwriters whittle a concept into a lyric form, they view the concept from different angles as they manipulate words, phrases, possible metaphors, and musical elements. In this way, they momentarily create multiple realities and outcomes, and eventually choose a destination or path that the piece will take as the song concept unfolds (Palidofsky & Stolbach, 2012).

When expressing an emotionally strong or difficult song concept, some songwriters deconstruct the abstraction into smaller fragments, examining each piece as they work to achieve a unified song image that accurately depicts the emotion of the idea

(Baker & Wigram, 2005; McFerran, Baker, Patton, & Sawyer, 2006; Miles, 1993; Roberts, 2006). Examples of this are evident in the songs “Grain of Sand” and “Crystal Reflections” by Simon Powers and Sent to Germany by Stewart Holdridge. In this way, writers approach difficult emotions or situations through a series of smaller steps as they plan the piece’s path. If the song concept is related to something personally difficult for the writer, the deconstruction and reassembling of the song concept gives the writer a chance to reflect and think about choices, causes, and effects that particular actions could have on outcomes. This reflection process may lead to personal insight and growth. The writer may also choose another outcome of the song that is not rooted in reality, or the writer may reflect upon past decisions and reflect upon how those decisions have influenced the present. Perhaps a writer re-envisioned his or her personal future and set particular goals that are steps toward the new, imagined vision of reality.

While some songwriters enjoy creating both lyrics and music for their works, some view themselves as strictly lyricists or music writers. In other words, the lyricist writes texts for songs only, and he or she derives a sense of satisfaction in feeling personally expressive by creating words that another songwriter will arrange in musical form. In a similar fashion, one who views him or herself strictly as a musical composer finds satisfaction in taking a set of lyrics written by another songwriter and setting it to music. This teamwork approach to songwriting requires accurate communication and trust in order to be personally satisfying. If a lyricist deems that the music written for his or her text does not fit in the way he or she envisions, he or she may experience disappointment, feeling that the setting does not express the text as originally intended. The lyricist/composer relationship can be a source of inspiration or inefficacy.

Through songs, writers expressed a wide range of emotions that are embedded in the human condition. Society, relationships, humanity, and world issues are ever changing, never stagnant. Song concepts reflect emotions and situations of the present and the past. Songwriters also look toward the future as they continue to create new pieces.

Social Aspects of the Songwriters' Workshop

Although this study did not measure growth in desirable social behaviors, the songs, reflections, and transcripts collected from this study indicated that some of the men, through songwriting, were able to process difficulties of their pasts, think about how their personal choices affected their lives and the lives of others. Sometimes they re-envisioned their futures as productive members of a free society. Axel James and Brian Lewis reflected upon their addictions, and how their enslavement to toxic substances had affected their lives. Stewart Holdridge and Christian Goodman pondered the actions that led to their incarceration, and they expressed remorse. For these men, songwriting aided in self-understanding, and in understanding relationships with others in society.

When the men first came together, they expressed psychological discomfort with some of the music learning, but a determination to learn through regular attendance and practice in songwriting exercises. As they became more familiar with facilitators and each other, they began to converse on a wide range of topics related to their songwriting. As the fall 2010 Songwriters' Workshop came to an end, they seemed much more comfortable with each other than they were when the workshop season began, and were excited to start the second session in January of 2011.

The routines and rituals of the workshops, as well as the relationships that the men built as the workshops progressed seemed to contribute to their psychological comfort. Although we had an overall routine for all workshop sessions, the routine was flexible to accommodate the needs, ability levels, and interests of the participants that were present, or to meet the needs of the prison staff/schedule. Using the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process (Lerman & Borstel, 2003) also gave the men a sense of predictability and security as their songs were being critiqued by the group. In other words, the men understood that their artistry would not be ridiculed or scorned. They could count on group members to provide honest, insightful feedback. The workshop processes enabled them to develop a sense of psychological comfort, and further empowered them to establish friendships and songwriting collaborations.

While some of the men were already enthusiastic lyric and songwriters, motivated primarily by intrinsic factors, other men were inspired to write songs by participating in the group processes and concerts. Some of the participants wrote their first songs in the workshop context. These men developed an enthusiasm for songwriting because of extrinsic, social motivators, including opportunities to share songs/ideas in the workshop for peers and facilitators, or a possible opportunity to perform song in concert with the full community choir.

Over the course of the fall 2010 workshop and the spring 2011 workshop, the individual songwriters formed into a cohesive songwriters' community. During the spring semester, my notes included instances of the men being concerned when they heard of illnesses, hardships or transfers of other members. When Luke became very sick from asthma, the men told a roommate of Luke's present at the workshop session to give

him their best. When Walter's back was debilitating sore and he could not attend, participants asked each other about him, and expressed concern. The men consoled Simon as he expressed concern about his upcoming transfer. In other words, the men had established a sense of community among the Songwriters' Workshop participants. They expressed joy in working together, and concern for each other. They extended emotional support to a participant in need.

Letters from four of the five of the men written eighteen months after their participation in the Songwriters' Workshop stated that they were more positive and productive working together in the sessions than they were working alone, and that the songwriter community, prison community choir, and writers' workshops had influenced their behavior as individuals. They also stated that they grew emotionally as individuals and as writers. Axel explained that these opportunities helped him to understand that he had potential as a writer, and he decided to pursue an Associates' Degree. Simon stated that he never realized how his former musical choices affected his behavior, but his interactions with the Songwriter's Workshop and prison community choir gave him new insight regarding his past behavior and musical choices. Three of these five men were still participating in the Songwriters' Workshop as of the fall of 2013, and the remaining two were transferred to other facilities. Both men that were transferred reveal in their fall 2013 letters that they were still writing songs on their own, since no songwriters' group was being facilitated in their new location, and as of October 2013, they both had maintained contact with facilitators. Furthermore, reflections, transcriptions, and lyrics indicated self and collective actualization. The men often realized that they could achieve a higher sense of expression, artistry, and musicianship when they worked together and

shared ideas. They valued the Songwriters' Workshop as a forum to enhance personal and collaborative creativity.

Mary Cohen's (2007a) theory of Interactional Choral Singing Pedagogy proposes that having a knowledgeable instructor, who thoughtfully plans pedagogical activities and social interactions among participants, facilitates growth in desirable personal and social behaviors. The Songwriters' Workshops in this study included purposeful activities through structured social interactions. Facilitators spent quite a bit of time each week collaboratively planning the workshop sessions, and the transcriptions of the workshops revealed that facilitators often used active listening techniques when dialoging with the men about their songs. As I was analyzing the emotional content of the transcriptions, I counted 108 incidences of facilitators encouraging individual participants to share their ideas within a four-hour period of time. As I was coding the written reflections, I further counted 76 incidences of facilitators collaboratively dialoging to develop pedagogical methods or resolve a pedagogical difficulty. The preparation and instructional strategies for each workshop were planned and purposeful. In light of these findings, Cohen's Theory of Interactional Choral Singing Pedagogy, modified to suit the goals of incarcerated songwriters, could provide another venue for music education within the prison setting.

Cohen's Theory in the Songwriting Context

Cohen's theory of interactional pedagogy, modeled after Small's (1998) concept of musicking, states the following:

Choral musicking experiences in prison contexts facilitated by a knowledgeable teacher-conductor results in assessable growth in desirable personal and social behaviors by individual prison choristers, when those choral musicking experiences include (a) engaging choristers in appropriate ways with

combinations of the somatic and word factors unique to choral singing including the thoughtful selection of musical pieces, (b) the intentional development of mutual and simultaneous relationships between musical sounds produced by prison choristers, the social interactions between and among people making or listening to such sounds , and the relationships between such singing and such people, such that (c) growth in desirable personal and social behaviors occurs in a manner specific to choral musicking that can be measured qualitatively and quantitatively (Cohen, 2007a, p. 293).

Cohen's theory recognizes that each participant's level of engagement, attitude toward the learning process, and awareness level of these processes influences individual growth. She further recognizes that the personalities of each chorister may also affect the group learning process, and that each prison-based choir is distinctive in terms of its membership, history, traditions, audiences, geographic location, motivations, intentions of participants, and other contextual factors (Cohen, 2007a). According to the findings of this investigation, this point is also true for the songwriting participants in this study; the personalities may affect the group learning processes, and each group of songwriters is distinctive in terms of its membership, history, traditions, audiences, motivations, intentions of participants and facilitators, and other contextual factors.

While social behaviors were not directly measured in this study, I observed changes in the participants' attitudes towards life and choices over time in the lyrics of Simon Powers and Stewart Holdridge. I observed the greatest amount of change in case study Axel James, as shown in his writing from 2008 to 2011. As I think of Cohen's theory of interactional choral singing pedagogy in broader terms, I surmise that songwriting experiences in prison contexts facilitated by a knowledgeable instructor-guide could assist in assessable growth in personal and social behaviors by individual writers, when those songwriting experiences include (a) engaging songwriters in appropriate ways with social interactions and creative outlets unique to songwriting,

including experimentation with musical elements and text, (b) the intentional development of an atmosphere in which the writers can provide personal insight, reflection and non-judgmental feedback about one another's songs in a psychologically comfortable environment, such that (c) the writers experience growth as individuals or as a group, perhaps both, in desirable musical, personal and social behaviors.

Findings of this study point to a conclusion that interaction with other writers and knowledgeable facilitators is a key component to growth in personal and social behaviors, because it is through these relationships that individual writers find a caring support network. As the writers interacted with each other and with facilitators, they learned how to accept constructive and positive feedback, which further motivated them to write. Some of the men were overwhelmed at the positive response from others, and that feedback inspired them to write further. Upon performing his piece for a concert audience and hearing from prison community choir members that his song "Crossroads" was inspiring, Axel James's writing became more emotionally positive and hopeful. His September 2013 letter states that these opportunities to share his work and receive feedback changed his outlook on life.

Theory of an Expressive Community

Throughout ever-changing psychological and social dynamics, there are multiple intersections in which these writers process the concept of a song, and express it in a personal way. Kathy Charmaz (2006), in her book *Constructing Grounded Theory*, encourages theorizing in the interpretive tradition, piecing together implicit meanings that pull together disparate experiences and elucidate its range of tacit meanings. Following Charmaz's dialogical model (p. 146) while reflecting on Waterman's Theory and how his

theory applies in a social context, I constructed an interpretive theory in this interpretive tradition from the data analyzed. I propose an intuitive and impressionistic interpretation of the communal expressiveness of songwriting.

Because these men indicated that they were motivated by social factors, I suggest an interpretive theory of the expressive community, in which communal factors, specifically group dynamics, synergy, and the companionship of others enable individuals within an organization to mutually sense motivation, flow experiences, and collective-actualization. This theory can be assessed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Modifying the four traditions of Alan Waterman's theory (1990) to apply to a group of people who are expressively collective through group interactions, I propose that the cohort draws from one or more of the four ideas of (a) a sense of shared uniqueness, (b) collective-actualization, in which individuals in the group communally realize the potentials, capabilities, and talents, of the cohort and seek the achievement of these potentialities, (c) a cooperative influence of control, and (d) aggregate moral reasoning. Collectively expressive activities can also involve one or more of the following experiences: (a) intense group involvement in a particular task, (b) a collective feeling of being specially adjoined to an activity that is uncharacteristic of other daily activities, (c) a shared experience of being satisfied while engaging in the activity, (d) the mutual perception that the activity is what the group or organization is meant to do, and (e) a sense that the expression of the group is enhanced beyond what an individual may be capable of expressing alone. Furthermore, the organization can affect individual behavior, and individuals can influence the synergism of the group. The men stated in their reflections and letters that having a group of songwriters with whom to write and

perform as both motivating and inspiring. They further articulated gratitude for opportunities to have the prison choir sing their songs; when the choir sang a songwriter's original piece, it was particularly meaningful. After performing "Sent to Germany" with the choir, Stewart Hodridge stated that the group experience of performing was "so much larger, so much more [than what I could have done alone]. All those people, singing it [his song]."

Educational Implications

The findings of this study show that songwriting, if facilitated effectively, may possibly provide a positive, personally expressive, safe way of conveying deep and difficult emotions, and help writers deal with the past, as well as navigating issues within the present. The songs Axel James wrote helped him to process his addiction to intravenous drugs, reflect upon past decisions, and visualize his future, understanding that he can make choices to shape his life. Brian Lewis expressed the agony of enslavement to alcohol, and the desire to be free of his addiction in his song "Release the Darkness." David Williams, Jason Young, Steve Keller, and Christopher Goodman, through their song texts, wrote of missing their children, and regret over not being able to be with them as they grow up. Luke Wise, Stewart Holdridge, and Ricky Brady expressed the hardships of incarceration. Many of the participant-written song texts examined in this study tell stories of difficult pasts and troubling emotions. The Liz Lerman Critical response Process (Lerman & Borstel, 2003) was an effective way for the men to express these emotions, and to manage participant feedback.

Findings of this study also show that songwriting offered the men a way to express hope and determination to overcome difficulties after emotional trauma,

particularly trauma from drug or alcohol addiction, and incarceration. Axel James expressed hope for his future in the songs “Down at the Bottom” and “Whispers from the Dawn.” Simon Powers also expressed hope for his future in his song “Bright Horizon,” and he expressed hope for future generations in his song “Dear Younger Me.” Stewart Holdridge expressed hope for the day he will be released in his song “Man Behind the Fence,” and Christopher Goodman and Mason Miller expressed hope for the day that they would be reunited with their families and wives through their songs “Lord Send a Dozen Angels” and “Mary, Mary.” The only participant who never articulated hope in his work is Ricky Brady; his song “Inside the Fences” tells of the pain and boredom of incarceration. According to Tarius (2008), verbalizing hope while incarcerated is often difficult. I can only imagine the difficulty of trying to tell others “I want a better future, I’m going to work for it, and I’m going to do it!” while incarcerated.

The participants, upon completing and performing their songs, often expressed a sense of satisfaction in their original pieces, the creative processes, and the performances. Often, a choral performance of their original work was a pinnacle moment of their songwriting experiences. Mason Miller, Axel James, Steve Keller, Simon Powers, and other songwriters expressed a sense of gratitude and accomplishment after the Prison Community Choir performed their original works. Christopher Goodman and Simon Powers also stated that they often spent six hours per week or more pondering ideas for new songs or refining old song material. Axel, Simon, Christian, Steve, Walter, and Brian reported that they found great satisfaction in the songwriting process.

When I examined the works of the writers from when they started writing songs, through the data collection period, the data analyses revealed that with practice and

experience, the songs became emotionally richer, and the lyrics were crafted with greater precision regarding metrical form and rhyme scheme. An example of such improvements can be seen in Stewart Holdridge's 2009 work, "Man Behind the Fence," compared with his 2011 pieces, "Sent to Germany" and "Fourth of July." Another example of such skill improving with time can be seen in Simon Power's piece "Nothing" (2010) and "Grain of Sand" (2011).

Concluding Thoughts

The findings of this study show that songwriting in this particular context was a personally expressive activity, and that through songwriting, incarcerated writers expressed deeply felt and difficult emotions. Many writers also expressed hope for a better future after traumatic events. Findings further indicated that with time and practice, songwriting skills improved. Many participants derived a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment from writing songs, but this was not true of all participants. Ricky Brady was not satisfied with his songwriting experience while he was writing the song "Inside the Fences." Data analyses indicated that songwriting that was purposefully and skillfully facilitated was a communally expressive activity. Members of the incarcerated songwriting community expressed themselves as individuals, groups of collaborators, or as a unified cohort. Furthermore, the group influenced individuals, and individuals influenced the group. Individuals were further motivated to write songs through the social interactions of the organization. When members of the group realized the potentials of the aggregation and strove to achieve those potentials, they experienced collective-actualization that was mutually felt, beyond the context of the individual, or self. This

point was evident when the men articulated how meaningful it was to have the prison choir sing their original songs in concert.

Songwriting involved a certain amount of psychological risk for writers; writers often found themselves stepping out of their individual comfort zones to write about deeply felt emotions, such as love, love gone wrong, or regret for the past. This was sometimes difficult for some of the writers, even though they had chosen their song concepts. The Liz Lerman Critical Response Process (Lerman & Borstell, 2003) helped to facilitate the songwriting process through managing participant feedback and judgments for original work.

One of my greatest joys during the Songwriters' Workshops was watching friendships blossom between the writers in prison, a place where people don't often trust each other. As the writers worked on lyrics and melodies together, they often learned more about each other, and there was an unstated understanding that they were all songwriters, whether they were beginning writers or more advanced. They enjoyed being creative and artistic; above all, they were all human, and wanted unconditional acceptance and approval. Throughout the Songwriters' Workshop, song topics were as varied as the individuals themselves, and no topic seemed off limits.

Future Research

The findings of this study reveal that songwriting is a very useful educational, as well as psychological, social, and emotional outlet for incarcerated songwriters. Through songwriting, participants learned gained musical, writing, and social skills. Although some of the participants were sometimes frustrated by their level of musical and/or writing skills, findings showed that purposefully and skillfully facilitated songwriting

provided a safe space in which to gain an understanding of the self and of others, and to realize that one is a creative, musical, likable being with value and skills. Findings further revealed that through the reflective nature of songwriting, expectations, beliefs, and values of the writer were sometimes transformed, helping a writer to envision a better future and live up to or beyond his potential.

As educators, we need to further understand how social dynamics and group processes can affect our classrooms and learning communities. Facilitators spent a great deal of time planning activities and teaching collaboratively. Further research on collaborative teaching and planning, and its influence upon various learning settings would be beneficial to educators. The men benefited from group interactions using the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process, and it was an effective tool for facilitating insightful conversations. Research on the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process, and how it can influence group-learning situations could further enhance the intricacies of feedback responses. In addition, more research on individual learning situations supplemented by group learning experiences would be beneficial for educators. This could include contexts of group songwriting, private music instruction, classrooms, and other group learning environments. Individual learning situations for exploration may include balancing individual practice time (seatwork, homework) with interactive, purposefully facilitated group activities in academic classroom settings—the intent not being that the instructor asks the questions and the students are expected to respond with the correct answers, but that the students, with the instructor facilitating, ask each other questions and come up with solutions. Other venues for research could also include balancing private music lessons with group interactions, such as a private studio

gathering to listen to individual performances—however, rather than just listen to the performances and have the instructor comment, students could engage in the Liz Lerman Critical Response Process to critique each other's performances. Research in any setting that involves individuals and groups working to create new goods, services, or art forms may also benefit from understanding how individuals are motivated by skillfully facilitated group interactions that are purposeful and goal-oriented. Such experiences could possibly lead to further student retention, enrichment, and satisfaction for both instructors and students, as well as a greater understanding of human relationships.

The findings of this study show that songwriting was an effective educational tool for the incarcerated participants. Through songwriting, the men gained greater musical, writing, and social skills. Findings also show that group interactions and skillful facilitation were important components that motivated the men to write songs, improve skills, and perform their work. Data analyses further reveal that performance of original work for an audience was a primary reason that the men participated in the Songwriters' Workshop, and the opportunity to perform original songs was very meaningful to the men. Further research related to group songwriting and performance opportunities would be of benefit for the music education community.

APPENDIX A: IRB LETTER OF APPROVAL

 <p>THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA</p>	<p>Human Subjects Office/ Institutional Review Board (IRB) 105 Hardin Library for the Health Sciences 600 Newton Road Iowa City, Iowa 52242-1098 319-335-6564 Fax 319-335-7310 irb@uiowa.edu http://research.uiowa.edu/hso</p>						
<p>IRB ID #: 201009712</p> <p>To: Mary Cohen</p> <p>From: IRB-02 DHHS Registration # IRB00000100, Univ of iowa, DHHS Federalwide Assurance # FWA00003007</p> <p>Re: Revealing the Songs of the Heart: Teaching Improvisation Through Singing and Relative Solfa to Prison Inmates</p> <hr/> <p>Approval Date: 10/19/10</p> <p>Next IRB Approval Due Before: 10/13/11</p> <table border="0"><tr><td>Type of Application:</td><td>Type of Application Review:</td><td>Approved for Populations:</td></tr><tr><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Project <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Review <input type="checkbox"/> Modification</td><td><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full Board: Meeting Date: 10/13/10 <input type="checkbox"/> Expedited <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt</td><td><input type="checkbox"/> Children <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prisoners <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant Women, Fetuses, Neonates</td></tr></table> <p>Source of Support:</p> <hr/> <p>This approval has been electronically signed by IRB Chair: Janet Karen Williams, PHD 10/19/10 0624</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right;">OFFICE OF THE VICE PRESIDENT FOR RESEARCH</p>		Type of Application:	Type of Application Review:	Approved for Populations:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> New Project <input type="checkbox"/> Continuing Review <input type="checkbox"/> Modification	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Full Board: Meeting Date: 10/13/10 <input type="checkbox"/> Expedited <input type="checkbox"/> Exempt	<input type="checkbox"/> Children <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Prisoners <input type="checkbox"/> Pregnant Women, Fetuses, Neonates
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UI Team Members

Name	E-mail	College	Contact	Key Prsn	UI COI	VAMC COI	Consent Process Involvement	Activity Location	Subjects consented	Deactivated
Mary Cohen, PhD	mary-cohen@uiowa.edu	College of Education		Yes	No		Yes			No
Colin Kraemer, High School	colin-kraemer@uiowa.edu				No	No	Yes			Yes
Catherine Wilson, MME	catherine-wilson@uiowa.edu	Graduate College		No	No		Yes			No
Patricia Zebrowski, PhD	tricia-zebrowski@uiowa.edu	College of Liberal Arts and Sciences		No	No		Yes			No

Non-UI Team Members

Name	Institution	Location	FWA Role	DHHS Contact	Key Prsn	UI COI	VAMC COI	Consent Process Involvement	Activity Location	Subjects consented
Nothing found to display										

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IRB Approval: IRB approval indicates that this project meets the regulatory requirements for the protection of human subjects. IRB approval does not absolve the principal investigator from complying with other institutional, collegiate, or departmental policies or procedures.

Agency Notification: If this is a New Project or Continuing Review application and the project is funded by an external government or non-profit agency, the original HHS 310 form, "Protection of Human Subjects Assurance Identification/IRB Certification/Declaration of Exemption," has been forwarded to the UI Division of Sponsored Programs, 100 Gilmore Hall, for appropriate action. You will receive a signed copy from Sponsored Programs.

Recruitment/Consent: Your IRB application has been approved for recruitment of subjects not to exceed the number indicated on your application form. If you are using written informed consent, the IRB-approved and stamped Informed Consent Document(s) are attached. Please make copies from the attached "masters" for subjects to sign when agreeing to participate. The original signed Informed Consent Document should be placed in your research files. A copy of the Informed Consent Document should be given to the subject. (A copy of the *signed* Informed Consent Document should be given to the subject if your Consent contains a HIPAA authorization section.) If hospital/clinic patients are being enrolled, a copy of the signed Informed Consent Document should be placed in the subject's chart, unless a Record of Consent form was approved by the IRB.

Continuing Review: Federal regulations require that the IRB re-approve research projects at intervals appropriate to the degree of risk, but no less than once per year. This process is called "continuing review." Continuing review for non-exempt research is required to occur as long as the research remains active for long-term follow-up of research subjects, even when the research is permanently closed to enrollment of new subjects and all subjects have completed all research-related interventions and to occur when the remaining research activities are limited to collection of private identifiable information. Your project "expires" at 12:01 AM on the date indicated on the preceding page ("Next IRB Approval Due on or Before"). You must obtain your next IRB approval of this project on or before that expiration date. You are responsible for submitting a Continuing Review application in sufficient time for approval before the expiration date, however the HSO will send a reminder notice approximately 60 and 30 days prior to the expiration date.

Modifications: Any change in this research project or materials must be submitted on a Modification application to the IRB for prior review and approval, except when a change is necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects. The investigator is required to promptly notify the IRB of any changes made without IRB approval to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to subjects using the Modification/Update Form. Modifications requiring the prior review and approval of the IRB include but are not limited to: changing the protocol or study procedures, changing investigators or funding sources, changing the Informed Consent Document, increasing the anticipated total number of subjects from what was originally approved, or adding any new materials (e.g., letters to subjects, ads, questionnaires).

Unanticipated Problems Involving Risks: You must promptly report to the IRB any serious and/or unexpected adverse experience, as defined in the UI Investigator's Guide, and any other unanticipated problems involving risks to subjects or others. The Reportable Events Form (REF) should be used for reporting to the IRB.

Audits/Record-Keeping: Your research records may be audited at any time during or after the implementation of your project. Federal and University policies require that all research records be maintained for a period of three (3) years following the close of the research project. For research that involves drugs or devices seeking FDA approval, the research records must be kept for a period of three years after the FDA has taken final action on the marketing application.

Additional Information: Complete information regarding research involving human subjects at The University of Iowa is available in the "Investigator's Guide to Human Subjects Research." Research investigators are expected to comply with these policies and procedures, and to be familiar with the University's Federalwide Assurance, the Belmont Report, 45CFR46, and other applicable regulations prior to

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conducting the research. These documents and IRB application and related forms are available on the Human Subjects Office website or are available by calling 335-6564.

APPENDIX B: ASSURANCES

Mary Cohen, PhD

Revealing the Songs of the Heart: Teaching Improvisation Through Singing and Relative Solfa to Prison Inmates

Assurances

Principal Investigator (PI) - As PI, I assure that:

- I am ultimately responsible for the conduct of the study.
- I agree to comply with all applicable UI policies and procedures, and applicable federal, state and local laws.
- The application is consistent with proposal(s) submitted to external funding agencies.
- The research will only be performed by qualified personnel.
- All persons assisting with the research are adequately informed about the protocol and their research-related duties and functions.
- I will not implement any changes in the approved IRB application, study protocol, or informed consent process without prior IRB approval (except in an emergency, if necessary to safeguard the well-being of a human participant).
- If unavailable to conduct this research personally, as when on sabbatical leave, I will arrange for another investigator to assume direct responsibility for the study. Either this person is named as another investigator in this application, or I will notify the IRB of such arrangements.
- I will obtain Continuing Review approval prior to 12:01 am on the date the approval for the study expires. I understand if I fail to apply for continuing review, approval for the study will automatically expire, and all study activity must cease until IRB approval is granted.
- If protected health information is used or created as part of this research project, the research team agrees NOT to reuse or disclose the information to any other person or entity (beyond the named research team) except as required by law, for authorized oversight of the research project, or unless subsequent IRB approval is obtained for such reuse or disclosure.
- If members of the research team access protected health information from a covered component in order to seek consent/authorization for research, such access is necessary for the research, is solely for that purpose, and the information will not be removed from the covered component.
- Neither I nor any member of the research team has a significant financial interest, as defined by the University of Iowa Operations Manual, whereby the value of the interest to me or any member of the research team could be influenced by the outcome of the study.
- **EFFECTIVE 10/1/09** If the above stated research study has a plan to compensate the research subjects participating in this project, I acknowledge that our unit has a Cash Handling Procedure that has been approved by Accounting Services.
- I further assure that the proposed research is not currently being conducted and will not begin until IRB approval has been obtained.

Mary L. Cohen

Signature of Principal Investigator

8-31-10

Date

Mary L. Cohen

Printed Name of the Principal Investigator

DEO (Department Chair) - My signature assures that the investigator:

- Is qualified to conduct the research as described in this application.
- Has adequate resources, facilities, and numbers of qualified staff to conduct the research as described in this application.
- Has used sound study design consistent with the standards of the investigator's area of research.
- **EFFECTIVE 10/1/09** If the above stated research study has a plan to compensate the research subjects participating in this project, I acknowledge that our unit has a Cash Handling Procedure that has been approved by Accounting Services.

Has available time to oversee and conduct this project.

Peter A. Hurniak

Signature of DEO (Department Chair)

8/31/10

Date

I have reviewed this form

Printed Name of the (Department Chair)

Mary Cohen, PhD

Revealing the Songs of the Heart: Teaching Improvisation Through Singing and Relative Solfa to Prison Inmates

Faculty Supervisor (If PI is a student) The faculty sponsor must be a member of the UI faculty and is considered the responsible party for legal and ethical performance of the project.

As the faculty supervisor on this research application, I assure that:

- I will meet with the student investigator on a regular basis and monitor study progress.
- The student is knowledgeable about the regulations and policies governing research with human subjects and has sufficient training and experience to conduct this particular study in accord with the approved protocol.
- If I will be unavailable to supervise this research personally, as when on sabbatical leave, I will arrange for an alternate Faculty Supervisor to assume direct responsibility in my absence and I will advise the IRB by letter in advance of such arrangements.
- **EFFECTIVE 10/1/09** If the above stated research study has a plan to compensate the research subjects participating in this project, I acknowledge that our unit has a Cash Handling Procedure that has been approved by Accounting Services.

Mary L Cohen

Signature of Supervising Faculty

8-31-10

Date

APPENDIX C:INFORMED CONSENT



INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT

Project Title: Revealing the Songs of the Heart: Teaching Improvisation Through Singing and Relative Solfa to Prison Inmates

Principal Investigator: Mary Cohen

Research Team Contact: Mary Cohen, 319-335-3030, mary-cohen@uiowa.edu

This consent form describes the research study to help you decide if you want to participate. This form provides important information about what you will be asked to do during the study, about the risks and benefits of the study, and about your rights as a research subject.

- If you have any questions about or do not understand something in this form, you should ask the research team for more information.
- You should discuss your participation with anyone you choose such as family or friends.
- Do not agree to participate in this study unless the research team has answered your questions and you decide that you want to be part of this study.

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY?

This is a research study. We are inviting you to participate in this research study because you are participating in the songwriters' workshop.

The purpose of this research study is to examine the role of songwriting and learning songwriting skills for incarcerated males. The researchers will use the information collected to determine the ways in which participation in the workshop affected the individual's self-perceptions, relationships with others, and life in the prison.

HOW MANY PEOPLE WILL PARTICIPATE?

Approximately 40 people total will take part in this study conducted by researchers from the University of Iowa.

HOW LONG WILL I BE IN THIS STUDY?

If you agree to take part in this study, your involvement will last for the time of the planned workshop. The Songwriting Workshop sessions will be held for forty-five minutes each Tuesday afternoon from October 2011 through May 2012.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN DURING THIS STUDY?

If you agree to be in the study, we will use your comments during class sessions in our transcribed notes from class meetings. We will collect materials from your workshop assignments and activities for use in the research. The workshop assignments and activities that will be used in our research are:

Weekly responses about what you intend to do in between sessions and what you actually did, and any other comments you have about the songwriters' workshop, and any writing you wish to share about



your experiences in the workshop classes. Each week you can turn in your writing to your individual folder. If you agree to the use of the writing for the research study, check "Yes" at the top of the document. If you do not agree to the use of the writing for research, check the "No" box at the top of the document.

We would also like to analyze the lyrics you compose, if you wish to share those for this purpose. If you consent to the use of a particular set of lyrics in the study, write "For Research Study" at the top of those lyrics. Include this note in your individual folders that we distribute during class.

The researchers will collect your written journal entries for the workshop weekly. This information will be included in your individual songwriters' workshop folders. Each week you can place your writing in your folders for us to pick up. If you consent to the use of a particular weekly journal entry in the study, write "For Research Study" at the top of those pages.

We will make audio recordings of each workshop session including our opening rhythm and pitch sections, some of the small group sharing and feedback sessions, and the full group sharing and feedback sessions.

Some of the students in the class may be asked to participate in an interview about the songwriters' workshop. We will decide who will participate as the class progresses depending upon time available in our sessions to complete these interviews. We will ask about your experiences of the songwriters' workshop, your musical learning while incarcerated, how these activities affect any aspect of your life, what you like or dislike about the sessions, your perceived musical skill level, and your processes for writing songs, plus any other comments you wish to share. Your interview will be recorded and transcribed if you give permission for it to be recorded.

Audio Recording

One aspect of this study involves using audio recordings of the workshop to measure your musical and learning progress. We will transcribe each weekly session. If you wish us to not include your participation in class in these transcriptions, we will not transcribe any of your comments. Once the recordings are transcribed, these documents will be stored in Mary Cohen's private locked office. The only people who will have access to them for research are the researchers on this project. The original recordings will be erased after the transcriptions have been made.

We will audio record interviews with select participants of the songwriters' workshop. Once the recordings are transcribed, these documents will be stored in Mary Cohen's private locked office. The only people who will have access to them for research are the researchers on this project. The original recordings will be erased after the transcriptions have been made.

You can still be in the study without agreeing to the use of your comments from class or interview recordings for research. If you do not agree to the use of your comments on the workshop recordings, we will only use your written responses, any journal entries you wish to share, and any lyrics you wish to share for the study. If you do not agree to the recording of your interview, we will use only our written notes of your interview responses. Please indicate your choice below by placing your initials in



the space next to the options selected.

Yes No I give you permission to use the workshop audio recordings of me in this study.

Yes No I give you permission to make a recording of my interview for this study.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS OF THIS STUDY?

You may experience one or more of the risks indicated below from being in this study. In addition to these, there may be other unknown risks, or risks that we did not anticipate, associated with being in this study.

You may be concerned that your decision whether or not to be in this study will affect your standing or your participation in the workshop activities. You may be in the workshop without agreeing to participate in this study.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF THIS STUDY?

We don't know if you will benefit from being in this study. However, we hope that, in the future, other people might benefit from this study because of the knowledge that teaching songwriting assists in expressing oneself musically.

WILL IT COST ME ANYTHING TO BE IN THIS STUDY?

You will not have any costs for being in this research study.

WILL I BE PAID FOR PARTICIPATING?

You will not be paid for being in this research study.

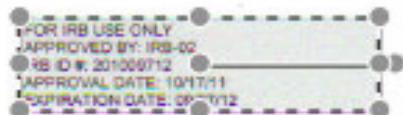
WHO IS FUNDING THIS STUDY?

The University and the research team are receiving no payments from other agencies, organizations, or companies to conduct this research study.

WHAT ABOUT CONFIDENTIALITY?

We will keep your participation in this research study confidential to the extent permitted by law. However, it is possible that other people such as those indicated below may become aware of your participation in this study and may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research. Some of these records could contain information that personally identifies you.

- * federal government regulatory agencies,
- * auditing departments of the University of Iowa, and
- * the University of Iowa Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approves research studies)



To help protect your confidentiality, we use a study number instead of your real name to identify the information we collect for the study. The list linking your study number and your real name will be stored in a secure location where only the researchers on this project may see it. We will store all materials we collect in locked files in locked offices and all data in password protected computers. If we write a report or article about this study or share the study data set with others, we will do so in such a way that you cannot be directly identified.

IS BEING IN THIS STUDY VOLUNTARY?

Taking part in this research study is completely voluntary. You may choose not to take part at all. If you decide to be in this study, you may stop participating at any time. If you decide not to be in this study, or if you stop participating at any time, you won't be penalized or lose any benefits for which you otherwise qualify.

What if I Decide to Drop Out of the Study?

You may choose to drop out of the study and continue to participate in the songwriter workshop.

Will I Receive New Information About the Study while Participating?

If we obtain any new information during this study that might affect your willingness to continue participating in the study, we'll promptly provide you with that information.

SPECIAL INFORMATION FOR PRISONERS WHO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

If you take part in this research study, your participation will not affect or influence the length of your sentence, your parole, or any other aspect of your incarceration. Likewise, if you decide not to participate, or if you leave the study before it is over, that will not be held against you.

WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?

We encourage you to ask questions. If you have any questions about the research study itself, please contact: Mary Cohen, 319-335-3030. If you experience a research-related injury, please contact Mary Cohen.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a research subject or about research related injury, please contact the Human Subjects Office, 105 Hardin Library for the Health Sciences, 600 Newton Rd, The University of Iowa, Iowa City, IA 52242-1098, (319) 335-6564, or e-mail irb@uiowa.edu. General information about being a research subject can be found by clicking "Info for Public" on the Human Subjects Office web site, <http://research.uiowa.edu/hso>. To offer input about your experiences as a research subject or to speak to someone other than the research staff, call the Human Subjects Office at the number above.

This Informed Consent Document is not a contract. It is a written explanation of what will happen during the study if you decide to participate. You are not waiving any legal rights by signing this Informed Consent Document. Your signature indicates that this research study has been explained to



you, that your questions have been answered, and that you agree to take part in this study. You will receive a copy of this form.

Subject's Name (printed): _____

Do not sign this form if today's date is on or after EXPIRATION DATE: 09/27/12.

(Signature of Subject)

(Date)

Statement of Person Who Obtained Consent

I have discussed the above points with the subject or, where appropriate, with the subject's legally authorized representative. It is my opinion that the subject understands the risks, benefits, and procedures involved with participation in this research study.

(Signature of Person who Obtained Consent)

(Date)

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION LETTER FROM PRISON



STATE OF IOWA

CHESTER J. CULVER, GOVERNOR
PATTY JUDGE, LT. GOVERNOR
Iowa Results Website (www.resultsiowa.org)

DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS
JOHN R. BALDWIN DIRECTOR
Website (www.doc.state.ia.us)

DANIEL R. CRAIG, WARDEN
Website (www.oakdaleprison.com)

September 2, 2010

University of Iowa Institutional Review Board
Hardin Library for the Health Sciences,
Office 105
600 Newton Road
Iowa City, 52242-1098

Dear University of Iowa Institutional Review Board,

The purpose of this letter is to acknowledge my permission for Mary Cohen and her research team to collect data from the men in the prison who are participating in her songwriting workshop. The songwriting workshop gives the offenders an opportunity to express themselves in ways completely different than other outlets. It is important for her to document, measure, and analyze how improvisation and composition assists them in their personal and musical development.

Sincerely,



The mission of the Iowa Department of Corrections is to:
**To Advance Successful Offender Reentry to Protect the Public, Staff, and
Offenders from Victimization**

APPENDIX E: PRESENTATION ABOUT THE RESEARCH STUDY

Songwriters' Workshop Group Presentation about the Research Study about Songwriting:

Catherine, Colin and I are continuing our research project about songwriting.

We have revised the research procedures to be used for the study. We will be re-consenting workshop students have already signed a consent for the previous study procedures and invite new students to participate in the study if they wish. I have distributed an Informed Consent Document with information about the research study. Please review the document and ask any questions you have about the study.

If you agree to the use of your comments during our workshop sessions for the study, sign the consent form and return it to me. Note you must indicate in the form whether or not you agree to the use of your comments when we transcribe the weekly audio recordings in the study. If you do not wish for us to use your comments, we will not transcribe them into our research notes. Be sure to initial your choices before signing and returning the consent form. I will give you a copy of the form for your records.

If you do not wish to participate in the study, return the form without signing it.

If you agree to the use of your original lyrics or journal entries for the study, write "For Research Study" at the top of the paper.

Some of you may be asked to participate in an audio taped interview as described in the consent document. If we ask you to participate in an interview, it is your choice whether you wish to participate in this interview or not and you may tell us when we ask you about doing the interview whether or not you agree to the interview procedure.

You may still participate in the songwriters' workshop whether you agree to participate in the research study or not.

APPENDIX F: SONGWRITING QUESTIONNAIRE

Songwriting Questionnaire

For Research Study: YES

Answer the questions as specifically and thoroughly as possible. Write as much as you wish. No limit on length.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

1. How did the strategies taught help or hinder your ability to remember and generate melodic patterns and songs?
2. Were there teaching strategies that were confusing? If so, what were they?
3. How much time per day did you spend related to musical learning? What did you do? Include any time spent in choir rehearsals or any music-making, listening, or creating activities.

BENEFITS AND PROBLEMS

4. Describe any benefits you attribute to your participation in this class. Be as specific as possible.
5. Describe any problems you attribute to your participation in this class.
6. What were the most difficult aspects of the class?

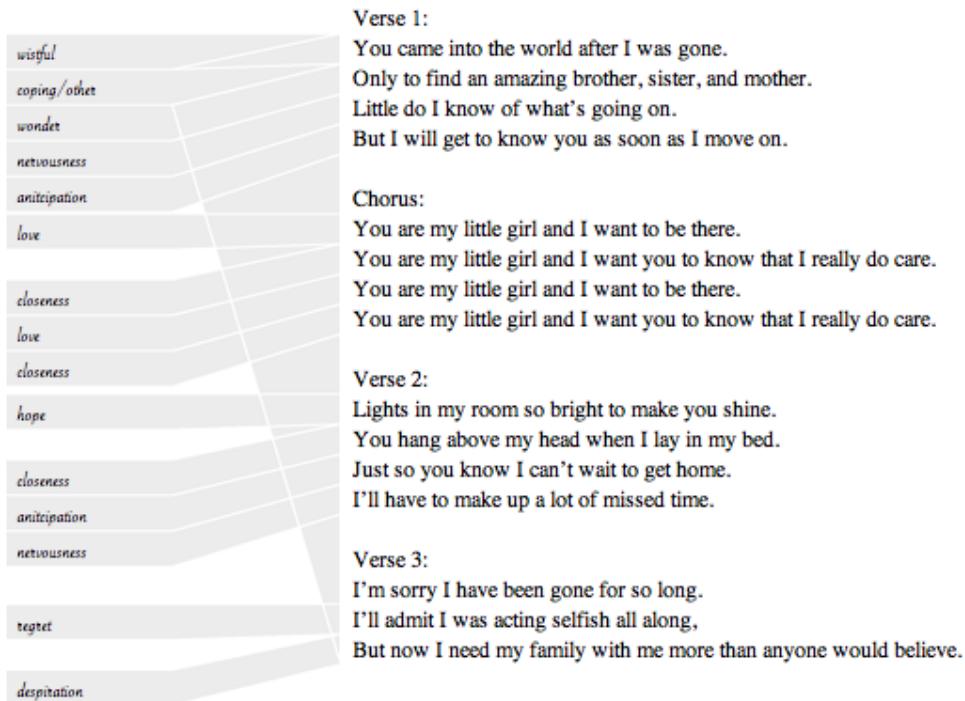
OTHER INFLUENCES

7. In what ways, if any, did your participation in the class affect how you listen to music?
8. In what ways, if any, did you collaborate with others in your songwriting?
9. Any other comments?

APPENDIX G: SAMPLE OF LYRIC CODING

Source: Amelia Renee.rtf

Amelia Renee (B. F., 2011)



APPENDIX H: SAMPLE OF LYRIC AND CLASS TRANSCRIPT CODING

Source: To My Daughter.rtf

<i>longing</i>	To My Daughter (B.F., C.W., & M.C, 2011)
<i>love</i>	Refrain:
<i>coping/other</i>	So little and so sweet, Never have I met you.
<i>longing</i>	Not that I don't want to, I may not be there.
<i>longing</i>	But in my dreams I'm with you, And we have time to share.
<i>regret</i>	I just want you to know That you hold all my love.
<i>hope</i>	
<i>hope</i>	
<i>love</i>	
<i>regret</i>	Verse 1:
<i>wonder</i>	You came into the world after I was gone To find an amazing brother, A sister, and mother.
<i>uncertain</i>	Little do I know, of what is going on, But I will get to know you As soon as I move on.
<i>longing</i>	
<i>longing</i>	Verse 2:
<i>longing</i>	You are my little girl, and I want to be there You are my little girl, and I want you to know That I really do care.
<i>regret</i>	I'm sorry I have been gone so long. I'll admit I was acting selfish all along,
<i>regret</i>	But now I need my family with me More than anyone would believe.
<i>desperation</i>	

Source: IMCC 2-8-11 trans.rtf

determination/ pedagogical

Then she asks the group if they see how it works. Then she says, du, du- di-day-da du, du. The group continues repeating patterns. Then the group does more decoding. After this process, the group then repeats pitches, do, do, do, do. Not all in the group are on the pitch yet. There is one person that is between a 4th and a 5th above the group. Next the group decodes pitch patterns. Most of the time was spent on do, re, and mi, but we did get to sol and la. There were both stepping and skipping patterns. The person that was off pitch is now singing in tune. It took about halfway through the melodic activity.

"Daisy, would you be so kind as to get the sheets out of those folders, and what we are going to do now will be slightly different, I think we'll take a look at these (there is general movement noise as people get folders and get organized. People are worried about the size of the print). I've given you two things. What you are getting from Daisy is what I would like you to fill out during our time tonight, what you are receiving from me is this process that we are going to use as we go through the original songs. Liz Lehrman is a... was or is, I do not know if she is still alive, does anybody know?"

Phil: Who?

Cohen: Liz Lehrman, she is a dancer who has created this critical response process that we are going to use.

humor

pedagogical/ giving instructions

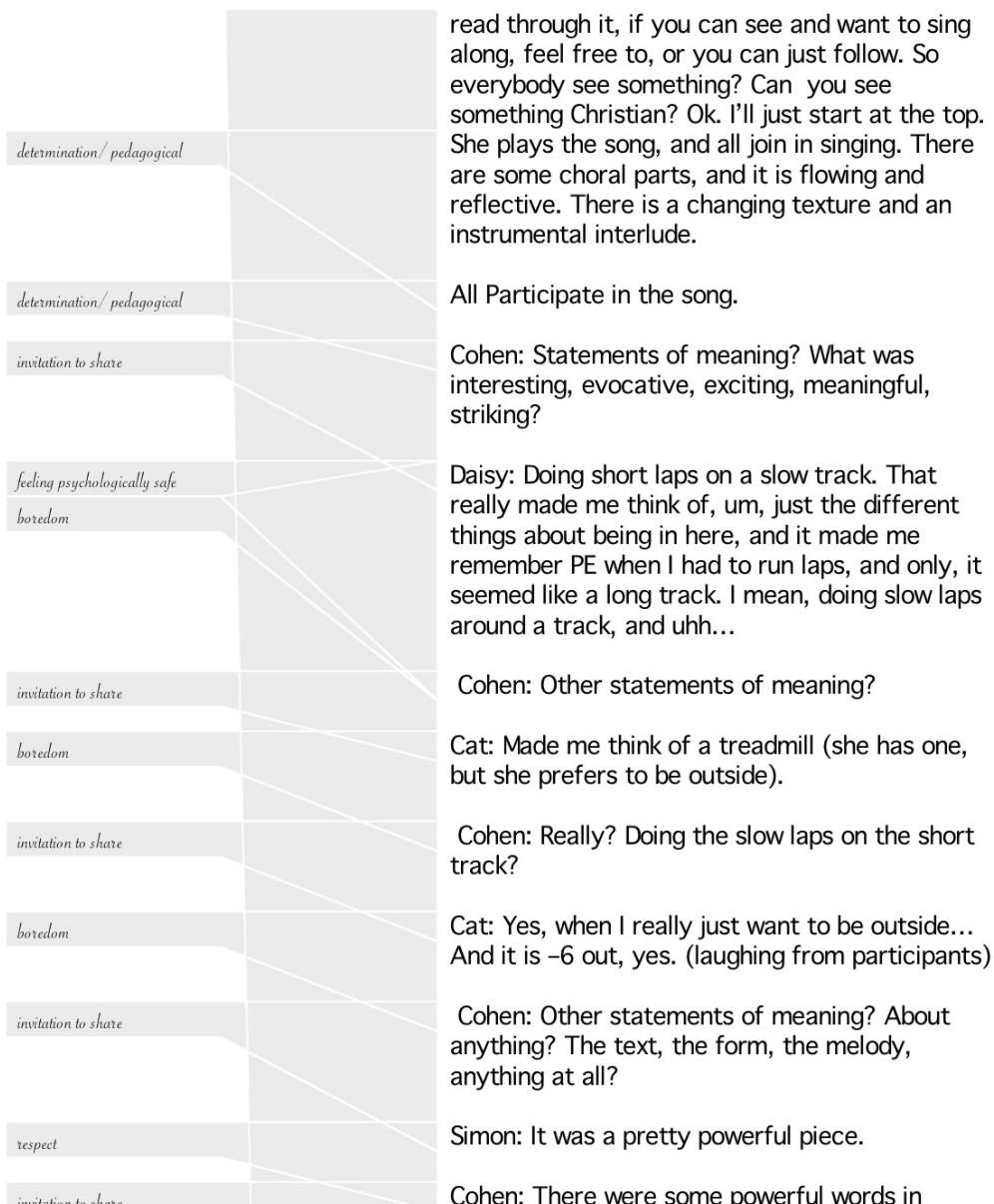
Jessie: Have you got a magnifying glass?

Cohen: This process is basically a way to give feedback to the person. So what we are going to do first, we're going to the Fences song first, and what we will do is we will go through the song, I actually plucked around on the piano and

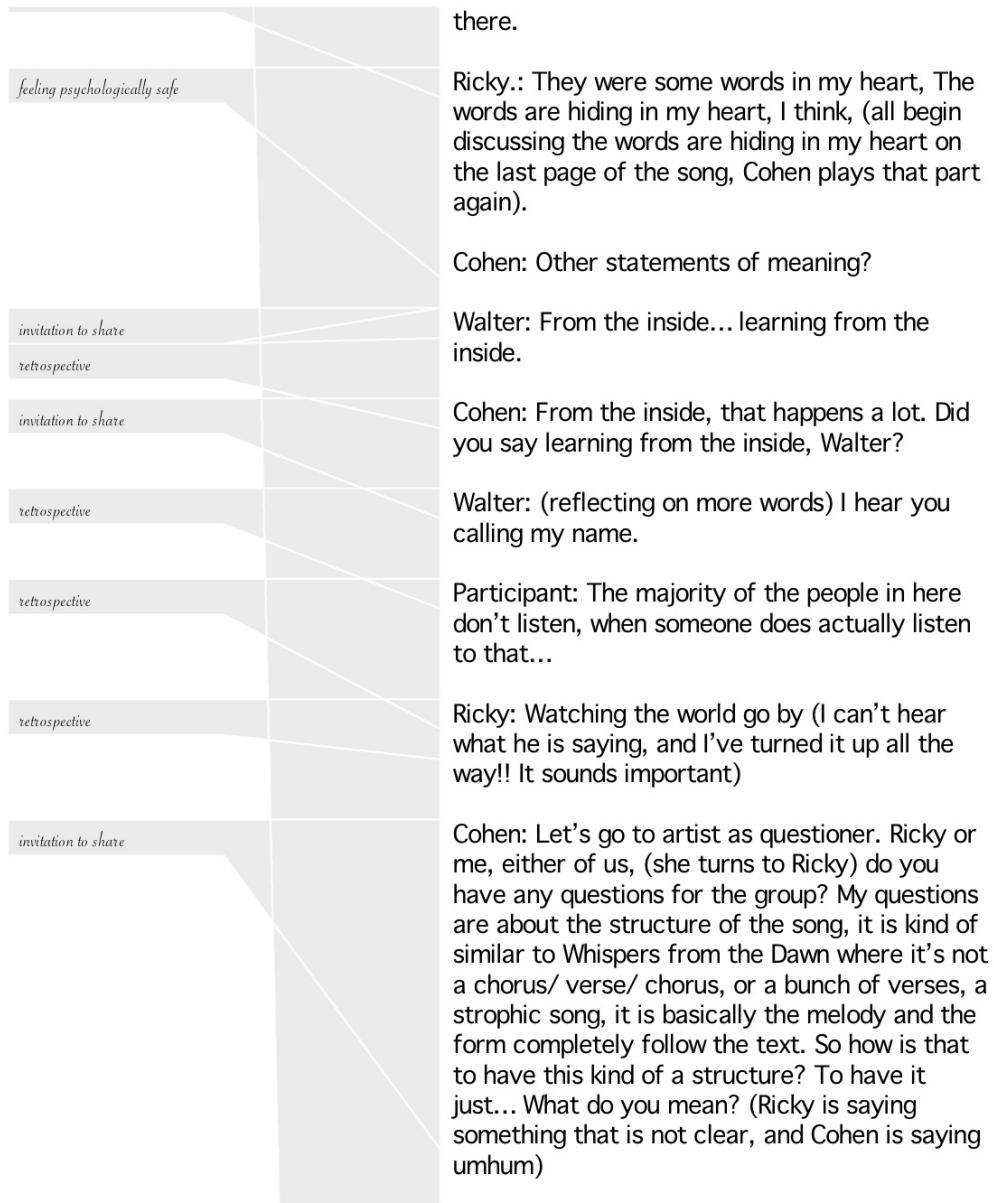
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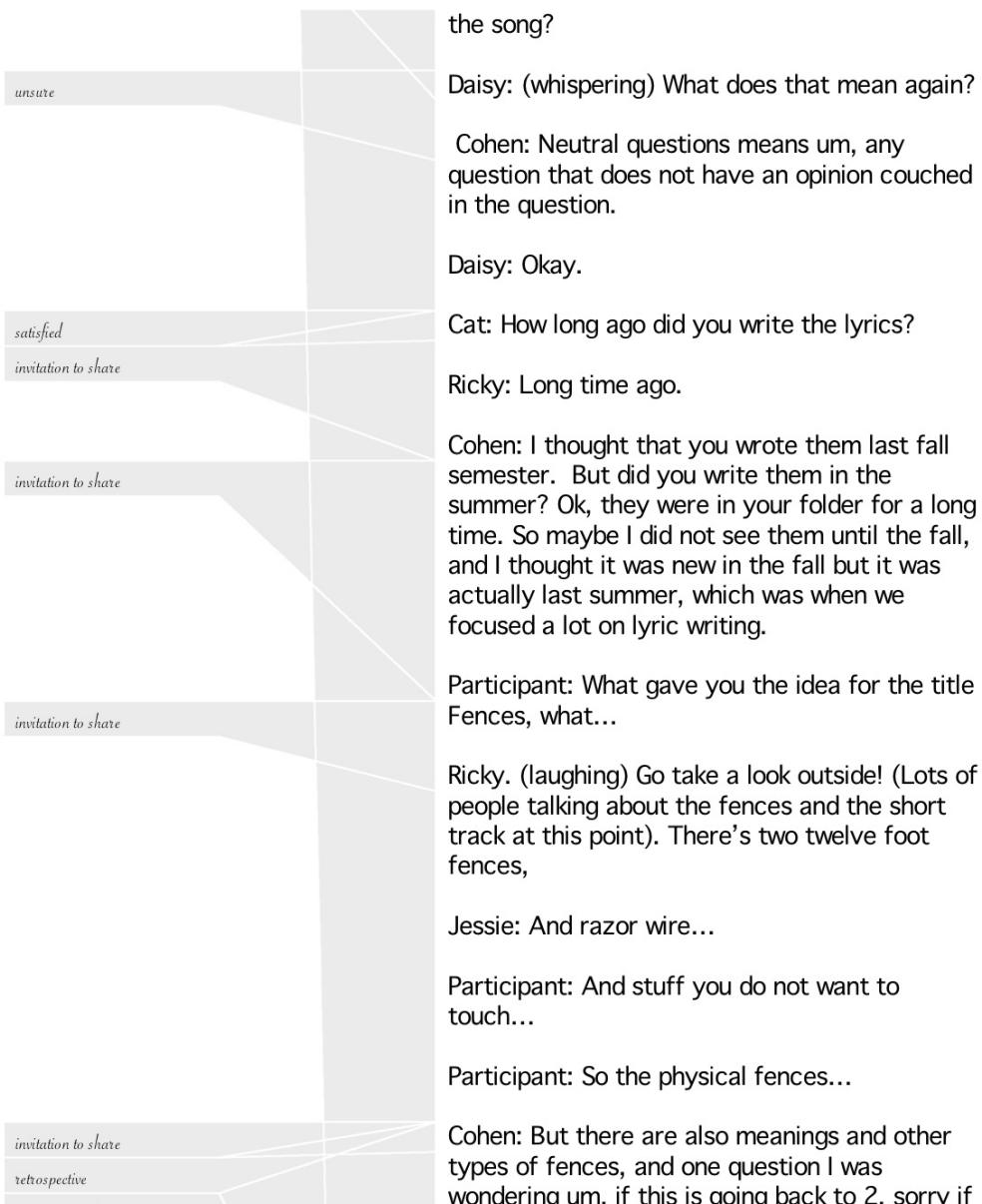
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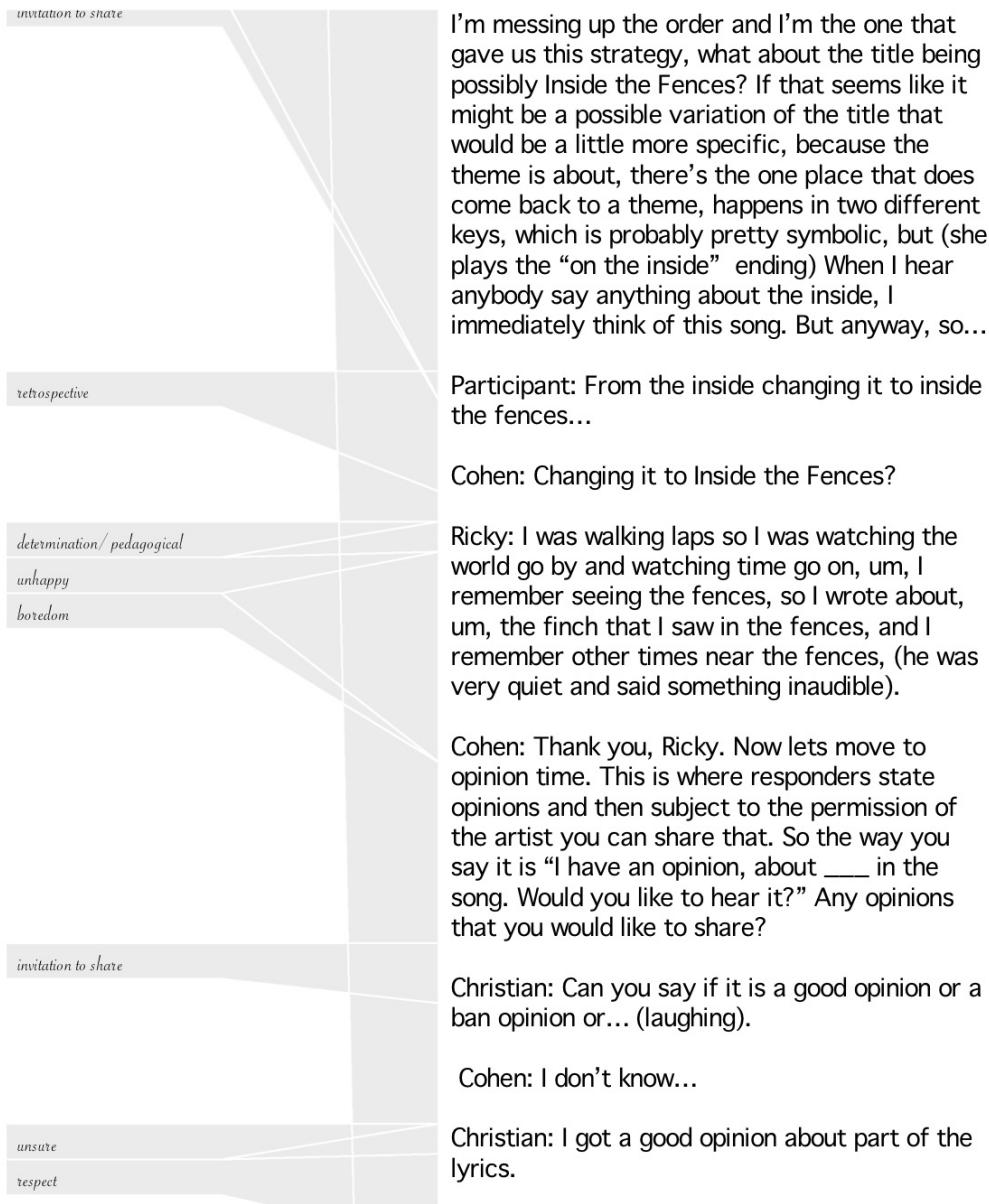
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<i>respect</i>	Christian: That is why I like it, because it is different, sometimes when you are waiting for that chorus to happen, and it happens, you let go. And then when it comes back again, you let go again.
<i>wonder / multi-layered thinking</i>	Cohen: I'm wondering about the structure, I know that Ricky said it sounded strange, and Christian said it was kind of nice not to come back to a chorus, does the structure parallel anything about your lives here at Sugardale? That maybe it is not predictable? A song that has a chorus verse chorus is predictable. And that is what our brains are used to, a pattern that keeps coming back.
<i>retrospective</i>	Ricky: His words talk about this place and how it feels to be in this place, it is the story of our lives in here, in this place, what we do, what is happening, what we see, it is very strong. And the chorus, it is telling everybody how we are, telling our story.
<i>unsure</i>	Cohen: Good. now Liam has got some hard chords that I did not play, and I wonder if we might be able to go though after we finish 3 and 4, maybe go through again if you remember, I don't know when was the last time you looked at it.
<i>invitation to share</i>	Liam: I got the paper here, it is not very much but it...
	Cohen: Ok, because there are some parts that he has added that have a different harmony, and I was looking at a sheet that wasn't the most recent one. I wonder if this one is it... this is the most recent one. So what I am looking at is the older one. Lets go to neutral questions. Do any of the responders have neutral questions about

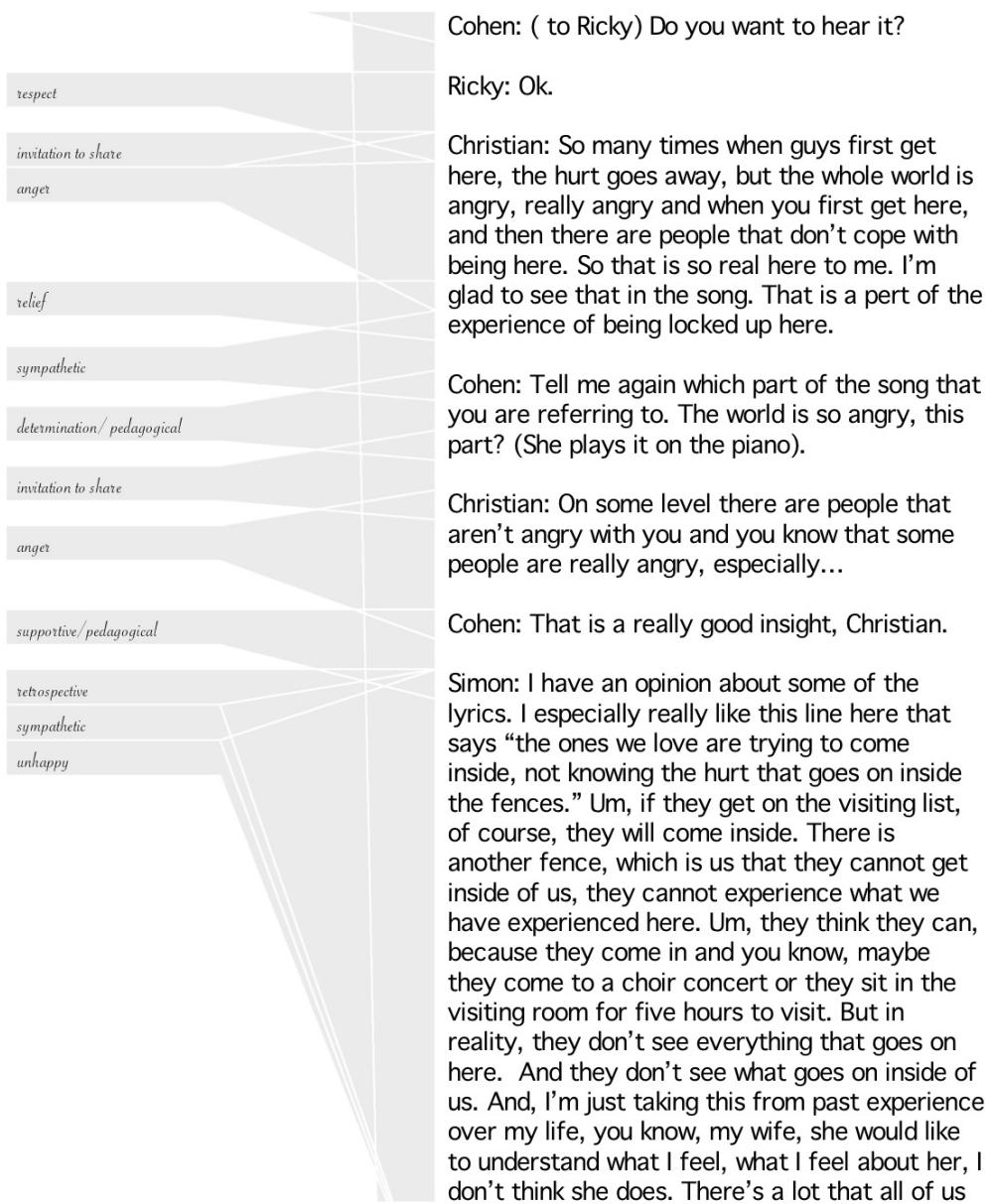
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invitation to share

unsure

unsure

determination/ pedagogical

determination/ pedagogical

determination/ pedagogical

determination/ pedagogical

determination/ pedagogical

a idea for lyrics for another song.

Cohen: Exactly. So all that I think, if you are ok with us doing this next week, is basically call it a night and we can decide number one, who is playing piano, and 2, what the interludes are, and number 3, what the harmonies are in a couple of those new spots. So, um, do you want to work on a little of that now, or should we go on to Sent to Germany and talk about other songs?

Liam: Either way, I mean, it's um, really what I had is not terribly much. the melody is the biggest and most important thing.

Cohen: Ok. Um, I can't remember now what we were talking about, because we met and we had some stuff that I thought you were going to add. do you remember?

Liam: Yes, um, I can play it for you...

Cohen: Why don't you play it and kind of refresh my memory, and then um, then we'll go on to... (turning to participants..) somebody's guidelines. Does anybody know whose guidelines these are? This was an extra one? ok.

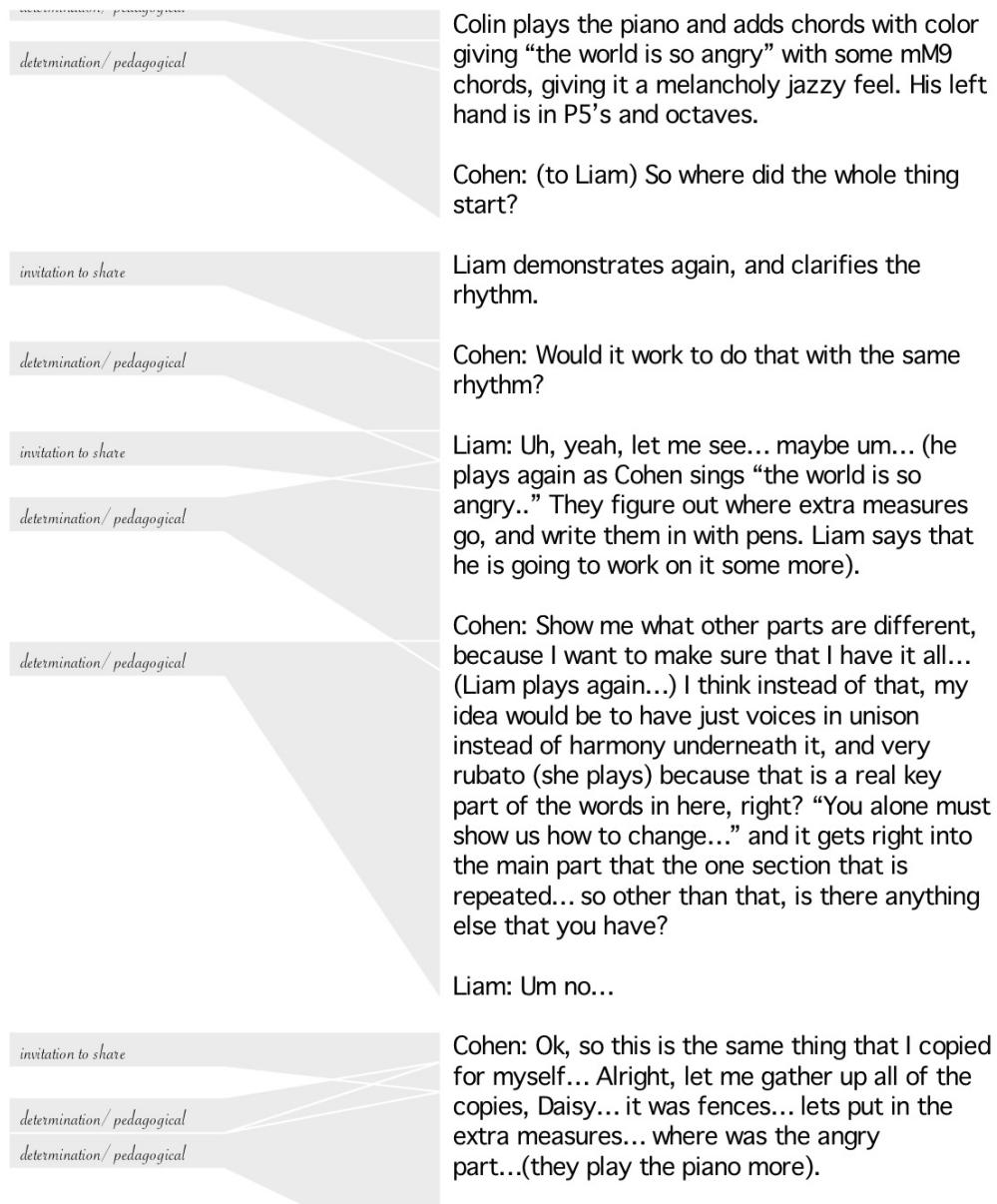
Daisy: If you are talking bout the critical thinking, those are mine.

Cohen: Yes. We might need them again when we move on to Sent to Germany.

Daisy: Okay. I will hang on to them.

Cohen (speaking to Liam) So which part, oh, you have the new version too...

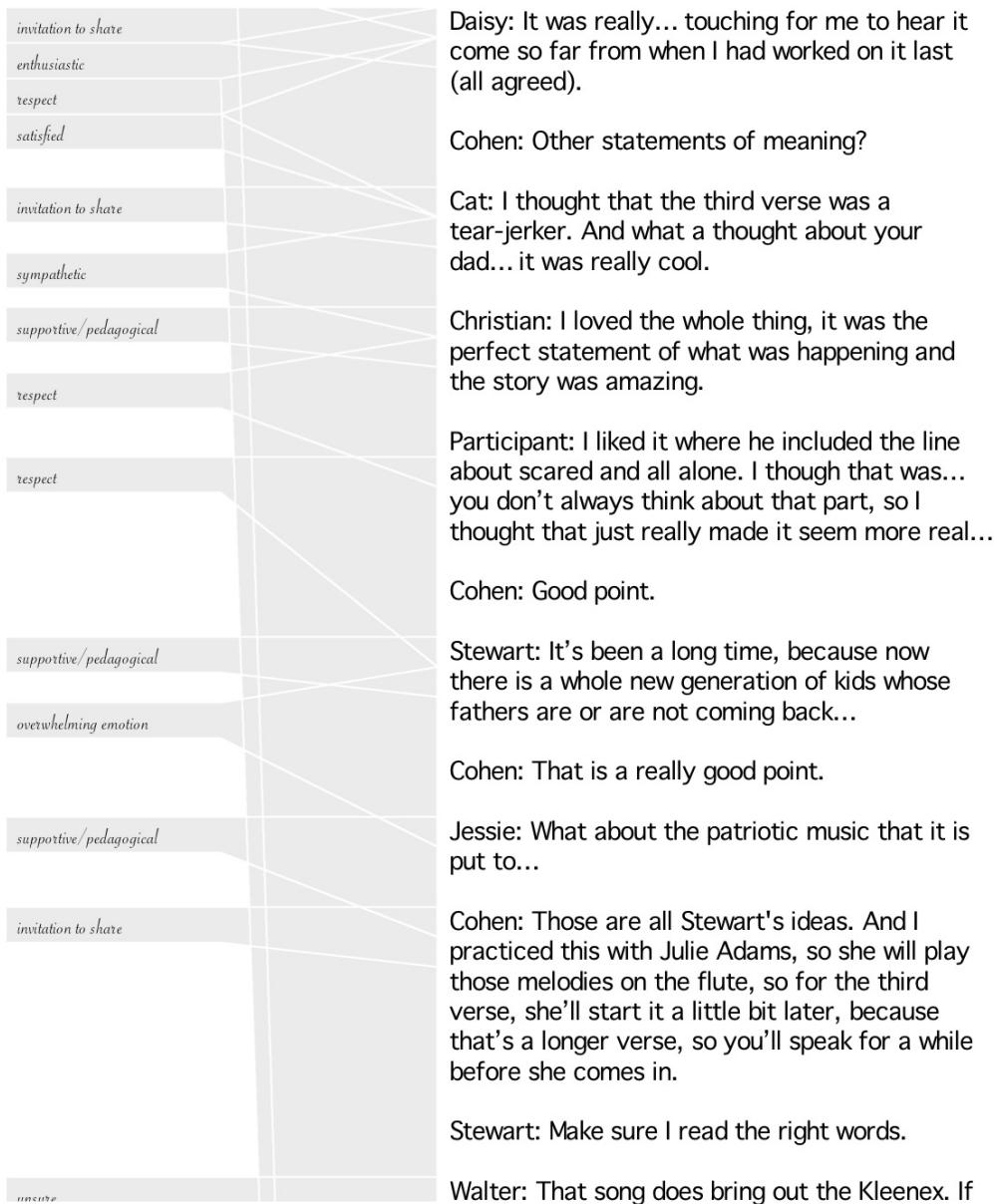
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you don't feel it, there's something wrong.
Cause that really tugs at the heartstrings.

Daisy: Like, you were talking about it's more meaningful, because not only are there kids whose parents are coming home, like, I have classmates and not really any close friends, but they are going off to war and that wasn't something that you... that I grew up expecting or that I ever really thought about, like it was in history books, like, veterans were old people (lots of laughing) you know, veterans were like, were like somebody's grandparents or you know, maybe their dad if they were older. (LOTS of laughter) SORRY! But that's what I thought when I was in high school, and now these are my classmates. And it's a lot different than I ever thought it would be. And just sort of a way to connect with the past generation, like you are talking about your father that way... but gosh, people my age and their fathers are soldiers...

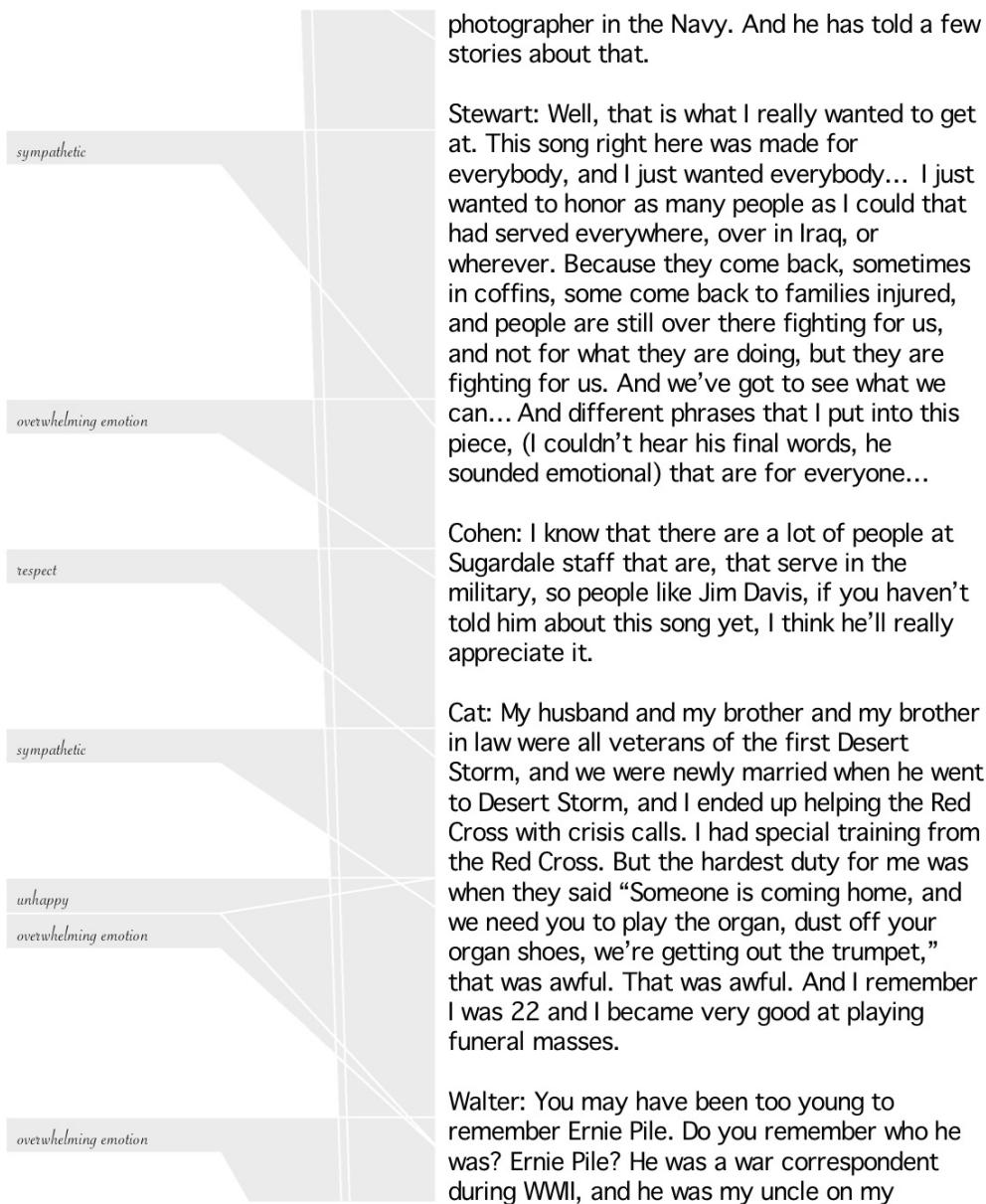
Cohen: I don't have the exact order, but the structure of the concert, the way it is planned right now, this song is a real key part of the beginning part of the concert, because it is the theme of service, you know, the song um, Seek to Serve, and Who Are the Brave, Mixed in with Sent to Germany. There is a really good line of theme in there.

Lets go to the second part, which is artist as questioner. (to Stewart) Do you have questions that you would like to ask about this?

Stewart: I know your family members, some of them, have been in the army, and stuff like that, have they ever told you any stories about some things like this?

Cohen: My father was in World War II. He was a

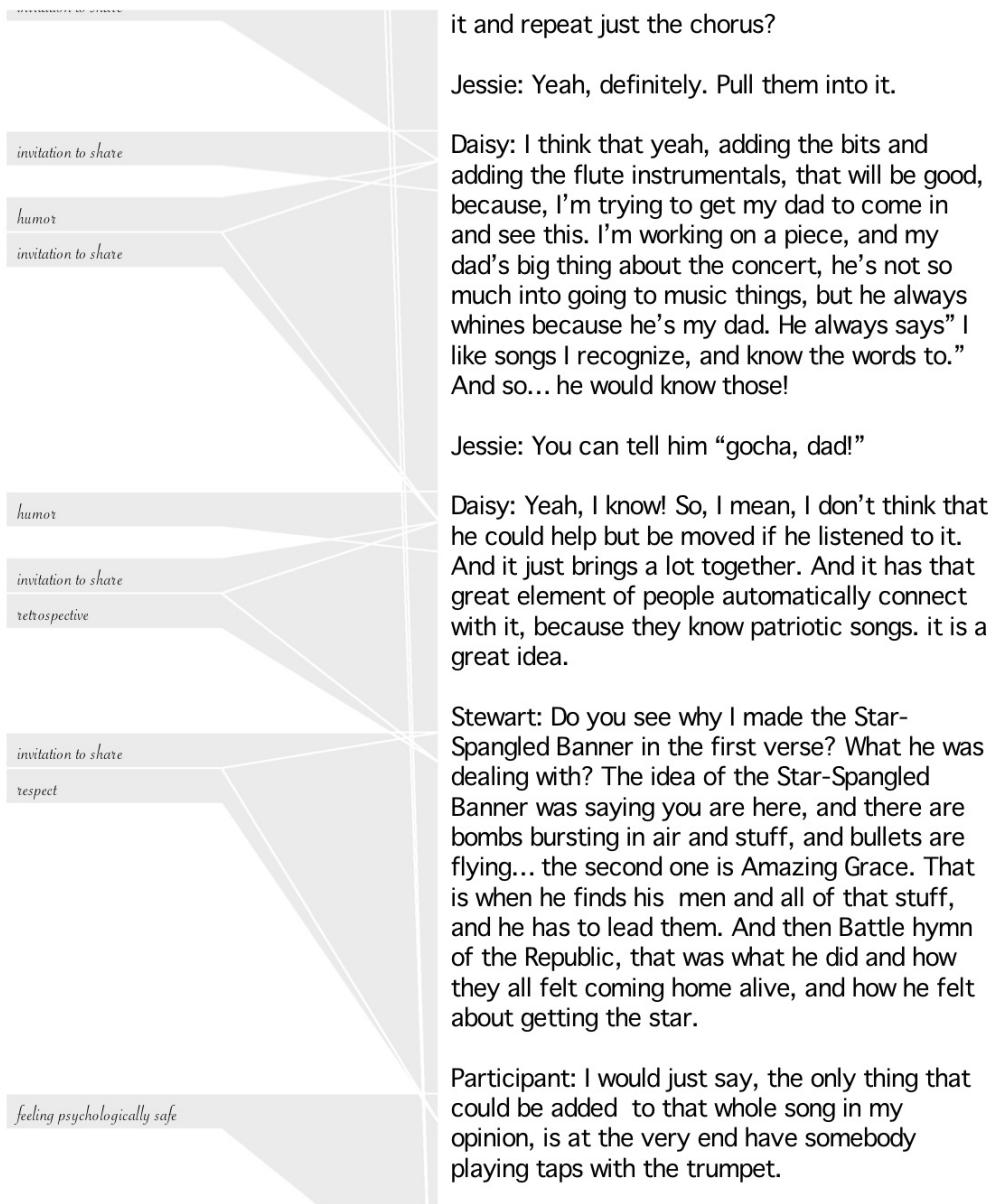
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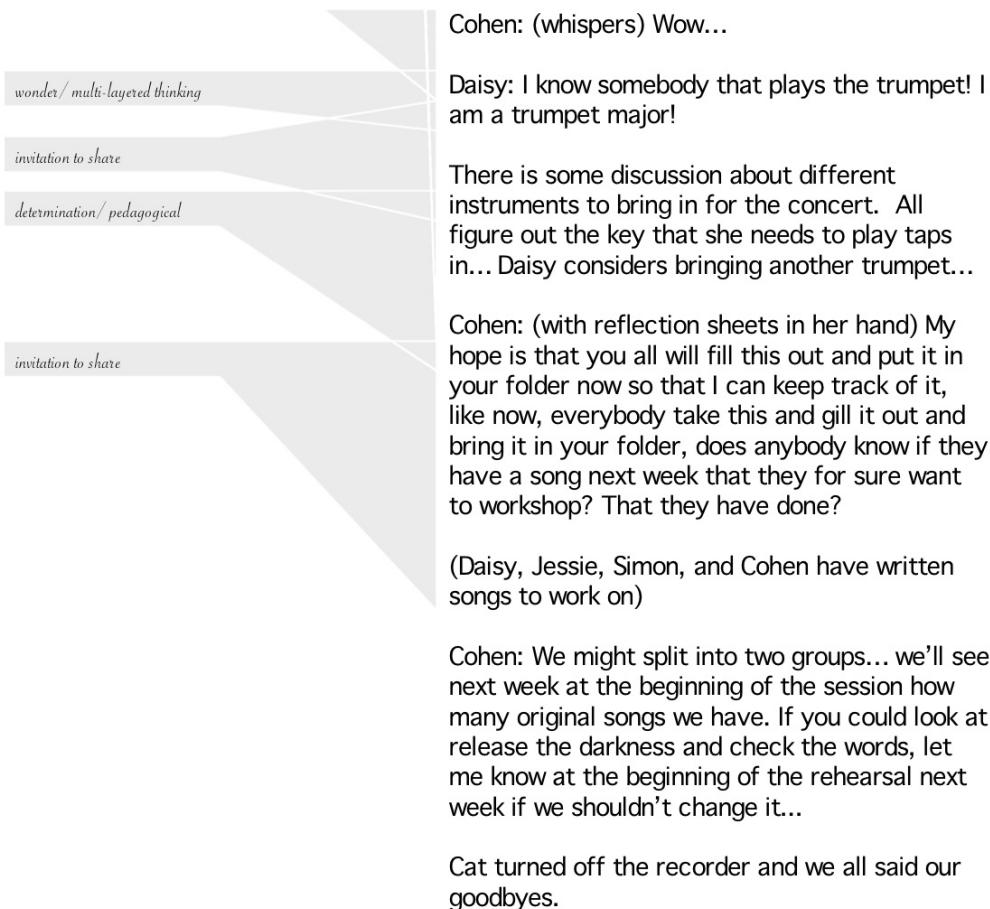
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