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Daughters of Rock and Moms Who Rock: Rock Music as a Medium for Family Relationships in Portugal

This article discusses the role of rock musicking as a medium for family relationships. Drawing on qualitative data from interviews with women who self-identify as rock music lovers, it analyses intergenerational rock musicking processes and informal learning. Music, together with other activities, aesthetic materials, technologies and narratives, is an essential element in family relationships and part of the parenting cultural toolkit, both for fathers, as the daughters remember and describe them, and for the mothers themselves. For women rock fans who become mothers, rock music articulates more empowering versions of maternal subjectivities, and specific settings – such as car journeys – can constitute “music asylums”. Taking two dyadic family relationships (father-daughter; mother-children), I argue that family and domestic spaces are relevant when analyzing everyday rock musicking.

Keywords: family relations; intergenerational relations; moms and daughters; rock music; sociology of music.

Introduction

The family is a key site for children’s musical worlds, as several studies in the fields of music education, infant psychology, ethnomusicology, sociology and anthropology have shown (Campbell, 2011; Reeves, 2015; Sloboda, 2005; Young, 2012).

This article addresses the role of rock musicking (Small, 1998) in family relationships, from the perspective of women rockers, via their roles as daughters and mothers (whether they overlap or not). Based on research conducted in Portugal and drawing on in-depth interviews with women, this paper explores the role of rock musicking in two dyadic family relationships (father-daughter; mother-children).

Section I analyses memories from the childhood and youth¹ of women who define their love of rock music as part of a family tradition. Self-identifying as rock music fans and/or musicians and DJs, their interest in rock music was acquired from their fathers, through everyday musicking practices. As these women grow older, a whole set of musical items – songs, records, guitars – is appropriated as part of the family legacy. Music is used to perform nostalgia and “memory work”, as well as to strengthen intergenerational ties in adult years.

In Section II the mother-child relationship is the main unit of analysis, from the perspective of women rockers who become mothers – whether they were brought up by rock-loving fathers or not. Music becomes part of their mothering ‘toolkit’ (Swidler, 1986), at the intersection between personal musical maps and family ecologies. Mothers enact different musical mothering styles and use rock music as a resource for specific reconfigurations of mothering. The mundane setting of car journeys is an example of a “music asylum” (DeNora, 2013), a physical space where through music, mothers can, at different times, gain respite from their role as child-centered caregivers and also restyle their relationship with their children.

These two sections offer two complementary perspectives on the intergenerational musicking processes of enculturation, family bonding, memory work, informal music education and musical (e)valuation within families, in domestic spaces. More broadly, this paper aims to contribute to the literature on the uses of musicking as an “active ingredient” in family relationships. In other words, it explores how socio-material practices configure and consolidate ways of being together, in this case within a family relationship.

Before moving onto the empirical sections I and II, I would like to detail the methodology and clarify the theoretical focus of the study.

Methodology

This paper is based on qualitative data collected from the fieldwork for the PhD research project “Woman and Rock Music in Portugal”.² From 2012 to 2014, I conducted 59 in-depth interviews with white Portuguese women³ who self-identified as rock music fans and/or musicians and DJs. The participants were mainly recruited using snowball sampling and by identifying DJ and musician pages online.

¹ My position here is that memory not only reflects, but also constructs experience.

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³ With the exception of one immigrant woman living in Portugal.

The oldest interviewee was 50 years old and the youngest 18, but the majority interviewees were aged between the late twenties and forties. They all live in urban areas of Portugal. The majority had at least one degree (only 10 did not attend university, 8 of whom had completed secondary education).⁴ Most of the participants were currently musicians (3 were professional musicians, living exclusively from music), and/or DJs. Only 12 interviewees were fans i.e. had no current or former musical experience as instrumentalists and/or singers and/or DJs. This paper focuses initially on the interviewees⁵ who link their interest in rock to their fathers' tastes, as detailed in Table 1:

TABLE 1 – List of interviewees who stated they had inherited their interest in rock music from their fathers

INTERVIEWEE	DATE OF BIRTH	MUSICAL ROLE
Ana	1985	Fan
Aurora	1980	Musician and DJ
Catarina	1980	Musician and DJ
Diana	1984	Musician
Filipa	1985	Musician
Joana	1983	Fan
Liliana	1982	Musician
Mónica	1985	DJ
Rosa	1982	Fan
Sílvia	1979	Musician
Teresa	1984	Musician
Zélia	1984	Musician

⁴ The socio-demographic features of the participants in my sample, namely their age and qualifications, match those of the (mostly) male participants in Guerra's (2010) sociological research on the Portuguese alternative rock scene (1980-2010). The creators and producers of Portuguese rock music in Guerra's study were mostly men in their thirties (followed closely by those in their twenties and forties), with a high level of high educational skills and correspondingly high social positions. As Guerra points out, the profile of these rockers contrasts with the average Portuguese population, but is similar to profiles of other artists.

⁵ All the interviewees' names have been changed to ensure anonymity and confidentiality.

Of these women, only Catarina also appears in Section II, which focuses on the experiences of mothers⁶ (cf. Table 2).

TABLE 2 – List of rock mothers interviewed

INTERVIEWEE	MUSICAL ROLE	MARITAL STATUS	NUMBER OF CHILDREN & SEX
Carla	Musician	Divorced	2 sons
Catarina	Musician, DJ	Divorced	2 sons, 1 daughter
Clarice	Fan	Divorced	1 son, 1 daughter
Elizabethete	Fan	Single mother	1 daughter
Elvira	Musician, DJ	Married	2 daughters
Fátima	Former musician	Married	2 sons
Hilda	Musician	Divorced	1 son, 1 daughter
Laurinda	Musician	Married	3 daughters, 1 son
Lúcia	Fan	Married	2 sons

Nine mothers whose ages ranged from the early thirties to early fifties, were interviewed. They are all educated (with exception of Fátima, they all have degrees), middle-class (salaried) working mothers. With regard to marital status, four women were divorced, four were married and one was a single mother.

Musicking in Everyday Family Life: Reclaiming the Domestic Musical Praxis

The domestic musical praxis and family music traditions play a crucial role in how children construct meaning from music, as well as in family bonding, and identities.

Music education studies have popularized the concept of “music enculturation” (Batt-Rawden and DeNora, 2005; Campbell, 2011) to refer to the role of music as a socializing medium, acknowledging the processes of musical immersion by listening, watching, and/or imitating the surrounding auditory ecosystems of families, neighborhoods, schools and communities.

However, socio-music studies, particularly rock music scholarship, tend to overlook the role of family and everyday musical practices in the home

⁶ It should be noted that all the interviewees mentioned in Section I, with the exception of Catarina, are not mothers.

at the expense of friends and peers within “subcultures”, “neo-tribes”, and “scenes”, with the exception of its role in musicianship. Socio-music ethnographies show how parental encouragement and (financial) support play a crucial role in children’s and young people’s musical development and later musical success (Cohen, 1991; Green, 2001; Finnegan, 2007). Another strand of enquiry into families fostering cultural and musical engagement has focused on these processes as forms of “cultural capital” and reflections of class-based inequalities (Bennett *et al.*, 2009).

Susan Young’s (2012: 114-115) thorough literature review of everyday musical experiences among children and young people supports this claim. Young contends that studies have overlooked home and school, focusing on musical experiences taking place among peer groups in non-home and non-school (physical or virtual) spaces (e.g. the ‘garage’ for amateur band rehearsals and after-school clubs, as well as new media and mobile technologies). The domestic environment has mostly been studied as the setting for (musical) “bedroom cultures” (McRobbie and Garber, 1991), where girls can escape to pursue their own media interests and leisure activities (Lincoln, 2014), including their own musical preferences apart from (and in opposition to) other family members (Baker, 2004), overlooking the media (and musical) ecologies in the home.

Studies on family musical relationships, specifically musical parenting, have tended to focus on preschool children and their first musical learning experiences (Custodero and Johnson-Green, 2003; Ilari *et al.*, 2011). The lullaby is the paradigmatic example of how the relationship between the caregiver and the infant constitutes a “communicative musicality” event (Trevarthen, 2002). Two studies on musical parenting that develop this focus are worth mentioning. One constitutes a “theoretically grounded conversation” between a feminist mother (the author) and her teenage daughter (the co-author) on the place and role of popular music in their everyday shared experience (Valdivia and Bettivia, 1999). The other focuses more broadly on the family (rather than peer) legacy of subcultural capital in the northern soul scene in the UK. Smith (2012) ethnographically examines how parents share their cultural spaces with their offspring and how the scene is appropriated by the soul child.

These studies are important as they reveal other forms of musical experiences that sociology traditionally leaves out when considering “cultural practices”. If we accept DeNora’s claim (2013: 57) that “we need to conceptualize cultural participation in ways that do not predefine what is and is not cultural”, a whole set of musical experiences open up for analysis, such as humming, clapping, dancing, listening to others singing, singing

along, or shared listening to recorded music. Music here is understood in its relational, collective and performative sense as musicking (Small, 1998: 9). These micro-attunements to music and musical practices are forms of mutual tuning-in and mutual enjoyment (Schutz, 1951) and part of informal home activities that constitute situated learning situations⁷ (Sloboda, 2005).

This article documents the range of everyday domestic musical practices within family life, from the perspective of women, via their roles as daughters and mothers. A taste for rock music is considered a collective, situated, pragmatic activity (Hennion, 2007), intersubjectively accomplished by specific amateurs. Music, together with other activities, aesthetic materials, technologies and narratives, is an essential element in family relationships and part of the parenting “cultural toolkit” (Swidler, 1986), whether for fathers, as these women describe them (Section I), or mothers, as described in their own words (Section II).

Section I: “I’ve Always Loved Rock Music, I Get it from My Father”. Rock Musicking as Family Tradition and Nostalgia

Many interviewees referred to belonging to a “musical family”. When the interviewees talked about their musical preferences in terms of musical genre, it was located in their personal musical maps as something inherited from a specific member of the family – the rock music father⁸ – if not the outcome of a friendship group.

This section focuses on twelve interviewees who define their love of rock music as inherited from their family. These women were born in the 1980s and there is a correlation between this age group and the reproduction of rock music tastes in Portuguese families, since they are the daughters of the first generation of rock music fans in Portugal.⁹ This is very similar to the situation in Japan, as described by Koizumi (2011: 36), who highlights the importance of vertical networks in Japanese families and how “the construction of the musical identity of children through repeated listening to their parents’ favorite songs in the family car and living room began in Japan in the mid-1980s”. These musical practices reconfigured the meaning of popular music in Japan, “from a symbol of youth rebellion to a communication

⁷ Although parents themselves might sometimes underestimate its potential to provide learning opportunities (cf. Papousek *apud* Sloboda, 2005: 298).

⁸ Only Ana reported listening to rock at home with her mother.

⁹ The first Portuguese rock/pop music bands appeared in Portugal in the 1960s. However, due to the political dictatorship in Portugal (1933-1974) it was not until the 1980s that rock/pop and other international music genres flourished within a solid production, distribution and consumption circuit (cf. Guerra, 2010).

tool between young people and their parents” (*ibidem*: 34). In the same way, these Portuguese women proudly described rock music as “inborn” or “genetic” and part of their “upbringing”, as illustrated in these extracts from the interviews:

I don’t have that prejudice of seeing rock as aggressive, because my father is a rocker and I always grew up with rock. Márcia [her DJ partner] also learned to listen to rock, but in a different way, which is even more valuable, because she had to search for it, it is not inborn for her, as it is for me. (Mónica, DJ)

I’m the daughter of a journalist, and I grew up surrounded by books, records, cameras... There was always lots of music in my life! At weekends my father used to read the newspaper and listen to music, Bruce Springsteen, The Pogues... we would travel... music was always in my life. (Diana, former bass-player)

For Mónica, rock is part of her family tradition and belonging to a “rocker family” is used as a marker of differentiation from other types of (non-musical, non-rocker) families, therefore establishing differences between families.

Diana describes rock music not just as part of the home environment assembled by her “cultural guide” – as she calls her father – but also part of her broader cultural home education.

Musical Objects at Home: Records, Turntables and Musical Instruments

The “rock father” type is presented by the daughters as an “audiophile” who owns records (an audio library) and sound technologies (stereo, turntables, etc.). Joana, for example, says: “My father had a vinyl collection, he loved music. He mostly listened to rock, old rock, like... Led Zeppelin, The Doors...”

It is no surprise that all these interviewees highlighted shared listening practices involving recorded music. Joana described how this musical activity happened in a specific way: sitting on the living room couch in silence, with the music played loud, (no conversation allowed), sometimes with the lights switched off. Joana’s father was an electronic technician who made the effort to buy the components and assemble a high quality stereo with speakers. For Joana, this embodies her father’s love of music. On the other hand, Diana describes how she and her father would discuss lyrics.

Rosa stated: “there’s no musical talent in the family, but we’re all good listeners”. “Musical talent” for Rosa is equated with music-making, highlighting the idea that listening to music has a lower status than

making music. However, the importance of being a “good” listener is reframed as an equally relevant musical skill.

Due to the importance of recorded music, the interviewees described how their parents would enable them to build up their own audio libraries and have their own musical equipment – from providing the commercial children’s tapes of early childhood to financially supporting their own first CD purchases.

The musical items kept at home also included instruments – acoustic and electric guitars¹⁰ and bass guitars – in addition to records and stereos.

Liliana is a musician in her early thirties whose first music-making experiences as a child were mediated by her father, an amateur acoustic guitar player. When Liliana’s father passed way, she kept his guitar, which she started playing. Teresa, now a bass-player, explains how she appropriated her father’s guitar – which he played for her as a child – as her first musical instrument:

when I was 12, I looked at my father’s guitar... when I was little he used to play it for me, some songs from José Barata Moura, Zeca Afonso... he stopped playing, but the guitar was there, at home. So I looked at the guitar and I thought: “if I practice I can do it”. So I started trying on my own. I thought of a song and I was able to play it. Then, I asked my father to write down the chords and he did it, and I could play by ear. (Teresa, bass-player)

Filipa’s father would play rhythm games with her, to which she attributes the rhythmic skills that encouraged her to take up drum lessons later on: “my father always encouraged me to have a notion of rhythm and tempo. He would go: can you do that? [clap his hands on his knees] and I would have to repeat it.”

For the current musicians, the easy access to musical instruments (in these cases, already available at home, but also bought for them whenever requested), combined with their father’s musical expertise, music games, and/or the family links with instrumental playing, played an important role in their first steps to musicianship. This also developed in adult years, as the musicians reported how their parents still encourage them and sometimes attend their concerts. Both fans and musicians describe going to concerts

¹⁰ The presence of the acoustic guitar in Portuguese homes confirms its existence as a mass-manufactured product which became available and affordable for regular consumers. Social histories of the guitar in the USA have documented how guitar companies designed, marketed and sold guitars, which become one of their bestselling and most coveted items (cf. Waksman, 1999).

with their fathers and/or sharing their record collections and playlists, thus building up shared audio memories. All these “daughters of rock” report actively maintaining a musical bond with their parents, with the exception of those who had passed away, as described in the following section.

Memory, Artefacts and Nostalgia

For the five women whose fathers had died, the narrativisation (Woodward, 2007: 152) of musical objects transforms the meaning of songs, records and guitars into devices associated with intergenerational aesthetic memories and nostalgia.

The artefact that embodies Joana’s memory of her father is a song by Led Zeppelin, her father’s favorite group. It is a romantic love song that she reframes as a daughter-father love song: “the lyrics have nothing to do with it, except the chorus, because it says “since I’ve been loving you”, and my father is the person I’ve loved the most”. Therefore one specific element of this song – the lyrics of the chorus – not only recalls her relationship with her father, but is also an aesthetic item used to construct the emotional content and aesthetic form of her father’s memory.

Music offers a temporal structure so that the feeling of loss and nostalgia can be described musically (Frith, 2007), as the embodiment as well as the expression of this feeling, constituting it in the process (DeNora, 2000). When Diana’s father passed away, the songs, books and cameras she grew up with become important artefacts that heightened her sense of being in “the family nest”. She started listening to the “classic rock” that her father used to listen to:

when I’m alone. When I’m nostalgic. When I’m going through troubled times I need to feel that... that sense of being in the nest, the sense of family. I lost my mom when I was 15 and my father last year, so for me it is important to search for that, to feel as if I’m inside the nest. To be in touch with what I know... (Diana, former bass-player)

Nostalgia is therefore a form of consciousness, musically mediated by the active self-reflexive agent. Songs and bands become re-classified (e.g. as “classic rock”), at the crossroads of biographical associations and collective memory, mediating between past and present rather than simply yearning for the “good old days” (cf. Pinch and Reinecke, 2009).

This section has documented the intergenerational musical practices passed on from fathers to daughters. Based on the childhood memories of daughters, rock music fathers become “cultural guides” through the use of specific musical materials and technologies (rock bands and songs, records,

musical instruments) and informal musicking practices at home. Rock music “genetics” is, in fact, an interactional achievement, temporally and spatially situated, which draws people, objects and technologies together.

So far, the outcomes of musical parenting practices on children has been traced from the perspective of daughters. The following section examines musical mothering from the perspective of the mothers.

Section II: “I’m a Rock Mom”. Musical Maternal Subjectivities and Practices

Women rockers who become mothers use rock music as an “active ingredient” (DeNora, 2000) in mothering. The mothers¹¹ described how they either intuitively or consciously use music on specific occasions, times or life stages, to bond, care for, interact with and teach their children and for being together – in other words, music is used as a child-rearing technique and a “technology of” mothering – in the Foucauldian sense. Different elements configure these methods and the ways in which music is used in the mother-child relationship, namely the age of the children (since a toddler is not a teenager), the number of children, the mother’s musical role (fan, musician or DJ), and the personal musical maps of each family member, as well as the intergenerational family culture.

In western societies motherhood is represented as a child-centered experience performed by selfless mothers who, guided by experts, are the central caregivers, and invest emotionally and financially in their children – in what Hayes (1996) has termed “intensive mothering” grounded in an ethos of “sacrificial motherhood” (O’Reilly, 2004). Rosa Monteiro’s (2005) study of Portuguese (salaried) working mothers analyzed the ways in which these mothers negotiate this model. Monteiro found that the work-family dualism does not have to be mutually exclusive, as women value both work and family life, refusing strategies that confine them exclusively to the traditional roles of (house)wives and mothers. A difference was also found between working-class and middle-class mothers: the former tend to identify with a discourse of good mothering as being a “caring mother” who provides total care for her children and the latter with a “mentoring mother” discourse that posits motherhood as crucial, but just one of the realms in which women must be successful. This caring/mentoring dynamic pervades different musical mothering styles and practices in nuanced ways, reflecting the different “attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that

¹¹ Here I take the participants’ view, i.e. the perspectives of the mothers (which may conflict with the children’s perspective). I do not wish to claim that children are passive recipients of adult child-rearing practices or deny their own agency, but the aim is to focus on the mother’s experiences.

parents [mothers] bring to [musical] settings in which they interact [musically] with their child or children” (Alwin, 2004: 152). Musical mothering styles and practices are forms of active engagement with children’s education, and social boundary-making practices.

Musical Mothering Styles and Practices

The mothers are fully supportive in promoting music-making practices – they expressed a desire for their children to learn musical skills and actively try to engage their children in formal musical learning. However, they have different ideas about what a child should be ‘allowed to’ listen to. Attentiveness and mediation in children’s (shifting) musical tastes is part of the mother’s care work and determining what constitutes child-appropriate music genres is also part of musical mothering. They are more concerned about (and exercise greater control over) musical genres than ways of listening to music and the technologies associated with this – e.g. music played too loud, the use of earbuds. Mothering styles range from encouraging musical (self-)exploration associated with promoting the child’s autonomy, to controlling children’s musical tastes and practices, and from influence and interference to banning (restrictive mediation).

Most of the mothers follow an ‘exposing/showing, not imposing/forcing’ ethos as a practical mothering guideline to deal with children’s musical preferences, which starts at an early age. The music in the domestic environment for newborns and toddlers is something mothers can control. Moreover, the mothers who had rock music at the core of their personal musical maps all refused to play “children’s music”. Instead, they played “their music” for “their children”, renegotiating the dominant discourses on “appropriate” music-for-children and reformulating the rock and heavy metal genres as (their) “children’s music” genre. Catarina highlights her musical choices as part of her family rock music tradition: her father never played “children’s music” for her, so she had no intention of doing so either.

As the children grow up, there is a growing concern to provide them with the space for (musical) exploration, in which colleagues and friends are also acknowledged as potential musical peers. Although exposure is important, the mothers also believe they should not hold their children back and confine them to their own musical tastes. They expressed a concern for the child’s individuality and autonomy that can be articulated musically and recognized that children need to establish themselves as autonomous (musical) subjects.

Lúcia adopts the strategy of giving her children the chance to “taste a bit of everything” – promoting “omnivorous” cultural practices (cf. Peterson and Kern, 1996). Providing her children with a wide range of musical genres

and styles – from classical music and opera to Iron Maiden – is seen as part of their broader cultural education, intellectual and cognitive development and a way of enriching their lives. This is a mothering style in which her professional role as a teacher merges with her role as a mother.

Musical self-exploration (usually with friends and peers) might result in a child's own musical preferences clashing with those of their parents and tensions may arise over musical differences.

Elvira, a 48-year old married mother of two girls (aged 18 and 15), illustrates this tension, and how she deals with it:

I think the more you antagonize them, the worse it becomes... They have to be the ones to discover things, to judge those things, otherwise they can't tell the good from the bad. And don't forbid anything: "you're not listening to this!". I wouldn't do that. Of course... there are those periods when they're really influenced by their friends... but it's also a part of their world, because it's theirs and their friends'... (Elvira, musician and DJ)

When her children's tastes clash with hers, Elvira adopts 'guidance' as a musical mothering style – "But then, we guide them!" In order to guide, mothers have to monitor their children's tastes, so they can respond to them:

the youngest likes the band "One Direction", what can I do? [shrugs her shoulders and laughs]. And I had to explain to them: 'Are you listening to this song? This is a cover of a Blondie song!' And she goes: 'Ahhh! I thought I knew it... Now I remember, we used to listen to it in the car'. Of course! We used to listen to Blondie! (Elvira, musician and DJ)

Musical guidance in this case is accomplished through conversation. "Talking about music" in informal settings has been studied as part of musical communication and as a tool for social action, both among musicians and music fans (MacDonald *et al.*, 2005) but it is equally important for mothers, who use it as a form of musical mothering and an educational tool.

Lúcia explained how she teaches her children to pay attention to music, namely to the lyrics: "I always tell them it is very important to listen to what's being said!". Lúcia is an Iron Maiden fan and tries to teach her children that listening to songs also involves learning about history, English and life:

I try to pass on that message. And every time I find out something new, I talk to them. Well... I don't have many people to talk to about this, so I talk to them, I pour it

out to my children [laughs]. And they get used to that and listen to me, and listen to the songs. (Lúcia, fan)

Here children are also reframed as musical peers: the mother-child relationship is reconfigured in terms of musical fandom. Talking about music and sharing music involves interaction between one music lover and another. It is a dynamic, dialogic relationship in which they learn from each other. Catarina explained how her children's musical remarks opened up new aspects of music for her that she had never thought of – even though she has been a long-time rock music fan.

The apprentice becomes an expert too, as Clarice also experienced. Clarice is a divorced 40-year old mother of a 13-year old boy and an 8-year old daughter. She tells me that she and her older son shared the same musical tastes, but then he evolved into “heavier stuff”, and because of that she became the “softer” one:

He started off listening those Disney Channel songs. Then he started listening to System of a Down, and from there he rushed into heavier stuff, he ran faster than I did! Now he listens to things that I can't, and he can tell the screams from the growls, all those different types of sounds. And I stick to the softer stuff. (Clarice, fan)

The “heavy vs. soft” opposition is relational. Clarice's musical preferences – such as mathcore – might be considered heavy by some, but within her family musical maps she has become the “soft(er)” one.

Having seen how mothers view talking about music as important, there are also other ways of providing musical guidance. Sometimes it may materialize as an unforeseen outcome of the most mundane of actions, as Elizabete, a punk rock fan and 30-year old single mother of a 12-year old daughter, describes:

I started noticing that my daughter liked Regina Spektor, because I would play it as my alarm clock song. Then I was surprised when I checked the browsing history and found searches on Regina Spketor: it was my daughter! And then she asked me the name of the song on the alarm clock because she liked it. And I really liked that she was liking it! So I think it's bit by bit...we can't impose things on our children. That thing about the alarm clock: I didn't do it on purpose, but it worked: I made her like an artist I love. (Elizabete, fan)

However, this “bit by bit” exposure ethos can change into a ban when it comes to pop music, for example the male pop idol Justin Bieber:

Q: Why don't you want your daughter to listen to Justin Bieber? Is it the lyrics, the music itself...?

A: The songs are stupid, and people who like those songs are not very smart, and I want my daughter to be smart. I always associate rock music with good lyrics, rock is something that not everyone can understand. And I have never met anyone who likes rock and is dumb. So, I would like my daughter to like rock, because that increases the chances that she won't turn out dumb.

Q: Yes. I'm asking what it is about rock that makes people like this music genre so much.

A: It's the lyrics because it has to do with a kind of philosophy of life, with political things that you have to understand. It's not just about having a pretty face and boobs, or whatever. And also because of the sound, the sound is strong, especially combined with the lyrics. It makes you think and take action. (Elizabete, fan)

These narratives about rock are common among rock fans – the construction of pop and its fans as the inauthentic, trivial, feminine 'Other', and the stigma of "teenyboppers" as a derided type of fandom (Duffett, 2013). Due to these "delineated" musical meanings (Green, 2001), Elizabete contrasts the content of pop and rock music (pop's lightness and stupid lyrics as opposed to rock's profound lyrics and strong sound), through which she establishes classed social types (dumb, shallow vs. critical mind) and femininities (criticism of hypersexualized "girlie" femininity, body vs mind). Classed gender inequalities are reproduced and transmitted by enacting gendered and classed musical stereotypes. The mainstream vision of the child as not-yet-adult and therefore the desire and authority to shape children's pathways through life – within the boundaries of white middle class respectability (cf. Skeggs, 1997) by renegotiating the "good girl" ideal (cf. Walkerdine, 1997) – and the belief that music provides templates for (un)desirable ways of being and lifestyles, leads this mother to resort to extreme parental control.

Clarice deals with her daughter's taste for pop music in a different way. She contrasts her two children's music tastes: her older son started by listening to 'Disney Channel music', but evolved to rock and heavy metal, while her daughter "is still in the Disney Channel stage". This means her daughter listens to Miley Cyrus,¹² Shakira, and all the "light pop, with dancing chicks". Although Clarice states she would prefer her daughter to listen to music

¹² The interview with Clarice took place in 2012, before the 2013 controversy concerning Miley Cyrus's (sexualized) musical performance – *twerking* – at the MTV Video Music Awards.

she identifies with, she is resigned to this and adopts a different mothering style. Instead of forbidding, she tries to be flexible and considers musically “downgrading” to pop and/or electronic.

Having examined how mothers build up their relationship with their children and provide musical care – not without some tensions – configuring classed and gendered musical identities for their children, we turn next to how mothers reconfigure maternal subjectivity – transforming it from a sacrificial ethos into a more empowering one.

From “Sacrificial Motherhood” to Other Forms of Maternal Subjectivity: Moms Who Rock

Lúcia and Catarina voiced the experience of a radical shift in the way they experienced being a mother, which was articulated in and through music. Both Lúcia and Catarina explained that when their children were born they dedicated themselves to child care and domestic issues and were confined to the space within the house. It was aesthetic material – rock music and heavy metal – that provided the temporal and cultural workspace for the transition from an ethos of sacrificial motherhood to more empowering versions of maternal subjectivity. Conceptualizing music as a “cultural workspace” highlights the ways in which people render music habitable as a space and place for the work – in the ethnomethodological sense – of world-making (DeNora, 2011).

The two following excerpts describe this transition to a woman-centered experience, constituted in and through musical identities and practices:

Five years ago I was just going home, I had the kids, I wouldn't leave the house and I was confined to one idea... then, it hit me, boom! “I don't want to do this!”... And to be a bit more specific, I can tell you that at the age of 28, after a long period without DJing, I started DJing again. And I decided at the age of 28 that I wanted to have a band and to make music... and maybe that's the greatest inspiration that came from rock... It awakened me to the kind of life I wanted to live. (Catarina, musician and DJ)

The most important thing that music gave me was learning how to be by myself. [...] I can spend an entire day on my own. I don't rely on someone else's opinion or how they feel, in order to feel good. Which gave me a new balance. And that balance came through music, from everything that music enabled... and from the way I experience music. (Lúcia, fan)

We can see that the transition between these two experiences of mothering was mediated by music and its socio-material practices, but also the way

in which it was experienced – music lovers are self-reflexive individuals. Going back to a positive self in the past, for instance – “I used to be a very active and lively person” (Lúcia) – and bringing it forward was a strategy used in both interviews.

These women know they are shaping their mothering practices in ways that conflict with images, representations and discourses of the child-centered caregiver – and they report being criticized by family and friends. In order to counteract the dangers of being stigmatized as ‘bad mothers’ these women establish new criteria for good mothering – criteria which they fit – by reaffirming their unconditional love for their children, claiming that they are responsible mothers (no maternal responsibilities and duties are neglected), that they have achieved a balance between motherhood and womanhood, and that being a ‘happy person’ and having time for oneself means being a better mother, which benefits both the mother and her children:

I realized I can do everything [work-life balance], I can keep an optimal balance, I can pay attention to my children, they deserve all my attention, but I can also pay attention to myself, because I also deserve it. And I found out that when you’re doing things that make you happy, that influences your children’s happiness, because you can be more patient with them, you’re much happier, self-fulfilled... (Catarina)

Nowadays, please don’t get me wrong, I love my children! They’re the most important thing in my life. But I learned to have moments for myself. (Lúcia)

Time to oneself is a vital when moving on from sacrificial motherhood. It is then that socio-musical practices – DJing, listening to music at home and in the car, and going to concerts – provide a time and a cultural workspace for ‘removal’ from their role as mothers-only.

DeNora uses the concept of ‘asylum’ to describe both phenomenological experiences and environmental constructs: “asylum can be defined as a space, either physical or conceptual, that either offers protection from hostility (a refuge) or, more positively, a space within which to play on/with one’s environment, whether alone or in a concert with others” (DeNora, 2013: 47). In other words, music asylums can be workspaces for “removal” (individual, private) or “refurnishing” (public, collective) activities and experiences, and the two forms are not mutually exclusive. These mothers use rock as a “music asylum” in the sense it offers a respite from sacrificial motherhood, but also helps them to bond with their children. Music becomes a resource for self-care and care work. Through creative re-arrangements of

social scenarios and places, rock music asylums are musically crafted for (temporary) ‘removal’ from the normative expectations, discourses and practices associated with motherhood. These women become rock moms and moms who rock, a valued musical identity beyond the family circle.

The In-car Musicking Asylum

The way in which mothers and children listen to music together in the car configures it as a music asylum. Michael Bull (2004) identified the automobile as a “listening chamber”, as a mobile existential space where mobile sound technologies (radio, sound systems, mobile phones) combine, given that “car habitation” is part of an ecology of media uses and everyday routines. Bull points out that drivers use the car as a free space and a refuge. For the mothers who feature in these interviews, a car journey can be both a solitary and a family moment (taking kids to school, picking them up), and this continuous movement is part of their everyday routine. In the confined space of the vehicle, parents are responsible both for their children’s safety and their wellbeing, which includes managing the musical environment in the car.

For Clarice and her children, the car is the place where they all listen to music together (as opposed to the privatized home space). The car becomes more than a listening chamber, as the practice of listening to music in the car includes singing along. In-car singing can also be a way of controlling both the sonic environment and disruptive behavior, as Laurinda, a mother of three preschool children, vividly describes: “It is a way of stabilizing the environment. Sometimes things are about to go wrong (tantrums, fights...) and you start: ‘ok kids, let’s sing a song! All together now!’”

For Lúcia, when driving alone, the car and the soundtrack she carefully chooses become the privileged ‘listening chamber’ for removal. When accompanied by her children, the mother’s car is a space for “mom’s music”. Although Lúcia plays the music she likes, she opens up a space for negotiation and uses music to teach her children to respect different musical tastes. In-car musicking becomes a template for modelling cooperative, prosocial musical and extra-musical behavior, as Lúcia explains:

At first, when they asked me to change the song, I would. But then... they have to understand that even if they don’t like a song, someone else might! And if we’re in the car, if we’re 3 or 4 people in the car, we must reach an agreement. Sometimes we have to give up what we want to play or listen to. But that was easy to change. Now, before they ask me to change the song, they first ask me ‘do you like this song?’ If I say “yes”, they won’t say anything. If I say “I don’t like it that much”, then they ask “could you please change it?”, and I do.

When mothers give up listening to their music, it is common practice to use the radio as the car soundtrack to create a neutral musical atmosphere.

Carla is a heavy metal singer and guitarist. Since she wants her two teen and pre-teen boys to find their own musical tastes, she listens to the radio in the car and/or plays her children's musical choices – which she finds beneficial as she can expand her musical knowledge as a musician. However, there are exceptions to the music routine in the car that are related to Carla's role as a musician. When the new album by Carla's band came out, they all listened to it in the car and the children would comment on it: "I like this song better" or "play the other one". On another occasion Carla was unexpectedly invited to play in a band. As she had very little time to rehearse, she listened repeatedly to the songs in the car to memorize them. The car became her rehearsal space and her children the spectators – although not passively, as Carla reported, since they would express their discontent with the situation. When Carla's role as a mother overlaps with her role as a musician, the former is relegated to the background, and the latter comes to the fore.

Conclusion: Rock Music as a Family Soundscape

Musical taste is a pragmatic achievement, actively mediated by parents using specific technologies for listening in real-time social settings (at home, in the car). Rock music scholarship has shown the relevance of social agents such as friends, schoolmates, peers and partners musicking together in scenes, subcultures and neo-tribes. In addition to these actors and realms, drawing on ethnographic examples of two specific dyadic family relationships (father-daughter; mother-children), I have documented how family and domestic spaces are relevant when analyzing everyday rock musicking. Music is the medium which constitutes the domestic and affective soundscapes of the home, family life and family relationships.

Socio-music studies on women's trajectories in rock music have acknowledged the role of male networks – mainly friends and boyfriends. The empirical data presented here shows that fathers also play a role in these trajectories. In fact, the role of the family has been studied as the catalyst for musicianship. The interviews confirmed the importance of the family in female (rock) musicianship, whilst also demonstrating its relevance to other forms of musicking.

The intergenerational transmission of musicking practices configures the ways in which people listen to music, make music, and re-transmit music. Attachments to rock are situated within the broader scheme of family continuity, in which a whole array of musical items – from songs to guitars or records to stereos – gain special meanings as they are narrated as family artefacts.

For women rock fans who became mothers, rock musicking practices are integrated into their everyday lives and mundane child-rearing and childcare practices. As music stages an “object lesson” (DeNora, 2011) not just about aesthetics, but also about morality, competences and social types, these mothers negotiate how children listen to music and which genres they explore, thus configuring specific musical childhoods, crafting classed and gendered subjectivities for their children. They also use rock music to negotiate their own roles as mothers, musically staging more empowering ways of being mothers – as rock moms.

Rock musicking becomes an “active ingredient” in the making of family life and relationships, creating memories and nostalgia, supporting mundane interactions and offering musical opportunities for family members. In fact, it becomes a socio-material practice that “holds together” rock families.

Revised by Sheena Caldwell

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Filhas e mães do rock: A música rock como mediador de relações familiares em Portugal

Este artigo analisa o papel do “musicar” *rock* como mediador de relações familiares. A partir de entrevistas com mulheres que se identificam como amantes de *rock*, analisam-se processos intergeracionais deste “musicar” e a sua aprendizagem informal. A música, em combinação com outras atividades e materiais estéticos, tecnologias e narrativas, é constitutiva de relações familiares; bem como parte integrante da “caixa de ferramentas culturais” de pais – tal como estas filhas os descrevem e relembram – e mães. Para as fãs de *rock* que se tornam mães, a música *rock* articula versões de subjetividade maternal que são mais capacitantes (empoderadoras); e contextos específicos – viagens de carro – constituem-se como “asilos musicais”. A partir de duas díades familiares (pai-filha; mãe-filhos/as) demonstro como a família e o espaço doméstico são fundamentais na análise do musicar *rock* quotidiano.

Palavras-chave: mães e filhas; música *rock*; relações de família; relações intergeracionais; sociologia da música.

Filles et mères du rock : La musique rock comme médiateur de relations familiales au Portugal

Cet article se penche sur le rôle du “musicar” *rock* comme médiateur de relations familiales. À partir d’interviews avec des femmes qui s’identifient comme fans de *rock*, nous analysons des processus intergénérationnels de ce “musicar” et son apprentissage informel. La musique, alliée à d’autres activités et matières esthétiques, technologiques et narratives, est constitutive de relations familiales; tout autant que partie intégrante de la “boîte à outils culturels” de pères – comme ces filles les décrivent et se souviennent d’eux – et de mères. Pour les fans de *rock* qui deviennent mères, la musique *rock* articule des versions de subjectivité maternelle qui sont plus capacitantes (autonomisantes); et des contextes spécifiques – voyages en voiture – se constituent comme “asiles musicaux”. À partir de deux dyades familiales (père-fille; mère-fils/filles) nous démontrons combien la famille et l’espace domestique sont fondamentaux dans l’analyse du “musicar” *rock* quotidien.

Mots-clés: mères et filles; musique *rock*; relations familiales; relations intergénérationnelles; sociologie de la musique.