COOL COUNTRY: A CONTENT ANALYSIS OF SPONSORED FRAMES IN COUNTRY-POP CROSSOVER PUBLIC RELATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Sarah Elizabeth Davidson-Palmer: Cool Country: A Content Analysis of Sponsored Frames in Crossover Country Public Relations (Under the direction of Dulcie M. Straughan)

A crossover artist has songs and/or albums on charts of two genres at the same time. The goal is to maintain the original audience while also attracting new fans from another genre or audience. Public relations plays an important role in crossover by creating and maintaining an artist’s image as well as promoting their music. Through qualitative content analysis, this study examined the frames sponsored by Shania Twain’s public relations team during her pop crossover (1993-2004) and determined whether these frames were accepted by key publics—the media and consumers. The findings revealed a highly effective “dual-frame approach,” with simultaneous emphasis on the frames of “country artist” and “mass appeal,” which was highly salient with the media and consumers. The results of this study highlight the intricacies of the crossover process, providing an effective set of sponsored frames as a model for a country-pop crossover campaign.
To my amazing mom, Susan Davidson. You are my rock. And to my dear dad, James Palmer (1953-2004), you are my hero and inspiration.
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In the middle of an average night in 1973, eight-year-old Eilleen Twain stepped timidly onto the smoky stage of a local bar in Timmins, Ontario to belt out country classics for the drunken audience (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Little did she know that by 2002, she would have taken the world by storm as the international pop superstar, Shania Twain. One may wonder, how did this shy little girl go from singing traditional country tunes in a small Canadian town to global pop superstardom by the age of thirty-seven? As Friskics-Warren (2002) of Nashville Scene explains, she “crossed over, redefining country music and proving how durable and elastic the idiom can be” (para. 7).

Crossover occurs in many music genres when artists move between markets, charts, and audiences (Baskerville, 2001). For decades country artists have been crossing over to other genres, mixing country sounds with outside musical influences and attracting new audiences to their music (Friskics-Warren, 2002). Between the country and pop genres, a “crossover” artist is defined as having simultaneous hits on the pop and country charts (Malone & Neal, 2010, p. 245). Since the 1940s, country artists have been making successful and lucrative transitions from the country genre to the glitzy pop world (Dicaire, 2008).

However, such success in the mainstream pop market does not come without backlash from the country community (Friskics-Warren, 2002; Malone & Neal, 2010). The heated debate
over the merits and drawbacks to country-pop crossover is called the ‘crossover controversy.’ On far right side of the spectrum are the country traditionalists who argue that pop influences dilute the pure country sound and have no place in their genre. On the far left side of the divide are the crossover proponents who view country-pop crossover as healthy, bringing innovation and much needed change to the country industry. This tension adds to the difficulty of crossing over as artists attempt to enter a new market, attracting outside audiences while maintaining their original fan base (Fenster, 1988).

While any crossover begins with the music itself, public relations play an important role in facilitating the transition (Baskerville, 2001; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003). Highly skilled promotional and management teams create, sculpt, and drive artists’ careers (Baskerville, 2001). As an integral part of any artist’s team, public relations professionals are responsible for forming, establishing, and promoting their public image (Baskerville, 2001; Field, 2010; Fink 1996; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003; Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003; Vittek, 2011; Weissman, 2003). Given the heated environment of country-pop crossover, one might wonder how a public relations practitioner successfully navigates their client through the controversial waters between the country and pop markets. How do they bridge the gap between the two vastly different music cultures? In creating and maintaining an artist’s image, which characteristics are emphasized and which are downplayed in order to reached the desired audience?

This study uses framing theory to answer these questions. Framing theory looks at how message creators use inclusion and exclusion to craft a text to have the desired effect on the target audience (Entman 2003; Hallahan, 1999). Frame sponsorship addresses who is responsible for the act of framing and frame choices (Andsager, 2000; Andsager & Smiley, 1998; Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Entman, 1993; Kleinmann, 2005; Turk, 1986). A ‘sponsored
frame’ is one endorsed by the framer or message creator. Public relations professionals often sponsor frames in communications such as press releases and interviews (Andsager & Smiley, 1998). The degree to which key audiences accept sponsored frames determines the ‘salience,’ or effectiveness of the message (Entman, 1993).

Thus, the purpose of this thesis is to examine country to pop crossover from a public relations perspective through the lens of framing theory. The research will address how country artists are framed by their public relations team during the crossover to mainstream pop markets. Specifically, the study looks at the sorts of frames sponsored in public relations materials in support of the crossover transition. Beginning in the 1990s, Shania Twain’s crossover from country to pop gave her “one of the most commercially successful careers ever enjoyed by a woman performer” (Malone & Neal, 2010, p. 433). Thus, Shania Twain’s crossover will be used here as an example of a successful crossover campaign. A qualitative content analysis was performed on public relations materials in support of her crossover to determine which image frames were sponsored by her team. Additionally, a qualitative content analysis of resulting press coverage was performed to determine whether the media accepted these sponsored frames. Finally, chart and sales data were compiled to show whether key consumers—fans and the music industry—also accepted the sponsored public relations frames. Ultimately, this study’s findings will shed light on the country-pop crossover phenomenon from a public relations perspective. This information can help practitioners understand the dynamics of the crossover landscape, giving them the tools necessary to guide their country artist through a successful crossover to the pop market. Given the past and current popularity of country-pop crossover, such skills are essential for practitioners in today’s country music industry.
The following background section will provide an overview of country-pop crossover, particularly its success in the 1990s, when Shania began her career. Then, it will discuss the crossover controversy and the various arguments involved. The second chapter presents a review of relevant literature on public relations functions, its role in the music industry, framing theory, frame sponsorship, framing’s use in public relations, and how it will be applied in this study. The third chapter presents the research questions and explains the methodology of content analysis as it is applied in this study. The fourth chapter includes secondary research on Shania’s career providing a background for the content analysis. The fifth chapter contains the findings of the study. Finally, the sixth chapter presents discussion of the research findings, research contributions, suggestions for future research, and conclusions of this thesis.

**Country-Pop Crossover**

**Country Crossover**

Country music history has existed as a commercial genre since the early 1920s (Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum [CMHFM], 2006, 2012; “Country music history,” 2014; Cusic, 2008; Malone & Neal, 2010; Neal, 2013; Oermann, 1999; Peterson, 1997; Tribe, 2006; Wolf & Duane, 2000). Throughout the genre’s evolution, trends have alternated between traditional sounds and newer styles. On the more progressive end of the spectrum is country crossover. A “crossover recording” is a recording that is “focused on one market segment that achieves sales in one or more additional markets” (Baskerville, 2001, p. 631). Crossover is two-fold in that the artist goes over to another genre or market while new audiences also come to the artist (Malone & Neal, 2010). It is also a balancing act. Artists aiming to cross over to new genres will infuse their music and image with elements of that target market (Cusic, 2008; Fenster, 1988; Malone & Neal, 2010). At the same time, the artist maintains the style and image of their original genre.
in order to keep those fans. As Fenster (1988) explains, the “degree” to which an artist wishes to cross over to another genre is evidenced by how much of the original and new styles are represented in their music and image (p. 295).

Throughout country music history, country to pop crossover has emerged as a defined style (CMHFM, 2006, 2014; “Country music history,” 2014; Cusic, 2008; Malone & Neal, 2010; Neal, 2013; Oermann, 1999; Peterson, 1997; Tribe, 2006; Wolf & Duane, 2000). From Eddie Arnold in the 1940s, to the Nashville Sound in the 1950s, to Patsy Cline in the 1960s, to Barbara Mandrell and Dolly Parton in the late 1970s and early 1980s, country artists found great success by integrating their music, and sometimes image, with slick pop style, shedding some of the traditional country elements along the way.

**1990s Country-Pop Crossover**

In the 1990s, country-pop experienced an unprecedented boom, with sales and popularity of new crossover artists soaring nationally (CMHFM, 2006, 2012; “Country music history,” 2014; Cusic, 2008; Malone & Neal, 2010; Neal, 2013; Oermann, 1999; Peterson, 1997; Tribe, 2006; Wolf & Duane, 2000). Known as “young country or new country” these artists aimed to attract a mainstream American audience (Malone & Neal, 2010, p. 419). Opting for the pop crossover path, they shot to national and international stardom thanks to a carefully styled and promoted images coupled with aggressive marketing tactics. Starting with Garth Brooks, country-pop crossover acts enjoyed extraordinary success with blockbuster sales figures, international fame, and rock-star type stage shows. These hit artists spurred a national line-dancing craze, which, combined with the invention of the music video, resulted in a national country music explosion. Music videos gave the attractive young singers a virtual stage on which to strut their stuff and spread their catchy songs. Female artists emerged in this crossover group,
declaring their independence through their lyrics, revealing outfits, and sexy performances, emulating their pop contemporaries.

**Shania Twain**

It was during this 90s crossover boom that Shania Twain emerged as a bona fide superstar (Cusic, 2008; Malone & Neal, 2010; Neal, 2013; Oermann, 1999). Recording in the country-pop style, Shania managed to go from country star to international pop star. Malone and Neal (2010) describe how her good looks and sassy performance style “translated into one of the most commercially successful careers ever enjoyed by a woman performer” (p. 433). Thus Shania’s crossover career is a useful example for this study examining how country artists are framed by their public relations team during their crossover to the pop market.

**Crossover Controversy**

From the start, a major part of country-pop crossover has been the long-standing and heated debate it has spawned—the ‘crossover controversy.’ (Malone & Neal, 2010; Neal, 2013; Oermann, 1999; Peterson, 1997). As these scholars explain, at the heart of this dispute are the diametrically opposed cultures of traditional country and country-pop, both with many fans and foes. While the former focuses on authenticity and tradition, the latter revels in innovation and change. Consequently, the country-pop crossover artist is often met with harsh criticism and staunch opposition from the traditional country community. This animosity makes the crossover transition delicate as the artist tries to balance their original country fan base with the newly attracted pop, mainstream audience (Fenster, 1988). Since any crossover move begins with the music itself (Baskerville, 2001; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003), it is important for public relations practitioners facilitating the transition to understand the nuances of the crossover controversy so they can guide their client through the process. The ability to effectively promote a crossover
artist to target audiences involves understanding his or her motivations and the fuel to their critics’ fire (Baskerville, 2001). Accordingly, the following section summarizes and provides examples of the basic arguments for and against country-pop crossover.

**Overview.** As Malone & Neal (2010) explain, today’s country industry “has continued its long-standing tradition of trying to reinvent its present without disowning any of its past” (p. 467). Consequently, the debate between traditionalists and country-pop crossover supporters is as fierce as ever. In fact, one’s opinion about the “health of country music” today can be determined by one’s stance on the crossover debate (p. 467). Flippo (2002) describes the industry’s divide over crossover as part of “the identity crisis that’s been with it since the music began” (para. 1). He describes the two sides of the debate in political terms, using the red and blue divisions typically used to delineate the more conservative Republican Party from the more liberal Democratic Party. “Red country” is supported by “the traditional fan—historically rural—who likes the music straight and simple, maybe with a little pop ‘sophistication’” (para. 1). The “blue country” fan is a “more uptown—often urban—listener who likes purist and retro sounds as well as more experimental fare” (para. 1). In the middle of these two sides is a clear line between supporters of pop crossover and traditionalists who are opposed to such influences. Surrounding that line are those fans whose preferences include both ends of the spectrum. Outside the spectrum are audiences of other genres who, in varying degrees, dip into the country pond.

**Arguments in support of crossover.** Generally, those who support crossover acts argue that the country artists’ infiltration into the pop market is beneficial for the country genre, widening its fan base, bringing heightened commercial success, and enriching its influences (Flippo, 2008, 2009a, 2009c; Jane, 2010; Price, 2005; Schmitzer, 1999; Stark, 1997; Yu, 2009).


**There’s room for everyone.** Proponents of pop crossover believe there is room for all types of music styles within the country genre. Flippo (2009a) argues that despite the crossover trend, there is still plenty of room in the industry for traditional country. He chastises the “defensive” nature of the traditionalists who claim that country-pop is pushing all other types of country out of the genre, arguing there’s room for every style under the country umbrella (para. 8). He comments: “Some country stars are sexy, some are trendy, some ignore history, some are students of history, some do sappy songs, some pay close attention to tradition and some do a dozen other things. That’s nothing new” (para. 10). Flippo (2009c) claims that the ability of the genre to accommodate so many opposing styles is actually “a testament to its inherent strength” (para. 9).

**Crossover music is authentic.** Another argument of crossover supporters asserts that country-pop is actually authentic music, despite traditionalists’ dismissal of the style as artificial. While traditionalists dismiss today’s crossover stars as talentless, Flippo (2009a) argues that these artists should be respected for their abilities. He uses the example of Taylor Swift who possesses enviable “songwriting skills”, “career smarts”, and “audience appeal” that surely are appreciated by some respectable country icons (para. 4). A country artist making money from pop success does not make their effort less legitimate. Schmitzer (1999) agrees, explaining that a good song is a good song, regardless of genre labels. Yu (2009) even suggests country-pop crossover has become its own genre, with a real interface between artists and their audience:

> Country pop has created its own subculture—a group of followers who find a deep connection to the messages shared by these crossover artists. With its fervent devotees, country pop has come to represent thousands upon thousands of people and their stories; it has come to articulate the feelings, concerns, lifestyles and issues of not just the lower-class, but middle-class American, too. Yet, it is not simply a one-sided exchange; [the fans’] participation and support is crucial to country pop’s continuity, just as country pop is to theirs. It is this nexus between music and its audience from which authenticity and conflict originates, not to mention the existence of culture itself. Both actors sustain
and unconsciously shape each other, thus creating a subculture that defines country pop as its own genre, for it, too, is an authentic form of music. (p. 53)

She believes that the harsh backlash of traditionalists ironically causes the progression of country-pop as a distinct style that is neither completely enveloped by pop music nor firmly tied to country tradition (p. 50, 53). According to Yu (2009), country-pop crossover is not pop music because it still exhibits some elements of traditional country, such as story-telling lyrics (p. 53). However, country-pop crossover is not country music either since the “negative stigmatism country traditionalists extend towards country pop fans segregates the type of audiences each respective genre appeals to” (Yu, 2009, p. 53). Instead, Yu (2009) suggests that country-pop crossover is its own “distinct” genre consisting of “a unique synthesis of both genres that appeals to its own type of audiences (p. 53). She concludes that “in acknowledging each of these generic markers of the genre, it is plain: country-pop is not artificial, fabricated, or inauthentic” (p. 53).

Change is healthy and natural. Crossover supporters also champion the familiar and positive nature of change in the country industry. Flippo (2009c) reminds us that “country music does not exist in a vacuum;” it “does not live in a test tube, as a pure and unsullied single-cell creature;” and that “music is an organic being, and it grows and mutates in unpredictable and sometimes uncontrollable way” (para. 1). He points out that many of the great moments in country history would not have occurred without change in the genre. He also advises that it is healthy to “embrace” new acts, and recommends: “it’s a good thing for country to publicly acknowledge, finally, that its artists get old. And die. That’s life” (Flippo, 2008, para. 9). Stark (1997) suggests that crossover acts actually widen the audience of country, increase record sales, and empower the industry as a whole. Price (2005) notes that when crossover artists can “straddle the country and pop [radio] formats,” country can reach more listeners (para. 16). Jane (2010) believes that the current mass crossover trend benefits country music as previously
untouched pop fans are exposed to country music through airplay of crossover hits on mainstream pop stations. Despite the traditionalists’ qualms, crossover is “happening and it’s making a lot of fans happy as well as those big wigs at the table” (para. 2).

**Arguments against crossover.** As Billboard (“Country crossover,” 2006) explains, “While attitudes have softened, there are still plenty on Music Row who believe that ‘crossover’ is a bad, bad word” (para. 1). Opponents of crossover feel that pop influences have a negative effect on the country genre, diluting its traditional sound, endangering the existence of traditional country, selling ‘imposter country’, and overshadowing the music with commercial ambition (Applebome, 1999; “Country crossover,” 2006; Flippo, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2010a, 2010b; Henkin, 1999; Jessen, 2010; Malone & Neal, 2010; McCloud, 1998; Molanphy, 2009; Stark, 1997; Tuttle, 2009).

**Dilutes country music.** One of the traditionalists’ main arguments against country-pop crossover is that the pop sounds dilute country music into a sugary sweet mess. Henkin (1999) claims, “Fans of real country know better!,” describing crossover as “so-called country music of today [that is] bland, boring, pop music that has fiddle and steel guitar added to try and fool listeners into believing its country” (para. 14). Tuttle (2009) depicts the 2009 Academy of Country Music Awards as a “strange, alien country-awards show that honors bubblegum pop stars like Taylor Swift, most of whose songs aren’t really country, even using the stretchiest definition” (para. 5). Molanphy (2009) agrees, claiming country is “morphing into pop music for white people who like stories” (para. 13). He questions whether crossover is country music and whether these artists are authentic, asking, “Is it much of a ‘crossover’ achievement for a song with pop bones and almost no Opry-style instrumentation to saturate pop radio” (para. 12)?
McCloud (1998), describes the country charts as “currently full of hunks and women with bellybutton rings whose recorded output is not even remotely country” (para. 5). Tuttle (2009) agrees, commenting, “country music just ain’t what it used to be,” (para. 3) contending that crossover acts greatly dilute the country genre by “borrow[ing] the vernacular…the genuineness and masculinity of that hard-knock life…[and] turn[ing] it into something that’s barely recognizable…The rough edges of authenticity have been sanded off” (para. 11). McCloud (1998) illustrates his concerns about the dilution of country through a hypothetical conversation: “Good morning. Please tell me, do you like country music?…No?…What’s the reason?…Oh, OK we’ll get rid of the steel guitars, fiddles, mandolins, nasal vocals,…Now do you like it?…Great, another convert. As a result another million sales” (para. 6). Similarly, Henkin (1999) describes the disgust of traditional country fans when “radio stations insist on playing these ‘pop’ songs and passing them off as ‘country’ on a continual basis, thereby insulting the intelligence of their listenership by passing off a fake product and not giving us fans what we really want” (para. 25).

**Endangers country music’s future success.** Traditionalists also take issue with the pouring of potential country profits into the pop market’s pockets. Stark (1997) and Jessen (2010) explain how airplay of crossover songs on pop stations takes potential listeners away from country stations playing the same tracks. As an example, Jessen (2010) contends that Taylor Swift’s “trajectory as a country-to-pop crossover artist has had a negative impact on [radio’s] youngest listeners” who have increasingly turned to pop-format radio, endangering the health of the country format (para. 8). Flippo (2010a) predicts that if the pop-crossover trend continues to dominate, the only successful country stars of the future will be “a multi-talented Shirley Temple doll of a child prodigy or else, you must be a shiny American Idol graduate with lungs of steel like Carrie Underwood” (para. 2). Flippo (2004) insists there are a lot of fans out
there that want more real country music yet cannot find it when they turn on so-called country radio stations.

**Overly commercial.** Billboard ("Country crossover," 2006) attributes the traditionalists’ dislike of crossover to “Southern culture” and “a certain down-home fear of getting too big for one’s britches” (para. 1). They do not like the overly commercial images of crossover stars. Flippo (2005) describes the overtly sexual image of female crossover artists as “a cattle call,” suggesting they’re seen merely as “meat on the hoof” (para. 7). He criticizes their “overdone makeup, exaggerated hair, [and] pneumatic cleavage,” calling such promotion tactics “course and cheap” (para. 6). In a similar vein, Tuttle (2009) depicts the red carpet of the 2009 Academy of Country Music Awards as a “parade of hot bodies” that could “rival the Miss America contest,” with female nominees “dressed in skintight, revealing tops, some with long, flowing blond hair and deep golden tans…and that’s just the men” (para. 3-4).

The record labels’ narrow focus on crossover’s commercial success irritates traditionalists. As Malone and Neal (2010) explain, “such openness about the commercial industry runs counter to traditional notions of country music” (p. 471). Crossover artists, such as Taylor Swift, have angered traditionalists by “presenting an unashamedly ambitious, commercial face to the world” (p. 472). McCloud (1998) agrees, stating his disgust for the labels’ “pander[ing] to the simple minds at the radio stations, many of whose presenters had not even heard of country music before 1989” (para. 9). Henkin (1999) agrees, adding, “diehard fans of traditional country music are complaining about being sold out by money-hungry acts who are ignoring their musical roots and crossing over into the arena of mainstream pop” (para. 12).

**Fear country genre will disappear.** Crossover opponents also worry that the genre they treasure will disappear. Applebome (1999) tells how “country music, almost by definition, exists
in convoluted, almost duplicitous relationship with its history…making elaborate bows to the past” and then “skittering wildly after the demographic or musical fashions of the moment” (para. 1). Traditionalists fear this unstable pattern may lead the to ultimate abandonment of traditional country. Flippo (2006) contends that today’s young country fans know nothing about the rich history of the genre, spurring fears about the genre’s future. He worries about where the “heart and soul and the core of country music” is at present (Flippo, 2010b, para. 1). This “heart,” Flippo (2010b) explains, “used to be at the center of the major Nashville record labels” and “at the major recording studios,” but this “core” “eroded” a long time ago (para. 9).

Although Tuttle (2009) admits that the current crossover trend of “spit-polished pop” is not “the end of the world,” ultimately “something gritty and real has been lost” (para. 11) Echoing these fears, Applebome (1999) questions whether the attempt to bring back “real” country sounds “constitutes a revival, a calculated marketing move or a nostalgic bow to the past” (para. 4). Henkin (1999) predicts a continued reliance on crossover for economic gains will lead to a gradual breakdown of Nashville’s music industry. He calls crossover a “limited star system,” (para. 9) claiming that label heads “have no idea of what has gone before,” and only follow “current trends” when producing music (para. 6).

Ultimately, there seems to be no end in sight for the crossover controversy. For the meantime, country-pop crossover is here to stay. Therefore, it is essential for public relations practitioners in the country industry to understand country-pop crossover and the dynamics of the controversy surrounding it. This study will apply this information towards understanding how country artists are framed by their public relations team during their pop crossover campaign. The following chapter will provide background information on public relations and
its role in the music industry as well as an overview of framing theory, its use in public relations, and how it will be applied in this study.
CHAPTER 2:
LITERATURE REVIEW

This review of the literature will provide a brief overview of public relations practice, function, and process. It also includes background information on the role and process of public relations in the music industry. Additionally, the review gives an overview of literature on framing theory, its use in public relations, and how it will be applied in this study.

Public Relations

Public Relations Practice

Public relations plays an important part in various industries, helping organizations and individuals establish and maintain beneficial relationships with key groups (Broom, 2009; Cutlip, Broom, & Center, 2006; Guth & Marsh, 2011; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). Wilcox and Cameron (2010) describe the practice as an all-encompassing “process” of “research and analysis, policy formation, programming, communication, and feedback” (p. 5). Cutlip et al.’s (2006) widely accepted definition asserts, “public relations is the management function that establishes and maintains mutually beneficial relationships between an organization and the publics on whom its success or failure depends” (p. 5). The Public Relations Society of America’s (PRSA, 2012) modern definition states, “Public relations is a strategic communication process that builds mutually beneficial relationships between organizations and their publics” (para. 2). Wilcox and Cameron (2010) describe the practitioner’s responsibility on “two distinct levels—as advisers to their clients or to an organization’s top management and as technicians
who produce and disseminate messages in multiple media channels” (p. 5). Consequently, successful public relations activity is focused on making public relations part of the management function, whether for an organization or single client, and maintaining positive relationships with important publics.

The targets of any public relations activity are the publics who matter to the client’s success (Cutlip et al., 2006; Guth & Marsh, 2011; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). A “public” is defined as “any group of people who share common interests or values in a particular situation—especially interests or values they might be willing to act upon” (Guth & Marsh, 2011, p. 88). Traditional categories of publics include employees, investors or stakeholders, customers or consumers, media, government, and the community (p. 90). The type of relationship desired and group of publics targeted can depend on the type of industry in which the public relations activity takes place. These relationships are created and maintained via the public relations functions.

**Public Relations Functions**

Practitioners establish and maintain relationships with their important publics using actions of the overarching public relations function (Bowen, Martin & Rawlins, 2010; Cutlip et al., 2006). Common activities include “counseling, research, media relations, publicity, employee/member relations, community relations, public affairs, governmental relations, issues management, financial relations, industry relations, development/fundraising, multicultural relations/workplace diversity, special events, and marketing communications” (Wilcox & Cameron, 2010, pp. 10-11). Such actions are the basic components of a public relations program (Cutlip et al., 2006).

Practitioners and scholars have established varying methods of practice emphasizing certain activities and implementation techniques (Cutlip et al., 2006; Guth & Marsh, 2011;
Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). Various models illustrate the assorted approaches. Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) popular model describes the four most common functions of public relations, categorized by how practitioners facilitate communication between an organization and its publics. Of particular interest to this study is the press agentry/publicity model, which Wilcox and Cameron (2010) describe in the following manner:

A one-way communication, primarily through the mass media, to distribute information that may be exaggerated, distorted, or even incomplete to “hype” a cause, product, or service. Its purpose is advocacy, and little or no research is required…Sports, theatre, music, film, and the classic Hollywood publicist are the main fields of practice today…(p. 53)

This model is useful for the purposes of this study since it focuses on public relations practice in the music industry.

**Public Relations Process**

The public relations process involves planning, building, and maintaining relationships with key publics (Cutlip et al., 2006). Stacks (2002) lists the four main steps:

1. Define the problem
2. State the program’s objectives
3. Create a campaign or program that meets or surpasses the objectives
4. Evaluate and provide feedback on the campaign. (p. 23)

Popular interpretations of this four-step process include the RACE (research, action, communication, evaluation) and ROPE (research, objectives, planning, evaluation) models (Guth & Marsh, 2011, p. 13). While other non-linear, cyclical models have been advanced, the traditional four-step method is heavily used (Cutlip et al., 2006; Guth & Marsh, 2011; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). The following section will summarize the four steps using the RACE method.

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1 The first and second models—press agentry/publicity and public information—involves a one-way communication flow from organization/individual to their publics. The third and fourth models—two-way asymmetric and two-way symmetric—entail a shared back and forth communication channel between an organization/individual and their publics (Wilcox & Cameron, 2010).
**Research.** During the research phase, practitioners thoroughly gather information to gain a better understanding of their client, the problem or opportunity at hand, and the publics involved or affected (Cutlip et al., 2006; Guth & Marsh, 2011; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). This process involves the formulation of a research strategy addressing, “What do I want to know?” and “How will I gather that information?” (Guth & Marsh, 2011, p. 195). The amount and type of research needed varies by client and scenario, so it’s often necessary to ask the client several preliminary questions assessing their current situation (see Wilcox & Cameron, 2010, p. 128). Practitioners then select a suitable research method that will effectively gather the type of information needed, which also varies according to client and situation. Once a sensible plan is in place, research begins. This may involve primary\(^2\) or secondary\(^3\) sources.

**Action (Program Planning).** After considering the research gathered, practitioners plan the actions they’ll take to reach key publics regarding their client’s problem or opportunity (Cutlip et al., 2010; Guth & Marsh, 2011; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). The level of detail involved depends on the situation (Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). Although various methods exist, the basic elements of most public relations plans include: “(1) a goal or goals; (2) objectives; (3) strategies; and (4) tactics or recommended actions” (Guth & Marsh, 2011, p. 237). Once a clear plan is in place, practitioners are ready to execute the strategy.

**Communication (Execution).** During the communication phase, “practitioners direct messages to specific publics in support of specified goals” (Guth & Marsh, 2011, p. 13; see also Broom, 2009; Cutlip et al, 2006; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). This involves creating effective

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\(^2\) Primary research is defined as “original research not derived from the results of an earlier researcher’s efforts” (Guth & Marsh, 2011, p. 543). This type of research can be formal or informal (see Cutlip et al, 2006, Guth & Marsh, 2011; Stacks, 2002; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010).

\(^3\) Guth and Marsh (2011) define “secondary research” as “using information generated by someone else, sometimes for purposes entirely different from your own” (p. 545) (see Cutlip et al, 2006, Guth & Marsh, 2011; Stacks, 2002; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010).
messages and selecting channels that will efficiently deliver those messages to key publics. These choices vary according to campaign goals and characteristics as well as the types of publics targeted.

**Evaluation.** In the final phase, evaluation, the practitioner must ascertain “how efficiently and effectively a public relations effort met the [client’s] goals” (Guth & Marsh, 2011, p. 13). Broom (2009) describes evaluation as finding “evidence of program impact” (p. 349). This can be measured by the “inputs,” “outputs,” and “effects” of the program (p. 357). These measurements commonly look at “(1) measurement of production, (2) message exposure, (3) audience awareness, (4) audience attitudes, and (5) audience action” (p. 196). Such assessments of the program allow practitioners to identify which approaches were successful, need adjustment, or should be abandoned (Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). This information informs and guides future campaigns.

**Importance of Process**

If researched, planned, executed, and evaluated properly, public relations activity can effectively craft and deliver messages to targeted audiences, accomplishing client objectives in an efficient manner (Broom, 2009; Cutlip et al, 2006; Guth & Marsh, 2011; Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). The next section will explain how this public relations process operates in the music industry.

**Public Relations in the Music Industry**

**Models.** As mentioned above, Grunig and Hunt’s (1984) press agentry/publicity model is most frequently associated with the entertainment industry (Wilcox & Cameron, 2010). Guth and Marsh (2005) explain: “In this role, practitioners focus on media relations. They tend to be tacticians—as opposed to strategists—interested in short-term gains” with a “focus on promoting
the [client], and they believe that the generation of publicity is their primary purpose” (p. 7). Music industry public relations can also incorporate the two-way asymmetric model where communication “is intended to be persuasive, even manipulative, in that feedback from audiences is used to guide the organization in how to get publics to behave as the organization wants them to behave” (Turk, 1986, p. 8; Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003). This model can be applied to communication between record labels and artists, the mass media, and consumers (Lahtrop & Pettigrew, 2003). Lahtrop and Pettigrew (2003) explain how two-way communication operates in the music industry:

The importance of the media to the marketer is substantial. The media provides the mass-communication channels through which marketers can publicize their products. The media also provides feedback—via reviews—about how the product is perceived in the marketplace. (The marketer can, if so inclined, use this feedback to suggest changes in future products, such as a different musical or lyrical direction in an artist’s future recordings.) (p. 138)

The record company uses feedback in crafting future music releases and messages to consumers.

Starting with the music. Although public relations are a key part of an artist’s success, it is important to remember that it all begins with the music (Baskerville, 2001; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003). Greenblatt and Steinberg (2003) explain, “As with everything in the recording industry, marketing begins with the music” with “[t]he music set[ting] the tone for how that music is to be marketed” (p. 70). Baskerville (2001) adds that promotional campaigns must connect “with the nature of the music and the style of performance…” (p. 346). Greenblatt and Steinberg (2003) elaborate on this process:

The marketing effort begins with outstanding, commercially unique music. Then there needs to be an effective marketing effort to bring the music to the public. This effort depends on creating an effective image for that music, and coordinating all of the many aspects of publicity, advertising, promotion, and sales into a successful marketing campaign. (p. 75)
Thus, once the promotional team has connected with the artist’s music, they will set about crafting the artist’s image and promotional campaign, all centered on the music.

**Creating an image.** Public relations practitioners in the music industry “are thought to be creators of [artists’] public images blurring the line between success stemming from musical talent versus persona” (Merkl, 1997, p. 2). Merkl (1997) discusses this awesome power of public relations in image creation:

> It can be argued that the core of this popular culture phenomenon [of image creation] has the potential to be created and controlled by such professions as public relations…If these personae are actually just crafted images created by publicists, marketers, media relations officers, and the artists, themselves, research must be done on such processes given their potential to become a controlling force in society. (p. 4)

Consequently, the main role of a public relations counselor in the music industry is to establish and maintain “an image for a musical group, artist, product, place, or company” (Field, 2010, p. 114; see also Baskerville, 2001; Fink, 1996; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003; Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003; Phillingane, 2005a; Vittek, 2011; Weissman, 2003). This strategically crafted image then guides all future public relations activity for the artist. Vittek (2011) explains the role of public relations in the music industry:

> Public relations, in its simplest form, are just that, your relationship with the public. How you interact with friends, fans, fellow musicians, and citizens of your community is public relations. The desired result of your public relations is to create and build credibility and integrity. The goal is to shape the opinion and perception of others toward you. It is a long-term effort that needs to be tended to on a regular basis. (p. 11)

Often when creating an artist’s image, the public relations professional will work from established templates of personae according to musical genre (Donze, 2011). Therefore, Merkl (1997) suggests that public relations professionals can effectively create and maintain an artist’s image with audiences by “establish[ing] frames of reference for your target publics” (pp. 26-27).
She labels “frames of reference” as an “essential ingredient in the larger concept of persona creation” (p. 27).

**Celebrity image.** Celebrity images are painstakingly crafted, encompassing not only the public, but private life of the star (McNamara, 2009). Avenarius (1993) suggests, “The organization (or the person) determines how it/he/she wants to appear and prepares for this appearance meticulously” (pp. 65-66). McNamara (2009) explains, “celebrities’ grooming and behavior at public on-stage events is crucial to the maintenance of their professional and personal image” (p. 13). This image is then “negotiated” by fans that become “an active audience [with] the space to make meaning of their world by accepting or rejecting the social values embodied by a celebrity image” (p. 891; Avenarius, 1993). Meyers (2009) describes the social power of celebrity image, explaining, “it is, in part, the blurring of the boundaries between private and public or the idea of an authentic individual behind the public persona that makes celebrity images particularly potent ideological symbols” (p. 891).

**Image in the music industry.** Consequently, image plays an integral role for famous music artists (King, 2010; Merkl, 1997). Merkl (1997) explains the overwhelming power of image in the music industry arguing, “Even when there is talent involved, it is often the persona that determines the success of an artist and not the music” (p. 1). Daley (1998) agrees, arguing that “the ear of the [music] producer is different from the eye of the marketers, who seek to create images that may or may not match the music but will be acceptable to radio, and to manufacturers of a broad range of goods with which they can create mutually profitable linkages” (p. 273). Accordingly, Merkl (1997) found that “show business images are carefully orchestrated to universalize certain experiences for various target publics, and this resultant
public persona often becomes indistinguishable from the actual humans at its core” (citing James, 1997, p. 12; Klapp, 1964, p. 13; Rich, 1997, p. 21).

**PR’s overlap with marketing.** Public relations practitioners in the music industry wear many hats and are commonly referred to as publicists or press agents since they tend to focus on the publicity and promotion aspects of the public relations process (Field, 2010; Phillingane, 2005a). As Baskerville (2001) explains, in the music industry there are no clear boundaries between “promotion, marketing, merchandising, publicity, and sales promotion” (p. 346). These activities could each have their own department, be shared by various personnel, or done individually (Baskerville, 2001; Fink, 1996). However, it is important to understand that public relations is the overarching field, while publicity and promotion are tactics used within the public relations process (Heath, 2005; Lyon, 2005; Phillingane, 2004a, 2004b; Vittek, 2011). Both publicity and promotion are achieved by the practitioner supplying planned messages to targeted publics with the goal of advancing the artist’s career and public image. Publicity is aimed at media exposure by giving tailored stories to outlets such as newspapers, television, radio, and the Internet. Promotion, on the other hand, has a more “long-term” effect as it aspires to “gain awareness, increase awareness, and foster positive thoughts and opinions about the organization, product, service, or issue” by “targeting” certain consumers (Heath, 2004, p. 650, 651).

**Distinguishing PR from marketing.** However, while both perform similar activities, the publicity and promotion goals of the public relations professional are distinct from that of the marketer (Phillingane, 2004b). While the marketer is focused on the short-term goal of selling product (records, concert tickets, etc.), the public relations counselor works to establish and maintain deeper ties to the consumer. Thus, publicity and promotion are tools that are used within a public relations campaign to feed the artist’s carefully crafted image to publics and
maintain that image in publics’ minds (Phillingane, 2004b; Lyon, 2005). As Vittek (2011) explains, publicity and promotion are the tactics that “get you to the top,” while “how you manage your public relations will determine how long you stay there” (p. 11).

**Music industry campaigns.** Public relations campaigns in the music industry follow the linear RACE model used across disciplines (Baskerville, 2001; Field, 2010; Fink, 1996). In creating, establishing, disseminating, and maintaining an artist’s image, the practitioner will go through the research, action, communication, and evaluation phases (Baskerville, 2001; Fink, 1996). Campaigns could be used to establish a new artist, revive an existing artists bad image, or take their career in a new direction.

**Research.** During the initial research phase, the public relations counselor will try to assess who the artist is, what genre they belong to, and the types of audiences they can reach (Baskerville, 2001; Field, 2010; Fink, 1996; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003). Important questions addressed at this point are: “(a) Just what kind of performer or act do we have? (b) To what audience does the artist appeal? (c) Can that audience be expanded? And (d) What must we do for the artist to fully exploit all the potential?” (Baskerville, 2001, pp. 186-187).

**Choosing a genre.** Greenblatt and Steinberg (2003) explain the importance of selecting a genre before moving forward with a campaign:

Although everyone wants his or her song to be played on as many formats as possible, it is important for the label to hone in on a specific area of music and make a strong promotional push in that area. Trying too many formats and spreading a song too thin can result in no station wanting to play the song. If the song hits in one format, then others may pick it up and add it to their playlists, especially if it’s close enough to their own format. Initially, however, it is more important to choose a limited number of formats and work hard to get acceptance. (p. 72)

Determining an artist’s genre is also important in crossover campaigns (Baskerville, 2001; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003). Baskerville (2001) defines a “crossover recording” as “A
recording focused on one market segment that achieves sales in one or more additional markets” (p. 631). Even though an intentional strategy may exist to have an artist’s music cross over to other genres, attracting new audiences, an artist must still establish his or her self in one genre to begin with. Baskerville (2001) describes this strategy:

When categorizing an album, a primary genre is initially assumed, and the music is placed on the corresponding chart. This is done so that radio stations playing that particular type of music can feel ownership of the album. However, if the album gains popularity on stations featuring other genres, the album is then “crossed over” to one or more additional charts. (p. 301)

Answers to the above questions may be obtained through extensive formal market research or an informal approach such as casual interviews with the artist. Baskerville (2001) suggests, “Conscientious [promotional teams] usually start their thinking by listening to the music they are going to try to sell” (p. 346). From the results of this research, the practitioner gleans which elements of the artist’s image will guide the tone and direction of the public relations campaign.

Action (program planning). Next, the public relations team will develop a carefully thought out campaign using the artist’s image as the overarching theme for all elements (Baskerville, 2001; Field, 2010; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003). The goals established during this stage depend on the situation of the client and budgetary allowances (Field, 2010; Rutter, 2011). For example, a campaign for a new artist would aim to introduce his/her image and music to the public, while a campaign for an established artist in recent legal trouble may try to restore the artist’s good image in the press and with fans (Field, 2010). Based on the chosen objectives, the practitioner will choose the publics they wish to reach and the tactics they will use to convey their message effectively (Baskerville, 2003; Fink, 1996; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003; Rutter, 2011; Weissman, 2003). In the music business, the most important publics for any
artist are the fans (consumers) and the media who deliver the message to fans. In order to reach
the media, most public relations counselors keep a running list of media gatekeepers with whom
they maintain a relationship (Field, 2010). Finally, campaign materials will be prepared, ready
for distribution in the following phase.

**Communication (execution).** Once the campaign has been planned, it will be put into
action (Baskerville, 2001; Field, 2010; Fink, 1996; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003). As Fink
(1996) suggests, carrying out the campaign “is complex, and its success often depends on precise
timing” (p. 72). There are many options of communication channels and tactics to get the artist’s
image and music to the desired publics (Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003).

**Promotion & publicity.** Here, the most important tactics are promotion and publicity.
Lathrop and Pettigrew (2003) summarize how the promotion tool works in this phase:

Promotion, in brief, is activity designed to stimulate demand for a product…Promotion
starts with the product selling points identified during product development…and
translates them into memorable, brandable messages and a marketable image…It then
makes use of the entire media system—print, audio, visual, and multimedia—to
communicate the message, project the artist’s image, and broadcast the sound in as many
ways, and to as many potential customers, as possible…A complete promotion program
makes use of all available tools, techniques, and outlets. (p. 137)

Often considered a subpart of promotion, publicity is another popular tool for public relations in
the music industry since it costs nothing compared to expensive advertising. Lathrop and
Pettigrew (2003) describe publicity as “the art of attracting attention via the information outlets
that consumers routinely use” (p. 138). Thus, practitioners gain publicity by feeding messages to
the media, which delivers them to the public. Below are the three main goals of publicity
activity in this third campaign stage:

1. Get the most possible coverage of the artist/product in a broad range of
   media…reaching the largest number of people…
2. Get coverage in the most appropriate media…focusing on publications and programs that cater directly to the target audience…
3. Attempt to control the content of the coverage…making sure that articles communicate the desired message…. (p. 138)

Media targets. Publicity efforts in this communication phase are targeted at media since they are the main conduit of information to consumers (Baskerville, 2001; Fink, 1996; Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003; Rutter, 2011; Weissman, 2003). The type of media outlet depends on campaign goals. However, there are several common channels through which music publicity is fed—print media, Internet, and broadcast media (Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003). Key print media in the music business include “daily newspapers,” “general interest, lifestyle, and entertainment magazines,” “newsweeklies,” “music and pop-culture magazines,” “genre-based music magazines,” “promotional magazines,” “magazines for music hobbyists and professionals,” “magazines for record collectors,” and “trade publications” (p. 140). “Web-based music magazines and news sites”, “general interest” web magazines, Internet versions of print sources, and music blogs are important Internet channels (p. 141). Radio and television are the main broadcast outlets.

Publicity tools. Music industry practitioners use several tools to accomplish campaign goals (Baskerville, 2001; Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003). The press kit and press release are popular choices.

Also called a “promo pack,” the press kit is a carefully selected package of materials communicating the artist’s music and image (Baskerville, 2003, p. 189). Lathrop and Pettigrew (2003) describe the press kit as “the essential tool for presenting your product to the media,” and the artist’s “‘ambassador’ to the press” (p. 143). These materials should be written properly and organized to be “as attractive and informative as possible” (p. 143). Metzler (2005) emphasizes, “The focus of the press kit should always be information” (p. 640). Distributed to influential
media outlets, a press kit usually includes, “a cover letter (also called a ‘pitch’ letter); a fact sheet; a bio or product description; publicity photographs, press clips, a CD…[or] DVD of visual performance and interview clips…and additional attention-grabbing items” (Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003, pp. 143-144). This information may be in print or digital format. All elements of the press kit are guided by the artist’s crafted image (Baskerville, 2001; Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003; Weissman, 2003).

Equally important, the press release is a meticulously worded, concise statement of information designed to get interest from targeted media outlets (Field, 2010; Fink, 1996; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003). It is used to inform the media and the public of the artist’s events or news. Greenblatt and Steinberg (2003) explain, “Publicity for each song or CD usually begins by developing a press release which contains the pertinent information regarding the artist and the CD, including release date, producer, content, etc.” (p. 70). It is typically “sent out to both the trade publications…and to consumer publications” (p. 70).

In addition to the press kit and press release, the artist is often scheduled for interviews and live performances to support promotion of their music (Baskerville, 2001; Fink, 1996; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003; Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003; Weissman, 2003).

**Evaluation.** In the final campaign phase, evaluation, the artist’s public relations team ensures that their publicity tactics have been disseminated extensively and effectively (Fink, 1996). The public relations counselor will continue to seek publicity opportunities to further the public awareness already obtained during the previous communication phase. Such opportunities often entail a full live concert tour or in-depth interviews in feature publications or news shows.
Importance of the Public Relations Team

As the above information shows, the public relations team is essential to a music artist’s success (Baskerville, 2001; Field, 2010; Fink, 1996; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003; King, 2010; Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003; Merkl, 1997; Phillingane, 2005a). As campaigns are carried out, the image carefully crafted by the public relations team guides the way, shaping each decision and detail. From the early research stages of the campaign, the public relations team considers how to present the artist to appeal effectively to the target publics. Every detail of this image is painstakingly planned, determining the course of the whole campaign:

Publicists hold meetings with the artist and his personal manager to obtain the artist’s biography, photographs, and impression of his personality. From these meetings and other research a formal “bio” is written and an “ideal image” for the artist is developed. Publicity people may work with the artist to prepare him for future interviews. Press releases are worked out using “angles” on the record, the music, the image, and the artist’s career to date. A publicity plan is developed which details, step-by-step, how the execution phase will be carried out. (Fink, 1996, p. 72)

Weissman (2003) argues, “the image of the [artist] is as important as the music” (p. 170). He explains how this image can be so manufactured that it no longer bears resemblance to the artist’s real personality:

The goal is to get the attention of the public, and it really isn’t necessary that the artist be what the public thinks an artist is. Once the attention of the public is captured, an act is on the way toward building an audience. (p. 170)

Components of this image can include “costumes, stage gestures, attitude presented to the media, and the type of photographs that the group uses as promotional pictures” (p. 170).

Accordingly, this study looks at the campaigns of country to pop crossover artists through the lens of framing theory, examining how public relations teams frame an artist aiming to make
such a transition. Thus, the following section will discuss the relevant literature on framing theory, its use in public relations practice, and how it will be applied in this study.

**Framing Theory**

**What is Framing?**

Framing is a powerful theory used widely in social science research and other disciplines (Entman, 1993; Hallahan, 1999; Scheufele, 1999). The theory began with the work of sociologist, Erving Goffman, who suggested people “use frames in our day-to-day experience to make sense of the world…help[ing] interpret and reconstruct reality” (as cited in Volkmer, 2009, p. 408). Johansson (2007) affirms that Goffman’s ideas on framing are still strongly applicable in communication, especially in the field of public relations. Although there is no universal definition of framing, some commonly accepted explanations exist. Entman’s (1993) popular definition is often cited:

To frame is to select *some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation* for the item described. (p. 52)

Volkmer (2009) asserts that at its most basic level, framing attempts to identify, define, and examine the lenses through which individuals observe the world around them. Similarly, Hallahan (2005) describes framing as a “rhetorical device” that’s used “as a way to understand the construction of arguments and the different interpretations of arguments” (p. 340). Thus, framing is founded on the idea “that message producers are involved in the construction of social reality and that message meanings are negotiated, not absolute” (p. 340).
How Do Frames Work?

Carragee & Roefs (2004) describe how “frames construct particular meanings concerning issues by their patterns of emphasis, interpretation, and exclusion” (p. 217). Hallahan (2005) likens the framing process to “drawing a border around a painting or picture,” where the frame is the border and the message is the painting within (p. 340). By choosing certain information to emphasize inside the frame and ignoring “competing, distracting, or contradictory” information placed outside the frame, message creators are able to determine the focus of a message (p. 340). He explains this process of inclusion and exclusion:

A frame essentially limits or defines a message’s meaning. Both message creators and receivers are involved in the process. Frames reflect judgments made by message creators, who put information in either positive or negative frames, use particular semantic phrases, and tell stories using particular syntactical, thematic, or rhetorical devices. (p. 340)

Likewise, Carroll (2005) defines a “frame” as “a rhetorical label that encapsulates unconnected pieces of information about a subject of interest into a graphic image or coherent story” (p. 338). He also explains framing in terms of a frame around a picture:

The term naturally draws metaphorical value from the function of a cropping frame used with visual images, which limits and focuses the viewer’s gaze, while at once bestowing relevance upon subjects within the position or scope of its borders and irrelevance upon those without. (pp. 338-339)

Carroll notes, although much research has focused on the use of frames in the media, they can also be used in independent communications “within or between individuals, groups, or societies” (p. 339). Within each of these places, frames can be analyzed on three separate levels: production, content, and effects. Numerous studies have been dedicated to frame analysis at these three levels.
Salience

In his foundational study synthesizing the myriad of classic framing research, Entman (1993) describes “selection” and “salience” as the cornerstones of framing theory (p. 52). Selection involves the purposeful inclusion or exclusion of information. Salience deals with whether the audience accepts the message presented. Entman (1993) defines salience as “making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful or memorable to audiences” (p. 53). Thus, frames operate to “highlight some bits of information about an item that is the subject of communication, thereby elevating them in salience” (p. 53). Entman (1993) suggests that increased salience is achieved by information “placement or repetition, or by associating them with culturally familiar symbols” (p. 53). By drawing attention to certain information, it becomes more likely that readers will “perceive the information, discern meaning and thus process it, and store it in memory” (p. 53, citing Fiske & Taylor, 1991). Essentially, the message creator chooses which frames to include and exclude, and the message receiver determines how salient the frames are by choosing to accept or reject them.

Through this process of selection and salience, Entman (1993) contends that frames perform four distinct functions: (1) define problems; (2) diagnose causes; (3) make moral judgments; and (4) suggest remedies (p. 52). Frames perform these functions at four points along the communication chain:

1. *Communicators* make conscious or unconscious framing judgments in deciding what to say, guided by frames (often called schemata) that organize their belief systems.
2. The *text* contains frames, which are manifested by the presence or absence of certain keywords, stock phrases, stereotyped images, sources of information, and sentences that provide thematically reinforcing clusters of facts or judgments.
3. The frames that guide the *receiver’s* thinking and conclusion may or may not reflect the frames in the text and the framing intention of the communicator.
4. The *culture* is the stock of commonly invoked frames…the empirically demonstrable set of common frames exhibited in the discourse and thinking of most people in a social grouping. (p. 52-53)
At each point in the communication process, frames serve to “select and highlight” certain information to “construct an argument about problems and their causation, evaluation, and/or solution” (p. 53).

Additionally, Gamson and Modigliani (1989) suggest five “framing devices” that can be used as “shorthand” in applying a consistent frame to a group of messages: “(1) metaphors, (2) exemplars (i.e., historical examples from which lessons are drawn), (3) catchphrases, (4) depictions, (5) and visual images (e.g., icons)” (p. 3, footnote 2). By implementing a framing device, a communicator can present his/her messages efficiently and effectively “as a whole with a deft metaphor, catchphrase, or other symbolic device” and “suggest how to think about the issue” (p. 3, Footnote 2).

**Frame Sponsorship**

Another important element of framing theory addresses who is responsible for the act of framing (Andsager, 2000; Andsager & Smiley, 1998; Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Entman, 1993; Kleinmann, 2005; Turk, 1986). Carragee and Roefs (2004) contend that recent research has focused too heavily “on news frames” and “the production, reception, and influence of news texts” (p. 214). They argue that such studies ignore the outside sources that provide frames to the media:

Researchers commonly refer to multiple, at times conflicting, frames in news stories, but frequently fail to trace these frames back to specific sponsors….Some studies neglect the process of frame sponsorship entirely (McCombs et al., 1997; Sotirovic, 2000; Turner & Allen, 1997). They focus exclusively on the frames emphasized in news texts and, in some cases, on their influence. These studies take news texts as a given, neglecting the degree to which journalistic discourse is shaped by external sources…This research runs the risk…of exaggerating the degree of journalistic autonomy in the framing process. Journalists frame issues, but their interpretations are shaped, in part, by discourses external to news organizations. (p. 219)
Frame sponsors can be any individual, organization, or group who create and disseminate their own messages. A sponsor’s power can be determined by whose frames are included in the news coverage (Carragee & Roefs, 2004; Entman, 1993). Entman (1993) suggests, “the frame in the news is really the imprint of power—it registers the identity of actors or interests that competed to dominate the text” (p. 53). Kleinmann (2005) contends, “Frame sponsorship is an active component of the framing process” (p. v).

Public relations practitioners frequently act as frame sponsors when constructing messages for clients (Andsager & Smiley, 1998). Andsager and Smiley (1998) explain how “In communicating information through interviews, press conferences, and press releases, public relations practitioners can transmit their [client’s] frames,” allowing them to “impact the public’s frame of reference” (p. 184). Turk (1986) highlights the importance of public relations practitioners’ role as frame sponsors, describing them as “the junction point for interaction between an organization and the media” (p. 4). In turn, the media become key publics for public relations practitioners sponsored messages “because although an organization also may communicate directly with key audiences, most of what an organization’s key publics know about it is mass media created and disseminated” (p. 4). Consequently, this thesis will examine frame sponsorship by public relations practitioners in the music industry, particularly those helping a country artist cross over to the pop market. The media’s acceptance of the sponsored frames will be examined, since they are a key public as well as a channel to other publics like consumers.

Of particular interest here is Andsager and Smiley’s (1998) study, which aimed “to determine the extent to which the news media relied on the [sponsored] frames policy actors provided in reporting the different facets of the silicone breast controversy” (p. 185). They
suggested, “The salience of the frame in the text should reflect the policy actor’s influence on the news coverage” (p. 185). Similarly, my study examines whether the press, as well as consumers accepted the sponsored public relations frames from Shania Twain’s public relations team. Like the study above, the salience of the sponsored frames in the news text should reflect her public relations team’s influence on the press coverage. The salience of sponsored frames with consumers will be measured by sales and chart performance data, indicating whether consumers accepted the frames and acted on them by buying and playing her records.

This study also keeps in mind Carragee and Roefs’ (2004) point that sponsored frames and news frames evolve over time and change in reaction to one another. They suggest, “Because journalists define issues over time and because sponsors often restructure their issue frames given changing…conditions, frames evolve, and particular frames may gain or lose prominence in the news media…These transformations highlight the construction of meaning over time…” (p. 216; citing Gamson, 1992; Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Snow & Benford, 1988). It will be interesting to see how the sponsored frames from Shania’s team change over time and whether they take cues from press frames. If the press frames reflect changes in the sponsored frames, this will also indicate increased salience of the sponsored frames.

**Importance of Framing in Communication**

As a result of its power to construct messages and influence audiences, framing is a very powerful tool for any communicator. Entman (1993) explains the ultimate strength of framing:

Whatever its specific use, the concept of framing consistently offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text. Analysis of frames illuminates the precise way in which influence over a human consciousness is exerted by the transfer (or communication) of information from one location—such as a speech, utterance, news report, or novel—to that consciousness. (p. 51-52)
Thus, this study will examine the use of framing by public relations practitioners in the music industry, specifically those helping country artists cross over to the pop market. Having provided an overview of framing theory, the remainder of this literature review will focus on how framing operates in the practice of public relations.

**Framing in Public Relations**

Framing’s ability to shape messages and influence how their audiences will receive texts makes the theory an important tool for public relations practitioners. As Hallahan (1999) explains, “Framing is a potentially useful paradigm for examining strategic creation of public relations messages and audience responses” (p. 205). Carroll (2005) agrees, adding that “[a]n awareness of frames helps public relations professionals better understand general trends in society” and “[a] thorough understanding of how frames work may also aid public relations staff members in knowing their role and abilities as professionals” (p. 339). Additionally, Lim and Jones (2010) suggest, “a frame has the utility for theoretical and practical understanding of public relations campaigns” (p. 292).

**Importance in Public Relations**

As one of the leading scholars on the workings of framing theory within the practice of public relations, Hallahan (1999) contends that framing “provides a potentially useful umbrella for examining what occurs” within the profession (p. 206). Framing’s power lies in its combination of a rhetorical and conceptual approach. The rhetorical approach concentrates “on how public relations is engaged in the construction of messages and meanings that are intended to influence key publics important to an organization” (p. 205). This approach includes a variety of models such as “argumentation, advocacy and persuasion, corporate communication, dialectics and discourse, dramatism and storytelling, information, organizing, public opinion, and
reputation management” (p. 205). On the other hand, framing is also “conceptually connected to the underlying psychological processes that people use to examine information, to make judgments, and to draw inferences about the world around them” (p. 206). Thus, the core elements of framing—message construction and audience receipt—tie directly to the idea that “public relations work fundamentally involves the construction of social reality” (p. 206).

Hallahan (1999) laments the social confusion about the role of public relations practitioners who are commonly labeled “imagemakers and spin doctors,” focusing only on their task of message creation (p. 206). Instead he argues, “public relations counseling involves defining reality for organizations by shaping organizational perspectives about the outside world…Similarly, outbound public relations communications involve attempts to define reality…for the many publics on whom the organization depends” (p. 206). Thus, the practice of public relations uses framing to “construct social reality” and “shape the perspectives through which people see the world” (p. 207).

In discussing the “construction of social reality” by public relations practitioners, Hallahan (1999) explains framing in terms of “a window or portrait frame drawn around information that delimits the subject matter and, thus, focuses attention on key elements within” using the “processes of inclusion and exclusion as well as emphasis” (p. 207). Thus, while building and sustaining “mutually beneficial relationships” with key publics, practitioners can use framing to create “common frames of reference about topics or issues of mutual concern” (p. 207).

Ultimately, Hallahan (1999) concludes that framing plays an invaluable role throughout the various stages of the public relations process:

It could be argued that framing is not merely useful but is essential to public relations. In developing programs, public relations professionals fundamentally operate as frame
strategists, who strive to determine how situations, attributes, choices, actions, issues, and responsibility should be posed to achieve favorable outcomes for clients. Framing decisions are perhaps the most important strategic choices made in a public relations effort. It is out of strategic framing that public relations communicators develop specific themes (i.e., key messages or arguments that might be considered by publics in the discussion of topics of mutual concern). Framing also provides the foundation for choosing images and other framing devices that can be used to dramatize or reinforce key ideas. Finally, framing provides the basis for how people should be asked to evaluate information, make choices, or take action. (p. 224)

Carroll (2005) agrees that framing theory is essential to the practice of public relations, positing that “a general awareness of the power of frames can assist public relations professionals in managing information so that they can clarify thinking, articulate alternative points of view, or more readily perceive less evident alternative viewpoints” (p. 339). He suggests several benefits framing may lend practitioners in the public relations process:

1. Use frames in research and evaluation efforts to track changes, monitor events, and identify new threats and opportunities in a given environment.
2. May more readily express their needs and objectives with frames preferred by top management in order to accomplish organizational or public objectives.
3. Can work with management groups to identify and avoid fixed perspectives preserved by lasting frames.
4. Policy advocates can enhance their success by shaping information into coherent packages with standardized prevailing values, stories, or myths.
5. Can use framing concepts to adapt organizational interests to the established media frame of “newsworthiness” that news workers use in deciding what counts as news. (p. 339)

Knight (1999) also agrees that framing has immense potential for use in public relations since “[p]ublic relations practitioners occupy positions ideally suited for framing issues in a way likely to advance both public and organizational interests” (p. 384). She adds that “[t]heir traditional roles as media and community liaisons offer opportunities for framing issues of interest, as do their less-recognized roles as lobbyists, negotiators, and environmental scanners” (p. 384). Practitioners should use framing in “organizational communication, external communication and production of media” (p. 384).
Use of Framing in Public Relations

Hallahan (1999) describes a frame as the element of a message that “limits or defines the message’s meaning by shaping the inferences that individuals make about the message,” thus “reflecting judgments made by message creators or framers” (p. 207). These frames can take many forms depending on their use and construction. Consequently, the process of framing “bias[es] the cognitive processing of information by individuals” (p. 207). Within this process, two “mechanisms” act to achieve the framing goal—“contextual cues” and “priming” (p. 207). First, “contextual cues” are supplied during the framing process to “guide decision making and inferences drawn by message audiences” (p. 207; citing Kahneman & Tversky, 1979; Hamilton & Zanna, 1972; Pratto & John, 1991; Smith & Petty, 1996; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986; Maheswaran & Meyers-Levy, 1990). Second, ‘priming’ aims to take advantage of the preprogrammed social and cultural norms in the audience’s mind. Hallahan (1999) suggests, “knowledge is thought to be organized in human memory in cognitive structures or schemas, which operate as constraints on the arrangement and interpretation of situations and events” (p. 208, citing Bartlett, 1932; Fiske & Taylor, 1984; Markus & Zajonc, 1985; Neisser, 1967).

Framing Models for Public Relations

Hallahan’s seven models. Perhaps the most widely cited study on the use of framing in public relations is Hallahan’s (1999) article organizing the body of framing research into seven models that can be utilized effectively by public relations practitioners (p. 209). After a full review of foundational framing literature across disciplines, he groups the findings into seven categories, distinguished by what is framed and how: (1) framing of situations, (2) framing of attributes, (3) framing of risky choices, (4) framing of actions, (5) framing of issues, (6) framing of responsibility, and (7) framing of news. These widely cited models aim to help “researchers
and practitioners to understand the usefulness of the framing concept, to apply it in practice, and to pursue a systematic research agenda about framing as it might be applied to public relations” (p. 209). However, Hallahan (1999) explains the common threads between the models and their importance for public relations practice:

The central idea that links each of these models of framing is contextualization. Framing puts information into a context and establishes frames of reference so people can evaluate information, comprehend meanings, and take action, if appropriate. Indeed, the message must be imbued with sufficient clues so that people can make sense of the message and for it be persuasive (i.e., to have an influence on people’s predispositions or overt behavior). Framing provides those clues. (p. 224)

**Framing of attributes.** Hallahan’s (1999) “framing of attributes” (attribute framing) is of particular interest to this study since it aims to examine how country artists are framed in public relations materials during their crossover to the pop market. It is defined as “the characterization of objects, events, and people” (p. 210). The model thus operates by highlighting certain “characteristics of objects and people” while disregarding others, “thus biasing processing of information in terms of focal attributes” (p. 210). Hallahan (1999) further explains, “When used in this context, semantic framing is used to focus on particular attributes that might be flattering or derogatory and, thus, be advantageous or disadvantageous to message sponsors in persuasive communications” (pp. 211-212).

This type of framing is commonly used in advertising to create picture captions (picture framing), influence consumer decisions (problem framing), affect how consumers experience the product (advertising framing of product experience), draw on “consumer’s prior experience with a product to bias their future choice (experience-frames-advertising), alternative ways to present product claims/attributes (product claims), and in comparing product attributes versus competitors (comparative advertising) (Hallahan, 1999, p. 212). Marketers also use framing of attributes through “product positioning,” which is defined as “the act of designing a company’s
offerings and image so they occupy a meaningful and distinctive competitive position in the customer’s mind” (p. 212, citing Kotler, 1995, p. 295). Additionally, framing of attributes has been examined in the context of “media studies,” with scholars claiming that “media are effective in not only raising the salience of particular topics, issues, or objects but also can create specific knowledge of attributes related to issues and people” (p. 213; citing Ghanem, 1997; McCombs, 1997; McCombs & Ghanem, 1998; McCombs & Shaw, 1973, 1993). Thus, the media can use attribute framing to tell audiences “what to think about—and how to think about it” (p. 213).

Consequently, attribute framing is an important and useful tool in public relations. Hallahan (1999) argues “public relations practitioners routinely engage in framing of attributes by accentuating particular aspects of the causes, candidates, products, or services they represent” and “routinely strive to position clients and their products or services so they will be evaluated favorably and so key publics will respond in a desired way when they buy, invest, donate, work, or vote (p. 225). These aims are achieved by “creating positively valenced associations with beliefs and values, traditions and rituals, or with other cultural artifacts that people cherish” (p. 225).

Other models. Similarly, Lim and Jones (2010) conducted a review of framing research within public relations, organizing the findings into distinct categories. After examining literature on framing in public relations from 1990 to 2009, the authors found two ways in which scholars “conceptualized” frames (p. 292). The first type, a “frame in communication,” is characterized as a “construction of reality in communication” (p. 292). This suggests, “a frame reveals properties of communication” and “focuses on how a content producer constructs a message” (p. 292, 293). Examples include media frames (media organization of news stories)
and public relations frames (construction of messages by practitioners) (p. 292, 293). The study lists thirty-eight sources conceptualizing a frame in this manner (p. 294). The second type of frame, “a frame within thought processes,” focuses on “social actors’ cognitive principles of understanding a situation” which allow “the public [to make sense] of events flowing into their lives” (p. 292, 293). An example of this frame type is an audience frame (p. 292). Only two sources were listed for this type of frame (p. 294). Based on their findings, Lim and Jones suggest seven articles as a foundation for any framing research in public relations: “Entman (1993), Hallahan (1999), Goffman (1974), Gamson (1992), Gamson and Modigliani (1987, 1989), and Tuchman (1978)” (p. 294). Hallahan’s 1999 study was cited most frequently—13 times (p. 294). Ultimately, their results conclude that research in this area focuses on the first frame type and construction of messages since “[p]ublic relations agencies are frame-setters by promoting specific frames to news media and the public” (p. 296). Additionally, “PR message and news coverage” and “PR messages” were the most frequently analyzed elements of public relations among the studies reviewed (p. 295).

Williams (2004) also performed a synthesis of literature on framing and public relations, but focused on the theory’s connection to agenda-setting theory. He argues that by pairing these theories and looking at them through a public relations lens, researchers will gain “a more interdisciplinary approach that offers implications for both the professional practice [of] public relations and the advancement of research of the public relations discipline” (p. 1).

Additionally, framing has been used in various public relations practices such as issues and crisis management (Darmon, 2008; Esrock et al, 2002; Fortunato, 2008; Glascock, 2002), social movements (Barnett, 2005; Reber & Berger, 2005; Zoch et al, 2008), healthcare (Knight, 1999; Park & Reber, 2010), and government relations (Heibert, 2003).
Framing and Country Music

Fenster (1988) examined the various frames used in country music videos. He found that country videos used elements from pop and rock videos to attract a mainstream audience, while also including stereotypical country images to maintain the country fan base. Fenster explains how the balance of country and non-country elements indicates the degree of crossover intentions:

Country music videos attempt to reach a crossover audience most directly by addressing it through visual elements and/or a narrative that is less distinguishable as country and more obviously within the realm of pop and rock videos. This is similar to crossover music, which uses various aesthetic elements, such as arrangements, melody, rhythm and lyrics to address and attract a comparable audience. The degree to which a crossover video directly uses country iconography or employs elements that can be attractively decoded as such by country audiences signals the degree to which the video remains a country video within the generic limits defined by convention. (p. 295)

The study remarks how “this process of adaptation provides insight into the way country music continues to define and re-define itself with regards to the popular music marketplace” (p. 285). In a similar study, Andsager and Roe (1999) studied how women were depicted in country music videos. Their results showed “that most female artists’ videos portrayed women progressively, whereas male artists’ portrayed them stereotypically” (p. 69). Additionally, Armstrong (1986) examined the framing of sexual issues in country songs. Peterson (1997) also combines ideas of framing with country music, discussing how artists carefully construct their image and music to present themselves as ‘authentic’ country artists performing ‘authentic’ country music. Hughes (2000) elaborates on Peterson’s (1997) work, suggesting this quest for authenticity is actually an exercise in impression management.
Framing In This Study

Extensive literature exists on framing theory in general and its application to public relations practice. Additionally, various researchers have examined the use of framing in the country music and the crossover trend. However, such studies have not touched on the use of framing and public relations in the context of country-pop crossover. Thus, this paper proposes to fill that research gap by examining the use of sponsored frames in public relations materials created in support of country artists’ efforts to cross over to the pop market. The study will also look at the salience of these sponsored frames with key publics—the media and consumers. Country music reaches a global audience, with many country-pop artists striving to reach the pop market. Therefore, it is crucial for such artists’ public relations teams to understand how to frame their clients effectively in order to reach the desired publics and achieve a successful crossover journey.

The next chapter will present the study’s research questions and explain the methodology that will be used to answer them.
CHAPTER 3:  
RESEARCH QUESTIONS & METHOD

Research Questions

After reviewing the background of crossover in country music and public relations and its use in the music industry, as well as existing research on framing theory, the following questions arose:

RQ1: What frames were sponsored by Shania Twain’s public relations team during her crossover to the pop market?

RQ2: Were these sponsored frames accepted by key publics—the media and consumers?
    A. Which sponsored frames were used by the media in the resulting press coverage?
    B. Which frames did the media use that were not part of the sponsored frames?
    C. Were the sponsored frames accepted by consumers?

Method

In answering research question one (RQ1), a content analysis was performed on public relations documents in support of Shania’s crossover to identify the sponsored frames. Research question two (RQ2) deals with salience, which asks whether key publics accept the given message (Entman, 1993). Thus, Shania’s team presents their sponsored frames to key publics through public relations messages, and the salience of those frames is determined by whether the media and consumers accept them. Consequently, RQ2 aims to determine the salience of the
sponsored public relations frames with the key publics in this study—media and consumers. To
answer part A and B, a content analysis of resulting media coverage was performed to determine
whether the sponsored frames were used. In answering part C, sales and chart data were
compiled to measure the acceptance of sponsored frames among consumers. The following
section will provide a brief overview of the content analysis method and describe the procedure
used in this study. It will also explain how sales and chart data were collected.

Content Analysis Method

Weber (1990) defines content analysis generally as “a research method that uses a set of
procedures to make valid inferences from text…about the sender(s) of the message, the message
itself, or the audience of the message” (p. 9). Julien (2008) comments, “As an analytic method,
content analysis is very flexible, providing a systematic way of synthesizing a wide range of
data” (p. 122).

Stacks and Michaelson (2010) describe content analysis as “one of the most commonly
used…public relations measurement and evaluation tools” (p. 83). Additionally, “when used
properly, content analysis can be critical in evaluating overall communications effectiveness and
function to help plan more effective public relations and media relations strategies” (p. 83).
Stacks (2002) adds, “Public relations researchers have employed content analysis for years when
they have counted the number of certain types of press releases, the number of times a client’s
name has made its way into print, or when examining the readability of public relations
messages” (p. 107). Additionally, “It is particularly appropriate for the analysis of documents,
speeches, media releases, video content and scripts, interviews, and focus groups” (p. 108).
Thus, content analysis is a useful method for this study’s purposes, since I am examining public
relations documents in support of Shania’s crossover to determine the frames that were used and ascertain whether those frames were accepted by key publics—the media and consumers.

**Types of Content Analysis**

Hsieh & Shannon (2005) explain, “The differentiation of content analysis is usually limited to classifying it as primarily a qualitative versus quantitative research method” (p. 1277). According to Julien (2008), quantitative content analysis “is applied in a deductive manner, producing frequencies of preselected categories or values associated with particular variables (p. 122).” Similarly, Altheide (1996) writes, “In quantitative content analysis, the emphasis is on obtaining data that can be counted and analyzed statistically” (p. 27). On the other hand, qualitative content analysis “is typically inductive, beginning with deep close reading of text and attempting to uncover the less obvious contextual or latent content therein (Julien, 2008, p. 122).” As Altheide (1996) explains, the focus of the qualitative approach “is on capturing definitions, meanings, process, and types” (p. 27). Qualitative data can be quantified by counting the number and frequency of codes (Altheide, 1996). However, unlike the quantitative approach, these numbers are not the focus of the data, and are used merely to “supplement” the data from the qualitatively derived codes (p. 27). Frey, Botan, and Kreps (2000) reinforce this concept, noting that with qualitative content analysis, “researchers are more interested in the meanings associated with messages than the number of times message variables occur” (p. 237).

Although each approach to content analysis can be conducted separately, Weber (1990) suggests, “The best content-analytic studies use both qualitative and quantitative operations on the text” (p. 10). Stacks (2002) states that the beauty of content analysis is that it “enables us to look at qualitative data in a quantitative manner,” which “allows us to break up the information we have obtained [qualitatively]…into units that can be counted and thus quantified” (p. 107).
Thus, this study will use a mixed qualitative and quantitative approach to content analysis. Frames will be derived qualitatively from the public relations documents and resulting media coverage. The frequency of these frames will then be counted to determine the significance and dominance of each identified frame.

Performing a Content Analysis

Regardless of the selected approach, a content analysis follows the same basic steps (Stacks, 2002; Stacks & Michaelson, 2010). Stacks (2002) explains, “First, as in all research methods, a documentary/historical search of research relevant to your problem, opportunity, or situation must be conducted” (p. 108). Then the researcher must determine the content to be examined, select the message pool, establish the units of analysis, establish category systems, and finally count and/or categorize the data (coding) (Stacks & Michaelson, 2010). The order and actions involved in each step will vary according to the specific approach followed. The following sections will describe the approach and procedure used in this study to answer the identified research questions.

Secondary Research

This study began by consulting two secondary sources to provide background information about Shania Twain’s career and her crossover efforts. The first source is Robin Eggar’s (2005) biography, Shania Twain. Although this is not an official, authorized biography, she notes in her introduction section that the work was written using many personal and telephone interviews with Twain, her staff, and industry insiders who willingly participated in her project. Eggar’s work provides a rare perspective on Twain’s career during the relevant crossover transition, as access to figures in the music industry is limited. Additionally, Shania Twain’s (2011) autobiography, From This Moment On, was consulted. It provides a first-hand
account of her life and career, including details on the motivations for her crossover and what was done to achieve success.

**Selecting General Content**

Next, I determined what messages would be examined during the content analysis. Neuendorf (2002) explains, “The researcher gets to define the population for the study” which is defined as “the set of units to be studied, the set of units to which the researcher wishes to generalize” (p. 74). She adds, “for content analysis, this [population] is often a set of messages…” (p. 74). Since research question one (RQ1) seeks to identify the frames used by Shania’s public relations team during her crossover, I examined public relations documents in support of her crossover effort. The second research question (RQ2) aims to determine whether these sponsored frames were accepted by key publics, including the media and consumers. Therefore, I examined media coverage on Shania’s four studio albums released during her crossover journey to see whether the media used the sponsored frames from the public relations documents and/or created their own frames. Additionally, sales and chart data were collected from relevant sources to determine whether consumer (fans) responded to the sponsored public relations frames (see “Sales and Chart Data” below).

**Selecting Message Pools**

Once the general content to be analyzed is selected, the researcher must select the specific content to be examined (Neuendorf, 2002; Stacks, 2002; Stacks & Michaelson, 2010). This group of messages is often referred to as the message pool or sample. Often it may not be possible or practical to perform a content analysis on all messages available, so a smaller sample or pool of messages within the general content is selected for study. The following two sections
will explain how messages were collected and how the study sample was selected for analysis of public relations documents and the resulting media coverage.

**Public relations documents message pool.** In order to obtain public relations documents issued by Shania’s public relations team, I visited the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum in Nashville, Tennessee.\(^4\) I was kindly granted access to the Frist Library and Archive by Mr. John Rumble. The Hall of Fame website (2014) describes the collection as “represent[ing] more than forty years’ worth of collecting country music books, periodicals, photographs, fan club newsletters, scrapbooks, sheet music, songbooks, video and film, oral histories, and sound recordings” (“Exhibits and Collections”). The Shania Twain file\(^5\) in the collection included news clippings, press releases, press kit materials, chart data, album artwork, event invitations, promotional photographs and materials related to Shania’s whole career.

Non-probabilistic sampling was used to select the messages. This type of sampling “occurs when you do not have access to all messages or when you are only looking for certain messages” (Stacks, 2002, p. 114). Neuendorf (2002) calls this approach, “nonrandom sampling” (p. 87). In particular, “convenience sampling” was used, which “relies on the selection of readily available units” (p. 87). The public relations documents selected were used since they were readily available in the Hall of Fame files. Due to the high level of fame music artists enjoy, documents related to their career and its promotion are not easily obtainable. In this case, multiple calls to the publicity department of the Mercury Nashville record label (Shania’s label) with requests for materials went unreturned. Therefore, I used the available documents from my trip to the Hall of Fame. Furthermore, I used “purposive or judgment sampling” to further

\(^4\) Located at 222 Fifth Avenue South, Nashville, TN 37203.

\(^5\) *Shania Twain [Archive File].* Frist Library and Archive. Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Nashville, TN.
narrow the pool of public relations materials (p. 88). As Neuendorf (2002) informs us, “This type of sampling involves the researcher making a decision as to what units he or she deems appropriate to include in the sample” (p. 88). Andsager and Smiley (1998) recommend examining press releases from the “relevant period” to identify sponsored frames (p. 187). Thus, I chose to examine the press releases and press kit materials (cover letters and biographies). These documents were the most informative in terms of determining how Shania was framed by her public relations team. I examined the press releases and press kit materials for each of Shania’s first three studio albums—Shania Twain (Twain, 1993), The Woman In Me (Twain & Lange, 1995), and Come On Over (Twain et al., 1997), since they were released during the progression of her crossover to the pop market.

I must note here that only public relations document was analyzed for her debut album, Shania Twain, as the press kit biography was the only text included in the file that fit the selected message pool criteria—press releases and/or press kit materials. There were more materials available for subsequent albums, which can probably be attributed to the fact that this was her first album. As her career built momentum, it’s likely that more public relations materials were released. Additionally, there were no publicity materials available in the file for her fourth album, Up! (Twain, 2002), just media coverage. Multiple calls to Mercury Nashville’s publicity department went unreturned. Consequently, secondary research was used to identify the sponsored public relations frames for Up!. Eggar (2005) and Twain’s (2011) books were used as well as the frames identified through public relations materials for other previous albums. The “identifying frames” section below explains this procedure in further detail.

Press coverage message pool. Type of media. As Lathrop and Pettigrew (2003) explain, publicity campaigns in the music industry are aimed at the three main press categories—
“print, Internet, and broadcast” (p. 139). Andsager and Smiley (1998) recommend, “Because the press releases must reach an audience in order to affect public opinion, we obtained all news stories containing” relevant terms during the relevant period (p. 189). Thus, I examined resulting media coverage to see whether they picked up the sponsored frames. I chose to limit this study to print coverage since the Internet was not as widely used as a press outlet during the earlier stages of Shania’s career.

**Type of print publication.** Lathrop and Pettigrew (2003) write that in print media, “Newspapers and magazines publish information about music from a variety of perspectives, depending on the audience” (p. 140). The kinds of print publications that are of interest to “publicity seekers” include the following: “Daily newspapers…General Interest, Lifestyle, and Entertainment Magazines… Newsweeklies…Music and Pop-Culture Magazines…Genre-Based Music Magazines…Promotional Magazines…Magazines for Music Hobbyists and Professionals…Magazines for Record Collectors…[and] Trade Publications” (p. 140). Thus, these types of media [provide] the mass-communication channels through which marketers can publicize their products to consumers” (p. 138). From this list, I chose print publications whose audience includes consumers Shania’s public relations team were interested in targeting.

“General interest, lifestyle, and entertainment magazines” were chosen as a publication type because their audience includes a “broad national readership that conforms to the particular editorial focus…” (p. 140). During Shania’s crossover, I wanted to see how the media were framing Shania to consumers across the nation. The second type of print publication included in this analysis was “music and pop-culture magazines” whose intended audience includes “young adults with strong interest in pop culture and music” (p. 140). I wanted to see how the media framed Shania in publications read by pop fans. The third type of publication examined was
“genre-based music magazines” which are aimed at “fans and aficionados of specific musical genres” (p. 140). Here, I sought to identify frames use by media targeting country fans. The fourth type of publication studied was “trade publications,” which target “music-industry professionals, including record company personnel, radio program directors, music promoters, managers, and marketers” (p. 140). Such industry participants are also consumers of music and target publics of publicity messages. It was important to see how the media framed Shania in articles aimed at such industry participants. Other types of print publications were excluded because their intended audience did not include consumers who were the focus of public relations messages issued by Shania’s team.

Types of articles. I chose to include feature articles/profiles on Shania as well as reviews of her albums and singles in the content analysis. Lathrop and Pettigrew (2003) write, “personality profiles” provide the reader “with in-depth information about an artist’s life, opinions, beliefs, and tastes” (p. 142). Due to the length and depth of such feature profiles and stories, I determined this type of article would be a suitable text from which to identify the media frames used. Additionally, album or single reviews allow the media to give “feedback…about how the product is perceived in the marketplace” (p. 138). This type of article is useful in determining the frames used by the media in reviewing Shania’s music.

Date range. The overall date range for the press coverage content analysis was 1993 to 2004, since Shania’s debut album was released in 1993 and her fourth album Up! was released in 2002. Extending the overall date range to 2004 gave time to include articles reviewing Up! or profiling Shania after its release. It was during her first four studio albums that Shania established and developed her crossover to the pop market. Press coverage was divided by the
studio albums it covered. Table 3 displays the corresponding date ranges for each album. These date ranges cover the estimated promotional period for each album.

*Titles.* From the chosen categories of print publications (general interest, lifestyle, and entertainment magazines; music and pop-culture magazines; genre-based magazines; and trade publications), I used purposive and convenience sampling to select specific titles. The convenience sampling involved choosing titles with articles “readily available” (Neuendorf, 2002, p. 87) in full text on the UNC online journal database, the publication’s website, or included in the Hall of Fame materials. This method of sampling was used since some titles of potential interest were simply not easily accessible and I was able to locate plenty of suitable titles through above-mentioned outlets. In addition, I used purposive sampling in selecting titles, which involves “the researcher making a decision as to what units he or she deems appropriate to include in the sample” (p. 88). As explained below, I purposefully chose titles that had published feature articles and music reviews on Shania and which were aimed at audiences including Shania’s key types of consumers (see Table 1).

Using the UNC library website article search feature, I did a preliminary search of magazines for “Shania Twain.” As explained in the previous section, I limited the results to feature articles on Shania and reviews of her albums and singles. From the results, I compiled a list of magazines that had written at least one feature article and/or review on Shania. I also used Lathrop and Pettigrew’s (2003) suggestions of key titles within each important print publication category (p. 138). In addition, I decided to include feature articles and music reviews from the relevant time period that were included in the materials gathered from the Hall of Fame. Below is the final list of included magazine titles and their intended audiences (Table 1) and a list of the articles retrieved from the Hall of Fame archive file (Table 2)
Table 1. Print Publications Reviewed in Content Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of print publication</th>
<th>Titles</th>
<th>Audience/Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General interest, lifestyle, and entertainment magazines</td>
<td>People (U.S)</td>
<td>Women (national)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entertainment Weekly</td>
<td>Pop-culture consumers (national)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cosmopolitan</td>
<td>Women’s magazine (international)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>News magazine (national), general readership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Esquire</td>
<td>Men’s magazine (national)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>News magazine (national), general readership</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redbook</td>
<td>Lifestyle, women’s interest</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamour</td>
<td>Women’s magazine</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music and pop-culture magazines</td>
<td>Rolling Stone</td>
<td>Music magazine, popular culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genre-based music magazines</td>
<td>Country Weekly</td>
<td>Country music magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trade publications</td>
<td>Billboard</td>
<td>Music industry magazine (international)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Print Articles Retrieved From Hall of Fame Archive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Publication</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Music City News</td>
<td>Shania Twain: From Grit to Glamour</td>
<td>Kimmy Wix</td>
<td>November, 1993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Woman in Me</td>
<td>TV Guide</td>
<td>True to Her Roots</td>
<td>Jon Bream</td>
<td>February 24, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Newsweek</td>
<td>The Malling of Shania</td>
<td>Karen Schoemer</td>
<td>February 26, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Tennessean</td>
<td>Shania Twain: More Than Meets the Eye</td>
<td>Robert K. Oermann</td>
<td>February 28, 1996</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview</td>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td></td>
<td>Alison Powell</td>
<td>March, 1996</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Village Voice</td>
<td>The Shania Show: Real</td>
<td>James Hunter</td>
<td>May 7, 1996</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unit of Analysis

Stacks and Michaelson (2010) explain, “Once your message pool has been established, content analysis requires a definition of what is being analyzed,” which is “called establishing the unit(s) of analysis” (p. 84). Altheide (1996) defines the unit of analysis as the “portion or segment of relevant documents [that] will actually be investigated” (p. 25). In the content analysis of the public relations materials, the unit of analysis will be each document, which was reviewed qualitatively to identify the sponsored frames and then quantitatively to count the frequency of each frame, which determined its significance. In the analysis of the resulting media coverage, the unit of analysis is the magazine article, since each feature or review will be analyzed separately—qualitatively to identify the frames used and then quantitatively to count the frequency of the frame in each article, again to determine each frame’s significance.

Identifying Frames

In order to answer RQ1 and RQ2 (A) and (B), I performed a qualitative content analysis on the selected public relations documents (RQ1) and resulting media coverage in the selected titles (RQ2 (A), (B)). Hsieh and Shannon (2005) define qualitative content analysis as “a research method for the subjective interpretation of the content of text data through the
systematic classification process of coding and identifying themes or patterns” (p. 1278). Similarly, Julien (2008) describes the method as “the intellectual process of categorizing qualitative textual data into clusters of similar entities, or conceptual categories, to identify consistent patterns and relationships between variables or themes” (p. 121). She suggests that the method is “useful for identifying both conscious and unconscious messages communicated by text (i.e., what is stated explicitly as well as what is implied or revealed by the manner in which the content is expressed,” which “may reveal recurrent instances of ‘items’ or themes…” (p. 121). Neuendorf (2002) agrees that the qualitative method goes beyond the quantitative method of counting elements of the text, instead burrowing deeper into the meanings and underlying themes of the text. Therefore, a qualitative content analysis is a highly suitable method for identifying the frames sponsored in the public relations materials and those used in the resulting media coverage since frames emerge from explicit and implied elements of the text.

I used Andsager and Smiley’s (1998) two-step approach to identifying frames in content analysis. They explain their method:

Our analysis of the extent to which policy actor frames appeared in major newspaper coverage of the silicone breast implant controversy consisted of two steps. First, we determined the three [sponsored public relations] frames…based on unique terms in the press releases each produced. Secondly, we coded the newspapers’ articles for both frequently occurring terms and the policy actors’ frames. (p. 187)

In a way, I determined the sponsored public relations frames used by Shania’s team by looking for key terms in the press releases and press kit materials. Then, I coded the press coverage, looking for recurring terms and the sponsored public relations frames.

**Sponsored public relations frames.** I followed Hsieh and Shannon’s (2005) conventional approach to qualitative content analysis in identifying the sponsored frames in the selected public relations documents. In order to get a better understanding for how the framing
took shape throughout Shania’s crossover journey, I chose to divide the documents into groups by which album they were supporting. The date range examined for each album was based on the estimated promotional period. I estimated when the core of promotional activity would occur for each album. The same date ranges were used for identifying press frames as coverage resulting from promotional activities would be released during the same timeframe. The corresponding date ranges for each album were as follows:

**Table 3. Date Ranges of Materials Reviewed For Each Album**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Date Range of Materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>1993-Jan. 1995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When using the conventional approach to content analysis, codes and categories emerge during data analysis and are based on the words of the text under analysis. I began analyzing the documents (data) in each album group by skimming them to get a general sense of the overall frames used to present Shania. Then I read each document carefully, highlighting any words, phrases, quotes, or facts that I felt were indicative of a frame of Shania. The documents were then read thoroughly a second time to make sure nothing was missed. Next, I went through each document, placing similar highlighted elements into categories according to which frame they invoked. When naming codes, mostly I used the exact words or phrasing of the text to make sure that the intended meaning remained intact. However, when I felt another label encapsulated the code more accurately, I used my own word(s) to represent the code. Hsieh and Shannon (2005) advise, as codes begin to emerge, “Depending on the relationships between subcategories,
researchers can combine or organize this larger number of subcategories into a smaller number of categories” (p. 1279). Julien (2008) adds some advice for comprehensive coding:

In addition, once thematic categories are identified, the careful researcher attempts to ensure that the groupings or categories of data are carefully defined in ways that are comprehensive (i.e., they cover all categories identifiable in the data set and all relevant data are categorized) and mutually exclusive (i.e., their definitions do not overlap). (p. 122)

Accordingly, I condensed similar codes into one. Once all highlighted portions of the texts were placed in codes and frame categories, I reviewed the groupings, combining similar categories, and moving certain codes to more appropriate frames.

A special note must be made here. Due to the generally inaccessible nature of internal publicity documents in the music industry, I was unable to obtain public relations documents issued by Shania’s team for her fourth album, *Up!* Instead, I used the information from the secondary sources (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011) detailing the creation and promotion of *Up!* to identify the frames sponsored by Shania’s team for this record. Additionally, I looked at the sponsored frames used in public relations materials for previous albums. I used these sponsored frames to predict which frames would likely have been used to promote *Up!* Sponsored frames that were used in public relations documents for two or more previous albums were counted as identified sponsored frames for *Up!* I reasoned that sponsored frames used for at least two previous albums would likely have been used again for her fourth album. The frames identified from these methods were combined to reach a total frame count for the *Up!* album. Since these are only predicted frames, no codes were identified.

After finalizing the codes and categories, Table 4 below reports the number of codes and sponsored frames identified in the public relations materials for each corresponding album.
Table 4. # Sponsored Public Relations Codes and Frames Identified For Each Album

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th># Codes</th>
<th># Sponsored Frames Identified</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Woman In Me</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come On Over</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up!</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The codes and resulting frames were then displayed in figures to illustrate the categories for the reader.

**Frames in resulting media coverage.** In order to answer RQ2 (A) and (B), regarding the frames used by media covering Shania’s albums, I used the same conventional qualitative content analysis procedure that was used to identify the sponsored frames in the public relations documents (RQ1). As with the public relations materials, I chose to divide the articles by album and the corresponding date range (see Table 4 above). I started by skimming the articles to get a general idea of the overall frames of Shania used by the media involved. Then, I read each feature article and review thoroughly, highlighting words, phrases, quotes, and facts I thought invoked a particular frame. I read each text again to make sure I had not missed anything. Next, I sorted similar highlighted portions of text into groupings by code. Where possible, I tried to use the exact terms from the text in order to keep their meaning intact. As before, when I felt another label encapsulated the code more accurately, I used my own word(s) to represent the code. Similar codes were combined and condensed. The codes were then arranged in similar groups, according to the frame they invoked. Similar frames were combined and condensed.
Table 5 below reflects the number of codes and frames identified from media coverage analyzed, divided by album:

**Table 5. # Press Codes and Frames Identified For Each Album**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th># Codes</th>
<th># Frames</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Woman In Me</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come On Over</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up!</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The codes and resulting frames were then displayed in figures to illustrate the categories for the reader.

**Determining frame significance.** As mentioned earlier, data derived from a qualitative content analysis can be supplemented and enriched by quantitative measurement (Altheide, 1996; Stacks, 2002; Weber, 1990). Stacks (2002) notes the advantage of content analysis is that it “allows us to break up the information we have obtained [qualitatively]…into units that can be counted and thus quantified” (p. 107). Thus, in this study I decided to count the frequency of sponsored frames in the public relations materials and media frames in the resulting press coverage to determine which frames were the most significant. Looking back at the highlighted elements of these texts, I counted how many times a word, phrase, quote, or fact invoking each frame occurred. These counts were arranged in tables for the public relations documents and the media coverage to determine the dominant and minor frames for each album.

**Reporting Findings**

Following Hsieh and Shannon’s (2005) approach, “To prepare for reporting the findings, exemplars for each code and category are identified from the data” (p. 1279). Consequently, the
findings section reports the results of the content analysis. Here, I listed the frames that emerged from the public relations materials and resulting press coverage, divided by the four albums and corresponding date ranges. Included in these findings are the final counts of frame frequency in the materials, revealing significance among frames.

**Discussion and Conclusion**

In the final step of the conventional content analysis, “relevant theories or other research findings are addressed in the discussion section” (p. 1279). The discussion section usually “include[s] a summary of how the findings from [the] study contribute to knowledge in the area of interest and suggestions for practice, teaching, and future research” (p. 1279). Therefore, my discussion section answers the research questions, makes final conclusions about the study, and proposes ideas for future research in the field.

**Determining Consumer Acceptance of Frames**

In answering RQ2 (C) regarding consumer acceptance of the sponsored public relations frames, I reviewed data on album and song chart performance and sales. Fans and industry (radio) were the target consumers observed, since these are important publics for an artist to reach.

Chart performance data was gathered from Joel Whitburn’s books (2008a, 2008b; 2010; 2011), compiling *Billboard* chart data. *Billboard* is a weekly music industry magazine that issues charts ranking albums and songs based on radio airplay and sales (Whitburn, 2008b). I examined the Country Singles chart (Whitburn, 2008b) and Country Albums (Whitburn, 2008a) chart data to determine whether country radio accepted the sponsored public relations frames by playing Shania’s music. Additionally, I reviewed the Pop Albums chart data (Whitburn, 2010) and Pop Singles chart data (Whitburn, 2011) to see whether pop radio played her music.
Appearing on both country and pop charts simultaneously would indicate a successful crossover (Baskerville, 2001; Malone & Neal, 2010).

Sales data were reviewed to determine whether fans accepted the sponsored public relations frames by buying Shania’s albums. For this part, I looked at the certifications issued by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA). As the RIAA (2014) explains, their “awards program was launched in 1958 to honor artists and create a standard by which to measure sales of a sound recording” (“History of the Awards,” para. 1). The various levels of certification show how many units of an album have been sold, demonstrating consumer response to the artist and promotional activities.

Although international charts and sales were involved in Shania’s success, this study only looks at the U.S. charts and sales data. The chart and sales data was required to determine whether consumers responded to the sponsored frames issued by Shania’s public relations team. U.S. data is sufficient to answer this question.

Limitations

The following paragraphs explain the limitations imposed on the method and content of this study. Given the confines of the project, it was necessary to place certain restrictions on the process and scope of the research in order to focus the examination on the research questions posed.

Method

The first methodological limitation of this study involves its limited quantitative nature. As Neuendorf (2002) explains, “Although content analysis must conform to the rules of good science, each researcher makes decisions as to the scope and complexity of the content-analytic study” (p. 2). Although quantitative approaches to content analysis can involve in-depth,
complex statistical analysis, the quantitative element here involves a simple count of the
frequency of the sponsored public relations frames and media frames to determine frame
significance and dominance.

Second, Julien (2008) reminds us that qualitative content analysis is “interpretive” and
“subjective” (p. 121). Therefore, the reader must keep in mind that my qualitative identification
of frames and count of frame frequency are based on my own subjective interpretation of the text
and is cannot be generalized to other studies in the area of interest.

Thirdly, as noted in the above description of the study procedure, I utilized purposive and
convenience sampling in selecting the message pools. Restricted access limited the number of
public relations documents I could obtain, and the press coverage examined was limited based on
availability and intended audience. Thus, the reader must remember that this study does not
examine all public relations documents created or all related press coverage. Additionally, since
inside information on Shania’s crossover campaign is not readily accessible, secondary sources
were difficult to locate. While the secondary sources used (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011) to
provide background on Shania’s crossover are insightful, the reader must take into consideration
the context and authorship of these works and any potential bias these may have. Finally, the
date range is limited to focus on publicity and press coverage surrounding each of Shania’s first
four studio albums. Therefore, this study does not purport to cover Shania’s entire career.

Content

As discussed in the background information in Chapter 1, crossover starts with the music
(Baskerville, 2001; Greenblatt & Steinberg, 2003). The music makes the crossover and public
relations help. However, since this paper is written from a public relations perspective, the
research findings and discussion will examine the sponsored frames, resulting press frames, and
sales and chart performance data through a public relations lens. Additionally, the distinctions between the country and pop genre are highly nuanced, with much scholarship devoted to contrasting and comparing the two styles. For the purposes of this study, the distinction between pop and country will be discussed in more basic terms in order to focus the discussion around the public relations questions. The descriptions of ‘pop’ and ‘country’ frames here are limited to the context of the secondary materials, public relations documents, and press materials. Also, while many other artists were crossing over during the period under study, this research focuses on Shania as one case within the crossover trend. Thus the scope of this thesis is limited to Shania’s career during the relevant time period (1993-2004). Although the above subjects are beyond the scope of this project, they serve as rich sources for existing and future research. Finally, even though the method for selecting press articles was followed closely, there may be existing articles matching the search criteria—title, time period, article type—that were not included in the sample. However, the articles that were identified through the search procedure and analyzed through qualitative content analysis seemed to provide an adequate sample of press frames for this study. It is likely that any missed articles would illustrate the same framing trends already identified.

Please keep these limitations in mind while reviewing the rest of the research findings and discussion.

**Reflexivity**

Dowling (2008) defines reflexivity “broadly…as qualitative researchers’ engagement of continuous examination and explanation of how they have influenced a research project” (p. 748). Going into this study, I had to constantly keep in mind the fact that I was approaching this
project as an avid Shania Twain fan. At all points of research I aimed to remain objective and neutral, despite my positive support of Shania as an artist.

The following chapter will provide the secondary background research on Shania Twain’s crossover career, providing context for the content analysis and demonstrating her and her team’s crossover intentions.
CHAPTER 4:  
SECONDARY RESEARCH

As Stacks (2002) explains, the first step in any research method is performing “a documentary/historical search of research relevant to your problem, opportunity, or situation” (p. 108). Thus, this chapter contains secondary research to provide context for the content analysis and demonstrate that an intentional crossover strategy existed for Shania and her public relations team. The bulk of this information comes from the secondary sources by Eggar (2005) and Twain (2011) since they provide inside information on Shania’s career and publicity plans.

**Personal History**

Shania Twain was born Eilleen Regina Edwards on August 28, 1965 in Windsor, Ontario to Sharon and Clarence (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Sharon had a daughter, Jill, from a previous relationship, and a third daughter, Carrie Ann, was born in 1967. Her parents had a tumultuous relationship and Clarence eventually left the family. Sharon moved her three daughters to Timmins where she met Jerry Twain, a Native Ojibwe man, whom she soon married. Jerry formally adopted Sharon’s children. They had a son, Mark, who was born in August, 1972.

Eilleen began singing at the age of three and by the age of eight was belting out country classics for the late night, drunken crowds at Timmins’ local hotels and bars (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). By age ten she was writing and performing her own songs. Urged by her mother
to explore her talent, Eilleen earned money for her struggling family, performing at every local opportunity available. At twelve years old she recorded her first demo and sang traditional country tunes for various radio programs. When she wasn’t performing, Eilleen helped with her family’s tree-planting business. As a teenager she played and toured with a local rock band and recorded some demos in Nashville with manager Mary Bailey, a former Canadian country singer.

Tragically, Eilleen’s parents were killed in a car accident in November, 1987 (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Aged twenty-two, Eilleen returned home to Timmins to care for her siblings and run the family tree business. After selling the tree business, the family moved to Huntsville where Eilleen performed in a nightly Vegas-style stage show at the Deerhurst resort. By 1990, she was writing and recording songs again, and reconnected with former manager Mary Bailey, deciding to pursue career in country music. Bailey invited respected Nashville music attorney Richard Frank to see Eilleen perform at Deerhurst and he was impressed. Frank send her demos to Norro Wilson, a renowned country producer. Wilson passed the tapes on to Mercury Nashville (Polygram at the time) executives Buddy Cannon and Harold Shedd who offered Eilleen a five-album recording contract. She moved to Nashville in 1992 to start her career as a country artist.

Debut Album: Shania Twain

Making the Album

At the advice of Bailey and Shedd, Eilleen adopted a more attractive stage name, Shania, reportedly meaning ‘on my way’ in Ojibwe (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Keeping her last name, Eilleen became Shania Twain. Mercury and Shania decided that her debut album would be in the country genre. It was produced by Harold Shedd, who had made some of the biggest hits in
country music, and Norro Wilson, a legendary Nashville producer. Shedd explains, “We did what we thought were the most commercial songs” aiming “to make a radio-friendly record” (Eggar, 2005, p. 286). As Eggar (2005) describes, “the material incorporated all the usual Nashville elements: up-tempo numbers contrasted with ballads, all suffused with a pop-country sheen, showcasing Shania’s vocal skills” (p. 286). Only one of Shania’s original songs was included—God Ain’t Gonna Getcha For That. In preparation for promotions, the label sent Shania through rigorous media training to get her ready for public appearances (Twain, 2011).

Shania Twain was released on April 20, 1993 in North America (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). The lyrics included common country themes of heartbreak and loss of traditional morals. Neal (2008) describes the album cover artwork that showed “a lone wolf in the snow, [Shania] bundled in a fringed parka and a woven jacket and jewelry that evoked her stepfather’s Native-American Indian heritage…” (p. 288). This photo was atypical for a country artist at that time (Eggar, 2005; Neal, 2008).

Promoting the Album

The first music video, for the single What Made You Say That?, showed Shania “cavorting around a Florida beach with a bare-chested male model” (Eggar, 2005, p. 292). Eggar explains, “Both [the director] and Shania were determined to get away from the expected image…Shania had a very clear idea of how she wanted to represent herself, contemporary and modern, because that was the way she saw her image heading” (pp. 292-293). Shania’s manager, Bailey, thought that this modern image appealed to the mainstream audience, dispelling their association of country music with “bales of hay,” presenting her as “a nineties woman” (p. 293).
New Mercury president, Luke Lewis, experimented with rock-and-roll promotional tactics, putting together the ‘Triple Play Tour’ showcasing their three newest artists—Toby Keith, John Brannen, and Shania—aiming for major country radio airplay (Eggar, 2005; Parsons, 1996). By contrast, new country artists usually sought an opening slot on an established artist’s tour to launch their career.

Shania’s music first video—*What Made You Say That?*—proved a hit on European stations (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Her second video—*Dance With The One That Brought You*—featured traditional country themes. Her third video—*You Lay A Whole Lotta Love On Me*—showed a glamorous Shania in a sexy red dress as well as sitting on a bed in silk pajamas. Both videos performed poorly on the country charts. After selling an estimated 100,000 units upon release, Shania continued promoting the album, playing small clubs and bars across the country (Eggar, 2005, p. 299).

**Second Album: The Woman In Me**

‘Mutt’ Lange

In 1993, famous producer Robert John Lange (a.k.a. ‘Mutt’) contacted Shania after being impressed by her music (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). As a highly skilled pop-rock producer, Lange had worked with artists such as AC/DC, Def Leppard, Foreigner, The Cars, Bryan Adams, and Michael Bolton. After playing music over the phone, the pair met in person and began writing Shania’s second album. They soon fell in love, marrying on December 28, 1993.

**Too Pop For Country**

Mercury president Lewis had two concerns for the new album: that the country industry would not accept Lange as an outside producer and that the album “wasn’t country enough or at least not familiar enough to what they used to hearing” (Twain, 2011, p. 260). The songs
“sounded too different” (p. 260). Shania described the album’s sound as an “unexpected arrangement blends of fiddles backdropped by concussive kick and snare drums, and steel guitars intertwined with the range and sexiness of distorted rock guitars” (p. 260). She described her vision for the record:

I was so in sync with Mutt’s conviction not to necessarily make a genre-specific record, but to make a great record, period. Our idea was to create something unique, unlike anything else; something that would stand the test of time, groundbreaking music the listeners would turn their heads to when they heard it for the first time. (p. 260)

Lange set the album budget at $400,000, far exceeding the usual $125,000-$150,000 country album (Eggar, 2005, p. 381).

The Mercury promotions team initially rejected the album advising, “it be sent back and remixed,” claiming “it’s too pop, it’s so obvious” (Eggar, 2005, p. 393). Shania explained her musical direction:

Not that I was asking to become a controversial artist among country music purists, but my perceptions of contemporary country music at the time was that it defined itself too narrowly…My version of country music, with Mutt’s personal stamp on the arrangement and sound, was the new album. Accepted or not by the industry, Mutt had produced a record I was proud of. (Twain, 2011, p. 261)

**New Sound, New Approach**

To market the new sound, Mercury brought in a promotional team with experience in the pop market (Eggar, 2005). Their aim was to debut the first single, *Any Man Of Mine*, in country line dance clubs, but after testing the song at a local venue, they discovered the song was out of sync with the classic line dance rhythms. Meanwhile, Shania made the rounds at radio where she received “love/hate responses to the new record” (Twain, 2011, p. 267). Lewis explained the task of getting the album played by radio:

“When we first heard this album, I believed we had something really special…I think all of us at the label knew that it might be a bit difficult, because it was definitely stretching
the boundaries musically. The task became getting it through the gatekeepers…” (Parsons, 1996, p. 15)

Instead, Mercury and Shania decided that *Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under?* should be the first single since it had a traditional country sound and lacked the rock influences that had deterred country stations from playing *Any Man Of Mine* (Egger, 2005; Twain, 2011). Parsons (1996) explains, “The logic was to send radio one of the surer, safer songs so that once a boot was in the radio’s door, Mercury could follow up with the format-bending tunes” (p. 16).

**Upgraded Image**

Using pop marketing techniques, Mercury released a promotional calendar of Shania that was sent to “radio and retail” (Parsons, 1996, p. 15; Eggar, 2005). Wanting to upgrade her image, the label brought in actor John Derek (husband to Bo) to take “sexy” pictures for the album cover (Egger, 2005, p. 395). However, the images still maintained classic country elements (Neal, 2008). Neal (2008) notes the traditional themes present in the artwork: “Twain, like her music, was wrapped in the most iconic elements of country’s stereotyped identity: denim, leather chaps, a cowboy hat…Twain’s new image was entirely centric to the country music scene at the time” (p. 288). This juxtaposition of sexy versus traditional was used for the music videos (Egger, 2005). The video for *Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under* was set in a diner with Shania wearing “a backless, clinging burgundy dress,” cutting to scenes “of her playing a guitar and singing, wearing a sleeveless waistcoat that ends above her midriff” (pp. 395-396). Similarly, the video for *Any Man Of Mine* mixed “scenes of Shania in a field wearing tight jeans and a blatantly bare midriff” with “sequences that showed Shania metamorphosing from a cowgirl to society sophisticate” (p. 396).
The First Single

The goal for the first single, *Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under*, was to get it playing on country radio (Eggar, 2005; Parsons, 1996; Twain, 2011). Released on January 2, 1995, the single was embraced by the few country stations that had played Shania’s first album, with the remaining country stations hesitant to play such pop-sounding tracks. Shania explained this roadblock: “‘Boots’ looked like it would stall several times as the resistance from industry gatekeepers, who complained that the music was too ‘out there’ and that I didn’t belong in country, was managing to block the connection between artist and public” (Twain, 2011, p. 268). Her team encouraged stations already playing her single to keep doing so, hoping the public would respond. The song caught on like wildfire, boosting radio play and carrying the single to #11 on the country charts, giving Shania her first real hit (Twain, 2011).

Selling Country the Pop Way

Shania’s second album, *The Woman In Me*, was released in the U.S. on February 7, 1995. As the second single, *Any Man Of Mine* “combined traditional country instruments with anthemic stadium-rock sounds” (Twain, 2011, p. 269). Mercury followed the pop technique of releasing new album singles in quick succession, as opposed to the country method where singles were released gradually, each running its course before the next came out (Eggar, 2005). Therefore, *Any Man Of Mine* was released on April 26, 1995, while *Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under?* was still getting radio airplay (p. 399). By July 1995, *Any Man Of Mine* was at #1 on Billboard’s country singles chart and became Shania’s first single to appear on the Billboard pop chart (Twain, 2011, p. 271). Mercury then released a constant stream of singles from the album with a new song every three to four months (Eggar, 2005): *The Woman in Me* on August 9, 1995; *(If You’re Not in It For Love) I’m Outta Here!* on November 15, 1995; *You Win My
Love on January 27, 1996; No One Needs to Know on May 15, 1996; Home Ain’t Where His Heart Is (Anymore) on July 24, 1996; and God Bless the Child on October 26, 1996 (p. 400).

After radio embraced the singles, “the visual impact of Shania’s videos kicked in and the album started to sell by the truckload” (p. 400). Noticing that “teenage males (and full-grown ones too) were responding to Twain,” Mercury “placed a Twain ad is Sports Illustrated’s college basketball preview issue” (Parsons, 1996, p. 16; Eggar, 2012).

No Tour

Typically, at this point in a promotional campaign, a country artist would tour to promote their new album, opening for an established country act (Eggar, 2005). However, after a few small-scale performances to the press in the U.K. and on talk shows in the U.S., Shania decided against a full-scale tour, refusing an opportunity to open for country megastar, Wynonna Judd. Eggar (2005) writes, “she didn’t want to tour until, when she went up on stage, every song she played was a hit song” (p. 405). The decision raised suspicion and criticism in Nashville that she didn’t have talent and her music was merely Lange’s studio creation.

Promotional Push

Instead of touring, Mercury implemented “an intense promotional blitz encompassing music videos; media interviews for radio, TV, and the press; photo shoots; and one-off performances like morning television…or entertainment talk shows” as well as “in-store autograph signings and special appearances” (Eggar, 2005, p. 275). Without the obligation of touring Shania focused her efforts on making impactful music videos that would present her image to the public (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). As Parsons (1996) notes, “The third single, the ballad ‘The Woman in Me,’ was chosen to broaden Twain’s image to lure older record buyers;
its video—a romantic romp around the Egyptian pyramids—was shot to appeal to markets outside the U.S.” (p. 16).

Meeting Fans and Silencing Critics

Shania appeared on various “showcase gigs, award shows, and TV shows” (Eggar, 2005, p. 419). Understanding the importance and impact of personal appearances, Mercury booked Shania at events where she could connect personally with fans and boost sales (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). She appeared at Fan Fair 1995; the grand opening of mega shopping center, Grand Motors Place, in Detroit, Michigan; Minneapolis’ Mall of America; and at a Dallas shopping center. Each time Shania was met by over 20,000 screaming fans, performing live and spending hours posing for pictures and signing autographs. Eggar (2005) describes the effect of these appearances:

That was PR at its purest, reaching directly to the heartland. Such gracious behavior has a long-lasting effect. It helps create loyalty that can last forever. It was a marketing coup that spread Shania way beyond the country market, positioning her for a crossover into pop. (p. 421-422)

Schoemer (1996) of Newsweek the marketing power of Shania’s image at such events:

Shania knows darn well that for the next four hours, her job is to bring that fantasy person to life. And she does it like a pro…Then it’s down to work. Shania smiles and signs, smiles and signs, waves and smiles and signs…Whether they’re fresh-faced 6 year-olds or bedraggled mothers with kids in tow, they all want to be Shania. She’s the Mall of America’s ideal of what a woman should be: kind, pretty, generous, unthreatening. For four hours, Shania puts all those qualities on sale. (p. 70)

By December 1996, the sales of The Woman in Me album had reached over 1,000,000 units, making it the best-selling female country record of the time (Eggar, 2005, p. 423; Twain, 2011). After parting ways with manager Mary Bailey, Shania hired Jon Landau who had worked with Bruce Springsteen for 20 years. Despite her success, some in the “deeply conservative”

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6 Fan Fair is an annual country festival held in Nashville, TN, providing country fans with live performances and meet and greet opportunities with their favorite artists.
country industry felt “she broke all the rules that had kept country so pure” (Eggar, 2005, pp. 427-428). These sentiments were perhaps reflected when she did not receive nominations for the 1995 and 1996 Country Music Association (CMA) Awards. Shania faced further backlash from tabloids that continued to claim she was a product of studio manipulation and questioned her Native heritage.

**Third Album: Come On Over**

**Making the Album**

With her third studio album, Eggar (2005) describes the lyrics as “a long way from the standard country formula” as Shania and Lange were “resolved to take their pop-country to its fullest extent” (p. 450, 455). Lange took advantage of the new recording technology, ‘Pro Tools,’ allowing him to electronically “cut and paste” music, from whole sections to single note (pp. 460-461).

**Promoting the Album**

After such success in promoting *The Woman In Me*, personal appearances were chosen to advance the new album (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). *Come On Over* was released on November 4, 1997. On release day Shania visited the Mall of America in Minneapolis with 20,000 fans waiting (Eggar, 2005, p. 463). She then appeared at the Southcentre Mall in Calgary, Alberta on November 9 in front of 27,000 fans (p. 463).

**Making the Crossover**

As Eggar (2005) explains, Shania’s team decided to promote *Come On Over* “very differently” in America than the international market (p. 464; Twain, 2011). In Europe the album was promoted as pop. In the U.S. it was promoted as a country album, with the ultimate
goal of crossing over to pop. The first two singles, *Love Gets Me Every Time* and *Don’t Be Stupid* were successful on the U.S. country charts.

Next, Mercury put together a set of tracks for radio and soon “some country stations were playing fifteen songs off the album” (Eggar, 2005, p. 464). The official crossover to the pop market was planned to take place with the release of the third single, *You’re Still the One*. Shania (2011) described the single, “The music, I believe, transcended genres, and the universal message of the lyrics gave it broad crossover appeal” (p. 305). *You’re Still the One* was a hit, playing simultaneously on “five different radio formats: Country, Regular Adult Contemporary, Hot Adult Contemporary, top, and CHR (Contemporary Hit Radio)” (Eggar, 2005, p. 464). Country stations that had previously rejected Shania’s music now embraced it and didn’t want to share her success with other formats. Head of Mercury marketing, John Grady, explained:

“All of a sudden they wanted to own her, wanted to be the only one that’s bringing you Shania Twain…The record came out of Nashville, on a Nashville label, so the country stations got very proprietary. Suddenly [her team] was fighting a radio war, and they made threats about her music…..” (Eggar, 2005, pp. 464-465)

Not giving in to country radio’s pressure, Mercury let the record’s popularity speak for itself, so “once the record had crossed over, there was little country radio could do except keep playing it” (p. 465). At this point over 20,000,000 copies had been sold (p. 465). Nine singles were released.

**Music Videos**

Next, Mercury and Shania made music videos to drive the sales of the chart-topping singles (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Eggar (2005) highlights the importance of the videos to the crossover campaign:

From the outset, Mercury knew video was going to be an essential part of that crossover. The country feel was dumped from the beginning as Shania was determined to go glamorous, whether it was classical sophistication (“From This Moment On”), flirting
with half-naked hunks in moody black and white (“You’re Still the One”), or playing the cabaret decadent in top hat and gloves (“Man! I Feel Like a Woman!”). (p. 466)

According to Eggar, Shania also knew how to use the videos for crossover appeal:

The killer video was “That Don’t Impress Me Much,” where Shania, wearing a somewhat improbable fake leopard skin ensemble, hitches across the Mojave desert, turning down a series of lifts from increasingly more gorgeous guys riding Harleys, Jeeps, and stallions. It was a camp classic that programmers, VJs, and viewers adored. The work of a woman who knew how to exploit the medium to the full. (p. 467)

First Tour

Mercury and Shania decided she was ready to headline her own tour (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). The setlist included 14 songs from Come On Over, 8 from The Woman in Me, and 1 from Shania Twain (“Setlist Come On Over Tour,” n.d.). Using the “latest technology” and “state-of-the-art equipment,” her concert was a large-scale production, keeping pace with other “successful” mainstream tours (Eggar, 2005, p. 471). Shania chose to “keep the country sound, but present it as if it was something new,” hiring “young, cool, and funky” musicians (p. 471).

To connect with the audience, massive video screens were used and Shania would start the show at the back of the arena, working her way through the fans to the stage. At each show, she would shine a large spotlight on the last row of seats, surprising a lucky fan with front row seats. For God Bless the Child, a local choir was invited to sing backup. Shania also chose a young singer in each location to perform. Meet-and-greets were scheduled before every show. Shania donated part of her song royalties, merchandise sales, and concert ticket sales to local and national charities supporting the fight against hunger nationally and internationally.

Although the connection with fans was typical of country tours, Eggar (2005) argues, other elements of the show “blurred the country boundaries from the start” (p. 478). She wrote that Shania wore “tight outfits revealing her world-famous midriff for at least half the set” and used visual elements from pop tours (pp. 478-479). Traditional country instruments were still
present, but “the groove was pure pop” (pp. 478-479). By the end of this extremely successful tour, Eggar contends that Shania had crossed over “from country star to pop superstar without missing a beat” (p. 489). In total the Come On Over tour made 164 stops throughout 5 different countries from May 1998 to December 1999, grossing $86,000,000 (p. 489). It was “the highest-grossing country tour” to date (p. 489).

**Going International**

A key part of Shania’s crossover to the pop market was the international promotional campaign for Come On Over (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). By 1998, she was a nationally known country singer in the United States. With country’s low popularity in Europe, roughly 10,000 copies of Come On Over sold in the United Kingdom, to what Eggar (2005) calls “die-hard country fans” (p. 491). Her team believed that before Shania could cross over to the pop market in Europe, she’d need a song to do well on the American pop charts. The tracks from The Woman in Me peaked at number 35 on the Billboard pop singles chart.

In order to succeed in international markets, Shania would have to “tailor [her] sound and image to the demands of the international market” (Eggar, 2005, p. 494). This involved “remixing 70% of the album”, toning down the traditional country sounds or removing them (p. 494). In her first international single, You’re Still the One, “the obvious fiddle and pedal steel parts were cut right back and the pop elements of the song were brought to the forefront…” (p. 494). The track order was also reconfigured. Mercury chose to launch the album in the United Kingdom as they “considered [it] the tastemaker for Europe” (p. 494). The international version of Come On Over was released on March 2, 1998.

Mercury brought in LD Publicity to handle the public relations as they had represented some of the biggest names in pop and rock music (Eggar, 2005). LD’s team overhauled the
album cover artwork, removing the “country” images of Shania with a horse and big hair in favor of a “simple” photo of Shania with her “head turned toward the camera, with disheveled hair, a half smile, and a bare shoulder” (p. 495). She did interviews and photo shoots with *Time* magazine and men’s magazine, *FHM*. The *FHM* photos of Shania wearing “a bustier and a white suit, showing cleavage, but not leg,” were used as “a poster campaign on London buses” and as “press shots for the European campaign” (p. 496). Shania made personal appearances at industry cocktail parties and gave television interviews.

Once British radio picked up *You’re Still the One*, Shania went on a promotional tour across Europe visiting Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Scandinavia, Scotland, France, Italy, and Spain (Eggar, 2005). Her appearances included television and radio interviews, personal appearances, and live performances. She visited Australia in April 1998, appearing on a television talk show and at the Australian Grand Prix.

Two more international singles were released: *When exclusively in the United Kingdom* on June 1, 1998, and *From This Moment On* in November (Eggar, 2005). The international version of *Come On Over* was certified platinum in the United Kingdom. *You’ve Got a Way* was featured in the credits of the hit film, *Notting Hill*, which was set in London. *That Don’t Impress Me Much* was released in June 1999 across Europe. On July 4, 1999, Shania headlined “Capital Radio’s Party in the Park,” a hugely popular annual outdoor concert in London’s Hyde Park (p. 509). *Come On Over* reached #1 on the U.K. charts in September, 1999, where it stayed for 16 weeks (p. 509). The international version was certified multiplatinum in Germany and topped the Australian charts for weeks (p. 509). Eggar describes Shania’s the success of Shania’s international crossover:

By the turn of the millennium, Shania had achieved an almost unique cross-section of the [global] audience. She had the adult market that buys albums and the kids—young girls
from eleven to fourteen who adored her image, indeed wanted to be like her—that buy the singles. Her music…engages children on a fundamental level. They don’t care about the subtext of the words, they just love the songs and the way she looks. (pp. 509-510)

A Change of Pace

In 1998, Shania and Lange moved from upstate New York to a large chateau in Switzerland, hoping for more privacy (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). In July 1999, Shania became the newest face of Revlon cosmetics. As Eggar (2005) explains, the release of the print and television ads were “cunningly designed to tie in with the release of her single *Man! I Feel Like a Woman!*, presenting a glamorous and sexy Shania (p. 529). By the end of 2000, Shania was pregnant, giving birth to her son, Eja, on August 12, 2001.

Fourth Album: *Up!*

Making The Album

Shania picked the encouraging song *Up!* as the title track (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Eggar (2005) describes the mix of sounds on the album: “a hard rock on top of a compelling pop hook, country fiddles contrasting with Indian strings, a mariachi feel in one song, a touch of calypso in another, jangling guitar on one chorus, buzz saw on the next” (p. 556). She suggested this was not “a pure country album,” but “an international pop record” (p. 559). In order to satisfy the various markets the album was recorded in three versions, seemingly “to avoid getting boxed into one genre” (Twain, 2011, p. 337). Each version was color-coded to match “the feel of each style” (p. 337). The first disc was “a more traditionally country-feeling version with the classic fiddles and steel guitar sounds,” colored green to evoke the “pasture, the green, green grass of home” (p. 337). The second version was “more progressively pop-rocky…with more electric guitar, bigger-sounding drums, and no country instruments,” colored red which Shania believed “felt sexier and progressive for the pop version” (p. 337). The third ‘international’
version was “a dance version that had an East Indian flavor,” colored blue, “representing open sky, a space without boundaries” (p. 337). The red and green discs were sold together in a 2-disc pack in the North American market (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). The blue disc was sold internationally.

Promoting the Album

The first music video, *I’m Gonna Getcha Good!*, used Shania’s sexy, glamorous image, showing her in “a skintight black leather catsuit, racing through a futuristic city on a motorcycle, and dodging a giant robot along the way” (Eggar, 2005, p. 562). In August 2002, Shania changed management to Peter Mensch from Q-Prime who listed “Def Leppard, Metallica, the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Garbage, Muse, and Fountains of Wayne” as clients (p. 564). Eggar (2005) notes that since the country market wasn’t doing well, Shania would have to “lean a little harder on the pop side, dress a little different” and “do a lot of things to keep pace” (p. 568).

*Up!* was promoted through television, radio, and print interviews (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). According to Eggar (2005), “the biggest problem Shania faced in promoting *Up!* was time” (p. 569). While promotions for previous albums had begun in the U.S. then crossed over to the European market, she was now an international superstar and “everybody wanted a piece of her at the same time” (p. 569). Thus, the promotional campaign for *Up!* began with international print and television interviews, focusing on popular talk shows.

At this point some believe that Shania began a sort of “Nashville rehabilitation” to win back some country fans who’d been put off by her crossover sound and image (Eggar, 2005, p. 579). She made a personal appearance at the Country Music Association (CMA) Awards on November 6, 2002, where she performed *I’m Gonna Getcha Good!* and presented an award.
Eggar (2005) suggests, “given the nature of her [CMA] performance and attire, it sounded as if she was deliberately trying to appeal to her roots audience” (p. 572).

Shania was booked on major network shows to promote the album’s release (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). The Up! album was released worldwide on November 18, 2002, going “straight to number one on the US, Canadian, and Australian album charts, to number two in New Zealand, and number four in the United Kingdom” (Eggar, 2005, p. 571). Shania (2011) recalled how Up! “became [her] first number one on both the country chart and the Billboard Top 200” (pp. 337-338). The red (pop) disc was successful in pop, country, and international markets, spawning “five Top 20 country hits,” selling 20,000,000 units internationally (p. 338). The green (country) disc was highly successful in the country market. Overall, Up! “made [Shania] the only woman performer [at the time]…to ever have three consecutive CDs exceed ten million in sales” (p. 338). The blue (international) disc did not sell as well, lacking radio play and “circulated on a smaller scale” (p. 338).

On November 24, 2002, Shania performed at the Canadian Superbowl (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). In January 2003, she kicked off the halftime performance at the U.S. Super Bowl XXXVIII. She showed her “bare midriff,” wearing “a silver bra, a full-length black leather coat, assorted chains, and knee-high black boots” (Eggar, 2005, p. 573). She was featured heavily in mainstream American magazines including, “People, Rolling Stone, Redbook, Time and Entertainment Weekly” (p. 574). Shania (2011) expressed her pleasure at her crossover success:

The fact that the album was categorized in pop, pop rock, and country pop was my dream: to be an international recording artist, recognized as an artist not of any specific genre, but just appreciated as an artist by all lovers of music. (Twain, 2011, p. 338)
A Toned Down Image

Although receiving much positive coverage, *Up!*’s sales did not match those of *Come On Over* (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Her team thought perhaps her glamorous international image had deterred some of her original country fans (Eggar, 2005). Mercury head Lewis explained:

“My take on her success was that her appeal was she was the all-American girl, but I think she had lost that, taken her finger off the pulse; maybe she was trying too hard…I told her that jeans make her look more American…” (Eggar, 2005, p. 576)

Mercury decided to delay the U.S. release of the music video for *Ka-Ching!*—a song about “conspicuous consumption”—worrying fans may not catch the “irony” of the “expensive jewelry and fancy clothes” (p. 576).

In Eggar’s (2005) view, Shania and her team tried to emphasize the more traditional country sides of image to win back lost fans. She “deliberately dressed down” at personal appearances (p. 576). At the April 7, 2003 Country Music Television (CMT) Awards she sang a duet with “Alison Krauss and Union Station, the exquisite champions of roots country” (p. 576). She appeared at the birthday party of outlaw country legend Willie Nelson. Shania also recorded a “television special” called “*Up! Close and Personal*” with Alison Krauss and Union Station (p. 577).

*Up! Tour*

Shania “warmed up” for the *Up!* tour by performing shows in Ireland and London as well as an NBC concert special in Grant Park, Chicago (Eggar, 2005, p. 578). The world tour kicked off in Hamilton, Ontario on September 25, 2003, selling out in forty-five minutes (p. 582). The average set list included 5 tracks from *The Woman in Me*, 10 from *Come On Over*, and 9 from *Up!* (“Setlist Up! world tour,” n.d.). Eggar (2005) states that “By July 2004, she had played some 130 shows in eleven countries to over two and a half million people, breaking box office...
records around the world” (p. 582). The European leg alone included “thirty shows in twenty-five cities” (Twain, 2011, p. 340). The tour earned more than $35.5 million on the first leg with the “average box office gross per city [at] $1,121,822…” (Eggar, 2005, p. 582). The costumes included glitzy outfits as well as toned down clothing. On the European leg, Shania said, “We played more international-sounding versions with fewer fiddles, and more electric guitars and synthesized loops and effects to the arrangements of the crossover hits that had gone international” (Twain, 2011, p. 340).

By December 2003, Up! was diamond certified by the Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA), meaning it had sold 10,000,000 units (Eggar, 2005, p. 586). This was her third album to be certified Diamond, making Shania the only artist to have done so.

2004- Present

Shania’s Greatest Hits album was released November 8, 2004, including three new songs (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). The single Party for Two was recorded in a country and pop version. I Ain’t No Quitter had a “down-home honky-tonk” sound (Eggar, 2005, p. 591). The third new track, Don’t, was made for the film An Unfinished Life. Shania made a cameo in the film I Heart Huckabees in September 2004 and launched a line of perfumes for the Stetson brand.

By the end of 2004, Shania decided to take a break from the spotlight and her grueling schedule, settling into domestic life and motherhood at her chateau in Switzerland (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). In March 2008, it was revealed that Lange was having an affair with Shania’s best friend, Marie-Anne Thiébaud (Chiu, 2008). Lange and Shania separated, divorcing in June 2010. Retreating to Switzerland, Shania developed a friendship with Thiébaud’s ex-husband, Frederic. In 2009, she delayed the release of her next album to spend time with her family.
During this break she served as an Olympic torch runner for the Vancouver winter games in 2010 (Chiu, 2010). Shania also appeared as a guest judge on the U.S. singing competition *American Idol*. By the start of 2011, Frederic and Shania had fallen in love, marrying in January (Bartolomeo, 2011; Dam, 2011a, 2011b).

In mid-2011, Shania debuted her reality show, *Why Not? With Shania Twain*, showing her private life and retreat from the spotlight (Gliatto; 2011; Twain, 2011). In conjunction with the show she released a new single, *Today Is Your Day*, on June 12, 2011. On June 8, Shania announced a Vegas residency show, *You’re Still The One*, at the Colosseum at Caesar’s Palace hotel and casino (Geller, 2011). The show is scheduled to run through 2013 and 2014 with 60 shows per year. Most recently, in July 2013, Shania revealed on her Facebook page that she is currently working on her fifth studio album, with no projected release date (Mensah, 2013).

**Summary**

The information in this chapter demonstrates that Shania and her public relations team had a deliberate crossover strategy. She was launched as a country artist, but through careful planning and promotion, she was able to mold her music and image to appeal to the pop audience. Thus, after showing that a crossover strategy was in place, the following chapter will present the findings from the qualitative content analysis of the public relations documents involved and resulting press coverage, as well as an examination of sales and chart performance data. These findings hope to shed insight on which frames were sponsored by Shania’s public relations team during her crossover and whether key publics—media and consumers—accepted the sponsored frames.
CHAPTER 5:
FINDINGS

This chapter will present the results of the study. The findings will report the sponsored frames that were identified through a qualitative content analysis of relevant public relations materials. Also reported are the press frames, which were identified through a qualitative content analysis of the resulting press coverage to show whether the sponsored frames were accepted. The findings are reported in chronological order organized by album. Table 6 below shows the date ranges for public relations materials and press coverage for each album. After the frames are reported, the sales and chart performance data for each album is displayed separately to show frame acceptance by consumers—fans and industry (see Tables 17-21).

Table 6. Date Ranges of Materials Reviewed in Content Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Date range of materials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>1993-Jan. 1995</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Up!</em></td>
<td>Oct. 2002-May 2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Shania Twain Frames*

*Shania Twain: Public Relations Frames*

In order to identify the frames sponsored by Shania’s public relations team during the campaign for her first album, *Shania Twain*, the press kit biography was examined (Mercury,
1992) (See Appendix 1). Four dominant frames emerged from this review: **tough background**, **versatile artist, authentic talent**, and **down-to-earth person**. Additionally, two less important frames were found: **glamorous performer** and **country artist** (see Table 7). The codes for each frame are shown below in Figure 1. Each sponsored frame is discussed below from most to least significant.

**Table 7. Shania Twain: Sponsored Public Relations Frames**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PR Frame</th>
<th>Total (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tough background</td>
<td>10 (27%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versatile artist</td>
<td>7 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>7 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>6 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>4 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>37 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 1. Shania Twain Album: Public Relations Codes**

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7 Frames are denoted by *bold italics*
**Tough background.** The most significant sponsored frame found in the text was Shania’s *tough background* (Mercury, 1992). The document portrayed Shania as coming from a humble, hardworking, and loving family plagued by struggle and heartbreak. Adjectives invoking this frame include “rustic,” “poor,” and “rural” (p. 1). The Twain’s are described as “poor even by rural Canadian standards” (p. 1). Her family’s rustic life and tough work ethic is illustrated through Shania’s description of their reforestation business:

> “From spring through fall I’d work with my father in the bush… I’d run the crew, and we’d plant millions of trees through the summer. We’d get up between 4 and 6 in the morning, live on beans, bread and tea, walk up to an hour to the site and work there all day with no shelter in the rain, snow or sunshine, in the middle of the bush, hours from civilization.” (p. 2)

The document also makes mention of Shania’s Native American heritage through her stepfather:

> “Shania’s father was Ojibway, and ‘Shania’ is an Ojibway name” (p. 2).

Additionally, details of Shania’s childhood performances show her hard work to succeed in the music business and her family’s effort to support this aim. The text states that “By the time she was eight, she had sung in talent contests, at carnivals and on television, and her success had become something the entire family would strive for” (p. 1). By the age of ten she was “singing professionally” in local bars and clubs, and “by high school, Shania was singing regularly in bands, as often as four nights as week…” (p. 1-2). Consequently, this “loving family…often made great sacrifices for Shania’s music, driving, for instance, 500 miles to Toronto for vocal and music lessons when they had the money” (p. 1). This frame was also sponsored by information about the loss of Shania’s parents in a car accident, stating, “she was faced with both the tragic loss and the responsibility for her younger siblings” (p. 2).

**Versatile artist.** The frame of *versatile artist* was also significant. Shania is described as having “versatility” and her album is called “very diverse” and “very different” (Mercury,
Noting that the album contains a range of sounds, the text uses adjectives such as “rich, bluesy feel,” “pop-tinged,” “light and poppy,” “funky, down-and-dirty,” “killer ballad,” and “sassy, R&B kind of song” (p. 1, 3). These “diverse elements” are described as providing “a song for everybody” (p. 3). Additionally, Shania’s range of musical influences is described as “an impressively eclectic mix,” noting how she “explored everything from rock and R&B to Christian music,” and “tried to bring all those elements into [her] writing” (p. 1). She also labels “Gladys Knight and Karen Carpenter” as “two of [her] biggest influences,” remarking that “If you only admire one kind of singer, you probably won’t develop much outside of that range” (p. 3). In a similar vein, the text explains Shania’s broad range of performance experience “in settings that ranged from singing in bands in night clubs to opening for Bernadette Peters with the Toronto Symphony Orchestra” (p. 2). Her stage performance is called “dynamic and complex” (p. 3).

**Authentic talent.** Another important sponsored frame presented Shania as a legitimate artist with *authentic talent* and true vocal ability. Her vocal skills are described as “rich and expressive” (Mercury, 1992, p. 3). Mention is also made of her performance experience at Deerhurst resort where her “biggest development as a performer really took place” (p. 2). In emphasizing Shania’s legitimate talent, the text calls her “a performer of rare passion” with “a long-standing passion for singing” (p. 1, 3). Additionally, the document mentions Shania’s “natural performing abilities” and “the young singer’s impressive abilities” (p. 1, 3). Her music is described as “unequivocally her own” (p. 1).

**Down-to-earth person.** The sponsored frame of Shania as a *down-to-earth person* portrays her as a modest, emotional, fun, determined, and relatable woman. She describes herself as a “pretty emotional person” who “can be serious and fun all at the same time”
(Mercury, 1992, p. 3). Shania also emphasizes her focus on being relatable to her fans saying, “As an entertainer, you have a way to get yourself across to people” and “They get to relate to you and feel what you’re feeling” (p. 3). Showing her modest side, she mentions, “I still bathe with a cup” (p. 2).

**Glamorous performer.** A less important sponsored frame of Shania as a glamorous performer depicts her as an entertainer with glamorous costumes performing at glitzy venues. The text suggests she possesses “confidence and a mature sense of style” (p. 1). The document also mentions glamorous clothing such as a “sequined gown” and performances “in some of the most glamorous resorts and nightspots of the Toronto region” (p. 2, 1).

**Country artist.** Another less significant frame sponsored in the public relations material is of Shania as a country artist. The text points out how she grew up singing country music, pursued a career in the country genre, and used Nashville talent on her debut album. Shania is quoted stating, “I’ve always sung country,” and one of the album’s tracks is described as “a lively, straight-ahead country two-step” (Mercury, 1992, p. 1).

**Shania Twain: Press Frames**

To identify press frames for this album, one feature article and two reviews were coded (see Appendix 2). Seven frames of Shania were found in the press materials reviewed. Four dominant frames emerged from the sample press coverage of the *Shania Twain* album: country artist, versatile artist, rags to riches story, and authentic talent. Three less significant frames also emerged: glamorous performer, down-to-earth person, and new country sound (see Table 8). The following section will discuss each of these press frames from most to least dominant, using quotations from the materials to illustrate the frame.
Table 8. Shania Twain Album: Press Coverage Frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Total (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>12 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versatile artist</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rags to riches story</td>
<td>8 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>7 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New country sound</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>46 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Shania Twain album: Press Codes

**Country artist.** The most significant frame found in the media coverage of Shania’s debut album presented her as an artist fully under the country genre label. Articles compared her to established country legends. *Rolling Stone* called Shania “one of the best country torch singers since Patsy Cline” and described one of her songs as “a straight-ahead country wopper” (McGee, 1993, p. 112). *Music City News* (Wix, 1993) named her “one of country music’s newest female stars-to-be” (para. 2); “perhaps the classiest country songstress since entertainers like Tammy Wynette or Anne Murray” (para. 3); and “a leading force for today’s contemporary country movement” (para. 3). Coverage also noted her use of country industry talent on her
album. For example, *Rolling Stone* said Shania was “accompanied by a host of top-flight Nashville, Tenn., players..” (McGee, 1993, p. 112). Additionally, *Music City News* pointed out, “after exploring practically every musical format possible…Twain is now back at home with the music she grew up singing—country” (Wix, 1993, para. 3). Wix (1993) also noted the use of traditional country themes—“an old-fashioned barn dance—in the music video for her single *Dance With The One Who Brought You* (para. 9).

**Versatile artist.** Another significant frame emanating from the press coverage is that of Shania as a *versatile artist* with many non-country influences and a mix of sounds in her music. *Music City News* stated, “Twain’s versatile musical voyage is indeed evident throughout her Mercury Records debut album,” describing some songs as “pop-laced” (Wix, 1993, para. 5). Wix (1993) comments, “Interestingly enough though, her approach to country music continues to embrace the sultry energy of contemporary rock, the soulfulness of R&B, as well as the strong conviction of Christian music” (para. 3). *Entertainment Weekly*’s review compares Shania’s sound to Karen Carpenter (Nash, 1993). *Country Music News* touched on the variety of her performance experience, adding that Shania “open[ed] for acts such as Bernadette Peters and the Toronto Symphony Orchestra” (Wix, 1993, para. 2). *Rolling Stone* described the mix of sounds in her music, calling her style “hard and bluesy” (McGee, 1993, p. 112).

**Rags to riches story.** Another important press frame presents Shania’s poor, rural, difficult upbringing as a *rags to riches* transformation story. *Music City News*’ article headline reads, “Shania Twain: From Grit to Glamour,” writing that “Before signing with Mercury Records and the release of the album, however, life was not always beaches, bright lights and glamour” (Wix, 1993, para. 10). *Rolling Stone* describes Shania as “a woman who has experienced life to the depths” (McGee, 1993, p. 112). Coverage noted her hardworking family
by mentioning Shania’s endless childhood performances at local venues as well as the family reforestation business. *Music City News* tells how Shania’s parents sacrificed, driving great distances to Shania’s music lessons (Wix, 1993). Additionally, mention of her Native heritage and life working in the bush tended to show emphasis on Shania’s rural background. Writers also brought up the tragic loss of Shania’s parents in a car accident and the subsequent raising of her siblings

**Authentic talent.** The frame of Shania as an *authentic talent* depicts her as a legitimate artist with vocal talent and the ability to effortlessly express emotion through her music. *Rolling Stone* asserts, “Twain works the vocal magic of an assured stylist whose every breath broadens a song’s emotional landscape” with “grit and maturity” (McGee, 1993, p. 112). *Music City News* describes Shania’s voice as “expressive” (Wix, 1993, para. 3).

**Glamorous performer.** The first less important press frame shows Shania as a *glamorous performer* in costume, image, and style. *Music City News* points to her “entertaining in some of the most glamorous resorts in the Toronto region…” (Wix, 1993, para. 2). The publication also describes Shania as classy and “sheer elegance,” (para. 3) with her music videos “flaunting a similar sort of Hollywood glamour” (para. 9).

**Down-to-earth person.** The *down-to-earth person* frame found in the press was also less significant. This frame depicts Shania as genuine, modest and optimistic. *Rolling Stone* says she has “incredible heart” (McGee, 1993, p. 112). *Rolling Stone* shows her genuine nature quoting Shania expressing her emotions—“There are just so many different sides of me that I have to get them all on one album. I call it my emotional rollercoaster” (Wix, 1993, para. 4).

**New country sound.** Another less-frequent frame emerging from media coverage of Shania’s first album is the *new country sound* frame. Articles describe Shania as bringing a new
sound to country music, pushing the boundaries of the genre. *Entertainment Weekly* calls Shania’s sound “a whole new genre of country music,” (Nash, 1993, p. 71) while *Rolling Stone* refers to her style “Twain’s brand of country” (McGee, 1993, p. 112). *Country Music News* describes her music videos as “some of the most progressive video performances ever witnessed in country music” (Wix, 1993, para. 6).

*The Woman In Me Frames*

*The Woman In Me: Public Relations Frames*

The public relations materials examined for frames in *The Woman In Me* promotional campaign included: the press kit cover letter (Mercury, 1994a), the press kit biography (Mercury, 1994b), and eight Mercury Nashville press releases (see Appendix 1). Eight sponsored frames were found in the public relations materials promoting Shania’s second album, *The Woman In Me* (see Table 9). Five dominant frames emerged from review of these materials: *country artist, mass appeal, down-to-earth, welcome Mutt, and tough background*. Three less important frames were found as well: *accomplished artist, authentic talent* and *independent female*. The codes for each frame are displayed in Figure 3 below. Each frame will be discussed separately below, from most to least dominant. Words from the public relations materials will be used to demonstrate the use of each frame.


### Table 9. The Woman In Me Album: Sponsored Public Relations Frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Total (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>42 (21%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass appeal</td>
<td>30 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth</td>
<td>27 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Mutt</td>
<td>26 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tough background</td>
<td>23 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>20 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>18 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent female</td>
<td>11 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>197 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3. The Woman In Me: Public Relations Codes**
**Country artist.** The most frequently used frame in the public relations materials for *The Woman In Me* album was Shania as a *country artist*. The text describes her as a country artist, her county sounds, how she grew up singing country, her start in Nashville, and how her success helps the genre. The press kit cover letter mentions “Shania’s country sensibility,” (Mercury, 1994a, para. 3) while the biography tells how she “grew up listening to Waylon, Willie, Dolly, Tammy, all of them…” (Mercury, 1994b, p. 2). The text also says that she “gravitate[s] toward Nashville and country music” (p. 2). Shania is quoted emphasizing, “as a child performer it was always country, so that’s how I developed” (p. 2). Further, the press releases refer to her as a country artist, listing her many awards in the genre and success on the country charts. Several of the releases also measure her success against established country legends such as Patsy Cline, Wynonna Judd, Reba McEntire, and Anne Murray. Additionally, Mercury Nashville President,
Luke Lewis, is quoted in some releases stating how Shania’s success helps country music: “I feel that [the album] is also good for country music in general…” (Mercury, 1995b, para. 4).

**Mass appeal.** The second most important frame emerging from the public relations documents is the *mass appeal* frame. This frame presents Shania as having mass appeal on a national and international level and mentions her success in the mainstream market, across all genres. The press kit biography describes Shania as “a talent so versatile that she could handle just about any style of music” (Mercury, 1994a, p. 2). The document also mentions how her debut album “enjoyed a great deal of success overseas” and describes her second album as “truly an international project” (p. 2). Two press releases explain how “Shania has been from coast to coast and around the world promoting *The Woman In Me*,” listing the extensive national media coverage she has received (Mercury, 1995a, para. 5; 1995b, para. 5). The releases also list Shania’s success in the mainstream market, mentioning her placement on the all-genre Billboard 200 chart and award nominations such as the American Music Awards and Grammys.

**Down-to-earth person.** Another significant frame to surface from *The Woman In Me* public relations materials was that of Shania as a *down-to-earth person*. This frame portrayed her as a genuine, giving, hardworking, balanced, grateful, and humble person. The press kit cover letter declares that “to know Shania’s music is to know her” (Mercury, 1994a, para. 4). The biography states, “she has found that delicate balance between her career and her personal life” (Mercury, 1994b, p. 3). Shania is then quoted saying, “I won’t neglect my personal life…my personal life comes first” (p. 3). In several press releases, Shania expresses her humble gratitude for her fans’ support: “I’m thrilled with all the support this early in my career…What’s most exciting for me is that people are going out and buying my music” (Mercury, 1995b, para. 2). Another release details Shania’s interactive, dedicated actions at her “first Fan Appreciation
Event,” describing how she “signed autographs for hours and climbed to the top of her video monitors for a sing-along on several occasions” (Mercury, 1996d, para. 1). Shania is quoted:

“I was overwhelmed at the response of the people…I still can’t believe how warm and enthusiastic they were, after waiting hours and hours in line. For me, the time just flew by. I hated to leave when it was over. (para. 6)

Additionally, three releases detail Shania’s donation of proceeds from the sale of her single, *God Bless the Child*, to charities feeding hungry children.

**Welcome Mutt.** The frame of welcoming Shania’s husband, Robert “Mutt” Lange, to the country music world was another important frame used in the public relations materials. Lange was depicted as a world-famous producer with a pop/rock background and over-the-top style making his first foray into the country music market with Shania as a strong and talented husband-wife team. The press kit cover letter (Mercury, 1994b) introduces Mutt as a “world renowned Grammy-winning producer,” (para. 2) making his “first venture into the country market” (para. 3). His style is described as “Mutt’s famous over the top production” (para. 3). The press kit biography quotes Shania: “Mutt’s a huge country music fan…I may be the princess in his life, but Tammy Wynette is the Queen! The steel guitar is his favorite instrument” (Mercury, 1994b, p. 2). She describes their husband/wife team effort involved in making the album saying, “Creatively we were very in sync with each other…My husband Mutt is the producer of my dreams and the love of my life” (p. 2). Shania also mentions his belief in her talent: “That’s when he realized I had writing potential he wanted to tap into” (p. 3). She adds that, “The title cut [of the album] is another good example of a collaboration of our two backgrounds” (p. 3). A press release labels Lange, “her husband and co-writer/producer” (Mercury, 1996e, para. 4).
**Tough background.** Tough background emerged as yet another important frame sponsored by Shania’s public relations team during promotion of her second album. This frame shows Shania coming from a rural, tough, poor, hardworking background with a large, loving family. The press kit biography says, “the talented little girl’s life was not filled with Barbie dolls and fingerpaints” (Mercury, 1994b, p. 1). Her family is described as very underprivileged: “We were extremely poor when I was a kid, and my mother was often depressed with five children and no food to feed them” (p. 1). The text mentions her work for the family reforestation business, the loss of parents in a car accident when she was twenty-one, and how she subsequently raised her younger siblings. Shania is dubbed, “a tough little survivor” (p. 1). Another highlighted aspect of her youth is the pressure to perform publicly and how she used music as an escape from her family’s economic struggles:

“I pretty much missed my childhood…I’ve always been focused. My career has always been very consuming. It probably consumes me less now than it did as a child. I liked to escape my persona life through music. Music was all I ever did. I spent a lot of time in solitude with just my guitar, writing and singing away for hours. I would play ‘til my fingers were bruised, and I loved it! But I never enjoyed the pressure of being a performer. My parents forced me to perform, which in the long run was the best thing because I was naturally quite a recluse. If not for my parents I’d still be singing in my bedroom and be quite content, mind you.” (p. 1)

In a press release announcing Shania’s donation of proceeds from her single “God Bless the Child” to child hunger charities, she explains, “There were times when I went to school without breakfast and had no food to pack a lunch when I was young…” (Mercury, 1996f, para. 2).

**Accomplished artist.** A less important frame portrayed Shania as an accomplished artist breaking sales and attendance records. Several of the press releases announced Shania’s record-breaking sales figures with headlines such as “Shania Twain’s The Woman In Me breaks sales records,” “Twain breaks another record,” and “Shania Twain’s The Woman In Me tops the 8 million mark” (Mercury, 1995b, 1996e, 1996d). One release detailed the record-breaking
attendance at “Shania’s first Fan Appreciation Event,” where “an estimated 20,000 Minnesotans” packed the Mall of America “rallying for a look and/or autograph” (Mercury, 1996e, para. 1).

**Authentic talent.** Shania as an *authentic talent* was another less frequent frame. This frame depicts her as an artist with natural, extraordinary talent with experience and a gift for songwriting. The texts also mention her immense success despite her decision not to tour in support of the album. The press kit cover letter calls Shania, “not ‘just a pretty face with a pretty voice’” (Mercury, 1994a, para. 1). The press kit biography describes the singer as “packin’ the goods,” with “extensive experience” (Mercury, 1994b, p. 2). The document adds, “Shania’s hope is to be perceived as an all around artist known not only for her singing but also for her ability to write” (p. 3).

**Independent female.** This less significant frame shows Shania as an *independent female* in charge of her career and accomplishing milestone feats for a female artist. Shania is quoted in the press kit biography: “I’m in control of my career now. I enjoy it because I want to do it, not because I have to” (Mercury, 1994b, p. 3). Several of the press releases from Mercury emphasize Shania’s triumphs as a female artist, with one claiming her success is beneficial for “female artists in particular” (1995b, para. 4). Another release describes *The Woman In Me* as “the fastest certified album for a female artist in country music history” (Mercury, 1995a, para. 1).

**The Woman In Me: Press Frames**

Eleven feature articles and three reviews were analyzed for press frames (see Appendix 2). In total, eleven frames were found in the press coverage of *The Woman In Me* album (see Table 10). Five dominant frames emerged: *rags to riches story, Lange, country artist, country*
outsider pushing boundaries, and glamorous performer. Six less significant frames were also found: crossover artist, authentic talent, down-to-earth person, accomplished artist, driven careerist, and female empowerment. The codes for each frame are displayed in Figure 4 below.

The following section will discuss each press frame in order from most to least significant.

Words from the texts will be used to illustrate the frame.

Table 10. The Woman in Me: Press Frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Total (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rags-to-riches story</td>
<td>61 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>59 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>46 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country outsider pushing boundaries</td>
<td>40 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>39 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossover artist</td>
<td>26 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>26 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>26 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>16 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>10 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>9 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>358 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4. The Woman in Me: Press Codes

Rags to riches story
- Rural
- Hardworking
- Tough
- Poor
- Large, loving family

Lange
- Husband/wife team
- Pop/rock background
- Responsible for Shania’s success
- Private
- Genius
- Overproduced
- Songwriter
- Country fan

Country artist
- Country label
- Country sounds
- Where belongs
- Grew up singing
- Compare to country artists

Country outsider pushing boundaries
- New sound to country
- Shed country image
- Not traditional path

Glamorous performer
- Good looks
- Physical assets
- Performance
- Videos
- Image
- Outfits

Crossover artist
- Pop
- Crossover
- Range of musical influences
- Mix of sounds
- National appeal
- International appeal

Authentic talent
- Vocals
- Songwriter
- Natural talent
- Not just pretty face
- Musical from young age

Down-to-earth person
- Giving
- Genuine
- Humble
- Grateful

Accomplished artist
- Sales
- Awards
- Videos

Driven careerist
- Hardworking
- Smart
- Confidence

Female empowerment
- Female themes
- Independent

Driven careerist
- Hardworking
- Smart
- Confidence

Female empowerment
- Female themes
- Independent
Rags to riches story. The most significant frame found in the press coverage, *rags to riches story*, presented Shania’s life journey as a fairytale transformation from poverty to stardom with her overcoming great obstacles and struggle along the way. Touching on her tough childhood, several articles mentioned the pressure to perform as a child, the loss of her parents, the raising of her siblings, her mother’s bouts with depression, how music was an escape, her emotional struggles, and her missed childhood. Coverage also emphasized her poor, rural upbringing, Native heritage, and work in the family reforestation business. *People* magazine’s headline proclaims, “Mark This Twain: Shania Twain rises from poverty and the loss of her parents to country music stardom” (Lague, 1995, n.p.). According to *The Tennessean*, “Twain’s history not only includes a lifetime of performing and songwriting, it reads like a cinematic epic” (Oermann, 1996, p. 1D). *Country Weekly* describes the resort where she got her big break as “the northern Ontario, Canada, resort that helped her overcome a family tragedy and launch her blossoming music career” (Krewen, 1995, para. 2). *Entertainment Weekly* writes, “Twain has been laboring toward stardom since her less-than-storybook childhood” (Schoenfein, 1995, para. 9).

Lange. The second most significant press frame found is that of Shania’s husband, Robert “Mutt” Lange. The most frequent descriptions of Lange mentioned him and Shania as a strong, creative, and loving husband/wife team. Writers emphasized the fact that Lange and Shania co-wrote the entire album and praised their collaboration. *TV Guide* calls their team “a real partnership” (Bream, 1996, para. 8). Shania describes their partnership in *Interview* magazine:

“...when you get together with the right person, all the right things seem to start happening...But obviously, we have a much closer relationship than your average co-writers. We sit around and write songs during commercial breaks while we’re watching TV, or while we’re going for groceries. It’s almost like extended conversation for us. If
there’s nothing to talk about, we make something up, and that’s what songwriting’s all about.” (Powell, 1996, p. 104)

Press coverage also highlighted Lange’s pop/rock background, often mentioning his past work with artists such as Bryan Adams and Def Leppard. *Billboard*’s review calls Lange a “rock-star producer” (1995, p. 59). *Billboard*’s feature article says, “On the album, Twain’s country music meets her husband Robert John “Mutt” Lange’s rock production and songwriting skills” (Borzillo, 1995, p. 82). *Entertainment Weekly* describes how Lange “applied his pop sensibilities to Twain’s music” (Schoenfein, 1995, para. 6). *The Tennessean* calls him “one of the world’s most glamorous rock record producers…” (Oermann, 1996, p. 2D).

Another slightly less used description of Lange presented him as responsible for Shania’s success. *Entertainment Weekly* writes, “What sets Twain apart is chemistry,” adding that “Before the singer met British pop-rock producer Robert John “Mutt” Lange and rocketed up various charts, she was just another carnivorous country singer with a modestly successful but ultimately uninspired self-titled debut” (Schoenfein, 1995, para. 3). *People* states, “Though she’s been singing since she first picked up a guitar at the age of 8, what changed Twain’s life was joining forces with Lange, 46, who orchestrated Def Leppard’s multiplatinum rise to stardom in the 1980s…” (Lague, 1995, para. 4). *TV Guide* even quotes Shania saying, “He’s responsible for the sound” (Bream, 1996, para. 8). Several articles also note how Lange helped Shania to believe in herself as a songwriter and to release her own material.

Some of the less significant descriptions of Lange depict him as a private, genius producer with an over-produced style. *Entertainment Weekly*’s album review calls Lange “an over-the-top pop producer” (Nash, 1995, p. 71). *Newsweek* writes that the album “was produced with monster hit-making sheen by Shania’s husband of two years, Robert John (Mutt) Lange, whose doctoring helped Def Leppard and Bryan Adams sell millions” (Schoemer, 1996, p. 70).
The Village Voice labels him a “scarily excellent all-purpose megaproducer” (Hunter, 1996, p. 64). Many writers also remarked on his reclusive ways. The Tennessean remarked how “Lange does not wish to be photographed and never appears in public with his wife” (Oermann, 1996, p. 2D). Only one source described Lange as an “avid country fan” (Oermann, 1996, p. 2D). One source described him chiefly as a songwriter.

**Country artist.** Another important frame emerging from the press materials portrays Shania as a country artist. In this frame, articles and reviews called Shania a country artist with a country album and country songs. Writers also referenced her success in terms of country chart placement and country genre awards. Esquire calls Shania “Country’s newest queen” (Stahl, 1996, p. 29). People refers to her success as “country music stardom” and calls dubs Shania “the hottest young female star in country music” (Lague, 1995, para. 1). Coverage also presented country as the genre Shania loves and belongs in. TV Guide says Shania is “true to her roots” (Bream, 1996, n.p.). When Interview asked Shania “What do you love most about country music?” she replied: “So many things. As a performer, it’s what I’m the most comfortable with. It’s also the lifestyle I’m most comfortable with.” (Powell, 1996, p. 104). Several articles also emphasize how she grew up listening to and singing country music. The country sounds in her music were also written about. Billboard’s (1995) review of her single “Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under” describes the track as a “fiddle-driven shuffler” (p. 59). Newsweek says the album “has all the earmarks of traditional country: fiddles, steel guitar, honky-tonk beats” (Schoemer, 1996, p. 70). A few texts also compare Shania’s success to other established country artists, such as Reba McEntire, Patsy Cline, and Trisha Yearwood.

**Country outsider pushing boundaries.** An important frame emerging from several press articles portrayed Shania as a country outsider pushing the genre’s boundaries. This
frame described her as bringing a new sound to country music, expanding its audience, shedding the stereotypical country image, and not taking the traditional path to country stardom.

*Entertainment Weekly*’s review wrote that “Twain sheds her country-cookie image” (Cannon & Helligar, 1997, p. 58). *Billboard* describes her album’s sound as “really different for country radio…but it’s a sound that will expand country music” (Borzillo, 1995, p. 82). *Entertainment Weekly*’s feature’s headline reads, “An outsider with all the right moves, Shania Twain hurtles out of the great white north, straight up country’s charts” (Schoenfein, 1995, p. 32). The article describes Shania’s different style:

Shania Twain may know how to write a hit single, but she sure doesn’t know how to be a country star. She’s from Canada, for one thing, and doesn’t live anywhere near Nashville. Not once in a five-hour interview does she thank God for her success. She doesn’t even eat meat, for Pete’s sake. Granted, the 29-year-old singer’s hair is on the big side, but what country music’s star of the moment is mostly about is breaking stereotypes. (para. 1)

Similarly, *Newsweek* says that “Shania’s success skirts other country traditions,” by not living in Nashville and deciding not to tour in support of her second album (Schoemer, 1996, p. 70). *The Tennessean* adds:

Shania Twain is rewriting the rule book on country stardom…Twain did not take the usual path to climb such dizzying heights in country music. She didn’t do concerts. She recorded with a rock producer instead of a country producer. She stayed out of the Music City social whirl and chose not to move to country music’s capital. And she defied another country rule of thumb, the one that says you can’t sell records to other women if you are too beautiful. (Oermann, 1996, p. 1D)

*TV Guide* writes, “Sexy and savvy Shania Twain, a fresh voice from Canada, has carried country music to a broader audience” (Bream, 1996, n.p.).

**Glamorous performer.** Another noteworthy frame in the press coverage of Shania’s sophomore album is that of the *glamorous performer*. This frame shows Shania as having good looks, attractive physical assets, glamorous clothing, glamorous performances, a distinct
professional image, and sexy style. *Entertainment Weekly*’s review says Shania has “pinup looks” (Cannon & Helligar, 1997, p. 58). The magazine’s feature article describes the artist as a “curvy, size 2 brunette” (Schoenfein, 1995, para. 14). *Newsweek* illustrates her performance image: “Her luscious brown hair is pulled back into a carefully styled ponytail, her cropped red turtleneck shows of a tantalizing swatch of midriff and her black stretch pants outline her curvaceous hips” (Schoemmer, 1996, p. 70). The writer also uses the following phrases to describe Shania: “Steamy panache,” “Stone fox,” “the new 10,” “languid,” and “bedroom allure” (p. 70). Further, the text quotes Shania explaining how she becomes the glam character, creating a certain performance image:

“I think that’s my job: to be this person in the videos that’s just free and getting into the music and having fun”…Shania knows darn well that for the next four hours, her job is to bring that fantasy person to life. And she does it like a pro. (p. 70)

*The Village Voice* refers to Shania as a “videobabe” (Hunter, 1996, p. 64). *New Country* quotes Shania highlighting the importance of this image: “The entertainment value of what we do visually is important—it has to be there” (Mansfield, 1997, p. 34).

**Crossover artist.** One of the less frequent frames emerging from the press coverage of *The Woman In Me* album depicts Shania as a *crossover artist*. This frame labels Shania as a pop or crossover artist and mentions her range of musical influences, mix of sounds, and her national and international appeal. *Billboard* describes her album as “a true crossover,” while *Entertainment Weekly* calls it “a crossover hit” (Borzillo, 1995, p. 82; Schoenfein, 1995, para. 2). A couple of sources also touch on the crossover controversy, with *New Country* commenting:

“In the process, she’s ignited what may become a full-scale culture war in country music between the faction that adheres to strict notions of tradition and the one that allows for changing influences for a changing market” (Mansfield, 1997, p. 34). Other writers remarked on Shania’s
national or international audience. *New Country* calls her “a perfect international star,” while *Interview* says Shania is “taking over the whole country” (p. 34; Powell, 1996, p. 102).

**Authentic talent.** The authentic talent frame was also less significant. This frame emphasizes Shania’s natural talent as a vocalist and songwriter, underlining her legitimacy as a real artist. Multiple writers noted her album sales success as proof of her talent. Others note her musical ability from a young age. *People* comments that “Critics too have swooned over Twain’s talents as a songwriter…” (Lague, 1995, para. 3). *Entertainment Weekly* refers to her “raw ability” (Schoenfein, 1995, para. 7).

**Down-to-earth person.** Another less significant frame found in press coverage for Shania’s second album is the down-to-earth person. This frame depicts Shania as a giving, genuine, humble, and grateful individual. *Country Weekly* mentions her “playful side,” while *People* says she was “clad in jeans and sneakers” during their feature interview (Krewen, 1995, para. 3; Lague, 1995, para. 1). In *Newsweek*, Shania is quoted stating, “Myself, personally, I’m very very conservative…On my personal time, I dress very conservatively, and I’m very old-fashioned” (Schoemer, 1996, p. 70). Also, in *The Tennessean*, Shania expresses her gratefulness for her fans’ support: “It’s the fans who have kept all this momentum going” (Oermann, 1996, p. 1D).

**Accomplished artist.** The frame of accomplished artist was another lesser-used frame. With this frame, writers emphasized Shania’s record-breaking sales, awards, and successful music videos. *TV Guide* said, Shania “has sold a staggering number of albums—five million…” (Bream, 1996, para. 3). Other articles used the low sales of her debut album, *Shania Twain*, to demonstrate how far Shania has come in the music industry. For example, *Entertainment Weekly* wrote, “Before the singer met British pop-rock producer Robert John “Mutt” Lange and rocketed
up various charts, she was just another carnivorous country singer with a modestly successful but ultimately uninspired self-titled debut” (Schoenfein, 1995, para. 3).

**Driven careerist.** *Driven careerist* was another minor frame emerging from press coverage of this second album. This frame shows Shania to be a hardworking, smart, and confident in her career. *TV Guide* describes her as a “committed careerist” (Bream, 1996, para. 3). *The Village Voice* writes that Shania “has obviously worked hard and won…” (Hunter, 1996, p. 64).

**Female empowerment.** Another less frequent frame found in the press coverage is *female empowerment.* This frame focuses on the themes of female issues in Shania’s songs as well as her independence as a female artist. *The Village Voice* touches on Shania’s independence as an artist, writing, “On its own terms—which is how *The Woman in Me* requires you to take it…” (Hunter, 1996, p. 64). *Billboard* highlights Shania’s resonance with the female audience: “…we are selling a huge portion to females because she speaks to females in songs…” (Borzillo, 1995, p. 82).

**Come On Over Frames**

**Come On Over: Public Relations Frames**

For Shania’s third studio album, *Come On Over*, three official Mercury Records public relations documents were available for review: the press kit biography and two press releases (see Appendix 1). Twelve sponsored frames of Shania emerged from the public relations materials in support of her third album, *Come On Over* (see Table 11). The six major frames were *mass appeal, country artist, authentic talent, accomplished artist, Lange,* and *rags to*
riches story. Six additional minor frames included upbeat and expressive music, down-to-earth person, versatile artist, female empowerment, driven careerist, and glamorous performer. The following sections will describe each frame from most to least significant, using words from the public relations materials analyzed as illustrations.

*Table 11. Come On Over: Sponsored Public Relations Frames*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mass appeal</td>
<td>31 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>21 (14%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>18 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>18 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>18 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rags to riches story</td>
<td>16 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upbeat, expressive music</td>
<td>11 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth</td>
<td>7 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versatile artist</td>
<td>6 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>2 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>1 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>152 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Mass appeal.** The frame of *mass appeal* focuses on Shania’s national and international appeal and success, emphasizing global sales, awards, and media coverage. Her success at
mainstream award shows, such as the Grammys and American Music Awards are also mentioned here. A press release announcing her new album calls *The Woman In Me* “an international phenomenon” (Mercury, 1997a, p. 2). The press kit biography notes how her second album “also sold another 3 million copies outside the U.S.” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 1). This document also describes Shania as “One of the most telegenically accessible figures on the planet” (p. 1). Another press release remarks that *The Woman In Me* “has sold 12 million copies worldwide…” (Mercury, 1997c, p. 1).

**Country artist.** This sponsored frame puts the “country” label on Shania, referring to her as a *country artist*, with country albums, performing at country award shows. Emphasis is also placed on the fact that she grew up singing country and got her career start in the country genre in Nashville. One press release announces, “Shania will perform ‘Love Gets Me Every Time’ on the Country Music Awards…” (Mercury, 1997c, p. 2). The press kit biography begins with the following passage:

> They say the ladies who sing the country songs are a breed apart. And the ladies who write the country songs, well they’re just as rare a breed too. But the ladies who do both—ah, now there is the heart and soul of it all, the women who give country music conscience and sizzle, with a full portion of romance from the feminine perspective thrown in at no extra cost. (Mercury, 1997b, p. 1).

The document goes on to mention Shania’s second album’s “record-breaking run on the *Billboard* Country Albums chart,” as well as honors for “Top Country Album Artist,” “Best Country Album,” “Academy of Country Music,” “Favorite New Country Artist,” and “Favorite Female Country Artist” (p. 1). Shania is quoted saying, “I grew up listening to Waylon, Dolly, Tammy, all of them” (p. 2).

**Authentic talent.** Another major sponsored frame highlights Shania as an *authentic talent*, noting her vocal and songwriting ability, as well as her love of music and performing
experience. One press release describes how Shania “conveys a quiet strength and self assurance that underscore the song’s power” (Mercury, 1997a, p. 1). The press kit biography says, “She also draws serious attention to herself as one of today’s strongest ballad writers and singers…” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 1). Another press release writes that the new album “showcase[s] Twain’s expressive vocals and instinctive ability to express herself emotionally through her music” (Mercury, 1997c, p. 1).

**Accomplished artist.** The *accomplished artist* frame portrayed Shania as an artist with record-breaking sales figures, an award-winning career, and spectacular chart performance. This frame also emphasized *Come On Over* as a strong follow-up album to the highly Shania’s highly successful *The Woman In Me* album. Additionally, the materials mentioned Shania’s upcoming tour and her ability to gain immense success without touring. A press release calls *Come On Over* “the upbeat follow-up to Twain’s record-breaking, award-winning CD *The Woman In Me*…” (Mercury, 1997a, p. 1). The press kit bio notes how *The Woman In Me* “continues its record-breaking run on the *Billboard* Country Albums Chart” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 1). Also referencing the unprecedented success of Shania’s second album, this document notes, “Altogether, Shania’s run on the singles chart spanned well over 100 weeks, an amazing achievement for one album with no touring” (p. 3). Another press release describes *Come On Over* as “eagerly anticipated” and “a stellar follow-up to the duo’s record-breaking *The Woman In Me*, which has sold 12 million copies worldwide and racked up innumerable awards and accolades” (Mercury, 1997c, p. 1).

**Lange.** Within the *Lange* frame, the most dominant code portraying Shania’s husband showed him to be successful creative team with his wife. Here, the materials emphasized Lange and Shania’s collaboration on her second and third album, their strong personal and professional
relationship, and Lange’s belief in Shania’s talent. Other lesser-used codes in this frame include presenting Lange as a producer, his pop/rock background, and his genius production talent.

One press release states, “Come On Over was written by Shania Twain and Robert John ‘Mutt’ Lange, and was produced by Lange” (Mercury, 1997a, p. 1). The press kit biography similarly says, “Come On Over is her third album (Mercury Records), sixteen songs written by Shania with her husband and producer, Robert John ‘Mutt’ Lange” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 1). This document also describes them as “a committed couple” (p. 1). This biography also mentions how Lange got Shania to believe and have confidence in her own talent as an artist and songwriter:

Although Shania was signed on the basis of her original material, her self-titled debut album of 1993 featured only one of her songs, the feisty “God Ain’t Gonna Getcha For That.” It took a phone call from a distant admirer, rock producer Mutt Lange (AC/DC, Cars, Def Leppard, Foreigner, Bryan Adams and many others) for Shania to find a true believer, both in her voice and her original songs. (p. 2)

A second press release calls Lange Shania’s “husband/producer/co-writer” and mentions the new tracks were “all co-written by the couple” (Mercury, 1997c, p. 1).

**Rags to riches story.** The *rags to riches* frame presents Shania as rising from a poor, hardworking, tough background to become a singing star. These materials also mention her large, loving family, Native American heritage, and how she looked to music as an escape from her difficult childhood. The press kit biography says, “Shania’s story may well be the great American dream…” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 2). The document goes on to describe her family’s struggle: “It was a proud but, at times, impoverished existence. There may have been a struggle to keep enough food in the cupboards but there was always an abundance of music in the household” (p. 2). The biography also touches on her many childhood performances, the loss of her parents in a tragic car accident, and how Shania subsequently raised her younger siblings.
**Upbeat, expressive music.** The first of the less significant frames describes Shania’s music as fun and upbeat yet also deep and expressive. One press release states that the album “delivers a mix of wit, charm and fun,” and quotes Shania saying the songs “represent life from a humorous, spunky, sensual and heart-felt perspective” (Mercury, 1997a, p. 1). The press kit biography describes the track “Black Eyes, Blue Tears,” as “an upbeat tribute to re-discovering self-esteem and freedom in the wake of an abusive relationship” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 2). A second press release says that “the songs…run the gamut from serious…to just plain fun…” (Mercury, 1997c, p. 1).

**Down-to-earth person.** This minor frame presents Shania in the public relations materials as relatable, likeable, giving, and honest. Shania is quoted explaining how she wants fans to relate to her music: “It’s my hope that through these songs, people will catch a glimpse of themselves” (Mercury, 1997a, p. 1). She is described as having a “fun-loving sense of humor” and being “good-natured” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 1). The materials also mention her charity work: “…and the lullaby-hymn ‘God Bless The Child,’ with proceeds donated to Kids Café/Second Harvest Food Bank in the U.S. and the Canadian Living Foundation which provides meals for underprivileged children there” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 3).

**Versatile artist.** This less significant sponsored frame portrays Shania’s music as having a mix of sounds, range of outside influences, and providing a new sound to the music scene. The documents note Shania’s non-country musical influences growing up:

“But we also listened to the Mamas and the Papas, the Carpenters, the Supremes and Stevie Wonder. The many different styles of music I was exposed to as a child not only influenced my vocal style but, even more so, my writing style.” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 2)
The materials also mention how the songs from *Come On Over* “run the gamut” in terms of style (Mercury, 1997c, p. 1). One press release highlights the unique sound, saying that this record “is destined to forge its own place in musical history” (p. 1).

**Female empowerment.** Using this very minor frame, the public relations materials highlight the female themes in Shania’s music. The press kit biography writes that the new album has “a full portion of romance from the feminine perspective thrown in…,” noting that “Shania Twain is no stranger to…the woman’s prerogative” (p. 1). This document also makes note of female issues as themes in Shania’s lyrics, “such as ‘Black Eyes, Blue Tears’ (an upbeat tribute to re-discovering self-esteem and freedom in the wake of an abusive relationship)…” (p. 2).

**Driven careerist.** Another very minor frame sponsored in the public relations materials for *Come On Over* is Shania as a driven careerist. A couple points in the texts highlight Shania as a driven, hard worker in her career. Describing her third album, Shania is quoted saying, “There was so much that I wanted to achieve…” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 2). The press kit biography quotes Shania speaking about her aims for her first world tour: “I’m going to give it all I’ve got to make it everything the fans have been waiting for” (p. 3).

**Glamorous performer.** This frame was only invoked one time in the public relations materials. The press kit biography mentions, “Shania Twain is no stranger to…sizzle…” (Mercury, 1997b, p. 1).

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*Come On Over*: Press Frames

Nine feature articles and five album/song reviews were coded (see Appendix 2). Four dominant frames emerged from the press coverage of Shania’s third album, *Come On Over:*
crossover artist, rags to riches story, down-to-earth person, and country artist (see Table 12). Eight less significant frames were also found in the stories and reviews: Lange, glamorous performer, female empowerment, accomplished artist, country outsider pushing boundaries, driven careerist, authentic talent, and fun, light music. These frames will be discussed in the sections below, from most to least dominant. Words from the press features and reviews will be used to illustrate the use of each frame.

Table 12. Come On Over: Press Frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crossover</td>
<td>102 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rags to riches story</td>
<td>88 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth</td>
<td>71 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>62 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>53 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>44 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>39 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>27 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>25 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country outsider pushing boundaries</td>
<td>24 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>19 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun, light music</td>
<td>14 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>568 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 6. Come On Over: Press Codes
**Crossover artist.** Press coverage invoking the *crossover artist* frame labeled Shania as a country-pop, pop-country, pop, or crossover artist. *Rolling Stone*’s feature called her “the queen of country pop” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, n.p.). *People* dubbed Shania a “country pop crossover phenomenon” (Tresniowski, 2000, p. 183). *Billboard* wrote, “Mercury Nashville’s Shania Twain Sits Pretty As Decade’s Crossover Queen,” adding, “In the course of the past two years, the country-cum-pop/AC artist had forged the most successful crossover pollination of the decade, landing hits on seven Billboard singles charts” (Taylor, 1999, p. 92). *Country Weekly* commented: “Shania’s appeal isn’t limited to country fans. She’s also tasted crossover success, particularly with her huge crossover hit, ‘You’re Still the One’” (Krewen, 1999, para. 29). *Redbook* called Shania a “Canadian country-pop singing phenom” (Handelman, 1999, para. 2). *Entertainment Weekly* described her as a “country-popster” (Considine, 1997, p. 88). *Billboard*’s
album review says the album “range[s] far and wide over country and pop” (Flippo, 1997, para. 2).

Many writers using this frame also mentioned the crossover controversy. *The Calgary Sun* wrote, “The fact that Lange, who is her producer as well as her writing partner, comes from a rock background has engendered resentment among some country traditionalists, who believe that his work with Twain has been consciously designed to cross over into pop markets…” (Gardner, 1997, p. 36). *Rolling Stone* also commented on her country industry critics:

In this regard, she was almost as much of a crossover sensation as Dolly Parton or Garth Brooks—more, really, since Dolly and Garth sold like pop stars but never really shed their corn pone. Shania, though, had almost too little country for some of her critics and the numbers to suggest that she might be too big for that world anyway…Naturally, this kind of success had not occurred overnight, nor without the concomitant controversy and the pissing off of various folks.” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 3)

The crossover artist frame also highlighted Shania’s international success. Many articles mentioned her upcoming world tour. *Country Weekly* notes Shania’s “international pop success” (Krewen, 1999, para. 39). *Cosmopolitan* labeled her an “international recording star” (Deitch Roher, 1999, What She Still Really Wants, para. 3).

Another aspect of the crossover artist frame is her mix of musical influences and sounds. *Country Weekly* describes this range:

Shania doesn’t deny that there are other influences in her music. “The Woman In Me had its obvious country elements, but it had its obvious rock and pop elements too…There’s a lot of variety on the album [Come On Over]. It goes from country to new traditional country to a very pop country.” (Krewen, 1999, para. 4)

*Cosmopolitan* mentions how “Twain sang and wrote all different styles of music” while growing up (Pocharski, 1998, Party of Four, para. 1).

Additionally, the crossover artist frame touches on her mass appeal. *Billboard* wrote, “She has an appeal that spans every age group, and she’s one of those performers that’s hard not
to like,” and mentions her “mainstream appeal” (Taylor, 1999, p. 92). The article also asks, “So just what is it about he 34-year-old artist that has touched the non-country masses?” (p. 92). *Cosmopolitan* commented that *Come On Over* has moved Shania “even more into the mainstream” (Deitch Rohrer, 1999, The Call That Changed It All, para. 6).

**Rags to riches story.** This frame depicts Shania as rising from a poor, tough, rural, hardworking background to a life of fame, luxury, and international success. *Rolling Stone*’s feature headline reads, “Shania Twain: From dirt-poor childhood to glitzy lounge singer to the queen of country pop, she’s made it all look easy but it hasn’t been” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, n.p.). Redbook wrote, “Her rags to riches story seems like a fairy tale” (Handelman, 1999, para. 1). *Cosmopolitan* commented, “The singer’s hard-luck life story is the stuff of which country songs are made” (Pocharski, 1998, Party of Four, para. 1). Another *Cosmopolitan* feature adds: “…Twain is also uniquely qualified to sing about overcoming life’s obstacles—she’s been there and done that. After all, the challenges of her past and how she got to where she is today is really the stuff of the saddest country ballads” (Deitch Rohrer, 1999, Cosmopolitan’s 1999 fun fearless female awards, para. 4).

Writers focused on her family’s struggle with poverty. *Rolling Stone* describes their hard times:

> Indeed, Jerry, a forester and prospector, never had steady work. There were four kids in a house with three bedrooms, and the family was poor. When there was milk around, a rare enough event, it was doled out in exact portions. At school, Shania envied the apples and roast-beef sandwiches of the other kids; she never had too many apples; between her two slices of bread was only mayo or mustard, nothing else. She lived in fear that her teachers would find out that her folks couldn’t afford to feed her and she’d be taken away. (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 11)

Similarly, *Cosmopolitan* writes of the impoverished family: “There still wasn’t enough money for food. When Shania and her older sister, Jill, were teenagers, they’d fix mustard sandwiches
for lunch, ‘just to have something between the bread’” (Deitch Rorer, 1999, How She Healed Herself, para. 6). Another *Cosmopolitan* feature says “she grew up dirt-poor…As a child she can recall huddling around the kitchen stove to stay warm and making mustard sandwiches for school because her family could not afford peanut butter and jelly” (Pocharski, 1998, Party of Four, para. 1).

Press coverage in this frame also mentions how tough Shania’s upbringing was. Aside from her family’s poverty, writers highlighted the loss of her parents in a tragic car accident when she was twenty-one as well as the subsequent raising of her younger siblings on her own. *Redbook* said, “The road from Timmins to Nashville was, as a country singer might put it, paved with heartache,” adding, “Shania Twain has overcome countless tragedies and seemingly insurmountable obstacles to reign triumphantly as one of the country’s hottest divas” (Handelman, 1999, para. 1). *Rolling Stone* describes her struggles as “major personal tragedy” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 4).

Articles also pointed to her family’s hardworking nature. The press often talked about the work she performed for her family’s reforestation business and her high school job at fast food chain, McDonald’s. *Rolling Stone* states, “During high school, Shania spent her summers leading a reforestation crew for her dad—reportedly, she wields a mean chain saw—and working at a McDonald’s” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 17). Additionally, writers referenced Shania’s many childhood performances as a main source of income for her struggling family. *Redbook* declares, “Twain’s talent proved the family’s salvation” (Handelman, 1999, From rags to riches, para. 6). *Cosmopolitan*’s feature article describes the young Shania’s pressure to perform and earn:

By the time Shania was 8 years old, Jerry and Sharon began pushing her to perform. Since she was too young to play in clubs when liquor was being served, Shania’s parents
would wake her up at midnight to take her to nightclubs after last call, where she would sing her heart out to make money for the family. (Deitch Rohrer, 1999, How She Healed Herself, para. 3)

Rolling Stone adds, “At the age of eight…Shania played guitar and sang at community centers and at senior-citizen homes and at the bar inside Timmins’ Mattagami Hotel, where she’d get up onstage after-hours and carry on bravely, surrounded by cigarette smoke and a whiskey-fume haze” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 15). Many writers reveal that Shania saw music as an escape from her difficult childhood. Rolling Stone states, “For a poor, shy girl, music was a refuge, her hiding spot” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 15).

Other references were made in press coverage to Shania’s rural roots, her Native heritage, and her large, loving family. Rolling Stone calls her “a simple Canadian girl from a rugged gold-mining city called Timmins” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 4). People wrote that she “grew up in rural Ontario” (Tresniowski et al., 2000, p. 183). Her Native heritage is emphasized by mentions of her stepfather, Jerry’s, Ojibwa background and changing her name from Eilleen to Shania, meaning “on my way” in Ojibwe. Bringing up her large, loving family, Cosmopolitan’s feature quoted Shania saying, “No matter what we all went through, the bigger picture was always there: We were a family and we all cared about each other and we needed to stick together” (Deitch Rohrer, 1999, How She Healed Herself, para. 8).

Down-to-earth person. Another significant press frame presents Shania as a low-key, humble, genuine person. People details her down-to-earth lifestyle, despite her wealth and fame:

No matter that she’s a five-Grammy country-pop crossover phenomenon who lives in a 100-room chateau in Tour-de-Peliz, Switzerland, with her South African songwriter-producer husband, Robert John “Mutt” Lange, 51. Or that she has a reported $3 million contract with Revlon cosmetics. When Shania Twain, 34, is out of the spotlight and her pores are parched, she opens a tin of Bag Balm…That’s right, buckaroos, the singer whose “Man! I Feel Like a Woman!” became a pop anthem last year smears herself with an odoriferous mixture of petroleum jelly, lanolin and antiseptic used to soothe cows’ irritated udders. (Tresniowski, 2000, p. 183)
Showing her low-key personal life, articles mentioned her rural home, casual dress, plain and simple style, healthy lifestyle, conservative nature, and focus on personal privacy. *Redbook* describes Shania’s home as “bucolic—there are cows, sheep, and roosters nearby, and a stable she just fixed up for her five horses…” (Handelman, 1999, Settling Down, para. 4).

*Cosmopolitan* brings up how “her days are spent outdoors, canoeing, swimming, hiking, and fearlessly riding one of her horses across their 20 miles of wild terrain…” (Pocharski, 1998, Home on the Range, para. 1). *Rolling Stone*’s feature comments on her appearance during their interview: “Then she ambled down from the stables with her hair in a topknot, in jeans and very little makeup” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 2). *The Calgary Sun* writes that she was “looking radiant in jeans and a sweatshirt” during their feature interview (Gardner, 1997, p. 36).


The press also underlined her humble nature in this frame. In *Rolling Stone* Shania shows her modesty: “I don’t see anything in particular in the mirror,’ she said with a shrug. ‘Pretty plain. Pretty simple’” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 5). Shania told *Country Weekly* of her success, “It’s overwhelming, and something I’d never thought I would ever achieve” (Krewen, 1999, para. 12). *Redbook* writes, Despite her unprecedented success, Twain seems remarkably clear-eyed, devoid of the extremism that tends to infect superstars”
(Handelman, 1999, Settling Down, para. 1). *Rolling Stone* describes how “…Shania is unruffled by show-business milestones that would make other performers insufferable…” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 10). Shania’s humbleness is also underlined by the gratitude she displays for her success and toward her fans. Shania told *Country Weekly*: “But it was the fans that just ruled all the way. I mean the industry didn’t control what happened to me, the fans did” (Krewen, 1999, para. 41).

This frame also emphasizes Shania’s genuineness. Articles mentioned her desire to relate to her fans, charitable work, optimism, and love of family and animals. *Rolling Stone* calls her “utterly real” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 48). Shania told the *Calgary Sun* that with this album, she wanted “to do what was truest to me” (Gardner, 1997, p. 36). In *Redbook* she explains her need to relate to her fans: “I only what to release music that people can relate to. That’s my thrill”” (Handelman, 1999, From rags to riches, para. 18). *Cosmopolitan* quotes Shania stating, “‘I really don’t take myself very seriously’” (Pocharski, 1998, Home on the Range, para. 3).

**Country artist.** The fourth significant frame found in the press coverage of *Come On Over* paints Shania as a country artist who is loyal to the genre she grew up with and began her career in. Writers labeled her as a country artist, singing country music, on the country charts, and winning country awards. Articles also compared her success to other established country legends such as Patsy Cline, Dolly Parton, and Reba McEntire. A feature in *Cosmopolitan* calls Shania a “hillbilly filly” (Pocharski, 1998, n.p.). *Country Weekly* writes of her loyalty to the genre: “Shania Twain:

*Country Music Is Still the One…*Despite her amazing pop success, Shania Twain is still inviting people to ‘Come On Over’ to country music…Shania says, “I’m not looking to leave country”…”There’s a lot of variety on the album”…But for Shania, home is where the heart is. She insists country music is her come. “I consider myself a country artist,”
she states flatly. “That music was always such a big part of me growing up. I took to what was most comfortable to me—and that was country.” (Krewen, 1999, para. 1-2, 5, 6-7)

*Entertainment Weekly*’s album review also insists Shania’s home is country music:

…deep down, these are all country songs at heart, and that’s precisely the way Twain treats them… “Honey, I’m Home” is, in fact, a perfect example of how superficial Twain’s rock trappings are…the band breaks into a sweet, simple two-step, all gitt-ar pickin’ and whining pedal steel. Though the contrast is disorienting at first, it’s not hard to get the point—it may be a big, brash, rock world out there, but home is where the twang is. (Considine, 1997, para. 5-6)

**Lange.** The first more minor press frame is of *Lange*, Shania’s husband and producer. Within this frame, Lange is most frequently described as part of a husband/wife team and responsible for Shania’s success. Less frequent descriptions of Lange include: pop/rock background, good marriage, foreign, genius producer, and controlling. Only one mention was made of the fact that he is private, friendly, or a country music outsider.

The most frequent code within the Lange frame describes him as being part of a strong, collaborative husband/wife team with Shania. Many writers mentioned how Lange and Shania co-wrote or collaborated on her second and third studio albums. *Cosmopolitan* says, “But theirs is an equal partnership, with co writing credits on both The Woman in Me and Come On Over” (Pocharski, 1998, Way to Go!, para. 2). He is frequently described as a husband-producer. *Redbook* labels Lange Shania’s “husband and musical collaborator” (Handelman, 1999, para. 3). The article adds: “…she’s very much his equal. He’s doing her bidding as much as she is doing his…It’s a really healthy relationship” (para. 3). *Billboard* writes, “The resulting creative explosion between her and [husband/songwriting partner/producer] [John] ‘Mutt’ Lange has been a joyous gift to music lovers everywhere” (Taylor, 1999, p. 92).

The other dominant code within the Lange frame depicts him as being responsible for Shania’s success. *Redbook* brings up, “People have sniped at Twain’s relationship with her
husband from the get-go, suspicious of the whirlwind romance, the age difference (at 50, he’s 16 years her senior), and the long separations, convinced she’s merely Lange’s musical puppet” (Handelman, 1999, The love of her life, para. 1). *Cosmopolitan* refers to similar criticisms: “Twain and Lange have encountered their share of naysayers. Some critics have even viewed Lange as a modern-day music Svengali, masterminding the metamorphosis of the perky little country girl into an international superstar” (Pocharski, 1998, Way to Go!, para. 2). Another *Cosmopolitan* feature labels Shania’s meeting Mutt as “the call that changed it all,” writing:

Even though Twain had finally cut an album with a major label, she still had some work to do. Although her demo tape had been all her own songs, there was only one track written by Shania on the first CD. It was released to lukewarm reviews and sold only 100,000 copies...Not long after [the album] Shania Twain was released, she received a call from music producer Robert John “Mutt” Lange...The fruits of that match are pretty clear. (Deitch Rohrer, 1999, The Call That Changed It All, para. 4)

Other codes within this frame emphasize Lange’s pop-rock background, their good marriage, Lange being foreign, his controlling nature, and his genius production skills.

**Glamorous performer.** Another minor frame, *glamorous performer*, presents Shania as a sexy, glamorous performer in her professional career. Here, writers focused on her sultry performances, good looks, glamorous image, alluring music videos, physical assets, and revealing outfits. Her work as a spokesperson for Revlon cosmetics was also mentioned. *Rolling Stone* describes her first music video for the track “What Made You Say That”: “It featured Shania and some stud twirling around a tropical beach setting and the first major sighting of Shania’s navel, which she would flaunt to great effect in subsequent videos” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 34). The magazine notes, “On her videos, she was sassy, flirty, roundabout and sexually carefree” (para. 53). *The Calgary Sun* also references her “sweet and spicy style” (Gardner, 1997, p. 36): “The word follows Shania Twain like an ill wind: Babe...Whenever the country star’s name comes up, it seems there is at least a passing reference
to those cheekbones, that hair or that figure” (p. 36). The article describes her performance outfit:

[S]he’s decked out in form-fitting, black-velvet pants and a matching sleeveless top. Her brunet locks teased just slightly to affect a sensuous look, Twain makes playful gestures into the camera while lip-syncing the lyrics and sways her hips with an athletic but distinctly feminine grace. (p. 36)

*Redbook* calls Shania “…a video and photo-shoot sex kitten with a navel-baring, leopard-print wardrobe…” (Handelman, 1999, From rags to riches, para. 17).

**Female empowerment.** This lesser-used frame was used in press coverage to underline Shania’s direct, independent and confident nature. *Cosmopolitan* writes, “…Shania Twain is leading the way for a new wave of female country artists who are hip, sexy, and not afraid to speak their minds” (Pocharski, 1998, Fun Fearless Female, para. 3). The frame also highlighted her use of themes of female issues and empowerment in her songs. *Cosmopolitan* notes, “The outspoken singer has also dealt with serious subject matter in songs such as ‘Black Eyes, Blue Tears,’ about domestic violence” (Pocharski, 1998, Way to Go!, para. 2). *Entertainment Weekly*’s review refers to her “country feminism,” with Shania saying, “A lot of songs on this album do have a woman’s perspective” (Willman, 1997, Shania Twain Come On Over). In describing the album’s tracks, *Billboard* mentions, “a celebration of being a woman these days” (Flippo, 1997, Twain’s View).

**Accomplished artist.** The *accomplished artist* frame emphasizes Shania’s record-breaking sales success, career success, chart performance, and how far she’s come since the low sales of her first album. Multiple articles cite the record-breaking sales figures of *The Woman In Me* and *Come On Over*. *Rolling Stone* details her success:

Even without a tour, Shania had gone from being the biggest thing in country music, with 1995’s *The Woman in Me* (sales: 10 million, the most of any album by a female country
artist), to among the biggest things in both country and pop, with last winter’s Come On Over (sales: 4 million and rising)…. (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 3)

Similarly, *Billboard* refers to her sales and chart domination:

Consider the evidence: Twain’s previous album, 1995’s “The Woman In Me,” has moved 11 million copies here alone, while “Come On Over” is at 13 million and counting (18 million worldwide). In all, the current project has dished out an astonishing 10 hits at country radio, five at [Adult Contemporary], and four each at mainstream top 40 and adult top 40. Its first crossover hit, “You’re Still The One,” had such mainstream appeal that it hit the top 20 of Hot Latin Tracks’ pop airplay chart and the Hot Dance Music/Maxi-Singles Sales chart. Currently the Mercury Nashville artist is riding the singles charts with three different hit songs on her core formats: “Come On Over” at country, “Man! I Feel Like A Woman!” at top 40/adult top 40, and “You’ve Got A Way” at [Adult Contemporary]. (Taylor, 1999, p. 92)

**Driven careerist.** The driven careerist frame is minor, but depicts Shania in her career as dedicated, focused, driven, hardworking, and strong. A few articles also noted how she defends herself and her music from critics. *Rolling Stone* quotes her manager, Jon Landau, describing Shania’s work ethic: “She works her butt off. She’s very results oriented, no-nonsense” (Hedegaard & Markus, 1998, para. 48). In *Rebook*, Mercury Nashville’s president, Luke Lewis, comments, “She’s so controlled and focused” (Handelman, 1999, Settling Down, para. 2).

**Country outsider pushing boundaries.** Another minor frame used in the press coverage of her third album is country outsider pushing boundaries. This frame talks about Shania not taking the traditional country path to stardom, her exclusion of the country market, how her sound is new for country, how she pushes the genre’s boundaries, and how her success is good for the country genre. *Billboard* quotes a source in country radio warning of the pitfalls of crossover sounds: “while I know Shania’s version is certainly meant to be inclusive of the country audience, some of them do feel excluded. Country listeners/consumers don’t relate very well to the European thing expressed in some of her videos” (Taylor, 1999, p. 92).
Cosmopolitan references the new sound Shania brings to the country genre: “Stylistically, Come On Over continues to break new ground in country music. The rhythms range from rockabilly to classic rock, and only two of the sixteen tracks are ballads” (Pocharski, 1998, Fun Fearless Female, para. 5). Another Cosmopolitan feature states that Shania’s “sexually charged” performances aren’t “what you’d expect from a country-music show,” adding that “in only four short years, [Shania] has given that Nashville style a whole new look and sound” (Deitch Rohrer, 1999, Cosmopolitan’s 1999 fun fearless female awards, para. 3). A Rolling Stone album review declares, “On 1995’s The Woman in Me, Twain and her producer-husband, Mutt Lange, stretched ‘90s line-dance-country until it snapped, crackled and popped…” (Eddy, 1997, p. 80). Billboard says that Shania’s songs are “great for the [country] format” (Flippo, 1997, para. 4).

**Authentic talent.** One of the more minor frames, authentic talent, underlines Shania’s vocal and songwriting talent, citing her start at a young age. Cosmopolitan writes of her early talents: “Songwriting also became second nature to her. By the time Twain turned 10, she was penning her own songs and performing them with local bands on the weekends. ‘I wasn’t just a kid trying to sing,’ Twain says. ‘I was actually a musician. I basically taught myself’” (Deitch Rohrer, 1999, How She Healed Herself, para. 5). Entertainment Weekly states how “Twain’s vocal slips into the rhythm with surprising ease” (Browne, 1998, “You’re Still The One”).

**Fun, light music.** The least used frame in press coverage casts Shania’s music as fun and light. Here, writers described her songs as fun, feel-good, inviting, and using too many exclamation points. In describing various tracks, Billboard uses the phrases, “fun,” “live, fast-driving,” “light-hearted,” “fun twist,” and “optimistic” (Flippo, 1997, Twain’s View). Entertainment Weekly calls her music “light” (Willman, 1997, Shania Twain Come On Over).
**Up! Frames**

*Up! Public Relations Frames*

No public relations materials were available to review for the *Up!* album. None were found in the archives of the Country Music Hall of Fame, and several calls to Mercury Nashville’s publicity department went unreturned. Instead, secondary research from the background section (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011) was used to see what Shania’s public relations team did in order to promote her fourth album. This secondary information will provide insight into what frames were likely used in public relations materials. Additionally, sponsored frames used in promoting previous albums were used to predict likely frames for this album. Four sponsored frames were identified in the secondary research (see Table 13). Six additional frames were identified by looking at previous albums’ promotions. These two sources of predicted frames are discussed below.

*Table 13. Up!: Sponsored Public Relations Frames*

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<th>Source</th>
<th>Frame</th>
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<td>International crossover artist</td>
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<td>Previous albums’ sponsored frames</td>
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<td>Accomplished artist</td>
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<td>Independent female/female empowerment</td>
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**Secondary research.** This section describes what was done by Shania’s team to promote *Up!*, revealing which frames were emphasized during promotional activities, and were likely sponsored in the public relations materials. Four frames were identified. The secondary
materials covering the promotion of *Up!* reveal an initial emphasis on Shania as an international crossover artist. Her team also perpetuated the glamorous performer frame. However, later stages of the promotion focused on a country artist frame in an attempt to win back the country fan base that had become disenchanted with her worldly European image (Eggar, 2005). Shania was also depicted as being dedicated to her fans.

**International crossover artist.** *Up!* began as an international project, written and recorded across the globe (Eggar, 2005). Few country industry musicians were used in recording the tracks. As Eggar (2005) describes, the music contained many non-country sounds including “a hard rock on top of a compelling pop hook, country fiddles contrasting with Indian strings, a mariachi feel in one song, a touch of calypso in another, jangling guitar on the chorus, buzz saw on the next” (p. 556). Shania herself expressed her desire to break out of the country mold:

> I had been frustrated by being boxed into the country genre with *The Woman in Me* CD, as I felt the title track and “If You’re Not in It for Love” were both pop-sounding records. I’d hoped they would have had more international and crossover success and believed I was held back from that by being labeled “country,” and therefore relegated to the one genre, no matter what the music actually sounded like. (Twain, 2011, p. 336)

Eggar (2005) explains that this was not a pure country album, but more “an international pop record crammed with nineteen tracks mixing up pop hits, Latin ballads, country swing, and hard rockers…and a rather strange collection of bhangra and Hindi pop mixes,” aimed at the “different tastes” of the international audience.

In order to satisfy the varied markets of Shania’s fans, she recorded “three different music arrangement styles for all the songs, to avoid getting boxed in to one genre” (Twain, 2011, p. 337). Shania elaborates, “I thought, why not just create the whole album in three distinct versions to begin with and let the public and industry decide which version of what song they preferred?” (p. 337). The result was three versions of the CD, color-coded to match “the feel of
each style” (p. 337). The first iteration was “a more traditionally country-feeling version with the classic fiddles and steel guitar sounds,” colored green to evoke the “pasture, the green, green grass of home” (p. 337). The second CD contained “a more progressively pop-rocky version with more electric guitar, bigger-sounding drums, and no country instruments,” and was colored red which “felt sexier and progressive for the pop version” (p. 337). Finally, the third format was “a dance version that had an East Indian flavor with authentic, traditional instruments, in place of what [was] recorded from the American musicians for the other two pop and country versions” (p. 337). This CD was colored blue, which “suited the international version, as [Shania] saw blue representing open sky, a space without boundaries” (p. 337). The “Red” and “Green” albums were sold together in the North American market. The “Blue” album was sold internationally. In producing the “Blue” album, Mutt brought in the Duggal brothers, a pair of renowned Indian DJs in Britain (Eggar, 2005, p. 561).

Additionally, after parting ways with her long-time management and teaming up with Peter Mensch, who came with a pop/rock background, Shania and her team decided to “lean a little harder on the pop side, dress a little different, do a lot of things to keep pace,” moving away from the struggling country market (Eggar, 2005, p. 568). For previous albums, promotions had begun in the U.S. then crossed over to the European market. However, now that Shania was an international superstar and “everybody wanted a piece of her at the same time,” her team began the promotional campaign on a global scale (p. 569). Such international media coverage included numerous television, radio and print interviews in publications such as “People, Rolling Stone, Redbook, Time and Entertainment Weekly” (p. 574). Shania performed at the halftime show of U.S. Super Bowl XXXVIII in January 2003. Further underlining the desire to be
international, she announced an “eighteen-month” world tour (p. 569). Ultimately Shania was thrilled with the success of *Up!*, expressing her joy at the crossover success:

The fact that the album was categorized in pop, pop rock, and country pop was my dream: to be an international recording artist, recognized as an artist not of any specific genre, but just appreciated as an artist by *all* lovers of music. (Twain, 2011, p. 338)

On the European leg of the *Up!* tour, Shania aimed for a more international, crossover vibe, tailoring the music to her audience (Twain, 2011). In her autobiography (Twain, 2011), Shania explains, “We played more international-sounding versions with fewer fiddles, and more electric guitars and synthesized loops and effects to the arrangements of the crossover hits that had gone international” (p. 340).

**Country artist.** In the secondary materials, Shania referred to herself as a “country singer” (Eggar, 2005, p. 556). Although described as a more pop/crossover sound, the green version of *Up!* was “a more traditional country-feeling version with classic fiddles and steel guitar sounds” (Twain, 2011, p. 337). As Eggar (2005) wrote, the album included “country fiddles” (p. 556). Moreover, Shania attended the 2002 Country Music Association (CMA) Awards, performing her hit single *I’m Gonna Getcha Good!* and presenting an award. With this appearance, Shania began a sort of “Nashville rehabilitation” to win back some of her country fans that had been put off by her crossover sound and image (p. 579). Eggar (2005) suggests, “given the nature of her [CMA] performance and attire, it sounded as if she was deliberately trying to appeal to her roots audience” (p. 572). Aware of the distance her glamorous international image had put between the star and her mostly middle-class country fans, Mercury Nashville’s president, Luke Lewis, said, “I told her that jeans make her look more American…” (p. 576). As a result of this divide with her original country fan base, Shania and her team made a concerted effort to re-appeal to her country fans. This was accomplished by emphasizing the
more traditional sides of her image. When she made public appearances, she “deliberately dressed down” (p. 576). At the 2003 Country Music Television (CMT) Awards, she sang a duet with “Alison Krauss and Union Station, the exquisite champions of roots country” (p. 576). She also appeared at country outlaw legend Willie Nelson’s birthday “wearing a simple white T-shirt and black cap” (pp. 576-577). Furthermore, Shania performed a recorded “television special” called *Up! Close and Personal* featuring “Alison Krauss and Union Station as her backing band,” declaring, “‘I wanted to go back to something stripped down and rootsy’” (p. 577). Eggar (2005) discusses Shania’s promotion of her country background:

> In the States, Shania was constantly reinforcing her country roots. “I mean I’ll never not be country, how can you not?” she said. “How can you be something and then not be it anymore? Country is so deep in my roots and such a huge part of my youth, my most impressionable years, that it’s just not going anywhere and I think even for people who listen to me in pop, the style of the way I write, which is very conversational lyrics, very real lifestyle lyrics, comes from my country roots.” (p. 579)

On her *Up!* tour, Emerson Drive, a Canadian country music band, accompanied her.

**Glamorous performer.** For her videos, Shania continued her sexy, glamorous image. The first single was *I’m Gonna Getcha Good!*. In this video Shania wore “a skintight black leather catsuit, racing through a futuristic city on a motorcycle, and dodging a giant robot along the way” (Eggar, 2005, p. 562). Furthermore, during her January 2003 performance on the Super Bowl XXXVIII halftime show, Shania wore an “outfit that somehow combined a bare midriff, a silver bra, a full-length black leather coat, assorted chains, and knee-high black boots” (p. 573). During her *Up!* tour, the stage costumes maintained her glitzy performance image, but perhaps a little toned down from the height of her glamour. As Eggar (2005) described, her look was more laid back, but with an ample amount of sparkle:

> While the actual outfits evolved over the tour, perennial favorites included silk cargo pants, jeans dotted with studs and crystals, sparkly tops, and Cosabella mesh tank tops
layered in bright colors. She also liked wearing large glittering pieces of jewelry, especially chokers covered with crystals, which show up well in the stage lights. (p. 585)

**Dedicated to her fans.** In Eggar’s (2005) biography, Shania explains her dedication to her fans: “When I write a song, I’m thinking about the people who are going to be listening to it. The whole process is done with that in mind” (p. 556). During her *Up!* tour, she chose a round stage in order to get even closer to her fans.

**Frames From Previous Albums.** Looking at previous albums’ sponsored frames identified six additional frames. Since public relations materials were unavailable for this album, I also used the sponsored frames identified for previous albums to predict which frames would likely have been sponsored in public relations materials for *Up!* based on their past pattern of use. I believe the six previous sponsored frames of **tough background/rags to riches story**, **authentic talent, down-to-earth person, accomplished artist, independent female/female empowerment** and **Lange** were likely used in the public relations documents for *Up!* These frames were used in either two or three of the previous albums’ public relations documents. The **driven careerist** and **upbeat, expressive music** frames were sponsored in public relations materials for *Come On Over*, so they too may have been used in promoting *Up!*, although this prediction is not as strong.

**Up! Press Frames**

Eight feature articles and four album/song reviews were coded (see Appendix 2). Fifteen frames emerged from the press coverage of the *Up!* album (see Table 14). Five dominant frames were found: **down-to-earth person, Lange, rags to riches story, international superstar**, and **crossover artist.** Twelve minor frames were also identified: **driven careerist, country artist, fun and light music, tired of fame, accomplished artist, authentic talent, glamorous performer,**
female empowerment, comeback album, and pushing country boundaries. In the section below, each frame will be described, from most to least dominant. Examples from the texts analyzed will be used to illustrate each frame.

**Table 14. Up!: Press Frames**

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<th>Frame</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>122 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>79 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rags-to-riches story</td>
<td>75 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International superstar</td>
<td>68 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossover</td>
<td>59 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>42 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fun and light music</td>
<td>29 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tired of fame</td>
<td>28 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>23 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>21 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>16 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>14 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>11 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comeback album</td>
<td>10 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pushing country boundaries</td>
<td>9 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>606 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 7. Up!: Press Codes
**Down-to-earth person.** The most frequent frame found in the press coverage for Shania’s *Up!* album was *down-to-earth person.* This frame depicts Shania as a low-key, humble, genuine person. Focusing on her low-key lifestyle, writers cited her desire for privacy, casual appearance during interviews, and rural home. *A Country Weekly* feature references her fiercely private nature, noting, “Shania has never allowed photographs of [her son] to be published; she shuns many photo opportunities herself and discourages the public from taking snapshots of her family” (“Has Shania Had Enough?,” 2003, para. 22). *Time* wrote of Shania and her husband, “They really like their privacy” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 15). *Rolling Stone* mentions that during their interview Shania wore “faded bellbottom jeans, [and] a maroon baseball cap” (Edwards, 2003, After Dark, para. 2). *Entertainment Weekly’s* interviewer remarks upon meeting the star, “Shania hops in [the car] with me, her hair tugged back in a ponytail” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 28). *Country Weekly* also cites her low-key look out of the spotlight: “After an exhausting, nonstop day, Shania Twain finally calls it a night. She changes into her favorite pair of camouflage pants—just right for relaxing—and stretches out on a front-room sofa” (Paxman, 2002, para. 1). *People* magazine mentions her favorite pastimes of hiking, cooking, skiing, and horse riding (Schneider, 2002).

Highlighting her humble nature, articles mentioned Shania’s gratefulness to fans and modesty despite her immense wealth and success. *Country Weekly* describes her modesty:

But she’s starting to play down what she calls “the glamour thing,” just one more measure of her disaffection with stardom…”If you notice in my video for ‘Up!’ I’m not doing the belly-button look,” she points out. “Of course,” she adds with a laugh, “I still have a belly button. But I’m dressed very casually, very relaxed in the video—not this head-to-toe glamour image that I had for a while.” (“Has Shania Had Enough?,” 2003, para. 27-28)
Time also reveals the star’s modesty:

Twain seems somehow removed from her own success. “There’s no separating me and music…but there’s a big separation between music and career. Sometimes I just think I belong in a bar, singing with my guitar. I don’t think I’m worthy of everything that’s happening now. I don’t think I’ll ever be my best commercially. I’m not sure I will ever achieve that.” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 21)

Shania’s sister, Carrie Ann, told People of her sister, “She shops sales racks and, after tours, has a tailor remake costumes into more wearable clothing” (Schneider, 2003, p. 118). Shania adds, “I hate waste…I wear track pants and a sweatshirt I’ve had since we first came to Huntsville 15 years ago. Why get a new one if the old one still works? Why?” (p. 118).

Showing her genuine nature, coverage noted Shania’s love of family and domestic life as well as her happiness with her role as a mother. Country Weekly’s headline declared, “she relishes everyday life and motherhood” (Paxman, 2002, n.p.). Another Country Weekly’s feature titled “Family First!” says Shania “insists there’s no place like home with her husband and son,” adding, “I’m always in family mode…I love just being at home and spending time with my son” (Paxman, 2004, para. 5). Shania’s sister, Carrie Ann, tells People, “And she believes no one scrubs the oven as well as she can,” with Shania adding, “I try to do everything I can myself. I wash the dishes after I cook. If the floor needs a vacuum, I pull out the vacuum” (Schneider, 2003, p. 118).

**Lange.** Another major frame found in press coverage of *Come On Over* is Shania’s husband, Lange. Within this frame, Lange was most frequently described as part of a creative husband/wife team, co-writing and collaborating with Shania. Coverage also focused on his eccentric lifestyle, strong marriage, and highly produced production style. Less-frequently invoked codes within the frame include private/reclusive, famous producer, and pop/rock
background. Minor attention was paid to the codes of good father, foreign, tabloid rumors, responsible for Shania’s success, odd couple, humble, and rich.

Many writers focused on Lange and Shania’s creative collaboration as a husband and wife team with frequent mentions of the fact that they co-wrote and co-produced *The Woman In Me, Come On Over, and Up!*. Coverage frequently referred to Lange as Shania’s husband-producer. Shania tells *Time* of their creative partnership: “they’re equal partners in her success, ‘Mutt alone has never had this much success in his career…Never as consistently and never as big. It’s what we do together that makes it so great’” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 19). *People* reveals that Lange “shares songwriting and diaper duty” (Schneider, 2003, p. 116). *Rolling Stone* comments, “The music Twain and Lange make together is as finely tuned as a Rolex…Twain’s fourth record, Up! (her third album with Lange), is a testament to their ceaseless toil (Edwards, 2003, After Dark, para. 8). *Entertainment Weekly* describes their music collaborations as the “fruit of their partnership” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 19).

Another focus of the Lange frame is his eccentric lifestyle, including strict vegetarianism and introducing Shania to the Eastern religion, Sant Mat. *People* cites that “…Twain and Lange, [are] both devotees of an Eastern religion called Sant Mat, which calls for daily meditation as well as abstinence from alcohol, drugs and premarital sex” (Schneider, 2003, p. 118).

*Entertainment Weekly* writes: “Shania and Mutt are devotees of a strain of Eastern mysticism called Sant Mat. ‘It’s a spiritual path, like the Beatles followed their spiritual path,’ she says. ‘It’s all about self-realization, just trying to find the inner self’” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 22).

Mercury Nashville’s president, Luke Lewis, tells *Time*: “I don’t think he’s an agoraphobe.’ But he adds, ‘You wouldn’t be the first to call Mutt Lange a little strange”’ (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 17). *Time* further comments on his desire for extreme privacy: “He has been honored with
numerous awards from the American Society of Composers and Producers and has never accepted a single one. He has not done an interview for 30 years, rarely leaves his home and recently purchased the rights to nearly every extant photo of him” (para. 17).

Coverage within the Lange frame also highlights the strong marriage between Lange and Shania. *Country Weekly* writes of the bond:

She reflects on her love for her husband, whom she married in 1995—and declares that romance is sweeter than ever!...“It’s become such a special relationship,” she notes excitedly. “I don’t even know how to put it in words, but every day we both count our blessings. We are such a great pair in every way—as husband and wife, as friends, as musical partners. We are each other’s inspiration and we just live for each other.” (“Has Shania Had Enough?,” 2003, para. 19-20)

Shania tells *Redbook* of her strong marriage and “strong connection” with her husband: “I just love my husband so much. He’s like the most special person. He is half of me: Without him I would be half a person. I really would be. You might as well just cut off one of my arms and legs” (Connors, 2002, What’s the most, para. 1; But don’t you, para. 1).

The press also emphasized Lange’s highly produced production style. *Rolling Stone* comments that Lange puts “every drumbeat and backing vocal perfectly in place” making a sound that is “hookier than a fishing-supply store” (Edwards, 2003, After Dark, para. 8; Some Things You Might, para. 1). *Entertainment Weekly* writes, “Like all her collaborations with Mutt, each track is a painstakingly hand-tooled piece of radio marzipan—sweet and glazed and shiny” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 30).

Other more minor aspects of this frame include Lange’s reclusiveness. *Country Weekly* notes Lange is “notorious for his reclusiveness” (“Has Shania Had Enough?,” 2003, para. 9). Coverage also made some mention of Lange’s established industry fame as a producer. *Time* refers to Lange as “producer of seven of the 100 best-selling albums of all time” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 13). His pop/rock background was also mentioned a few times. *Entertainment
Weekly lists his experience with “…the likes of AC/DC, Bryan Adams, and Def Leppard…” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 30). Additionally, some sources highlighted Lange’s talent as a producer. Nashville Scene said the album was “…arranged with verve and imagination by Lange…” (Friskics-Warren, 2002, para. 5).

**Rags to riches story.** This press frame underlines Shania’s rise from a poor, tough, rural hardworking background to become a huge star. Country Weekly called Shania a “once-poverty-stricken girl” and refers to her life as “a fairy tale come true” (Paxman, 2002, para. 9). Time mentioned her “journey from poverty to stardom” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 14). People labels Shania a “triumph-over-tragedy poster girl” (Schneider, 2002, p. 115). Entertainment Weekly described, “It’s this saga, this up-from-the-ashes triumph, that gives Shania an almost saintly glow in the eyes of her fans” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 15). Rolling Stone called her life story “a compelling rags-to-riches biography” (Edwards, 2003, After Dark, para. 4).

Great attention was given to Shania’s poor childhood. People pointed out, “money was scarce” (Schneider, 2003, p. 117). Rolling Stone described, “Twain grew up eating mustard sandwiches when the family food budget was tight” (Edwards, 2003, Shania Twain is yelling, para. 5). Entertainment Weekly wrote, “She grew up in Timmins, so poor that she had to pack mustard sandwiches for lunch” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 15). Time added: “Her mother Sharon and her adoptive father Jerry Twain…continually struggled for work. The five Twain children considered themselves lucky to find a mustard sandwich in their school lunch boxes” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 9).

In addition, many writers described Shania’s rural youth. Time called her early life a “grim frontier tale,” noting, “She grew up in Timmins, Ont., a mining town in the heart of the Canadian bush” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 9). People magazine described her hometown as “a little
gold-mining town in Northern Ontario” (Schneider, 2002, p. 115). *Rolling Stone* wrote, “she grew up poor in rural Timmins, Ontario” (Edwards, 2003, After Dark, para. 4). Press coverage also focused on Shania’s tough times including the loss of her parents in a car accident, raising her siblings on her own, her difficult home life, the pressure to perform as a child, and how she used music as an escape from her struggles.

**International superstar.** Another highly used press frame was *international superstar.* Here, writers emphasized Shania’s international appeal, awards, performances, and sales as well as her luxurious life and global fame. *Country Weekly* labeled Shania a “global superstar” and mentioned her “trappings of fame” and “lavish castle” (Paxman, 2004, para. 2; “Has Shania Had Enough?,” 2003, para. 1). *Time* called her “the world’s biggest commercial singer” and noted her “100-room chateau” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 7). Similarly, *Nashville Scene*’s headline referred to Shania as a “global megastar” (Friskics-Warren, 2002, n.p.). *Entertainment Weekly* named Shania “one of the biggest pop stars on the planet” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 3).

**Crossover artist.** The crossover artist frame describes Shania as a country-pop, pop-country, pop, or *crossover artist* with mass appeal and musical influences from outside the country genre. This frame focused heavily on the fact that three version of the album were released—pop (red), country (green), and indie (blue). Here, writers highlighted the pop and crossover sounds of the red disc. *Redbook* called Shania a “pop-country singing superstar” (Connors, 2002, After a two-year absence, para. 1). *Time* said she is “the rule of the vast collection of ears between Madonna and Garth Brooks,” noting that “her songs are aimed at a mass audience…” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 4, 5). *Rolling Stone* called Shania a “crossover firebrand” (Walters, 2003, p. 66). *Entertainment Weekly* declared Shania has “steamrolled her way into cross-continental hugeness” (Gordinier, 2002, para. 19). *Nashville Scene* stated the
decision to release three versions of the album “offers something for everyone” (Friskics-Warren, 2002, para. 4). This frame also noted the crossover controversy and backlash Shania has received from some in the Nashville industry.

**Driven careerist.** One of the lesser-used frames, *driven careerist*, depicted Shania as hardworking, focused, driven, professional, commercial, and defensive of her career path. *Country Weekly* mentioned her “breakneck speed” and “exhausting, nonstop day” (Paxman 2004, para. 1; Paxman, 2002, para. 1). *Redbook* called her “very focused” (Connors, 2002, You and Mutt, para. 1). *Time* declared, “what she wants more than anything is to have the biggest-selling album of all time, and she will do anything…to get it” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 2). *Rolling Stone* described how “although her lyrics depict a spontaneous, funloving gal, she’s focused on her career with total tunnel vision…Whether she’s glad-handing retailers, doing interviews or making music, Twain is relentless, filling every minute of the workday, with barely a moment to relax” (Edwards, 2003, After Dark, para. 5).

**Fun and light music.** Within the *fun and light music* frame, coverage described Shania’s *Up!* album as upbeat, feel-good, cheap-thrills, fun, lightweight, relatable, message-oriented, and using many exclamation points in the song titles and lyrics. *Time* used the terms, “contagious,” “energy,” and “fun” to describe the album tracks (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 6). *Nashville Scene* described the music as “meaty, beaty, big and bouncy” (Friskics-Warren, 2002, para. 5). *Rolling Stone* mentioned “wise, personable, wildly contagious songs” and Shania’s “trademark exclamation points” (Walters, 2003, p. 66).

**Tired of fame.** The *tired of fame* frame highlights Shania’s two-year break from the spotlight to have a baby and spend time with her family in the privacy of her Swiss estate. Here, writers focused on Shania escaping the spotlight, being tired of fame, never seeking fame, the
non-importance of fame to her, and playing down her glamorous image. *Entertainment Weekly* noted that *Up!* is “her first album in five years” (Gordinier, 2002, n.p.). Shania told *Country Weekly*, “‘Being famous isn’t all that great, or anything to aspire to personally…If I could do what I do without being famous, that would be my choice’” (“Has Shania Had Enough?,” 2003, para. 3). *Redbook* described how “the couple retreated to their eighteenth-century chateau, nestled in the mountains near Geneva, Switzerland, to reconnect and to work on two new projects: a new album and a family” (Connors, 2002, After a two-year absence, para. 2).

**Accomplished artist.** This press frame focuses on Shania’s record-breaking sales, progress since her debut album, and accomplishments. *Country Weekly* wrote how Shania “is shattering attendance records wherever she performs” (Paxman, 2004, para. 2). Another *Country Weekly* article described Shania as “accomplished enough to fulfill a lifetime of dreams” (“Has Shania Had Enough?,” 2003, para. 6). *Redbook* referred to *Come On Over* as “the biggest-selling album by a female singer ever” (Connors, 2002, After a two-year absence, para. 1). *Time* called her third album “the most popular album by a female singer in American history” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 4). *Rolling Stone*’s review labeled Shania a “megaseller,” also noting that *Come On Over* is “the biggest-selling album by a female artist of any stripe” (Walters, 2003, p. 66).

**Country artist.** The *country artist* frame labels Shania a country artist, winning country awards, on the country charts, with country sounds, who got her start in Nashville. Articles also emphasized the country sounds of the green disc. *Rolling Stone* claimed the green disc is “one with banjos and fiddles for country fans” (Edwards, 2003, After Dark, para. 8). *Country Weekly*’s headline called her “country music’s biggest female star” (“Has Shania Had Enough?,”
2003, n.p.). *Time* noted the green disc “is sprinkled with mandolin and slide guitar for the country folk who first made Twain a star” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 8).

**Authentic talent.** The *authentic talent* press frame presents Shania an authentic talent with true songwriting and vocal skills, emphasizing the fact that she began to show promise at a young age. *Nashville Scene* wrote, “her vocals on *Up!* are more supple and commanding than ever” (Friskics-Warren, 2002, para. 6). *Time* noted how “Twain’s vocal talent was discovered when she was 4” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 10). *Redbook* wrote of “her perfect voice” (Connors, 2002, After a two-year absence, para. 1).


**Female empowerment.** Some press coverage used the minor frame, *female empowerment*, which focused on the theme of female empowerment and women’s issues in her songs and interviews. Writers also mentioned Shania’s independence as a female in her career. Discussing song themes, *Time* mentioned one track, “Juanita,” about “the independent goddess raging inside all women” with what “might be interpreted as a reference to abortion” (Tyrangiel, 2002, para. 6). *People* called Shania an “alpha woman in the industry,” who they labeled “a self-professed feminist” (Schneider, 2003, p. 115, 119). *Nashville Scene* described her as “a woman in command of her art, image and career is more like it, and well nigh unstoppable too”
(Friskics-Warren, 2002, para. 8). *Entertainment Weekly* pointed to her “singing come-ons with kiss-off attitude” (Seymour, 2002, Singles Shania Twain, para. 1).

**Comeback album.** Another minor, less-frequent press frame was *comeback album*. Within this frame, coverage painted *Up!* as a comeback album after her five-year hiatus following *Come On Over*. Writers emphasized the high expectations and big promotion effort for the album. *People* wrote, “Shania Twain emerges from her Swiss hideaway and swings back into action with a new CD, a new baby and a new attitude” (Schneider, 2002, p. 114). *Country Weekly*’s headline proclaims, “Shania Twain Gears Up For a Massive Global Comeback,” noting that with “her brand new, hotly anticipated album, *Up!*...There’s a lot to live up to…” (Paxman, 2002, para. 2).

**Pushing country boundaries.** The *pushing country boundaries* frame emphasized how Shania tests the boundaries of the country genre, pushing the limits of what is defined as country and bringing new listeners to the country audience. *Rolling Stone* wrote of her start in Nashville, “As she blossomed into a star, the country-music industry generally considered her an outsider…” (Edwards, 2003, Shania Twain is yelling, para. 8). *Nashville Scene* claimed, “Shania Twain’s new album pushes and redefines country music’s parameters,” adding that she “relish[es] pushing the boundaries of what constitutes country music” (Friskics-Warren, 2002, para. 2).
### Table 15. Sponsored Public Relations Frames Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album (year)</th>
<th>Sponsored Frames (most to least frequent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Shania Twain</em> (1993)</td>
<td>Tough background Versatile artist Authentic talent Down-to-earth person Glamorous performer Country artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Come On Over</em> (1997)</td>
<td>Mass appeal Country Authentic talent Accomplished artist Lange Rags to riches story Upbeat, expressive music Down-to-earth person Versatile artist Female empowerment Driven careerist Glamorous performer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 16. # Sponsored PR Frames Accepted by Press

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album (date range)</th>
<th># Sponsored PR frames</th>
<th># Sponsored PR frames directly accepted</th>
<th># Sponsored PR frames accepted with minor alteration</th>
<th># New press frames</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Shania Twain</em> (1993-1995)</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Woman in Me</em> (1995-1997)</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Come On Over</em> (1997-2002)</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Up!</em> (2002-2004)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart Performance & Album Sales

The tables below (Tables 17-21) display the chart performance and sales data for Shania’s first four albums. This data shows how consumers—fans and industry—accepted the sponsored public relations frames by playing her music and buying her albums.

Table 17. *Billboard’s Country Albums Chart*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Chart Debut</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
<th>Weeks at Peak</th>
<th>Total Weeks on Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Shania Twain</em></td>
<td>07/24/1993</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Woman in Me</em></td>
<td>02/25/1995</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Come On Over</em></td>
<td>11/22/1997</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Up!</em> Country version</td>
<td>12/07/2002</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Up!</em> Country &amp; pop version</td>
<td>12/07/2002</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Whitburn, 2008a, p. 256)

These results come from *Billboard’s* Top Country Albums chart as reported by Whitburn (2008a, p. 256). The *Billboard* Top Country Albums chart reports “the week’s top-selling country albums, ranked by sales data as compiled by Nielsen SoundScan” (*Billboard*, 2013d, n.p.). Implemented in 1991, Nielsen SoundScan is “a system of electronically tracking and counting retail record sales (Lathrop & Pettigrew, 2003, p. 102).
Table 18. Billboard’s Pop Album Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Chart Debut</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
<th>Weeks at Peak</th>
<th>Total weeks on Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>02/24/1996</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Woman in Me</td>
<td>03/18/1995</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>107</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Come On Over</td>
<td>11/22/1997</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Up!</td>
<td>Country version</td>
<td>12/07/2002</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country &amp; pop version</td>
<td>12/07/2002</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Whitburn, 2010, p. 800). *Note: Earlier albums, Shania Twain and The Woman in Me rose in ranking on the pop charts due to mainstream popularity of later crossover albums, Come On Over and Up! (Whitburn, 2010).

Table 19. Billboard’s Country Singles Chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album &amp; Single</th>
<th>Chart Debut</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
<th>Weeks at Peak</th>
<th>Total Weeks on Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What Made You Say That</td>
<td>03/27/1993</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dance With The One That Brought You</td>
<td>07/03/1993</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Woman in Me</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any Man Of Mine</td>
<td>05/13/1995</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under?</td>
<td>01/14/1995</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(If You’re Not In It For Love) I’m Outta Here!*</td>
<td>11/18/1995</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

9 The cover of Whitburn’s (2008a) Top Pop Albums states the compilation includes “Chart Data Compiled From Billboard’s Pop Album’s Charts, 1955-2009.” The “Billboard 200” chart lists “The week’s top-selling albums across all genres, ranked by sales data as compiled by Nielsen SoundScan” (Billboard, 2013a, n.p.).

10 These results were obtained from Whitburn’s (2008b) compilation, Hot Country Songs. Whitburn states, “This book covers the entire history of Billboard magazine’s Country ‘Records’/ ‘Singles’/ ‘Songs’ charts from 1944 through August 30, 2008…” (p. 8). From December 5 through January 15, 2005, “Billboard began compiling the Country singles chart strictly on the number of detections or plays registered by each song” (p. 8; see also Billboard, 2013b).
### Table 19 Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Peak</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Woman In Me (Needs The Man in You)</em></td>
<td>08/12/1995</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You Win My Love</em></td>
<td>02/24/1996</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>No One Needs To Know</em></td>
<td>05/11/1996</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Home Ain’t Where His Heart Is (Anymore)</em></td>
<td>08/10/1996</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>God Bless The Child</em></td>
<td>11/30/1996</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Come On Over**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Peak</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Love Gets Me Every Time</em></td>
<td>10/4/1997</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Honey, I’m Home!</em></td>
<td>11/15/1997</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Man! I Feel Like A Woman!</em></td>
<td>11/15/1997</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Don’t Be Stupid (You Know I Love You)</em></td>
<td>11/15/1997</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Come On Over</em></td>
<td>11/15/1997</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>From This Moment On</em></td>
<td>11/15/1997</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You’re Still The One</em></td>
<td>01/24/1998</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>That Don’t Impress Me Much</em></td>
<td>12/12/1998</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You’ve Got A Way</em></td>
<td>06/19/1999</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rock This Country!</em></td>
<td>01/15/2000</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I’m Holdin’ On To Love (To Save My Life)</em></td>
<td>07/08/2000</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Up!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Song</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Peak</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>I’m Gonna Getcha Good! (pop version)</em></td>
<td>10/19/2002</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Up!</em></td>
<td>11/16/2002</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>When You Kiss Me</em></td>
<td>12/07/2002</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Forever and For Always</em></td>
<td>04/12/2003</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>She’s Not Just A Pretty Face</em></td>
<td>10/11/2003</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>It Only Hurts When I’m Breathing</em></td>
<td>02/21/2004</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Whitburn, 2008b, p. 433). *Marks a “song that peaked in a year other than its debut year” (Whitburn, 2008b, p. 8).* This often occurs when subsequent albums/singles boost sales of earlier albums/singles.
Table 20. *Billboard’s Pop Singles Chart*\(^{11}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album &amp; Single</th>
<th>Chart Debut</th>
<th>Peak Position</th>
<th>Weeks at Peak</th>
<th>Total Weeks on Chart</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>The Woman in Me</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Any Man Of Mine</em></td>
<td>05/27/1995</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under?</em></td>
<td>05/27/1995</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>(If You’re Not In It For Love) I’m Outta Here!</em></td>
<td>12/16/1996</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>The Woman In Me (Needs The Man in You)</em></td>
<td>10/28/1995</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You Win My Love</em></td>
<td>03/16/1996</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>God Bless The Child</em></td>
<td>12/28/1996</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Come On Over</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Love Gets Me Every Time</em></td>
<td>10/11/1997</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Don’t Be Stupid (You Know I Love You)</em></td>
<td>12/06/1997</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You’re Still The One</em></td>
<td>02/14/1998</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>From This Moment On</em></td>
<td>12/05/1998</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>That Don’t Impress Me Much</em></td>
<td>01/23/1999</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Man! I Feel Like A Woman!</em></td>
<td>04/17/1999</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Come On Over</em></td>
<td>10/23/1999</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>You’ve Got A Way</em></td>
<td>07/17/1999</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I’m Holdin’ On To Love (To Save My Life)</em></td>
<td>10/07/2000</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Up!</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>I’m Gonna Getcha Good! (pop version)</em></td>
<td>10/19/2002</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Up!</em></td>
<td>02/01/2003</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Forever and For Always</em></td>
<td>05/24/2003</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>She’s Not Just A Pretty Face</em></td>
<td>12/06/2003</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>It Only Hurts When I’m Breathing</em></td>
<td>05/08/2004</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{11}\) These results were obtained from Whitburn’s (2011) *Top Pop Singles*, compiling chart data from *Billboard’s Pop Singles Chart* from 1955-2010. Whitburn used *Billboard’s ‘Hot 100’ singles chart*. *Billboard* (2013c) describes the ‘Hot 100’ chart as listing “The week’s most popular current songs across all genres, ranked by radio airplay…[and] sales data.” (n.p.).
(Whitburn, 2011, p. 920). *Marks a “song that peaked in a year other than its debut year” (p. 8). This often occurs when subsequent albums/singles boost sales of earlier albums/tracks.

**Table 21. Recording Industry Association of America (RIAA) Sales Data**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Release Date</th>
<th>RIAA Certification</th>
<th>Certification Date</th>
<th># Albums Sold</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Shania Twain</strong></td>
<td>04/20/1993</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>10/30/1996</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Platinum</td>
<td>04/15/1999</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Woman In Me</strong></td>
<td>02/07/1995</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>05/31/1995</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Platinum</td>
<td>06/22/1995</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2.00x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>08/14/1995</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>11/07/1995</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>12/15/1996</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>02/07/1996</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>6x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>03/20/1996</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>7x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>05/23/1996</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>09/13/1996</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>02/28/1997</td>
<td>9,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>11/17/1997</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>11x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>12/03/1998</td>
<td>11,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>12x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>12/01/2000</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Diamond</td>
<td>12/01/2000</td>
<td>10,000,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Come On Over</strong></td>
<td>11/04/1997</td>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>12/23/1997</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Platinum</td>
<td>12/23/1997</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>12/23/1997</td>
<td>2,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>01/08/1998</td>
<td>3,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>06/16/1998</td>
<td>4,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

12 The RIAA awards official certifications (Gold, Platinum, etc.) to albums reaching certain sales criteria (RIAA, 2014).
(Table 21 Continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multi</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>09/02/1998</td>
<td>5,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>11/04/1998</td>
<td>6,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>12/09/1998</td>
<td>7,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>01/27/1999</td>
<td>8,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>03/22/1999</td>
<td>9,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>04/07/1999</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>06/02/1999</td>
<td>11,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>07/26/1999</td>
<td>12,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>08/27/1999</td>
<td>13,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>11/10/1999</td>
<td>14,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>12/15/1999</td>
<td>16,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>03/14/2000</td>
<td>17,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>12/01/2000</td>
<td>18,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>03/27/2002</td>
<td>19,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>11/15/2004</td>
<td>20,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond Up!</td>
<td>11/19/2002</td>
<td>10,000,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>12/16/2003</td>
<td>500,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Platinum</td>
<td>12/16/2003</td>
<td>1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>12/16/2003</td>
<td>10,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11x Multi Platinum</td>
<td>09/23/2004</td>
<td>11,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diamond</td>
<td>09/23/2004</td>
<td>10,000,000+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The next chapter will discuss the findings, answer the research questions posed in Chapter 4, draw conclusions from the study, mention the study’s contributions, and make suggestions for future research.
CHAPTER 6:
DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

Discussion

In the following section, I will answer the research questions posed and discuss the study’s findings. The discussion will be arranged by research question. The chapter will end with research conclusions and give suggestions for future research.

RQ1: Sponsored Public Relations Frames

Research question 1 (RQ1) asked: What frames were sponsored by Shania Twain’s public relations team during her crossover to the pop market? These frames were identified using a qualitative content analysis method (see Table 22). I will address the sponsored frames found in the public relations materials for each album.
### Table 22. Frequency of Sponsored Public Relations Frames By Album

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Frame</th>
<th>Shania Twain</th>
<th>The Woman In Me</th>
<th>Come On Over</th>
<th>Up!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Frame</strong></td>
<td># (% rounded up)</td>
<td>Frame</td>
<td># (% rounded up)</td>
<td>Frame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tough background</td>
<td>10 (26%)</td>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>42 (21%)</td>
<td>Mass appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versatile artist</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>Mass appeal</td>
<td>30 (15%)</td>
<td>Country artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>27 (14%)</td>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>6 (16%)</td>
<td>Welcome Mutt</td>
<td>26 (13%)</td>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>4 (11%)</td>
<td>Tough background</td>
<td>23 (12%)</td>
<td>Lange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>20 (10%)</td>
<td>Rags to riches story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>38 (100%)</strong></td>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>18 (9%)</td>
<td>Upbeat, expressive music</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Independent female</td>
<td>11 (6%)</td>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>197 (100%)</strong></td>
<td>Versatile artist</td>
<td>6 (2%)</td>
<td>Independent female/female empowerment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>3 (1%)</td>
<td>Lange</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>2 (1%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>1 (0%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>258 (100%)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Shania Twain.** For this album, Shania’s team sponsored six frames in the press kit biography. The major frames identified are *tough background, versatile artist, authentic talent,* and *down-to-earth person.* Less significant frames included *glamorous performer* and *country artist.* As mentioned in chapter 4, only one public relations document was available for this debut album—the press kit biography. This limited message pool must be considered in reviewing the frequency of frames.
The dominant frames appeared to strike a balance between qualities seemingly aiming for a pop, mainstream audience and those that lean towards attracting a country audience. The versatile artist frame emphasizes Shania’s versatile, diverse, and “very different” sound (Mercury, 1993, p. 1). Her range of non-country influences and performance experiences are also highlighted. Moreover, the country artist frame was the most minor, invoked only three times. These characteristics seem to be aimed at targeting pop or mainstream audiences. On the other hand, the tough background, authentic talent, and down-to-earth person frames seem to underline qualities valued in the country industry, which treasures authenticity both professionally and personally (Peterson, 1997). As the secondary materials explain, Shania was launched as a country artist (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Her debut record was produced by Nashville talent and featured the “usual Nashville elements” with lyrics containing common country themes (Eggar, 2005, p. 286; Twain, 2011). However, her music had a “pop-country sheen,” the album cover artwork was atypical for a country artist at that time, and her first music video pushed country boundaries (Eggar, 2005). These elements of the promotional campaign also suggest a split between attracting pop, mainstream audiences and country audiences. Since Shania’s music did have a pop-country tinge to it, perhaps the more traditional country frames were used to ensure a smooth introduction to the country industry. It’s also possible that the mix of frames to attract country audiences and pop or mainstream audiences show a desire for later crossover. In her autobiography, Shania (2011) expressed a desire to cross over early on in her career. Perhaps by balancing frames for the country audience with frames to attract a mainstream audience, Shania and her team were introducing her as a country artist, including mainstream frames to leave open a later possibility of crossover.
The minor frames of *glamorous performer* and *country artist* also demonstrate a desire to please both the country and pop audiences. The *glamorous performer* image leans towards the outer country-pop end of the spectrum, while the *country artist* frame places her more firmly in the country genre. As with the major frames, the minor frames place Shania on both sides of the crossover fence.

What surprised me most about the sponsored frames for this album was that *country artist* was the least-used frame. The secondary materials clearly show Shania was launched as a country artist (Egger, 2005; Twain, 2011). Naturally, I expected the public relations document to emphasize the country artist frame more heavily. As discussed above, the dominant frames of *tough background, authentic talent*, and *down-to-earth person* seem to target a country audience that values authenticity and tradition (Peterson, 1997). Perhaps these frames were used as a more subtle way to attract country fans, as opposed to highlighting a *country artist* label. Again, there is also the possibility that, given Shania’s professed early desires at crossover, she wanted to keep the option of later cross over open, avoiding a permanent *country artist* label. This might explain the inclusion of the dominant *versatile artist* frame, which could have been aimed at attracting mainstream or pop fans to her early music. However, this is more of a stretch since her early music was quite country sounding, even with its pop-country sheen. Ultimately, only one public relations document was available for review here, so it’s likely that, given her launch as a country artist, other public relations materials for this first album would contain a heavier emphasis of the *country artist* frame.

Another observation is that the sponsored frames for *Shania Twain* presented a mix of personal and professional attributes. The *tough background* and *down-to-earth person* frames emphasize Shania’s personal attributes outside her professional career. On the other hand, the
versatile artist, authentic talent, glamorous performer, and country artist frames focus on her attributes as a performer and professional artist. It is possible that the professional qualities were used to attract industry consumers who were looking for authentic talent. The personal qualities may have been aimed at attracting fans that were inclined to engage with artists on a personal level.

The Woman In Me. For this album, eight sponsored frames were identified through a content analysis of public relations materials including the press kit cover letter and biography as well as eight press releases issued by Shania’s label, Mercury Nashville. The dominant sponsored frames were country artist, mass appeal, down-to-earth person, welcome Mutt, and tough background. Three minor sponsored frames also emerged—accomplished artist, authentic talent and independent female.

With this second album, the country artist frame became the most dominant sponsored frame. This frame described her as a country artist, emphasizing her country sounds, how she grew up singing country music, got her start in Nashville, and how her success helps the genre. As Shania explained in the secondary materials, her label was highly concerned that the album would not be accepted in country circles, believing “that it wasn’t country enough or at least not familiar enough to what they were used to hearing” (Twain, 2011, p. 260). She describes how “Nashville wanted Nashville songs and Nashville producers, and Nashville musicians recording in Nashville studios” (p. 255). It’s possible that her team’s emphasis on Shania as a country artist was to ensure that the country industry would accept her and play her records. Also, after all, Shania was launched as a country artist with her debut album, and became a country star.
through *The Woman in Me*, so it makes sense that *country artist* would be a dominant frame here.

In close second, behind the *country artist* frame, was the *mass appeal* frame. This sponsored frame presented Shania as having mass appeal on a national and international level, mentioning her success in the mainstream market, across all genres. This frame absorbed the *versatile artist* frame used for her first album, which highlighted the mix of sounds and influences in her music. The updated version of this frame presents Shania’s versatility in the context of her broadening appeal and fan base. With this second album, Shania’s crossover desires seemed to emerge through the music and through her own admissions. In the background materials, she explains, “I was so in sync with Mutt’s conviction not to necessarily make a genre-specific record, but to make a great record period [and]…to create something unique, unlike anything else” (Twain, 2011, p. 260). Accordingly, the album had a very different, very pop sound (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). Eventually, her label got behind the new sound and hired pop promotional people to sell this country album the pop way. In her music videos, Shania focused on a sultry image that was outside the country music norm and refused to tour per Nashville tradition. She also made three personal appearances at malls in the Midwest, aiming to appeal “beyond the country market, positioning her for a crossover into pop” (Eggar, 2005, p. 421-422). Given the emerging crossover vibes from Shania and her music, it would make sense that the public relations team would sponsor the *mass appeal* frame for this album.

The *down-to-earth person* and *tough background* frames were dominant again, as they had been in promotions for her debut album. As Shania’s sound became even more pop sounding, perhaps her team wanted to maintain a country audience by highlighting qualities typical of country stars. Presenting her as a kind, humble person from a rustic, rural, poor
background could even be viewed as trying to placate those in the country industry who began to complain that she sounded too pop and not country enough. At this point, country was still her main market and the genre in which she launched her career, so it would make sense to sponsor frames that enforced her loyalty to country music.

The *welcome Mutt* frame praised Lange’s talents as a rock and pop producer, yet made sure to emphasize his long-standing love of country music. As the secondary research reveals, Shania’s Mercury boss, Luke Lewis, was highly skeptical that the country industry would accept the outside producer (Twain, 2011). In fact, many country stations at first rejected the pop-sounding, very different sounding music he and Shania had created. Accordingly, by firmly welcoming Mutt to country music in the public relations materials, her team appeared to provide Lange with an endorsed entrée into the Nashville industry. By supporting this country outsider, perhaps country insiders would be less likely to reject him, and more likely to welcome him and his music to the country world.

Although the *accomplished artist* and *authentic talent* frames were minor, they were important in defending Shania from critics claiming she lacked real talent and was merely the product of Lange’s studio manipulation (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). The *accomplished artist* frame brought attention to the record-breaking sales figures of *The Woman In Me*, while the *authentic talent* frame highlighted her natural, extraordinary vocal and songwriting abilities. The *independent female* frame could also be seen in a similar light, as she was quoted in the press kit biography defending herself from those questioning her independence: “I’m in control of my career now. I enjoy it because I want to do it, not because I have to” (Mercury, 1994a, p. 3).
Come On Over. For Shania’s third album, *Come On Over*, twelve sponsored frames were identified through a content analysis of the press kit biography and two press releases from Mercury Nashville. Six major frames emerged: *mass appeal, country artist, authentic talent, accomplished artist, Lange,* and *rags-to-riches story.* Six additional minor frames were also found: *upbeat and expressive music, down-to-earth person, versatile artist, female empowerment, driven careerist,* and *glamorous performer.*

*Come On Over* is an interesting mark. Although *The Woman in Me* stretched the boundaries of country music, it was still a country record and established Shania as a country music star (Neal, 2008; Parsons, 1996). Parsons (1996) describes the album’s sound as a “rock-country hybrid,” but argues, “few who’ve heard *The Woman in Me* dispute its being a country album” (p. 15). Although Mercury used pop marketing techniques to promote *The Woman in Me,* the campaign was still heavily aimed at the country market, specifically country radio airplay (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). However, it’s clear that the album introduced a noticeably more pop-infused sound than her debut album. Shania and Mercury “were all pretty nervous about how country radio station programmers were going to react to the less overtly ‘country’ sound” (Twain, 2011, p. 261). *Mass appeal* emerged as a dominant frame in the public relations documents for the second album, highlighting her national appeal. Shania’s sexy performance image was amplified and she began appearing on a national scale with her hugely successful mall appearances in the heart of America (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). These factors, combined with the epic sales figures of *The Woman in Me,* seemed to open the door for a possible crossover to pop. Now that she’d appeared on a national scene, opening the ears of mainstream America to her music, the next step was to make that leap. Thus, *The Woman in Me* seemed to place Shania in prime position to tip over the watershed, making the crossover. It was then with
Come On Over and its immense success that Shania was able to make the crossover to the mainstream national and international markets.

Therefore, it makes sense that the most dominant sponsored frame in the public relations materials for Come On Over would be the mass appeal frame. As Eggar (2005) notes, the songs on this album “were a long way from the standard country formula” and the husband-wife duo were “resolved to take their pop-country to its fullest extent” (p. 450, 455). Again they targeted the mainstream audience with personal appearances at major shopping centers. In Europe Come On Over was promoted as a pop album from the beginning and in the U.S. as a country album with the ultimate goal of crossing over to pop (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). This sponsored frame focused on Shania’s national and international appeal and success, emphasizing global sales figures, awards, and media coverage. From Shania’s glamorous image to the over the top tour production, Shania was going full speed towards pop crossover with this album.

The country artist frame was still the second most dominant frame, aimed at maintaining her original country audience. As mentioned above, the album was marketed initially as a country album in the U.S. and her stage performance still had “the country sound,” despite the over the top production elements (Eggar, 2005, p. 471). The country artist frame was still heavily emphasized in the public relations materials for Come On Over likely to continue to appeal to Shania’s country fans and keep the country industry support. By highlighting Shania’s long history with the genre, growing up singing country and getting her start in Nashville, her team seemed to convey her loyalty to country music, perhaps to quell fears or criticism that she was leaving the genre behind for pop stardom.

The authentic talent and accomplished artist frames were also used frequently in the public relations materials. Their use is likely an attempt to defend Shania from critics who
questioned her ability as a vocalist and songwriter, skeptical of whether she could actually sing, calling her Lange’s puppet. The accomplished artist frame touted the epic, record-breaking sales figures of The Woman In Me and Come On Over, perhaps presenting a big “I told you so” to the naysayers, namely traditionalists who questioned her talent. Similarly, the Lange frame underlined Shania and Mutt’s partnership as a husband and wife team, also defending the equality in their relationship against critics of Shania’s talent and independence. Lesser-used codes within this frame touted his genius talents as a producer, bolstering his credibility in the industry.

It’s interesting to note that with the public relations documents analyzed for Come On Over, the tough background frame from Shania Twain and The Women In Me transitioned to the rags-to-riches story frame. The tough background frame used during promotion of the first two albums described the facts of her background, namely her difficult and impoverished upbringing. By contrast, the rags-to-riches frame used for promoting Come On Over described her background more as a fairytale transformation from poverty to stardom, overcoming great obstacles along the way. Although subtle, there is a difference. As suggested during discussion of previous albums, the tough background frame was used subtly to present the traditional country themes from Shania’s background—rural, rustic, poor, heartbreak, and struggle. It’s possible that with Come On Over establishing Shania’s crossover to a national and international level, the tough background theme of traditional country values would not translate to mainstream audiences. Instead, the fairytale come true, rags-to-riches story might have been a more effective way to communicate her life story to mainstream fans. This frame may also have been used to demonstrate the obstacles Shania had overcome and the hard work she had put in to get to this point in her career, dismissing critics who claim she is Lange’s puppet with no real
talent. Additionally, my content analysis of press coverage for *The Woman In Me* identified the frame of *rags-to-riches story*, so it’s possible that Shania’s public relations team picked up on that frame and chose to sponsor it in the public relations materials for *Come On Over*.

The minor frame, *upbeat and expressive music*, appeared to highlight the attractive qualities of her crossover sound for the target mainstream audience. This frame may also have been chosen to show country fans that her music was still worth listening to even though it was moving further outside the contemporary country bubble. The *down-to-earth person* frame was also used less frequently than in promotions for previous albums. Perhaps this frame was not as important when marketing to the pop audience, versus the country audience, which historically values a more authentic, low-key, down-to-earth personality (Peterson, 1997). The *versatile artist* frame was also demoted in dominance from earlier album promotions. This may have been due to the fact that the *mass appeal* sponsored frame was now the one being used to present Shania to a more mainstream, crossover audience. Moreover, now that Shania had the sales figures, chart performance, awards, and international acclaim to prove how versatile and diverse her music was, her promotions team didn’t need to emphasize the *versatile artist* frame as much this time around. The media and consumers could see her versatility in her global success and hear it in her music. With the *accomplished artist* frame being one of the more dominant frames in *Come On Over*’s promotions, the *versatile artist* frame was no longer needed. In a similar vein, the *driven careerist* frame, which depicted Shania as a motivated hard worker, was not needed since the *accomplished artist* frame underlined Shania’s successful career. Furthermore, the *accomplished artist* frame also demonstrated Shania’s command of her career, as she broke records for female sales and chart performance, thus the *female empowerment* frame
highlighting her power, independence, and allegiance to the women’s prerogative, was not as essential.

Finally, the **glamorous performer** frame was less significant for *Come On Over*. Perhaps with the focus on the **mass appeal** frame and image, her team did not need to draw attention to her sexy, glamorous professional image. It’s also possible they chose to play down her sultry image since it received so much attention in the press frames identified for *The Woman In Me*. The press focused heavily on her sexy image, often attributing some, if not all, of her success to it, thus her team may have wanted to draw the focus back to her talents as an artist and international success, instead of her physical look. Shania was even criticized in some outlets for just being a pin-up beauty, with mediocre talent, so it’s likely her team wanted to downplay this image and instead prove her true artistic worth.

**Up!** As noted previously, no public relations materials were readily available for *Up!* However, the secondary materials (Egger, 2005; Twain, 2011) provided ample details on the creation and promotion of the album. These materials were used to determine what sorts of frames were used in promoting *Up!* Four frames were identified from a reading of the secondary materials: **international crossover artist, country artist, glamorous performer, and dedicated to fans.** In addition, sponsored frames used for two or three of her previous albums were identified as likely sponsored frames for *Up!*’s public relations: **tough background/rags-to-riches story, authentic talent, down-to-earth person, accomplished artist, independent female/female empowerment** and *Lange.*

The frame that received the most coverage in the materials was the **international crossover artist** frame. As discussed above, while *Come On Over* was the album that made the
crossover, *Up!* was the album that *continued* the crossover to pop, aiming to grow Shania’s audience and success on a global scale. Thus, the *international crossover artist* frame became the main sponsored frame in promotions. Shania had expressed a long-standing desire to break out of the country mold she’d been part of until now, so it makes sense for the focus of her team’s publicity actions to be an international crossover artist (Twain, 2011). Retrospectively, Shania expressed satisfaction with the success of *Up!’s* international crossover:

> The fact that the album was categorized in pop, pop rock, and country pop was my dream: to be an international recording artist, recognized as an artist not of any specific genre, but just appreciated as an artist by *all* lovers of music. (Twain, 2011, p. 338)

Highlighting this frame are the three versions of the album that were released to satisfy a range of markets—country (green), pop (red), and international (blue). Additionally, according to Eggar (2005), her team knew that since the country market was not doing well, they would have to “lean a little harder on the pop side, dress a little different, do a lot of things to keep pace” (p. 568). This may also explain the heavy emphasis on the *international crossover artist* frame.

Although not as dominant a sponsored frame, *glamorous performer* was another frame perpetuated by Shania’s team in promoting *Up!* This frame goes hand in hand with the international crossover artist frame, as the sexy, glamorous performance image seems stereotypically more heavily associated with pop stars than country singers. The *Up!* world wide tour fit this image, including heavy pyrotechnic elements (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). The stage costumes were also quite glitzy.

The *country artist* frame was also sponsored in the public relations materials. This continued the trend from her second and third albums, as country is the genre she was labeled with and began her career in. However, the sales of *Up!* did not match the record-breaking numbers of *Come On Over* (Eggar, 2005). Eggar (2005) credits this to the fact that Shania had
been out of touch with American culture for the past three years, living in Switzerland, and suggests that “to fit in [within Europe] requires personal changes, and by 2002, whether she realized it or not, Shania had changed her style and image,” with glamorous clothing and an international lifestyle (p. 575). These changes were perhaps seen as too far from the “jeans and T-shirt girl” she started out as, now seeming to be “the international superstar gracing the little people with her presence” (p. 575). Although Eggar (2005) points out, “that was, and is, not true of Shania, but stardom is all about public perception” (p. 575). As a result, during the later stages of the promotional run of Up!, Shania and her team began a sort of “Nashville rehabilitation,” emphasizing the more traditional elements of her image in an attempt to win back some of her original contemporary country fans who had been put off by her ever-progressing crossover sound and image (p. 579). Promotional actions that highlighted this frame include Shania “deliberately dressing down,” performing at country awards shows, and performing with more traditional country artists such as Alison Krauss and Union Station (p. 576).

Shania being **dedicated to her fans** was a more minor sponsored frame. For example, she chose a round stage for her Up! tour, bringing her physically closer to her audience. Perhaps this was an extension of her “Nashville rehabilitation,” attempting to reconnect with her fans in a genuine and relatable way (Eggar, 2005, p. 579). The predicted frames *tough background/rags-to-riches* story and *down-to-earth person* could also have been used as part of this renewed focus on a country image. The **authentic talent, accomplished artist, and independent female/female empowerment** frames continue to emphasize Shania’s real talent, success, and control over her career. Similarly, the **Lange** frame, which highlights the husband/wife partnership both professionally and personally, shows that Shania is not controlled by her husband in any way.
Overall comments.

Crossover progression. Looking at the sponsored public relations frames for all four albums, certain trends emerge (Table 22). *Shania Twain* introduced Shania to the country industry. *The Woman In Me* cemented her place in the country industry, introduced her to the national music industry, and opened the door for a crossover to pop. Then, *Come On Over* actually made the crossover to the national and international mainstream market. Finally, *Up!* continued that crossover on a truly global scale. I believe this journey is reflected in the sponsored public relations frames for each album.

The dominant sponsored frames for *Shania Twain* were tough background and versatile artist, presenting both traditional country themes and Shania’s non-country sounds. *Country artist* was the most minor frame, despite her being launched in the country genre. Perhaps this was to introduce Shania’s background, personality, and talent above stamping her with a genre label, boxing her in to one type of music.

In promoting her second album, *The Woman In Me*, her team focused on the country artist frame, cementing her status as a bona fide country star. However, mass appeal was another significant sponsored frame, presenting Shania as having national, mainstream appeal. This frame was an updated version of the versatile artist frame, which had been frequently used for the album, *Shania Twain*. It’s possible that the emphasis on mass appeal here was designed to open the door for Shania to make a crossover with the next album. At this point Shania had proven she was a hit in both the country market and could at least appear on the national, mainstream scene, even if not with the same impact as the country market. By opening
mainstream America’s ears to her music, at least in part, Shania seemed to have her foot in the pop crossover door.

Thus, with her third album, *Come On Over*, **mass appeal** finally replaced **country artist** as the most frequent sponsored frame in public relations materials, as Shania made a successful crossover to the pop market. **Authentic talent** and **accomplished artist** became more significant sponsored frames, perhaps in response to critics claiming Shania was merely a studio puppet, the product of sound engineering with no real talent. Such frames would combat these assertions by the press and industry critics, especially those on the traditional side of the crossover controversy who were against more progressive, pop-sounding country music.

With her fourth album, *Up!*, **international crossover artist** became main sponsored frame during initial promotional activities (Egger, 2005; Twain, 2011). It seems clear that the focus was on promoting Shania as a bona fide crossover artist with global appeal. I find it interesting that although the press began using the **crossover** frame for her second album, it did not appear to become a sponsored public relations frame until her fourth album, *Up!* For *The Woman in Me* and *Come On Over*, her team chose to use the **mass appeal** frame instead, focusing on her international and national appeal, as well her versatility and ability to perform in all genres. Perhaps her team’s reticence to use the ‘crossover’ term was due to a desire to remain successful in the country genre. Although Shania’s sound was on the more progressive, pop end of the country spectrum from the start of her career, using the term ‘crossover’ in official promotion materials may have tipped the balance and moved Shania out of the country spectrum altogether. Throughout her four albums, Shania’s team demonstrated a clear loyalty to the country genre, by touting her tough background with traditional country themes of struggle, heartbreak, and hard work; her down-to-earth, humble nature; and most importantly her label as a country artist,
emphasizing how she began her career in country and grew up singing traditional country songs. As much as the press labeled her a ‘crossover’ or ‘pop’ artist with international appeal, it seemed her public relations people did not want to get rid of the country label altogether. In fact, as mentioned above, Shania even went through a “Nashville rehabilitation” in 2002, emphasizing more traditional country sounds and images in a concerted effort to win back her original country fans that felt out of touch with the glamorous global superstar (Egger, 2005, p. 579).

Ultimately, this straddling of two genres is the essence of a crossover. A successful crossover involves keeping the original fan base while also gaining fans, recognition, and airplay in a second genre. It’s all about expanding an artist’s audience without losing initial supporters. This seems to be what Shania’s team was trying to accomplish with their ‘dual frame approach,’ keeping country artist as a dominant frame, while also equally emphasizing her mass appeal. The fact that they reverted to focusing on the country artist frame after the overemphasis of the mass appeal/international superstar frame upset her country fans demonstrates the essential role of balance between the two genres during a crossover campaign.

Constructed image. The findings of the first research question also reveal the construction of Shania’s image through the sponsored frames. In the music industry, one of the main roles of the public relations team is to carefully construct and maintain an artist’s image in order to target key publics and reach campaign goals (Field, 2010; Merkl, 1997; Vittek, 2011). In this case, the frames involving Shania’s personal and professional life seem to be in stark contrast. As discussed below, this contrast is also reflected in the press coverage. The frames involving her professional life, such as glamorous performer and mass appeal, tend to show a more progressive, modern image. On the other hand, the frames involving Shania’s personal life, such as down-to-earth person and tough background, expose her modest and conservative
private life. Describing her professional image, Shania told *Newsweek*, “I think that’s my job: to be this person in the videos that’s just free and getting into the music and having fun” (Schoemer, 1996, p. 70). The article commented, “Shania knows darn well that for the next four hours, her job is to bring that fantasy person to life,” adding that, “she does it like a pro” (p. 70). Conversely, she also is quoted explaining, “Myself, personally, I’m very conservative…On my personal time, I dress very conservatively, and I’m very old-fashioned” (p. 70). The juxtaposition of her progressive, flashy professional image and conservative, traditional private image also represent the essence of crossover. The two images come together in one campaign, attracting the pop and country-pop fans with her glamorous professional image and appeasing the more moderate of her country fans with her conservative private image. Once again, crossover is a balancing act of two genres, attracting both fan bases and appeasing critics on both sides.

Keeping the trends and observations of the sponsored public relations frames in mind, the next section will answer the second research question, which examines whether the sponsored frames were accepted by key publics—media and consumers.

**RQ2: Frame Acceptance By Key Publics**

Research question 2 (RQ2) asked whether key publics—the media and consumers, accepted the sponsored public relations frames identified by RQ1. This question deals with salience of the sponsored public relations frames identified in the answer to RQ1 above. Salience is measured by whether key publics accept the sponsored frames in the message presented (Entman, 1993). Thus, RQ2 seeks to determine whether Shania’s key publics—the media and consumers—accepted the frames sponsored by her public relations team during her
crossover journey. The salience of the sponsored frames with the media was measured using conventional qualitative content analysis to determine whether the media used the sponsored frames and/or created their own frames. The salience of the sponsored frames with consumers—fans and industry—was measured by sales and chart performance data, showing whether or not they responded to the frames by buying and/or playing the album. RQ2 has three subparts that will be answered and discussed in order.

Part A of RQ2 asks which sponsored public relations frames were used by the media in the resulting press coverage. The answers to this question below will include discussion of the sponsored public relations frames that were reflected exactly in press coverage as well as those frames the press altered slightly. Since such press frames generally matched the sponsored press frames, with only minor variations amongst codes, I counted them as showing acceptance of the corresponding sponsored public relations frame. In determining overall salience of sponsored public relations frames for each album, I took into account the number of frames reflected exactly versus those that were slightly altered by the press.

Part B of RQ2 asks what frames did the media use that were not part of the sponsored public relations frames from Shania’s team? Answers to this question will discuss any frames present in the press coverage that were not part of the sponsored frames identified in the public relations materials.

Part C of RQ2 asks whether consumers accepted the sponsored public relations frames. Answers to this question will discuss whether consumers—fans and industry—accepted the sponsored frames by buying or playing Shania’s music.

The following section will answer these three questions for each of the four studio albums observed in this study and discuss the findings reported in the previous chapter.
**Shania Twain**

**RQ2 (A): Accepted PR frames.** The press coverage of *Shania Twain* used five of the six sponsored public relations frames exactly as her team had presented them—*versatile artist, authentic talent, down-to-earth person, glamorous performer, and country artist* (see Table 23).

The sixth public relations frame, *tough background*, was also accepted by the press, but presented as *rags-to-riches-story* in coverage. The same codes were found (rural, poor, hardworking, difficult, large and loving family) but the articles presented the frame as more of transition from a poor, tough background to fame and riches, whereas the public relations materials merely gave the information about her upbringing. It’s possible that press thought that presenting Shania’s difficult background story would be more appealing as a rags-to-riches fairytale versus a straight biography.

**RQ2 (B): New press frames.** The press coverage of *Shania Twain* used the frame *new country sound*, presenting Shania’s music as a new sound for country music that pushed the boundaries of the genre. This frame was not used in the public relations materials.

**Table 23. Shania Twain: Comparison of Public Relations Frames and Press Frames**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PR Frames</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
<th>Press Frames</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Tough background</td>
<td>10 (26%)</td>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>12 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versatile artist</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>Versatile artist</td>
<td>9 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>7 (18%)</td>
<td>Rags to riches story</td>
<td>8 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>6 (16%)</td>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>7 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>4 (11%)</td>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>3 (8%)</td>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>38 (100%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>New country sound</strong></td>
<td><strong>2 (4%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>46 (100%)</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
**RQ2 (C): Consumer acceptance.** Shania Twain debuted on the *Billboard* country album chart on July 24, 1993, about 3 months after its release (Whitburn, 2008a, p. 256). It reached a peak position of 67 and spent only four weeks on the chart (p. 256). The singles, *What Made You Say that* and *Dance With The One That Brought You* both appeared on the country singles chart for 18 weeks, at a peak position of 55 (Whitburn, 2008b, p. 433). The album did not appear on the pop album chart until February 24, 1996, when *The Woman in Me* became popular, leading fans to explore Shania’s earlier work. No singles from this album made the pop singles chart. As for sales, her debut album sold an estimated 100,000 units upon release (Eggar, 2005; Twain, 2011). RIAA certification data shows that the album did not receive Gold or Platinum certification until 1996 when *The Woman in Me*’s popularity led fans to buy her earlier work. Although chart performance and sales were low, the album’s appearance on *Billboard*’s country album chart and two singles’ appearance on the country singles chart indicates that country consumers accepted the sponsored *country artist* frame, playing and buying *Shania Twain*.

**Comments.** Overall, it seems that salience was high between the sponsored public relations frames and key publics—the press and consumers. Five out of six sponsored public relations frames were reflected directly in press coverage. The *tough background* frame was altered slightly to *rags-to-riches story*, keeping the same codes. Only one new press frame was used that was not part of the sponsored public relations frames—*new country sound*. Also, although chart and sales numbers were low, they indicate that country consumers did accept the *country artist* frame, buying and playing the album.

Looking at the frequency of frame usage in Table 23 above, it is interesting to note that *country artist* was the least significant public relations frame, but the most significant press
frame. *Versatile artist* was the second most frequent frame in both public relations materials and press coverage. Shania’s sound was more progressive and pop-sounding from the beginning, as opposed to the more traditional end of the country spectrum. However, she was entering the market as a country artist (Egger, 2005; Twain, 2011). It’s conceivable that her team chose to downplay the use of the country artist frame and emphasize the versatile artist frame to leave open the option of crossing over with subsequent albums. Not knowing how Shania would be received with her debut album, it’s possible her team did not want to highlight genre labels, instead drawing attention to her versatility as an artist.

The press picked up on the *country artist* frame, with this being the most frequent press frame. However, *versatile artist* was the second most frequent press frame, accompanied by the lesser-used frame of *new country sound*, showing that the press understood her versatility as an artist and the different sound she brought to the country scene. *Authentic talent* is another sponsored public relations frame that was featured frequently in press coverage. Whether Shania chose to stay in the country market or pursue a crossover career after her debut album, establishing her as having an authentic talent seems important.

*The Woman In Me*

**RQ2 (A): Accepted PR frames.** The press coverage for *The Woman in Me* used four of the eight sponsored public relations frames just as they were presented in the promotional materials analyzed—*country artist, down-to-earth person, accomplished artist,* and *authentic talent* (see Table 24). The remaining four sponsored public relations frames—*mass appeal, welcome Mutt, tough background,* and *independent female*—were also accepted by the press, but were slightly altered. These four frames are discussed below.
The mass appeal frame sponsored in public relations materials was used in press coverage, but was absorbed into the newly created press frame of crossover artist (discussed below). The sponsored mass appeal frame codes of national appeal, international appeal, versatile, and all-genre were used as part of the crossover artist press frame.

The welcome Mutt frame sponsored in the public relations materials was accepted in the press coverage, but included some minor variations. The press frame used the sponsored codes of husband/wife team, pop/rock background, and over-the-top production style. While the sponsored frame described Lange as a world-famous producer, the press frame focused more on his talents, describing him as a genius producer. Also, the sponsored frame focused on how he recognized Shania’s talent and helped her, whereas the press frame showed Lange as being responsible for her success, with some writers casting a negative light, implying Shania did not have the talent to make it on her own. The press frame also added information about Lange as a songwriter and described him as private in his personal life.

The sponsored public relations frame of tough background was used in the press coverage, but was altered to the rags-to-riches story frame, as it had been with her first album. Once again, the same codes were used—rural, hardworking, tough, poor, and large and loving family—but the frame was presented more as a fairytale transformation of a tough upbringing to a famous music artist, as opposed to the straightforward biographical presentation of the sponsored tough background frame. This frame was the most frequent press frame, perhaps seeking to tell Shania’s life story in a more appealing fairytale format.

The sponsored frame of independent female was split in the press coverage into the driven careerist and female empowerment frames. The sponsored public relations frame included both internal and external elements of female independence, focusing on Shania’s
control of her own career as well as her accomplishments in the world of female artists. By contrast, the press divided the sponsored frame into internal and external elements of female power. The driven careerist press frame focused on Shania as a hardworking, smart, and confident female artist, while the female empowerment frame highlighted female power in general by describing the female themes and messages of independence in Shania’s music.

RQ2 (B): New press frames. Three new press frames emerged that were not included in the sponsored press frames for The Woman In Me—country outsider pushing boundaries, glamorous performer, and crossover artist. The press created the frame of country outsider pushing boundaries, mentioning how Shania brought a new sound to country music, shed the stereotypical country image, and had not taken the traditional path to stardom in the country industry. Although the glamorous performer frame was sponsored in public relations materials for Shania Twain, it was not included in the materials examined for The Woman in Me. For the first album, the sponsored frame highlighted Shania’s glamorous clothing and style, attitude, and performances, while the press mentioned her glamorous performances and image. Here, the press again focused on Shania’s glamorous performance, image, and outfits. However, the press frame also includes her good looks, physical assets, and music videos. I believe that the press was merely expanding on the sponsored public relations frame of glamorous performer presented in promotional materials for her debut album in 1993. Additionally, the press included the frame of crossover artist in its coverage of The Woman in Me. As discussed above, this press frame absorbed the sponsored frame of mass appeal, including codes of range of musical influences, mix of sounds, national appeal, and international appeal. However, it added the codes of pop and crossover.
Table 24. The Woman In Me: Comparison of Public Relations and Press Frames

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PR Frames</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
<th>Press Frames</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>42 (21%)</td>
<td>Rags to riches story</td>
<td>61 (17%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mass appeal</td>
<td>30 (15%)</td>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>59 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>27 (14%)</td>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>46 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Mutt</td>
<td>26 (13%)</td>
<td>Country outsider</td>
<td>40 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tough background</td>
<td>23 (12%)</td>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>39 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>20 (10%)</td>
<td>Crossover artist</td>
<td>26 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>18 (9%)</td>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>26 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent female</td>
<td>11 (6%)</td>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>26 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>197 (100%)</td>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>16 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>10 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>9 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>358 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RQ2 (C): Consumer acceptance.** The Woman in Me debuted on the Billboard country album chart on February 25, 1995, reaching a peak position of 1, where it remained for 29 weeks, staying on the chart for 110 weeks total (Whitburn, 2008a, p. 256). Eight singles from the album appeared on the country singles chart (Whitburn, 2008b). The album debuted on Billboard’s pop album chart on March 18, 1995, reaching a peak position of 5 for 1 week, and staying on the chart for 110 weeks total (Whitburn, 2010, p. 800). 6 singles appeared on the top pop singles chart (Whitburn, 2011). The excellent performance of the album on the country album and singles chart indicates that country consumers accepted the major sponsored public relations frame of country artist. The album’s performance on the pop album and singles chart shows that pop consumers accepted the dominant sponsored frame of mass appeal. The sales data shows that consumers responded very well to the sponsored frames, with record-breaking sales figures. Released on February 7, 1995, The Woman in Me reached RIAA Gold status (500,000 units sold) by May 31, 1995; Platinum (1,000,000 units sold) by June 22, 1995 (RIAA, 2014). Sales continued rising, reaching nearly 10,000,000 units by the end of the
promotional period examined for this album. The stellar performance of *The Woman in Me* on the country and pop charts as well as its high sales numbers demonstrates that consumers accepted the sponsored frames.

**Comments.** Ultimately, salience of the sponsored public relations frames for *The Woman In Me* was also quite high, with four of the eight sponsored frames reflected directly in press coverage and the remaining four reflected generally, with only minor variations. Although three press frames were included that were not part of the sponsored public relations frames for this album, two were based on existing sponsored public relations frames. Only the *country outsider pushing boundaries* press frame was not included in the sponsored frames for either of Shania’s two albums, although *new country sound* was a press frame for *Shania Twain.* Additionally, the album fared very well on country and pop charts with astronomical sales figures.

Examining the frequency of sponsored frames and press frames for this album, some observations are worth noting. First of all, with *rags-to-riches story* as the most frequent press frame, writers seem to be introducing Shania and her background. Her debut album, *Shania Twain,* did not perform well in sales or on the charts, so it’s likely that a lot of people had not yet heard of Shania. The *rag-to-riches story* of her background is an alluring hook for introducing her to the public and industry.

After being the least significant sponsored frame for her debut album, *country artist* shot to being the most frequent sponsored frame for promotion of *The Woman in Me.* This emphasis is reflected in the press coverage, with the *country artist* frame as the third most used press frame. Close behind, in fourth place, is the *country outsider pushing boundaries* frame. This is an updated version of the press frame *new country sound* from coverage of *Shania Twain.*
emphasizing her new sound and how Shania pushes country boundaries. The updated version also emphasizes the new sound Shania brings to country, but builds upon the original press frame, adding how she sheds the stereotypical country image and has not taken the traditional path to country stardom. A little further down the list of press frames is crossover artist with writers beginning to label Shania and her music as ‘pop’ and ‘crossover.’ With the country outsider pushing boundaries and crossover artist frame, the press was starting to pick up on and emphasize Shania’s crossover sounds. This development is intriguing since country artist is the most frequent sponsored public relations frame for this album. However, mass appeal was the second most frequent sponsored frame, so it seems that the press coverage is reflecting the dual-frame approach of promoting Shania under the country artist label while also heavily emphasizing her mass appeal in public relations materials. Perhaps, given the hotly debated crossover controversy, her team did not want to use the terms ‘pop’ or ‘crossover’ in promotions at this point in Shania’s career. With The Woman in Me earning Shania a spot as a top country female artist, it is possible that her team did not want to ruffle feathers in Nashville by dropping such controversial terms. However, the press certainly got the drift of where Shania’s music was heading.

Come On Over

RQ2 (A): Accepted PR frames. From the public relations materials reviewed for Come On Over, eight of the 12 sponsored frames were reflected directly in the press coverage—country artist, authentic talent, accomplished artist, rags to riches story, down-to-earth person, female empowerment, driven careerist, and glamorous performer (see Table 25). The
remaining four sponsored frames were also reflected in the press coverage with only minor variations—mass appeal, Lange, upbeat and expressive music, and versatile artist.

The sponsored frames of mass appeal and versatile artist were both used in the press coverage but were included in the new press frame of crossover artist. From the mass appeal frame, the codes of international and national appeal were included in the new frame. From the versatile artist frame, the codes of mix of sounds and outside influences were included. The third code from the versatile artist frame—new sound—was included in press coverage through the non-sponsored frame of country outsider pushing boundaries. The sponsored frame of Lange was also included in the press coverage with writers borrowing the codes of husband/wife team, producer, pop/rock background, and genius producer. However, press coverage added information about the pair’s good marriage and how Lange was foreign, friendly, and private. Furthermore, the press frame included some negative views of Lange that were not part of the sponsored frame. Such critical descriptions include Lange being responsible for Shania’s success, controlling, and a country music outsider. The sponsored frame presenting Shania’s music as upbeat and expressive was also reflected in press coverage. However, the press frame did not include the descriptions of the more serious sides of Shania’s music that were part of the sponsored frame in public relations materials examined. The press’ version of this frame also included observations, with some critiques, of her abundant use of exclamation points in her song titles. Altogether, these four sponsored frames were reflected in the press coverage with only minor differences.

RQ2 (B): New press frames. Two frames were included in the press coverage of Come On Over that were not part of the sponsored public relations frames—crossover artist and country outsider pushing boundaries. As previously mentioned, the crossover artist frame
combined the sponsored frames of *mass appeal* and *versatile artist* which described Shania as having international and national appeal with a mix of sounds and musical influences. However, this press frame added descriptions of Shania and her music as country-pop, pop, or crossover and referenced the crossover controversy.

The second press frame that was not present in the sponsored public relations frames is *country outsider pushing boundaries*. This frame described Shania as not following the traditional path to country stardom, excluding the country market, providing a new sound for country music, pushing the genre’s boundaries, and how her success is good for the country genre.

*Table 25. Come On Over: Comparison of Public Relations and Press Frames*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PR Frames</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
<th>Press Frames</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mass appeal</td>
<td>31 (20%)</td>
<td>Crossover</td>
<td>102 (18%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>21 (14%)</td>
<td>Rags to riches story</td>
<td>88 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>18 (12%)</td>
<td>Down-to-earth</td>
<td>71 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>18 (12%)</td>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>62 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>18 (12%)</td>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>53 (9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rags to riches story</td>
<td>16 (11%)</td>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>44 (8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upbeat, expressive music</td>
<td>11 (7%)</td>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>39 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth</td>
<td>7 (5%)</td>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>27 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Versatile artist</td>
<td>6 (4%)</td>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>25 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>3 (2%)</td>
<td>Country outsider pushing boundaries</td>
<td>24 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>2 (1%)</td>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>19 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>1 (0%)</td>
<td>Fun, light music</td>
<td>14 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>152 (100%)</strong></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>568 (100%)</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RQ2 (C): Consumer acceptance. *Come On Over* debuted on *Billboard*’s country album chart on November 22nd, 1997, remaining at #1 for 50 weeks, and staying on the chart for 151 weeks total (Whitburn, 2008a, p. 256). 11 of the album’s singles made the country singles chart (Whitburn, 2008b, p. 433). The album also appeared on the pop album chart on the same
date, reaching a peak position of #2 for 2 weeks, staying on the chart for 151 weeks total (Whitburn, 2010, p. 800). 9 singles landed on the pop singles chart (Whitburn, 2011, p. 920). With such success simultaneously on the country and pop charts indicates a strong acceptance of the sponsored country artist frame by the country audience and the mass appeal frame by the pop audience. With Come On Over, mass appeal became the dominant sponsored frame for the first time, ousting country artist from its top spot for previous albums. This was Shania’s crossover album, and the emphasis on mass appeal was accepted by consumers, with increased pop chart performance versus previous albums.

Come On Over was released on November 4, 1997, and had reached RIAA Gold (500,000 units sold) and Platinum certification (1,000,000 units sold) by December 23 (RIAA, 2014). The album had sold over 17,000,000 units by the end of the promotional period examined. These sales figures certainly indicate a strong acceptance of sponsored frames by consumers who bought Come On Over in record numbers, firmly placing Shania on the pop charts and making her an international crossover sensation.

Comments. Once again, the salience of the sponsored public relations frames with key publics—press and consumers—was high. The press used eight of the 12 sponsored frames directly and the remaining four with only minor variations. In fact, one of the press frames that was not included in the sponsored public relations frames—crossover artist—actually included two sponsored frames—mass appeal and versatile artist—just as they appeared in the public relations materials. Chart performance and album sales continued to rise to record-breaking levels in both the country and pop markets.

For the first time, mass appeal overtook country artist as the most frequent sponsored frame in public relations materials. The press frames reflected this change in strategy, with
crossover artist as the most frequent frame in coverage. Country artist was the second most frequent sponsored frame, and the press mimicked this emphasis, with country artist near the top of the press frame usage list. Once again, the press seemed to reflect the dual-frame approach of Shania’s team presenting her as both a country artist and having broad, mainstream appeal outside the country genre.

Up!

RQ2 (A): Accepted PR frames. It is important to once again note that no public relations materials were readily available from Shania’s team for her fourth album, Up! However, from the description of the album’s promotion in the secondary materials, I was able to glean four sponsored frames that guided the public relations activity—international crossover artist, country artist, glamorous performer, and dedicated to fans. All four of these sponsored frames were reflected directly in press coverage of Up! (see Table 26). The sponsored frame of international crossover artist was used in the press coverage in the form of the international superstar and crossover artist frames. The country artist and glamorous performer frames was used directly. The sponsored frame of dedicated to fans was used in coverage as part of the down-to-earth person frame, which described Shania as being eternally grateful for her fans’ support and dedicated to making music and performing for them.

Additionally, all six of the sponsored frames predicted based on use for previous albums were accepted by the press: tough background/rags to riches story, authentic talent, down-to-earth person, accomplished artist, independent female/female empowerment and Lange.

RQ2 (B): New press frames. Three press frames emerged in the coverage of Up! which were not part of the sponsored public relations frames—tired of fame, comeback album, and
**pushing country boundaries.** The **tired of fame** frame was likely a result of the break Shania took between *Come On Over* and *Up!* to get away from the limelight and have her son. This new press frame described how she escaped the spotlight, was tired of fame, never sought fame, fame was not important to her, her two year career break, and how she wished to play down her glamorous image. The second new press frame, **comeback album**, highlighted *Up!* as Shania’s comeback album, the high expectations of fans after her previous hits, and the big promotional effort behind the album’s release. The third new press frame, **pushing country boundaries**, underlined how Shania’s music was pushing the accepted sound of country music and expanding its audience.

**Table 26. Up!: Comparison of Public Relations and Press Frames**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PR Frames*</th>
<th># (% rounded up)**</th>
<th>Press Frames</th>
<th># (% rounded up)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International crossover artist</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>122 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>79 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Rags-to-riches story</td>
<td>75 (12%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dedicated to fans</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>International superstar</td>
<td>68 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tough background/rags-to-riches story</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Crossover</td>
<td>59 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authentic talent</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Driven careerist</td>
<td>42 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Down-to-earth person</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Fun and light music</td>
<td>29 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Tired of fame</td>
<td>28 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent female/female empowerment</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Accomplished artist</td>
<td>23 (4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lange</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Country artist</td>
<td>21 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>--</strong></td>
<td><strong>Authentic talent</strong></td>
<td><strong>16 (3%)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Glamorous performer</td>
<td>14 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Female empowerment</td>
<td>11 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Comeback album</td>
<td>10 (2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pushing country boundaries</td>
<td>9 (1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>606</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Since the PR frames for *Up!* were taken from secondary sources, no coding occurred, thus these frames are in no specific order. **Since no coding was performed on these frames, no counts are available.
RQ2 (C): Consumer acceptance. *Up!* was released on November 19, 2002. By December 7, the country-only version (green disc) and the combined country and pop 2-disc set (green and red disc) premiered on the *Billboard* country album chart (Whitburn, 2008a, p. 256). The country only version peaked at #23, remaining on the chart for 14 weeks. The 2-disc country and pop set peaked at #1 for 6 weeks, staying on the chart for 104 weeks total. Six singles made the country singles chart (Whitburn, 2008b, p. 433). Both versions also appeared on the pop album chart on December 7 (Whitburn, 2010, p. 800). The country only version reached a peak position of #190 and only stayed on the chart for 1 week. The country-pop disc set hit a top position of #1 for 5 weeks and remained on the chart for a total of 93 weeks. Five singles made the pop singles chart (Whitburn, 2011, p. 920). The excellent performance of the record on both the country and pop charts demonstrates a strong acceptance of the sponsored country artist frame by country consumers and of the international crossover artist frame by the pop audience. On December 16, 2003, *Up!* was certified Gold, Platinum, and 10 times Multi Platinum (10,000,000 units sold) (RIAA, 2014). As with chart performance, such sales figures show an acceptance of sponsored public relations frames by consumers.

Comments. Overall, the salience of the sponsored public relations frames with media and consumers seemed high for the *Up!* album. With the four frames gleaned from secondary materials and the six predicted sponsored frames based on previous albums reflected directly in the press coverage, the media appeared to accept the frames presented by Shania’s team. Performance on country and pop charts as well as sales figures were also high.

It is worth noting that down-to-earth person was the most frequent press frame in coverage of this album. The secondary materials state that after reaching the height of international fame and glamour, Shania underwent a concerted “Nashville rehabilitation” trying
to soften her European, high glamour image which many of her original country fans had difficulty relating to (Egger, 2005; Twain, 2011). It would make sense that as a consequence, the most frequent press frame would be *down-to-earth person*, emphasizing her humble, low-key, modest personal life. Also, although actual public relations documents were not available for review, the secondary materials seem to indicate that her team may have been ready to finally use the *crossover* term officially in their documents. By this time Shania had reached international fame as a bona fide pop artist, so the term may have been sponsored. On the other hand, given her “Nashville rehabilitation” (Egger, 2005, p. 577; Twain, 2011), her team may not have used the ‘crossover’ term in official public relations documents, not wanting to lose their original country audience. It’s possible they might have continued to use the *mass appeal* frame.

Throughout all four albums, there were more press frames than public relations frames. This is likely due to the fact that the public relations materials are coming from one source, Mercury Records, while press coverage comes from many different publications and authors. Additionally, the number of press frames increased for each subsequent album. This is probably because the press knew more about her and had more opinions with each successive album.

**Conclusion**

The purpose of this thesis was to identify the sponsored frames used by Shania’s public relations team during her crossover to pop music, and to determine whether these frames were accepted by key publics—the media and consumers. The findings revealed the sponsored frames used in public relations documents for each of the four studio albums under review. Additionally, the results showed strong acceptance (salience) of these frames by the press and consumers—fans and industry.
Dual-Frame Approach

The overarching question that led to this study asked how public relations practitioners could effectively frame country artists in their crossover to the pop market. Shania’s team demonstrated a winning formula of sponsored frames that carried her through one of the most successful crossovers in music history. They used a dual emphasis on the frames of country artist and mass appeal, gradually shifting the focus from the former to the latter as her crossover progressed throughout her first four albums (1993-2004). This dual-frame approach is what allowed Shania to maintain her original country audience while also attracting a global pop fan base. As Fenster (1988) explains, “the term crossover implies that while reaching a broader audience, the product will retain the original audience upon which it attempts to build” (p. 288). This balance and maintenance of two distinct genre audiences is the essence of crossover, and it is this simultaneous success in both markets that marks a victorious journey.

Personal vs. Professional Image

Among the sponsored public relations frames were a mix of personal and professional attributes. The personal attributes frames such as tough background/rags-to-riches story and down-to-earth person reveal Shania to be quite conservative and traditional in her private life. On the other hand, the frames related to her professional image such as glamorous performer and international superstar tend to project a more progressive woman. This dichotomy of traditional personal image versus progressive professional image reflects the sides of the crossover controversy. Just like the dual frame approach discussed above, this contrast of Shania’s two worlds seems to balance her overall image. The traditional private image allows her to appease those traditional country industry folk and fans, while the progressive professional
image attracts pop and country-pop fans. The result of this balance between audiences is a successful crossover.

**Constructed Image**

The juxtaposition of Shania’s conservative private life and progressive professional image also underline the importance of image construction in the music industry. Quoted in *Newsweek*, Shania explained this contrast:

> “Myself, personally, I’m very very conservative…On my personal time, I dress very conservatively, and I’m very old-fashioned. But I believe in entertainment. I think it’s a very cool thing. It’s almost like I get to step outside of myself and just kind of be this person. I think that’s my job: to be this person in the videos that’s just free and getting into the music and having fun.” (Schoemer, 1996, p. 70)

Her words demonstrate the need to cater ones image towards entertaining audiences, even if out of line with the artist’s personal image. Although Shania was not the glamorous vixen in her every day life, it was this siren that helped sell millions of records and attract a mainstream pop audience to her music. Consequently, public relations is essential in the music industry, as practitioners construct, establish, and maintain an artist’s image.

**Two-Way Communication**

The findings of the study demonstrate that, at least in part, the communication process between Shania’s public relations team, the media, and consumers involves two-way communication. Although asymmetric, with her public relations team appeared to use some media and consumer reactions to tweak future framing. Throughout the progression of four albums, it became evident that Shania’s public relations team reacted to the press frames, changing the sponsored frames as a result. For example, *country artist* was the dominant sponsored frame for *The Woman In Me*, while *crossover artist* was the dominant press frame. In response, *mass appeal* became the most dominant sponsored frame for her third album, *Come*
On Over. Similarly, Shania’s background was described via the sponsored frame of **tough background**. However, as the press used the alternate frame of **rags-to-riches story**, Shania’s team adopted this version of the frame and used it in public relations materials for her third album. As Carragee and Roefs (2004) explain, “Because journalists define issues over time and because [frame] sponsors often restructure their issue frames given changing…conditions, frames evolve, and particular frames may gain or lose prominence…” (p. 216). They encourage, “These transformations highlight the construction of meaning over time” and how frame sponsors can shape this evolution (p. 216). Knowing that it is a two-way process aids public relations professionals in the music industry in creating more effective campaigns for artists and altering them in reaction to publics’ frame acceptance levels.

**Research Contributions**

The findings of RQ1 demonstrate a successful approach to framing a country artist in public relations materials in support of their crossover to the pop market. By gradually and carefully switching the top emphasis from country artist to mass appeal over the course of four albums, Shania’s team helped her make one of the most successful country-pop crossovers of all time. The pattern of sponsored frames here seems to mimic the vacillating trends of country music between tradition and innovation. Thus, this study teaches public relations professionals in the country music industry about the intricacies of the genre’s ebbs and flows and the dynamics of crossover. This knowledge is essential in navigating the waters between the country and pop markets. The results also show how to effectively present an artist’s image by sponsoring frames in public relations materials. Such skills are important for music industry public relations as image construction and maintenance is one of the main roles of practitioners in this area.
The findings for RQ2 reveal high salience of the sponsored frames with key publics—the media and consumers. These results reinforce the effectiveness of the approach used by Shania’s team in getting publics to accept the sponsored public relations frames. Recognizing the techniques used here can show practitioners how to create highly salient frames for their own crossover acts.

Suggestions For Future Research

Since this study used only a qualitative content analysis method, I think it would be useful to explore the same research questions using a quantitative, statistical approach. My qualitative approach covered fewer texts, but at a deeper level. A quantitative approach would cover more texts at a more surface level, yielding data that could possibly be applied generally. Although highly descriptive, the qualitative method is very subjective and cannot be applied universally as perhaps quantitative work could be.

It would also be interesting to study the crossover of other successful artists such as Garth Brooks, Faith Hill, and more recently, Taylor Swift to see whether similar public relations frames were sponsored. Shania’s crossover was in its later stages when the digital revolution occurred in music, bringing digital downloads and social media into the mix. Therefore, I think it would be of great value to perform a similar content analysis of a current crossover artist like Taylor Swift, who made her crossover after the digital world took over the music industry. It would be great to compare that study to this one to determine if there are differences in the approach to frame sponsorship for crossover artists in the digital age.

It would also be worthwhile to examine the use of mediated (indirect) and non-mediated (direct) communication between artist and fan. Another suggestion is to study what drives crossover and to what degree, whether it’s public relations, audiences, or the music industry.
Ultimately, the **dual-frame approach** of Shania’s public relations team, simultaneously emphasizing the *country artist* and *mass appeal* frames, illustrates the balance required of a crossover artist. The essence of crossover is to maintain the original country audience while attracting new mainstream fans. This two-fold process involves the artist going over to another genre, while also attracting new audiences to his/her existing genre. As the age-old Girl Scout song says, “Make new friends, but keep the old. One is silver, and the other is gold” (Girl Scouts, 1956). In the case of Shania Twain, both are Multi Platinum. She was able to make one of the most successful country to pop crossovers of all time by keeping her original country fan base while also attracting the attention of pop fans worldwide. At the heart of this success were her team’s public relations efforts and the sponsored frames they used to maintain her country audience and reach new pop fans. Using sponsored frames to keep the balance between the country and pop audiences, Shania achieved simultaneous success—the essence of crossover.
### APPENDIX 1

**Public Relations Materials Analyzed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Shania Twain</em></td>
<td>Press kit biography</td>
<td>Biography: <em>Shania Twain</em></td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Dec. 1992</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>The Woman in Me</em></td>
<td>Press kit cover letter</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Nov. 1994</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Press kit biography</td>
<td><em>Shania Twain: the woman in me, Biography</em></td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Nov. 1994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press release</td>
<td><em>Shania Twain becomes the fastest certified album for a female artist in country music history</em></td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Dec. 15, 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press release</td>
<td><em>Shania Twain’s The Woman in Me breaks sales records</em></td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Aug. 16, 1995</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press release</td>
<td><em>Shania Twain snags four Grammy nods</em></td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Jan. 4, 1996</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Press release</td>
<td>Twain breaks another record</td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Feb. 22, 1996</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Press release</td>
<td><em>Shania Twain's the woman in me tops the 8 million mark</em></td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Oct. 10, 1996</td>
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<td>Press release</td>
<td><em>Shania Twain’s sales top 10 million worldwide</em></td>
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<td>Press release</td>
<td>“God Bless the Child” raises initial donation of $50,000 for kid’s café</td>
<td>Mercury Nashville</td>
<td>Jan. 28, 1997</td>
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<td><em>Come On Over</em></td>
<td>Press release</td>
<td><em>Shania Twain’s</em></td>
<td>Mercury</td>
<td>Sept. 1997</td>
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| **Up!**             | Secondary material           | Secondary material | 2005 |
| Up!                 | *Shania Twain: The biography* | Eggar, Robin      | 2005 |
| Up!                 | *From This Moment On*        | Twain, Shania     | 2011 |

Materials are from the Shania Twain archive file at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.
## APPENDIX 2

### Press Coverage Analyzed

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Album</th>
<th>Type</th>
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<th>Author</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Publication</th>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Music Review: Shania Twain, by Shania Twain</td>
<td>Nash, Alanna</td>
<td>May 21, 1993</td>
<td>Entertainment Weekly</td>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>Shania Twain: From grit to glamour</td>
<td>Wix, Kimmy</td>
<td>Nov. 1993</td>
<td>Music City News</td>
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<td>The Woman In Me</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Whose Bed Have Your Boots Been Under</td>
<td>Billboard</td>
<td>Jan. 21, 1995</td>
<td>Billboard</td>
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<td>Review</td>
<td>The Woman In Me</td>
<td>Nash, Alanna</td>
<td>Feb. 10, 1995</td>
<td>Entertainment Weekly</td>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Review</td>
<td>Twain writes her way to stardom on Mercury set</td>
<td>Borzillo, Carrie</td>
<td>May 6, 1995</td>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>Runaway Twain</td>
<td>Schoenfein, Liza</td>
<td>Aug. 11, 1995</td>
<td>Entertainment Weekly</td>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>Mark this Twain</td>
<td>Lague, Louise</td>
<td>Sept. 4, 1995</td>
<td>People</td>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
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<td>True to her roots*</td>
<td>Bream, Jon</td>
<td>Feb. 24, 1996</td>
<td>TV Guide</td>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>The Malling of Shania*</td>
<td>Schoemer, Karen</td>
<td>Feb. 26, 1996</td>
<td>Newsweek</td>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
<td>Feature</td>
<td>Shania Twain: More than meets the eye*</td>
<td>Oermann, Robert K.</td>
<td>Feb. 28, 1996</td>
<td>The Tennessean</td>
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<td>Shania Twain</td>
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<td>Shania Twain*</td>
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<td>Mar. 1996</td>
<td>Interview</td>
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<td>Shania comes on over*</td>
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<td>Krewen, Nick</td>
<td>June 22, 1999</td>
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<td>Mercury Nashville’s Shania Twain sits pretty as decade’s crossover queen</td>
<td>Taylor, Chuck</td>
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<td>Gordinier, Jeff</td>
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<td>Connors, Claire</td>
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</table>

*Articles from the Shania Twain archive file at the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum.
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