



The Lifetime Soundtrack

Music and Autobiographical Memory

by Lauren Istvandy

DESCRIPTION:

The process of creating and reflection upon autobiographical memory is an everyday practice that is typical within the human experience. When music becomes integrated into personal memories, an invitation to remember is provided through both purposeful listening activities and incidental engagement with music in the everyday. The result is a metaphorical canon of music that accompanies life experiences.

The Lifetime Soundtrack investigates musically motivated autobiographical memories as they relate to the lifetime soundtrack in order to provide further understanding of their occurrence, nuance, emotionality, and function for individuals. Drawing on in-depth discussions with younger and older adults, each chapter reflects on a common theme or aspect of musically motivated memory. People, places, and eras feature frequently, with memories of childhood, family, past romantic relationships, and the major and minor events occurring within them acting as prime sites for memory and music interaction. The book also considers the ways in which musically memory may manifest differently for trained musicians, for whom music represents both leisure and work. Forging a broad foundation in an overlooked area, this study brings together sociological views on the personal use of music and existing ideas on the workings of human memory. At the same time, it aims to fortify the concept of the Lifetime Soundtrack as a sociological concept with broad application in future research. In so doing, the book highlights the significance of music-enhanced reflection as a tool for the composition of meaning within everyday life.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

Introduction

Chapter 1

Assembling an Interdisciplinary Approach to Musical Memories

Chapter 2

Foundations and Development of the Lifetime Soundtrack

Chapter 3

Emotion, Feeling and Musical Memories

Chapter 4

Recorded Music and Memory: Capturing, Indexing and Archiving the Past

Chapter 5

Effects of Music-Making on Musical Memories and the Lifetime Soundtrack

Chapter 6

Change: The Past, Present and Future of the Lifetime Soundtrack

Chapter 7

Renewed Perspectives on Musical Memory

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