

ANALYSIS OF WEBLOG COMMENTARY CONCERNING
POPULAR MUSIC IN AMERICAN
MUSIC EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Little Kids Rock (LKR) is a non-profit teacher-training program for K-12 general and music education teachers focused on the study of popular music as an alternative to traditional music education programs focused on western classical music. It has garnered considerable attention from parents, teachers, and the media. In 2011, the *New York Times* published two online articles about the LKR program. The first expounded on the virtues of the LKR program and the second was a reaction to the readers' comments to the first article.

The purpose of this study was to examine the opinions, perspectives, issues, and ideas expressed by *New York Times* readers to "Beyond Baby Mozart: Little Kids Rock" the first article. Readers' comments were compiled and themes and general trends were identified and related to broader philosophical questions about the role of popular music in contemporary music education. Seventy-eight comments representing 68 respondents were coded using qualitative analysis methods, revealing 22 primitive and 19 secondary themes (i.e., categories). Findings indicated that (52%) of respondents identified themselves as having a direct relationship with music. These included general music educators, LKR teachers, performing musicians, college music education students, classically (formally) trained musicians, former grade school music students, parents of music students, and music advocates. Respondents with knowledge of in depth musical concepts, not directly identifying a music relationship, were represented as Knowledgeable Consumers. Thematic analysis revealed that factors motivating respondents to

post commentary were *personal beliefs, article content relationships, music content relationships, and education system relationships*. Debate centered on issues surrounding formal and informal methods of music instruction in music classrooms and the spectrum of issues relating to arguments surrounding the general purpose of music education (product vs. process). While broad generalizations to the larger music community are not necessarily implicit through findings in the current study, the debate does provide an opportunity for the parsing of particular ideas and attitudes towards both popular music and concepts surrounding formal and informal methods of instruction.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND DEFINITIONS

<i>Coding</i>	“A process for both categorizing qualitative data and for describing the implications and details of these categories. Initially one does <i>open coding (primary)</i> , considering the data in minute detail while developing some initial categories. Later, one moves to more <i>selective coding (secondary)</i> where one systematically codes with respect to a core concept.” (Trochim, 2006)
<i>LKR</i>	Little Kids Rock popular music program centered on the primary use of guitar and popular music genres
<i>N</i>	Number of participant comments
<i>NYT</i>	<i>The New York Times</i>
<i>Theme</i>	A single representative category for specific areas of discourse amongst participants
<i>Trending</i>	A collection of more than three participants comments to a theme category

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Considering the everyday use of popular music, it is surprising how much ambiguity surrounds the concept. For example, attempts to identify precisely what actually constitutes *popular music* can easily incite discussion. Is it the music promoted by the media for consumption by today's youth? Is it solely comprised of the top 100 hits of the week? Is it the music we surround ourselves with everyday? Some argue that popular music is confined to the pop music genre, while others suggest that rock, rap, be-bop, pop, and rhythm&blues genres also fall under the moniker of popular music. Additional arguments suggest that the designation of popular music also includes the timeless pop music of multiple generations, in essence an artifact of a specific genre and time.

The function, effectiveness, and use of popular music in music education classrooms are widely discussed and debated among musicians, educators, philosophers, sociologists, and the general populace. Some question popular music's inclusion in systemic music education and its effect on music pedagogy, technology, and methodology (e.g., Dunbar-Hall & Wemyss, 2000), while others argue for the incorporation of non-traditional informal music programs *en masse* in order to expand music classrooms and music making to a larger audience of students (e.g., Green, 2006). Central to these perspectives and arguments is the ongoing public discourse questioning the need for systematic music instruction programs in public schools during times of

fiscal uncertainty, high-stakes testing, and calls for value-added measures of teacher effectiveness.

One purpose of music education programs is to help all students meet the National Standards in Arts Education, as laid out in the Goals 2000: Educate America Act of 1994. This act cemented arts education as part of the core curriculum needed to meet high school graduation requirements across all 50 states. The National Association for Music Education (NAfME), one of many arts organizations leading the charge and adoption of national standards, adopted the National Standards for music education programs as a guideline and goal for addressing music education instruction in American public schools. The national standards for music education are:

1. Singing, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
2. Performing on instruments, alone and with others, a varied repertoire of music.
3. Improvising melodies, variations, and accompaniments.
4. Composing and arranging music within specified guidelines.
5. Reading and notating music.
6. Listening to, analyzing, and describing music.
7. Evaluating music and music performances.
8. Understanding relationships between music, the other arts, and disciplines outside the arts.
9. Understanding music in relation to history and culture.

Together the national standards form a theoretical basis for the evaluation of music instruction while reinforcing active music participation and exploration. Through the adoption of standards in music classrooms, teachers expect students to attain all levels of intellectual understanding, as noted in Bloom's taxonomy, through the overt demonstration of students' ability to remember, understand, apply, analyze, evaluate, and create music. It could be argued that the purpose of public school music education is to help students fulfill fine arts requirements for high school graduation while simultaneously providing opportunities for music participation and exploration.

The recognition of music as a "core" subject is actively supported by music educators, professional musicians, and education organizations. Indeed, proclamations from organizations such as the American Society of Association Executives and the Academy of Television Arts & Sciences frequently acknowledge that the study of music has value and adds to the human condition (e.g. ASAE's "Associations Advance America" Award of Excellence to NAFME 2007, 2008; ATAS/NATAS's Governor's Award contributions to "VH1 Save the Music Foundation" Program). Popular musicians and music programs like *Save the Music* (VH1), overtly help support music education programs through fundraising efforts and contests designed to equip and support music students and programs (e.g., VH1's "Save the Music" concert series including Maria Carey, Alicia Keys, Rod Stewart, Rob Thomas, Josh Groban, John Legend, Joss Stone, and Donna Summer). NAFME, the largest music education organization in the world with an estimated 75,000 members exists to "advance music education by encouraging the study and making of music by all" (<http://www.nafme.org/about/view/mission-statement>) through advocacy at the national level. Through these efforts and organizations, on the part of countless

musicians, music educators, and music supporters, the desire to support and include music as a valuable part of our society is clearly felt. Regardless of the progress made to promote music study, participation in school music remains an elected activity for students (Elpus & Abril, 2011). In many cases, where student participation is low or fragile, music educators are called on to develop elaborate and time consuming programs to recruit students and educate communities about the value of an education including music.

Regardless of the efforts expended on behalf of music education, music participation continues in U.S. schools as only a shadow of its former self. In 1982, involvement in music by high school seniors was 31% (Stewart, 1991). Three decades later, only (21%) of high school seniors were involved (Elpus & Abril, 2011). Interestingly, music participants appear to have changed from the common view of “music geek” to a different type of atypical group (upper quartile of GPA, higher socioeconomic status, advanced parent education, and high standardized test scores), not representative of the population of most high school seniors. Apparently, this initial evidence suggests that the official declaration of the arts as a core requirement has not yet staved the decline of music participation in schools, it continues to serve a particular constituency or sub-group. Obviously, questions about the ability of present programs to attract all students to music participation are raised, especially in light of the many distractions experienced in contemporary society due to the proliferation of technology (Madsen, 2000; Rideout, 2010). Of course, not one answer to this question is definitive, least of which is the ongoing and persistent perception of music education as an elective in school curricula.

One perception of secondary school music is that it consists solely of a traditional “trivium” of offerings (i.e., band, choir, and orchestra). These music organizations and repertoire

may not be easily relatable or familiar to most students and therefore do little to entice the involvement of students. Indeed, the style, instrumentation, and lyrics may be entirely foreign to some (Madsen et al., 1999). Considering that part of the mission of schools is to expand the listening possibilities of students, it is interesting that music educators choose to rely on these three ensembles as the primary means of music instruction as few offer alternatives (e.g., rock bands, steel drum groups, mariachi ensembles). Obviously, some educators may not realize that playing a couple of “pop” or “ethnic” pieces is not enough to entice students to participate.

Perhaps expanding music programs to include other music begins with the training of preservice music teachers. Wang and Humphreys (2009) found that only a fraction of the music used in teacher training programs originated outside of the classical or western art music genre. It stands to reason that as preservice teachers learn to develop lessons, scrutinize resources, and practice teaching techniques if they are solely taught to use western art music as the basis for instruction, they are highly likely to continue to use that which is familiar and modeled for them. The reinforcement in using western art music continues as they become inservice teachers. For example, the quality of most music programs is typically measured through the successful performance and instruction of western art music at formal music performance assessments. Moreover, while the quality of these ensembles can be very high, not all students will be attracted to participate in these groups simply due to the repertoire, even though they may have an interest in music in general. Are there avenues for music study for these students, especially those with an interest in the contemporary music of their generation?

Close examination of the origins of the National Standards in Music reveal that the authors were purposefully trying to maintain music teachers' academic freedom when it came to implementing and teaching to the standards. Discussion of the genres or the types of music to be used is notably absent. So the question becomes, why do music programs continue to rely heavily on traditional ensembles and repertoire? Perhaps the answer lies in the profession's philosophy of music education and the role music plays in the lives of individuals and society as a whole. Reimer (2000) noted that contrasting philosophies permeate k-12 music education that directly impact the way music programs are evaluated and valued. Specifically, he recognized that music instruction in school seemed excessively focused on the music performance itself (formalism) and less on the actual process (praxialism) of music making, often sacrificing individual student's growth as an independent musician. Regardless of philosophical viewpoint, in all cases the determining factor at the school level is the music teacher's response to the demands of their schools and student's needs. If a music teacher chooses to continue to follow the norms and culture established by music associations, school performance demands, and other stakeholders than perhaps the decline in music program involvement is justified.

Students' music preferences seem to be key to the issue of k-12 music involvement. Schafer and Sedlmeire (2010) examined the development of music preferences and noted that preferences were determined by the music's ability to communicate, provide opportunities for self-reflection, arousal and activation, mood and emotion, repetition and familiarity, and culture. Factors such as background, age, environment, and gender can also have an effect on individual musical preference (LeBlanc et. al., 2000; LeBlanc et. al., 2002; Leblanc, Jin & Stamou, 1999). Studies have shown that factors surrounding the music itself such as: tempo, rhythm, dynamics,

performing medium, and style, have varying effects on individual music preference (Britten 2000; LeBlanc, 1981, 1988, 1996; LeBlanc & Cote, 1983). Therefore, one can conclude that aspects surrounding a person's life, as well as music composition factors, can influence music preference. Here the question is raised whether the repertoire used in school music ensembles provide for the most straightforward psychological transfers as found by Schafer and Sedlmeire. If music programs primarily perform western art music, to the exclusion of other genres, then it can be argued that k-12 music programs will continue to appeal to a small minority of students.

However, some k-12 ensembles, such as marching band and show choir, have embraced other music's and the performance repertoire for these groups is immersed in popular music. These ensembles regularly participate in formal music performance assessments conducted by organizations recognized for high standards and musical integrity. One example would be Music for All's "Bands of America" national marching band competition held annually in Indianapolis, IN. Another would be the Show Choir Nationals competition held annually in Nashville, TN. These contests play host to some of the nations top performing ensembles in their field; high marks at such contests are indeed an honor for participants and show serious dedication to the music program on the part of the students and director. Resources for music teachers of marching bands cite the importance of teaching musical concepts typically found in concert ensemble curricula (Shellahamer, Swearingen, & Woods, 1986), and note that they are viable venues for teaching the National Standards (Dunnigan, 2007). Indeed, teaching music elements in concert bands through popular music has been found to have profound effects on learning (e.g., Grashel, 1979). Furthermore, many music philosophers argue for the incorporation of informal learning process and open genre exploration by music educators to

include the collaborative and improvisatory practices embedded in popular music making and world music genres into their classrooms (e.g., Green, 2006).

Considering the rise of ensembles dedicated to the performance of popular music and the call made by philosophers and thinkers to include popular music in music education it is not surprising to find a maelstrom of opinions among music educators surrounding issues dealing with formalist and praxialist philosophies and their ideals encompassing music's purpose in music education and society (e.g., Elliott, 1995; Small, 1998; Firth, 2007; Green, 2008; Asia, 2010). The formalist views music as a product, a thing to be had. Aesthetic qualities of the music and the musical experiences are key concepts in Formalism. In stark contrast is the praxialist idea that music is a process, something that one does. Praxialists focus on the processes involved with music making (i.e., formal, informal), utilizing performance, listening, improvising, composing, and musical play as tools for building musicianship in the classroom.

Elliott (1995) stated that “fundamentally, music is something people do”, and “should not be conceived as a product, in this position”. Varied music types can be included in this approach while primary focus is given to performance aspects of the music. It is Elliott's belief that the making of music and the active processes involved when performing are of the utmost importance, with holistic musicianship and musical concepts developed through “procedural, formal, informal, impressionistic, and supervisory process” used in music classrooms.

Small (1998) expands on Elliott's idea that music is a process, coining the term *musiking*, to represent a process of performance, including all parties involved in the musical event as participants in the musiking activity (i.e. audience, musicians, listeners, etc.). According to

Small, the primary function of music is to provide a perceptive lens through which musical, personal, and sociological relationships can be examined.

The idea of music as a process is also shared by Green (2008). This book is focused on the development of a new music pedagogy that is complementary to formal approaches commonly used in music classrooms. Green's pedagogy uses various music types through informal processes of music learning to better understand and connect the controverting relationship between "inter-sonic" (i.e. elements of the music) and "delineated" (i.e. extra musical factors) meanings in music. Informal learning processes are examined with five key principals crucial to the informal pedagogical model. These are as follows: music is chosen by students; methodology is centered on imitation of recordings by ear; peer and self directed learning are important, knowledge and skills are attained through haphazard, idiosyncratic, and holistic ways; and listening, performing, improvising, and composing process are integrated throughout.

These philosophers and educators share similar view points as to the values and use of music in education and society, perhaps most important is the lack of exclusivity of different non-traditional music genres. However, there are those that view the process of excluding particular music genres as par for the course. Firth (2007) questioned the seriousness of popular music, and discusses indicators of what may be perceived as "bad music." Concern is given to the aesthetic qualities of the music and the musical experience. Firth argues that issues surrounding the appropriateness of a given music are intrinsically linked to the music performer (s), how the music is being used, and the purpose of the musical event. He stated that "the music (itself) is not the issue." Bad music or inappropriate music involves a conflict of control and

value, and is determined by the music's lack of ability to overcome objections regarding the music's production, effects, and issues surrounding the homogenization of music types by society. In this light music is seen overwhelmingly as a product. The idea that it is music's purpose to provide a product is shared by Asia (2010), although here a direct attack on popular music in defense of classical music is undertaken. The researcher discussed the dichotomy of "serious" classical music and "non-serious" non-Western art music. Perhaps the best representation of the researcher's beliefs can be seen in his own words:

Pop, from a purely musical standpoint, is too simplistic to be given much intellectual consideration. It traffics in the most banal of ideas. Were Western classical music offers sophistication of architecture, pop gives us the three-minute song and/or endless, mindless repetition, and thus evinces an inability to advance any kind of complex scenario of argument (p. 190).

Considering the debate among professionals, one question seems important to increasing the number of students studying music. Should popular music be used to attract students who are likely to informally explore music at home to the formal study of music in k-12 schools? For many questioning how popular music can be used to expand music education's reach to a larger audience of students, the heart of the matter lies in the usefulness of the music at hand and the focus of the music program. Answering such questions regarding the usefulness and functions of popular music will inevitably have a direct impact on the teaching and learning processes involved in the music classroom. It is indeed left to the music educator to determine the focus of his program. However, questions are also raised by relating information discussed in Wang and Humphreys (2009) research concerning the amount of Western art music and non-Western art music in music teacher training programs and the ability of the music educator to expand their personal vision of the music program in its current state, as well as areas of improvement or

refocus. Although it is clear that there exists a lack of teacher training in popular music (Isbell, 2007); Green, 2000), a variety of commercial and educational programs have been developed which are designed to facilitate popular music genres and music education such as the *Girls Rock Institute*, the *Lakewood Project*, *Day Jams*, *Camp Jam*, and *Little Kids Rock*. Is it possible that certification in popular music, similar to Orff certification, could become a desirable credential to help bridge the gap between popular music's benefits and music education?

The Little Kids Rock program (<http://littlekidsrock.org/>) is a K-12 program that has been implemented in urban area schools since the early 2000s. The LKR website describes it as:

a national non-profit that transforms children's lives by restoring and revitalizing music education in disadvantaged public schools. We do this by partnering with school districts, training public school teachers in our innovative curriculum, and donating all of the instruments and resources necessary to run rockin' music programs. We do this because playing music is more than just 'fun' for kids - it is transformational and vital. Yet, budget cuts have forced many school music programs to close, especially in schools serving low-income communities.

An article in the *New York Times* (*NYT*; cf. Bornstein, 2011, September 14) dedicated to describing the positive affect of the LKR program in music classrooms ignited an online debate that was detailed on the *NYT* website and elicited a response from the author in the form of a second article.

Public deliberation of a controversial topic through online reader comments to opinion journalism has been used to identify the varying facets surrounding a given issue as formulated by a knowledgeable audience (Manosevitch & Walker, 2009). Indeed, Manosevitch and Walker concluded that the online environment contained the analytical and social processes surrounding a typical public discussion and discourse, and therefore was a viable means to examine an issue. Analytical processes include narratives, facts, sources, values, position, and reasons. Social

processes include addressing other comments and commentators, posing questions, and addressing article content.

In the case of the current study, the issue was popular music in music education. The most representative opinion article at the time the study was found in the *New York Times*, *Beyond Baby Mozart: Students Who Rock* (Bornstien, 2011). Readers' comments served as the primary source of public deliberation and research inquiry.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine public reaction to a newspaper article advocating and illustrating the use of popular music in public school music classes. Specifically, the intent was to give insight into the perspectives of an audience of individuals who have chosen to respond to the contents and messages contained in the article by examining the affecting influences, perspectives, opinions, issues, and beliefs contained and illustrated by the posted public commentary to the article. These influences and ideas are discussed within the context of three broad concerns surrounding popular music and music education, derived from ongoing philosophical debate and discussion found in music education literature. These are popular music's sustainability, the general use of popular music in music classes, and the general purpose of music education in public schools. Formal evaluation and coding of reader comments is used to investigate the primary research questions of this study.

Popular Music

For the purposes of this study, popular music is defined as the preferential choices of a given audience. For example, popular music to a group of music educators may be comprised of, but not limited to the genres of traditional western art music, world music, jazz, and folk

music while popular music to a group of secondary students may include the genres of rock, pop, rap, or country.

Research Questions

The following research questions were investigated:

1. Who posted commentary to the original article found on the *New York Times* website and what experiences did the commentators have with learning and making music?
2. What events and experiences were cited by the commentators when responding to the issues presented in the article?
3. What motivating factors prompted the respondents to comment?
4. What primary and secondary themes emerged in the readers' comments (i.e., common threads) and how did they correspond to the broad systemic concerns surrounding music education?
5. What questions did the commentators have regarding the role and use of popular music in music education?

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Taste/Preference Research

Research in the field of music preference has been widely examined, probing an ever expanding network of variables that influence music preference. The level of music training (Ginnocchio, 2009), as well as musical (Boyle, Hosterman, & Ramsey, 1981) and sociological (Schafer & Sedlmeire 2009, 2010) factors surrounding music have been explored for clues to the development of music taste and preference. Two representative researcher articles of current theoretical models for music preference are Leblanc (1980) in his *Outline of a proposed model of sources of variation in musical taste*, and Rentfrow, Goldberg, and Levitin (2011) with *The structure of musical preferences: A five-factor model*. These provide a wealth of knowledge and grounded theories about why people choose to listen to one music genre over another and the process involved in selecting music for personal use. Many of the research studies done in this area deal with factors surrounding the individual who would be consuming music as well as how a wide range of variables affect one's preference for different music genres.

The variable of a person's prior training in music and its effect on music preference was examined by Ginocchio (2009). Subjects ($N = 176$) were college non-music majors. Subjects were asked to complete a personal information form provided by the researcher to gather information regarding their participation in music and musical ensembles. Preference

information was gathered using 19 musical excerpts ranging from popular to non-popular music styles. After subjects rated their preference for these styles, correlations were made with their personal information to look for interrelationships between level of training and overall music preference, as well as type of training and style preference. The researcher determined that a person participating in music for over five years have a significantly higher preference for all music types compared with non-participants. The researcher also noted that participation in band had the highest effect on a person's preference for non-popular music styles.

Other studies involving music preference generated much richer data by incorporating many variables into the same equation. In the following case variables surrounding music were also examined and expressed through detailed results. Boyle, Hosterman, and Ramsey (1981) located factors that influence a subject's preference for popular music. The researcher also attempted to determine if factors varied according to an individual's grade level, sex, age, and music experience. Student's self and family rating of musical abilities, as well as the type and amount of preferred music the subject and their family consumed were also examined. Researcher determined the rank of factors influencing subject's ratings of pop music examples were "melody, mood, rhythm, lyrics, instruments, sentiment, harmony, singer or group, radio, danceability, and peer influence". The researcher did not reveal any significant interactions between students' music experience and their preference for popular music.

Many studies involving music preference research and popular music research vary according to the particular interests of the researcher. Some of these studies are attempts to study popular music in the classroom while others are concerned with relating music preference, popular music, music education, and variables present in students and music. For example,

Scafer and Sedlmeier (2009), examined the particular functions of music itself that affect a person's music preference. The study provided seven functions that most correlate with music preference. Music functions include the following: music helps express one's identity; helps one to meet people; makes one feel ecstatic; expresses one's values; lets one appreciate music as art; puts one in a good mood; and provides information.

Schafer and Sedlmeire (2010) tried to determine what general factors made one like music. Various predicting factors were tested using a survey analysis and the researcher determined that music's ability to communicate was the strongest determining factor for music preference. This was followed by self-reflection, arousal and activation, mood and emotion, repetition and familiarity, and culture.

Popular Music Research

Popular music and its function in music education have been examined from several different angles. Isbell (2007) discussed the broad issues and history of the incorporation of popular music genres into the music classroom. Much research and debate have also been had in the area of formal and informal processes used in teaching popular and other genres of music (Davis & Blair, 2011; Green, 2006). Perhaps the largest area of research relating to popular music is that which involves the functionality of popular music within the classroom setting and results from the incorporation of popular music programs in music education systems (Abramo, 2011; Dunbar-Hall & Wemyss, 2000; Grashel, 1979; Lebler, 2007; Seifried, 2006; Winter, 2004;).

Isbell (2007) examined the current state of popular music in the music education system and reviewed research leading to and flowing from the incorporation of popular music into the

school curriculum. He discussed how the 1967 Tanglewood Symposium called for a better relationship between the music most commonly used in everyday society and the music of public school music program. One primary goal of the symposium was to close the gap between how students experienced music at home and school. Following a review of popular music research, it is concluded that one of four categories were predominately present in the examined studies' research questions. These included "preference studies, factors affecting preference/selection, detailed analyses of popular pieces and/or lyrics, and studies that attempted to justify the use of popular music in public education". After reviewing specific instances of popular music's use in public education systems, including Australia and the United Kingdom, recommendations were made for further research in the area of popular music including its effect of student participation and achievement, as well as the "readiness" of teacher training programs to take on such matters. He called for more analytical and descriptive studies in this area, as well as others that will help replicate or advance the current understanding of popular music's impact on the public school music classroom. The researcher noted that there are no existing status updates for how many teachers or school systems are using popular music in their curricula.

Davis and Blair (2011) examined the informal process of music making by engaging college students enrolled a secondary methods course in the informal processes involved in popular music production, as opposed to the formal processes that they were accustomed to in their classical music training. Transfer of informal learning processes to future classrooms was emphasized. Using qualitative methods, the researchers identified a three-fold process that took place during the course and subsequent observations. The three-fold process involved disequilibrium, breaking down existing barriers, and eventual student transformation. The

researchers concluded that the incorporation of popular music into the music education system in higher education is vital to the continuation of the system itself. Finally suggestions are made for music teacher training programs to allow ample time for music education students to develop a better understanding of informal process so that they may use these processes in their classroom with authenticity. The researchers also commented that very little time is spent on the inclusion of informal process in primary schools past the elementary levels.

Green (2006) examined popular music education research, focusing on the informal learning process and their comparison to formal process used in current music classrooms. Research for both informal and formal learning process was reviewed, with the assertion that the incorporation of both types of processes can and should be used to engage all students in music learning. Research noted the lack of informal learning process and teacher education of informal processes in the music system to date. Also the researcher reviewed concerns regarding autonomy and authenticity presented by teachers. These were equated to the education system's construct that the product of the music class is more important than the processes involved in making and learning musical concepts, leading to inherent delineations in formal process that are non-existent in informal ones. Therefore, by incorporating informal process in music education, through the use of popular musics, a student is allowed to make his own personal delineations, making the experience more personal and meaningful.

Research in the area of popular music in the music classroom has been the focus of many research studies, with a varying array of research questions intricately tied to the researchers teaching preferences and abilities. Grashel's (1979) study dealt with the use of popular music to teach form to band students. The goal was to see which instructional strategies (in-class

instruction, programmed instruction, and a combination) worked best for using popular music to teach form. Subjects ($N = 184$) were 7th and 8th grade students participating in their local band class. Subjects received a pre-test to gather knowledge on their current skill set pertaining to form in music and then one of the instructional strategies was employed using current popular music to teach basic concepts in form analysis. The primary question of the researcher was could popular music be used at the beginning stages of learning form and be substantial enough in its use that the ideas learned from the study of popular music form could be transferred to the study of band/classical music form. The researcher found that for all groups the mean rating for pre/post test scores significantly improved after the implementation of the three instructional strategies, pre-test = 4.8, post-test = 20.9. This confirms that the use of popular music in this situation lead to an increased knowledge of music form measured by the pre/post tests. Research notes that popular music can be used in formal settings of the band classroom, with little disruption from the standard rehearsal schedule.

Winter (2004) studied a popular music experimental methodology called the Sting Curriculum he created for the classroom. The curricula served as an integrated and sequential model for popular music learning. Winter's purpose was to examine and rate the quality of music activities in the pedagogical model. Subjects ($N = 124$) were students 16-18 years old in 18 different primary schools in Sydney, Australia. The curriculum model was administered to students over a nine-week period and data was gathered from teacher and student evaluation sheets. Additionally a post test was given to determine the effect of different music activities. Activities involved music listening, composition, and performance. Results indicated that students scored significantly higher for the performance category compared to listening and

composition categories. In this particular popular music curriculum focus on performance was determined to be the best means of improving students' final scores on classroom assessments.

Seifried (2006) examined interviews from select students enrolled in a secondary popular music guitar course to assess the nature of the class objectives and student perceptions of class content. Students generally felt that the class offered a place for personal exploration and self identity, confirming the use of popular music as a personal identifier for adolescents. Students also became more selective in their listening, citing a knowledge of basic music concepts and performance practices, leading to judgements in the quality of popular music performers. The researcher explained that the classroom was an atypical one in the current system of music education, but gives great insight into the possibilities surrounding such classes, including expansion of the music program to outside students who would not normally participate in formal music classes.

Lebler (2007) investigated the implementation of self taught, instructor facilitated popular music production classes. Subjects were popular music majors at a music conservatory in Australia. Classes were facilitated by popular music faculty with all final grades and submissions presented to the staff. Students were given the opportunity to propose their own assignments, which would be the music composed and performed during the course. The format of the pedagogical model for these research classes included exploration through popular music and practice skills associated with the informal process involved in playing by ear and replication procedures. Students were given full access to a studio to record their work, which would be used as assessment material by the students to gauge their progress. Recordings were also gauged by other members of the class as well as the instructors. This provided immediate

feedback and real world responses to a student's work. While the student was able to take control of the situation and remedy any factors within the music that they chose, without the expressed consent of the instructor. A survey was taken from the group of students to gauge the most impacting areas of the program. Students rated studio access the highest among all class levels. Collaboration, analysis skills, reflective practice, and external activities were also rated, with collaboration rated as the lowest impacting area. Analysis skills, reflective practice, other courses, and external activities fell below (60%) ratings for all levels observed. The researcher explains that the classes provided an opportunity for teacher engagement with students as equals rather than one where the instructor is perceived above the student.

Abramo (2011) examined whether gender groupings effected the processes used when composing and rehearsing in popular music classes. Results indicated that boys used a streamlined process, combining musical gestures and nonverbal communication to compose and rehearse. Girls split these processes, using verbal communication and musical production techniques as separate parts to achieve their desired composition. Mixed gender groups experienced a variety of conflicts and tension when rehearsing and composing which was attributable to different learning styles.

Dunbar-Hall and Wemyss (2000) focused on effects that the incorporation of popular music had on the music education system in Australia. The authors noted that popular music was incorporated into the music education curriculum in the 1970's led to increased developments in pedagogical methods, including technological advances. Three broad areas of influence occurred that changed the profession, including the development of teaching methodology, aspects of multiculturalism, and use of technology. These ideological expansions and their embrace of

current popular music, combined with expanded concentration on creativity, led to the current state of music education in Australia (2000). The authors conclude that through participating in these processes, the music education system in Australia had to reshape learning strategies as well as rethink the ways music education was theorized and conceptualized.

Music Training Program Research

Music selection in teacher training programs has recently come under some scrutiny from the music education community as their interests lie in the music genres used in music teacher training programs and the amount of each genre used throughout the program (Wang & Humphreys, 2009).

Wang and Humphreys (2009) examined the percentage of western art music and non-western art music genres used in a large southwestern American university music education program. Instructors of target classes estimated the amount of time that subjects spent in their courses using a 13 item music list, the list included: twentieth century romantic, classical, baroque, jazz/broadway, renaissance, medieval, American popular, Latin/Caribbean, African, Asian, and Native American. Results indicated that subjects spent a total of 92.8% of time with western art music, 6.9% with western non-art music, 0.2% with non-western music, and 0.5% on popular music. This can be viewed as evidence of the exclusivity perpetuating in music education programs in public education at the top level, teaching by association, exclusivity of preferred genres of study, and the formation of a perpetuating cycle. Students chose to persist in music programs at the primary level, inherently developing a preference for western art music due to teacher preferences seemingly fostered in their own primary and secondary school experiences.

Online Commentary Research

Studies using online commentary are varied in nature, many times focusing on the specifics of the comment relationship to the content area and the actions spurring the initial response to comment (Ogan, Çiçek, & Özakça, 2005). These researcher efforts are much like the current study. The broad issues concerning the purpose and usefulness of online commentary have been examined through their interactive communication processes (Schultz, 2000) and their ability to create arenas for public deliberation (Manoseviten & Walker, 2009).

Ogan, Çiçek, and Özakça (2005) examined an online editorial article and analyzed the comment responses emailed to the author. The original article was posted on an online news website and was subsequently reposted on a wide variety of other sites. Over 300 responses were analyzed by the researcher to determine the nature of the responses. Results indicated that readers were prompted to respond to the article for four reasons: agreement with position based on political or religious beliefs, linking of experiences or feelings with the issue, relation of personal stories to article content, and male gender. The article was primarily focused on the specifics that spurred the readers to repost the article or comment on the article at hand and provided a model of organization of future studies concerned with these same issues.

The processes of interactivity and their relation to mass media were examined by Schultz (2000), with discussion focused on media in the internet age. The researcher was “identifying the different forms of interaction that enable journalists and readers to communicate with each other through examining online forums and email in the context of an exploratory survey of *New York Times* readers and journalists” (p. 205). The author determined that one-way, two-way, and interactive communication was taking place in the online forums and emails with primary

communication coming from journalist-reader and reader-reader interactions. The author suggested that mass media should be concerned with offering more ways to communicate and address a large and diverse audience.

Manoseviten and Walker (2009) examined readers' comments to online opinion journalism content as a space for public deliberation. Readers' comments from two online opinion articles were selected and examined, highlighting the respondent commentary and their relation to processes involved in public deliberation. The researchers determined that readers' comments represented both analytical and social process involved in public deliberation. Analytical process included narrative, facts, sources, values, position, and reasons. Social process included addressing other comments and commentators, posing questions, and addressing article content. This study provides a basis for future exploratory endeavors using online commentary and other areas of mass media public deliberation arenas.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Research Method

An interpretive qualitative design based on the participants' responses and subsequent data collection through a narrative description process was determined to fit the research questions for the study (Phillips, 2008). As noted by Merriam (2002):

qualitative research lies with the idea that meaning is socially constructed by individuals in interaction with their world. The world, or reality, is not the fixed, single, agreed upon, or measurable phenomenon...there are multiple constructions and interpretations of reality that are in flux and that change over time. Qualitative researchers are interested in understanding what those interpretations are at a particular point in time and in a particular context. Learning how individuals experience and interact with their social world, the meaning it has for them. (p. 2)

The specific methods espoused to *interpretative qualitative research* involved the researcher

seek[ing] to discover and understand a phenomenon, a process, the perspectives and worldviews of the people involved, or a combination of these. Data are collected through interviews, observations, or document analysis. These data are inductively analyzed to identify reoccurring patterns or common themes that cut across the data. [Resulting in a]...rich, descriptive account of the findings presented and discussed. (pgs. 6-7)

Data Source

Data for this study came from online commentary to an article in *The New York Times* titled, "Beyond Baby Mozart: Students Who Rock" by David Bornstein. Commentators' motivations for writing were identifiable (Ogan, Çiçek, & Özakça, 2005) and the structure of the dialogue space included both analytical (narrative, facts, sources, values, position, and reasons)

and social (addressing other comments and commentators, posing questions, and addressing article content) processes (Manoseviten & Walker, 2009). In total there are 78 responses.

Readers' comments to the article were rich with detailed narratives discussing and debating ideas surrounding the research questions.

Comments originated from an ethnographic setting comprised of people who would read the *New York Times* via the internet and were motivated to respond to online articles. The respondent group included people living in the United States (87.5%), with additional comments from the United Kingdom, Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa. Analysis of respondents within the US revealed respondents resided in a cross section of geographic regions: Northeast (60.3%), South (14.3%), West (14.3%), and Midwest (7.9%).

Credibility of Source Material

The *New York Times* is considered the largest seven-day-newspaper in circulation in the United States, with a *quality audience* of 22 million readers (Nielsen, 2010). One-hundred and one Pulitzer Prizes have been awarded to the publication. The quality of the *Times* has been deemed worthy for use by at least 1,500 schools and is distributed to more than 1,200 colleges and universities in the US.

Beyond Baby Mozart Article

On September 8, 2011 the *New York Times* published an article titled "Beyond Baby Mozart: Students Who Rock" by David Bornstein. The author discusses the incorporation of popular music pedagogies into the mainstream music curriculum. Bornstein first gives an account of his personal experiences with music education in the public school, where his participation in piano lessons focused on classical repertoire lead to disinterest in music

participation and eventual abandonment of music all together. He then discusses his perspective of the current state of music education, expressing that “Music education hasn’t changed fundamentally since the 1970s. Students are still taught to read notation so they can recite compositions that they would never listen to on their MP3 players or play with friends.” Bornstein proclaims the notion that not all students will be interested in formal music classes (i.e. band, orchestra, choir, jazz) and that many students choosing not to participate will regret their decision to not learn an instrument later in life. He goes on to pose the definitive question of the entire article.

Why do schools teach music in a way that turns off so many young people rather than igniting their imagination? Adolescents and teenagers are crazy about popular music. At a time when educators are desperate to engage students and improve school cultures, can we do a better job of harnessing the power of music to get kids excited about school?

He argues for the incorporation of more popular music genres in music education with focus given to the program Little Kids Rock, a popular music teacher training program that seeks to expand teachers’ knowledge of popular music pedagogies and incorporation tactics.

Although the article itself contained a unique and informed perspective about music education and popular music’s function, I deemed it as a catalyst for the readers’ discussion—a discussion rarely played out on a national stage—and therefore would not be examined since my interest was in the ensuing responses to the article.

Little Kids Rock Program.

The program is described as a supplement to the current system of music education, trying to attract a broader audience of grade school students who are interested in music, but not necessarily interested in the traditional music setting currently used in schools. Guitars are used

as tools of musical exploration in the program, however, the idea is not to teach the students guitar lessons, rather, to train the students to be exploratory music learners with a tool that is more accessible in cost and basic level achievement than current beginning instruments. Large groups of students are taught basic chords and notes to begin their journey of music exploration, and, once a hold of interest has taken effect, the fundamentals of music composition and techniques are introduced and discussed.

The program is intriguing in its approach to large scale participation in music through popular music genre exploration, serving an estimated 85,000 (<http://littlekidsrock.org/>) students nationwide. LKR began as a single program implemented by David Wish when funds were unavailable through the school system to support music classes for students in Wish's school. The local success of the program lead Wish to expand the programs reach to the national level. It should be acknowledge that the LKR program is by no means a cure all to the myriad of issues surrounding the state of music education, however, it can be considered as a step toward accessing the nearly (75%) of grade school students (Elpus & Abril, 2011) who do not participate in music programs through popular music genres.

Data Analysis

Readers' comments to the article were accessed from the website <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/09/08/beyond-baby-mozart-students-who-rock/> and transcribed into an *Excel* spread sheet. Initial examination suggested that readers' comments could be labeled using 22 discernible categories. See Table 1. Readers' comments were then imported into *NVIVO*, version 9, parsed into identifiable chunks of text according to topic and

formally grouped within *primary themes*. All data were coded so that the origin of the text was identifiable.

Following this initial categorization process, comments were reexamined and a set of *secondary themes* were created within each grouping. Nine percent of *secondary themes* were supported by three or more pieces of evidence. The other *secondary themes* (91%) were supported by one to two pieces of evidence. The primary and secondary themes and their supportive evidence comprise the responses and prevailing themes that emerged from the respondent groups online discussion.

Comments within each *secondary theme* groupings were then examined to identify evidence that suggested trends within the data. Evidence consisted of single words, phrases, ideas, references, and concepts suggested within the text as interpreted by the researcher. Existence of a *trending statue* was determined by a concentration of three or more pieces of evidence supporting a *secondary theme*. *Trending statues* were examined and categorized based on the *probable motivation* that prompted readers to respond and comment on the article. Probable motivation categories were rank order, based on frequency, to represent the prevailing motivations, inferred from the readers' comments, for responding to the article.

Table 1

Primary Categories

Category
Commentary on Classical Music
Commentary on K-12 Student
Commentary on Popular Music
Commentator Resources
Comments about Music Learning
Comments about or to the Author
Comments on the Articles Purpose and Position
Comments Regarding Music Education America
Comments to Respondent Group
Comparisons and Transfers
Educators
Expressed Intentions of Commentator
Fully Support Article
General Beliefs about Music
Loss of Interest in Music
Musical Influences
Musical Involvement
Non-Support of Article
Other Comments
Parents
Partial Support for the Article
Serious Formal Study

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Overall Results

Primary level. Findings of the initial coding process revealed 22 themes classified into distinct *primary categories*. Primary categories were ranked based on frequency of secondary themes located in the category. Categories with “ties” were labeled with the same rank. See Table 2.

Secondary level. Secondary coding revealed 248 secondary themes. Secondary themes contained specific references from distinct groups of persons and detail the underlying data within themes. Full categorical results of secondary themes by primary category can be found in Appendix A. Following thematic analyzation, 21 themes were determined to be trending. The rank order for trending secondary themes according to primary category is located in Appendix B. Table 3 illustrates the rank order of trending secondary themes.

Response motivation. After a thorough examination of trending secondary themes, it was determined that the general motivating factors surrounding the commentators’ responses were identifiable and that the responses comprising most trending secondary themes were related to one of the motivation categories. It was surmised that the motivation categories represented possible catalysts for a reader’s response. The category *personal beliefs about music and its study* represented the most varied of the influence categories. See Table 4. Comments included philosophical notions, transfers, comparisons, and personal perspectives surrounding music and

its study. The *article content relationships* category included commentary spurred by the article itself or a relationship to the issues presented in the article regarding popular music and music education. See Table 5. The category contains praise, questions, personal perspectives, support, and anger for and about the article. The *musical content relationships category* included any influences dealing with ideas about specific music types consisting of comments about music in general—mainly popular or classical music. See Table 6. The *education system relationships* category described influences from the education system and knowledge of current music teaching. See Table 7. Respondents interests in the instruction and learning of music, with comments ranging from issues regarding music teaching, funding, and personal perspectives from educators were represented.

Table 2

Rank Order of Primary Respondent Categories Based on Frequency of Themes

Primary Category	<i>n</i>	Rank
General Beliefs about Music	34	1
Fully Support Article	22	2
Commentary on Classical Music	21	3
Non-Support of Article	19	4
Comments on the Article Purpose and Position	17	5
Comments Regarding Music Education in America	17	5
Comparisons and Transfers	16	6
Other Comments	16	6
Musical Involvement	15	7
Commentary on Popular Music	13	8
Educators	13	8
Comments to Respondent Group	11	9
Serious Formal Study	10	10
Musical Influences	7	11
Partial Support for the Article	7	11
Parents	2	12
Loss of Interest in Music	2	12
Commentator Resources	2	12
Expressed Intentions of Commentator	1	13
Commentary on K-12 Students	1	13
Comments about Music Learning	1	13
Comments about or to the Author	1	13

Table 3

Rank Order of Trending Secondary Themes

Trending Secondary Theme	<i>n</i>	Rank
Need for Formal Study	14	1
Language Arts Comparison	12	2
Questions about Implementation of Little Kids Rock	12	3
Exposure to Any Music is Positive	9	4
Parents' Influence	9	5
Program Descriptors	8	6
Little Kids Rock Mentor Story	7	7
Sports Comparison	5	8
Loss of Interest in Music During Formal Study	5	9
Lack of Funds (Money)	5	10
Examples of Teaching	4	11
Problem with the Way Music is Taught	4	12
Classical Music Influences	4	13
Simplicity in Popular Music	4	14
Prior Exposure to Popular Music	4	15
Allowing for Expanded Exploration	3	16
Insult to Music Education and Teachers	3	17
Support with Addition of Advanced Studies	3	18
Popular Artists' Training	3	19
Comments Regarding the Teaching of Classical Music	3	20
Private Teachers	3	21

Table 4

Rank Order of Trending Secondary Themes by Personal Belief Motivation Category

Trending Secondary Themes	<i>n</i>	Rank
Need for Formal Study	14	1
Language Arts Comparison	12	2
Exposure to Any Music is Positive	9	3
Parents' Influence	9	3
Sports' Comparison	5	4
Loss of Interest in Music Due to Formal Study	5	4
Allowing for Expanded Exploration	3	5

Table 5

Rank Order of Trending Secondary Themes by Article Motivation Category

Trending Secondary Themes	<i>n</i>	Rank
Questions about Implementations of Little Kids Rock	12	1
Program Descriptors	8	2
Little Kids Rock Mentor Story	7	3
Support with Addition of Advanced Studies	3	4
Insult to Music Teachers and Education	3	4

Table 6

Rank Order of Trending Secondary Themes by Music Motivation Category

Trending Secondary Node	<i>n</i>	Rank
Classical Music Influences	4	1
Simplicity in Popular Music	4	1
Prior Exposure to Popular Music	4	1
Popular Artists' Training	3	2

Table 7

Rank Order of Trending Secondary Themes by Education System Motivation Category

Trending Secondary Node	<i>n</i>	Rank
Lack of Funds (Money)	5	1
Problems with the way Music is Taught	4	2
Examples of Teaching	4	2
Private Teachers	3	3
Comments Regarding the Teaching of Classical Music	3	3

Geographic regions. A demographic break down of the geographic information left by the 72 respondents revealed that the majority of commentators resided in the United States (87.5%), with additional comments from the United Kingdom, Europe, Asia, South America, and Africa. Within the US, the North East region accounted for (60.3%) of responses, followed by the South (14.3%), West (14.3%), an Midwest (7.9%). Findings represented the general geographic location of all respondents choosing to reveal their city/state/country in the profile information displayed when commenting on *The New York Times* online website.

Music experience of commentators. Many of the commentators declared an affiliation with music and/or music education ($n = 40$). Analysis of the *musical involvement* category indicated that commentators were music educators (26.8%), former grade school music students (14.4%), LKR teachers (11.9%), professional musicians (although not necessarily formally trained) (4.5%), parents of music students (4.5%), formally trained classical musicians (4.5%), college music education students (1.5%), and music advocates (1.5%). See Appendix C.

Several respondents did not disclose any definitive music connection involvement ($n = 32$). Although some choose not to share their exact connection with music, many of the parties affected by the music education system and music in their personal or professional lives were involved in the conversation. Examples of these descriptive theme types are shown in the following comments from a professional musician, a parent, a private music teacher, and a former music student.

I have played jazz and classical trombone professionally, and when I was a kid I played trombone/trumpet in jazz-rock/funk bands that did covers of Tower of Power, Chicago, Blood Sweat and Tears. (Professional Musician)

I have taught private piano for 33 years. My students receive a thorough education in theory, composition, improvisation and performance. (Private Teacher)

My musical sons found no outlet whatsoever for their passion at school because school band was just too rote and boring for them. (Parent)

I had piano lessons at a young age and a really lame music program in elementary school and was completely turned off from music when I was a kid. (Former Music Student)

The musical experiences shared by the respondent group seemed internally connected to how they viewed themselves and their involvement with music. Many of these experiences were closely tied to the music education they received in school. Through their involvement in or with school music education, as a student, educator, former student, or parent, their collective experiences revealed their views about music.

In elementary school, I learned to tootle on a recorder. I also learned to strum a banjo. I can still tootle on a recorder and strum a banjo, or rather, could, if I had any reason to. Meanwhile, I stopped my piano lessons after only a few years, and so deprived myself of a lifetime of enjoyment. (Former Music Student)

Furthermore, as a Suzuki parent, I observed that my talented daughter, who learned to play violin very well by ear, resisted the discipline of learning to read music. I think a couple of years of piano lessons would have helped her overcome her frustration, and would have helped her continue in music. (Parent)

Other comments relating to experiences with learning or making music were grounded in influences found outside of the education system. Parents were seen to service a particularly large role on the influence of children in regards to music consumption and participation. Here is an example of just this case, where a parent's influence on their child led to a love of classical music.

As a child growing up in the early sixties, my friends and I watched cartoons which paired Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd with Rossini's *Overture to the Barber of Seville* and the *Poet & Peasant Overture* by Von Suppé. When my mother was

asked at the time why she allowed me to watch cartoons, her answer was simple: "Are you kidding! She's learning classical music!" By the time I reached the fourth grade, I was happy to learn the violin in order to play songs which were long familiar to me. (Former Student)

Events and experiences. Respondent's comments drew extensively from their own life experiences with popular and classical music in the education system as a student, teacher, or parent. General experiences and perspectives about learning music were used to discuss the use of popular music in school music education programs. In many cases respondents employed detailed narratives, explaining their past history with music, their current perspective on the music education system and popular music, and attitudes surrounding both. Further comments represented the events and experiences of a former music student, an LKR mentor, and the parent of a music student.

I took lessons -- lots of them for 8 years, and quite rigorous ones -- in the 70's and 80's, and I still remember the way my piano teacher looked at me when I asked to learn some Billy Joel. She suffered through "My Life," and I never brought it up again. I left lessons when I turned 18, just when I was preparing to get manacled for the rest of my life to Chopin. When I left to go to college, the first thing I did was run to the library and photocopy the entire Schirmer album for Scott Joplin. If I'd been learning THAT instead, I'd never have stopped lessons. (Of course, this is all obvious in the hindsight afforded to any 45 year old.) -It wasn't the classical music I hated -- it was the way that anything else was unwelcome. Classical and rock were and always will be part of me. But a big part of me was unwelcome in those lessons. I had to artistically amputate something in order to continue in classical piano lessons, and I was unwilling to do that. (Former Music Student)

I too am a proud LKR teacher. I have been a music teacher for 9 years and a music student for over 25. I too was ready to quit teaching due to constant budget slashes and the feeling of fighting a constant and endless up hill battle. (LKR Mentor)

I am relating this story for the benefit of other parents who may find themselves in a similar situation, and feel conflicted about how to proceed. My advice is to approach lessons cautiously, and consider dropping the whole idea at the first sign of frustration. Many students may benefit from traditional instruction, but if your

child is like our son, follow your instincts. You may find a non-traditional teacher who understands how to work with such kids, or you might be better off letting your child just enjoy playing without formal instruction, at least for now. Only you know and understand your child. (Parent)

Popular Music and K-12 Music Education

Themes noted in Table 2 were examined across the three broad concerns surrounding systemic music education and popular music. These are: the general use of popular music in systemic music education, popular musics sustainability in music classrooms, and the general purpose of music education in public schools. Tables 8 - 10 represent the map of trending secondary themes. These themes detail the topic points found in the respondents' discussion.

Table 8

Secondary Themes Relating To Popular Musics Sustainability In Systemic Music Education

Trending Secondary Themes	<i>n</i>	Rank
Need for Formal Study	14	1
Questions about the Implementation of the LKR Program	12	2
LKR Mentor Story	7	3
Support with the Addition of Advanced Studies	3	4

Table 9

Secondary Themes Relating To Popular Musics Use In Systemic Music Education.

Trending Secondary Themes	<i>n</i>	Rank
Exposure to any Music is Positive	9	1
Simplicity in Popular Music	4	2
Prior Exposure to Popular Music	4	3
Allowing for Expanded Exploration	3	4

Table 10

Secondary Themes Relating To Music Educations Purpose In Public Schools

Trending Secondary Themes	<i>n</i>	Rank
Need for Formal Study	14	1
Language Arts Comparison	12	2
Sports Comparison	5	3
Loss of Interest in Music Due to Formal Study	5	4

Sustainability of Popular Music

Results revealed six trending secondary themes relating to the concerns of popular musics sustainability in the music education system. These included *LKR mentor stories*, *program descriptors*, *LKR mentors*, *support with the addition of advanced studies*, *need for formal study*, and *questions about the implementation of the LKR program*. Four of these trending secondary themes represented the idea that popular music could possibly be sustainable, while two argued the dissenting opinion felt by several respondents.

Support for the idea of popular music's use in public schools was seen in the comments represented by the secondary themes *LKR stories*, *program descriptors*, *LKR mentors*, and *support with the addition of advanced studies*. Many of the responses in these categories showed the individual perspective of the respondent and their belief that popular music could be a valuable tool to music educators for its ability to connect with students on a personal level, as well as provide exploratory possibilities through improvisation and composition. Several of the comments came from teachers who had experience with the LKR program or programs similar in nature to LKR. One example of this is shown through a selection of comments left by an LKR teacher who chose to share his experiences with music education and his perspective on popular musics use in the classroom.

I have been a public school music teacher for 12 years, and I got involved with LKR about seven years ago. I am a musician who started out with piano lessons at age 5, hated it, quit, and then started playing rock guitar years later at age 12. I love classical music, play classical guitar, and teach it to my students (over 100 a year), yet still see the immense value in rock music, improvisation, and composition. I consider myself a classical musician first and foremost, but you bet I use LKR in my classroom. I have had many of my student rockers go on to college and continue studying classical music after their initial exposure to LKR in my classroom. (LKR Teacher)

Other supporters of the article saw potential in popular music but also recognized the need for advanced studies in the music education system.

This program has potential, but I feel to gain the full support of the musical world it needs to add more substantial material in its curriculum. I feel that applying the concept of using more popular music to attract students to learning instruments, improvise and compose, they will also have the full ability to appreciate the art of music as a whole. (Educator)

Program descriptors were all in support for the article. Examples of supporting words included: Amazing, Excellent, Fantastic, Brilliant, and Inspiring. Many of the program descriptors left by respondents displayed their enthusiasm and support for the program.

In contrast, secondary themes *need for formal study* and *questions about the implementation of the LKR Program* contained rather different opinions than those expressed in the previous comments.

Anyone can pick up a guitar and plunk out chords with their favorite radio tune, but like writing or mathematics, to get a true education on excellence in music requires learning all of music, even what some label boring. (Educator)

We all like what we like and assume our taste is as good as anyone else's. And there is far too much influence of commercial popular music on children today. They don't need schools to reinforce the commercial culture. We need academically trained classical musicians who also like children and know how to make traditional, folk, and classical forms of music meaningful and fun. Think Kodaly as well as Suzuki. (Parent)

One particular comment questioned the very nature of the program and its implementation in the school systems.

How many kids want to take group guitar, keyboard and drum lessons, and for how long? What is the goal? Will there be school concerts done by groups with multiple guitarists, drummers, keyboardists and singers all taught by rote? I can only guess what those would sound like. but I'm sure they won't sound anything like the music that these kids listen to. How long will the kids like this. I'm pretty sure that when they reach middle school they'll think this is lame. Also, though

some will want to write songs, I'm pretty certain most will want to perform the music that is currently popular and that brings up copyright problems. So, for this to be a successful musical education experience, the large groups will have to be broken down into more tradition sized rock ensembles (1 or 2 guitars , bass, drums and keyboard) if a music teacher is involved with such a small group there is going to be logistical hell. How does one schedule such a small class during the school day? How many groups will there be? How many teachers will be needed and what sort of training will they need and what will be the costs of these programs. How will public concerts be held? If teachers aren't needed what is the difference between these groups and garage bands? (Educator)

General Use of Popular Music

Concerning the issue of popular musics general use in public school music education, findings revealed four trending secondary themes that were closely related to the argument for popular music's general use in music education (i.e., using popular music within the confines of preexisting classrooms on a curricular level to teach musical concepts). Themes included: *exposure to any music is positive; allowing for expanded exploration; simplicity in popular music; and prior exposure to popular music*. Supporting comments can be seen in the collection of reference comments in the categories of *exposure to any music is positive* and *allowing for expanded exploration in music*. These comments represented the resounding idea that all students should have the opportunity to be exposed to music, regardless of genre.

Kids should be taught to appreciate the beauty and skill found in all kinds of music. (Knowledgeable Consumer)

Rather than limiting a person to the shackles of one kind of music, children should be made aware of the many sounds, possibilities, and messages that music carries, and their lives will be much more enriched because of it. (Knowledgeable Consumer)

As with any argument, staunch opponents existed. Here the idea of using popular music to train musicians was opposed. The notion that popular music is too simple to be used in the

classroom was displayed in the *simplicity in popular music* category. Respondents in this theme argued that the simplicity of prevailing popular music of today is limiting in composition and will be limiting in the study of music. Here are a few examples of references that supported this argument.

Most popular music that students listen to is redundant and simplistic. It does not force the listener to really dig in. (Educator)

The knowledge you need to get started playing rock music is very limited, that's because the music is very limited. (Knowledgeable Consumer)

All one needs to do is see Rob Paravonian's comedy sketch in which he takes the passacaglia bass line of Pachelbel's Canon in D and shows rather starkly how popular songs can simply be superimposed on the simplistic harmonies of the Canon. (Classical Musician)

Another issue surrounding the general use of popular music was the notion that many students have had prior exposure to popular music. While some argued that this does not necessarily represent a negative opinion of popular music, upon further examination into reference comments, the prevailing opinion of respondents was that it was not the place of music education to promote popular music, as students had massive amounts of exposure to popular music in their daily lives.

Every kid is exposed to pop music in our society. It's ubiquitous. (Former Student)

Kids will find commercial pop music on their own. (Knowledgeable Consumer)

I extend my appreciation to those commenters who, unlike Mr. Bornstein, recognize that in fact, in today's world, there is no classical music industry shoving its values down the public's throat, rather, it is popular music which pervades every corner of contemporary 'culture' and fosters the under-informed, pseudo-populist attitudes toward the classical repertoire. (Classical Musician)

Comments surrounding the purposes of music education varied considerably. These opinions, comparisons, and issues were represented in the trending secondary themes *need for formal study*, *sports comparisons*, *language arts comparisons*, *problem with the way music is taught*, and *loss of interest in music due to formal study*.

Respondents comparisons of music to language arts represented varying opinions about how the purposes of music and language arts are both alike and different. Perhaps the most important information gained here is that many people felt that music is very similar to language and the idea that music should be taught in a similar fashion. Many of the same issues surrounding popular music in music education are the same types of issues that surround popular print media and other media forms in language art classes. Below are examples of respondents' comments regarding music's comparison to language arts, and similar perpetuating issues

And maybe instead of reading the classics we should let kids read the comic versions? (Former Student)

I'm no fan of Harry Potter, but those books inspired millions of readers who would never otherwise pick up a book to do just that, and if rock music is a gateway to inspiration, bring it on! (Educator)

Teaching complex music theory with overly structured and soulless lessons to children in order to cultivate a love and interest in the arts is as ridiculous as trying to teach a child to speak a foreign language with textbooks and written tests - oh wait, we do that too. (Knowledgeable Consumer)

In regards to the comparison of music to language arts, the overriding issue was not necessarily the type of music or literature used but the way that it is being taught to students. The trending secondary themes *problem with the way music is taught*, *loss of interest in music due to formal study* and *need for formal study* represented the core issues when dealing with long standing arguments of formal vs. informal methods and product vs. process philosophy.

Illustrations of this can be seen in the reference comments of the trending themes.

I think the problem is less with the type of music taught and more with the way it is taught in schools. (Knowledgeable Consumer)

I think that classical music is taught the wrong way by some teachers. (Current Music Student)

I had piano lessons at a young age and a really lame music program in elementary school and was completely turned off from music when I was a kid. (Former Student)

Sounds great, but not teaching classical music? That would be a terrible mistake. Every kid is exposed to pop music in our society. It's ubiquitous. But classical music is rarely heard. And this sublime, complex music cannot be appreciated without exposure, preferably during childhood. (Former Student)

Additional Trending Secondary Categories

Insult to music teachers and music education. Several respondents felt that the article was insulting to current music teachers and to the music education system in general. Many of the comments disagreed with Bornstein's portrayal of the current music education system and with the idea that music should be taught by individuals without detailed training in the teaching of music. Below are a few examples of the comments from this category.

This article is a grave insult to music teachers (You too can teach music with just a few weekends of your time!) as well. (Performing Musician)

I think this is just a lazy article and in many ways insults music education, the very thing it claims it is trying to revitalize. (Current Music Student)

In these regards there is little discussion to be had. The commentators' offense to portions of the Bornstein article can be understood and indeed they have every right to feel as they will, whether it be elated or insulted.

Lack of funds (money) in music education. Funding for music programs is a widely discussed issue, and several respondents felt it important to note that funding in music programs

plays a crucial role to the success of a program. Concerns about the lack of funding in general education were also discussed. Commentators noted that arts programs are seemingly the first to be cut when budgets become extremely tight. Below is an example from some of the respondents' opinions.

Most public schools across the nation have no money, nor are they judged one iota on how good their music departments are in the national mania for corporate testing and corporate lists of 'best' schools. So music programs have been one of the first to go. (Educator)

I was quite taken aback by how this article attacks music programs, a section of education that is constantly under fire during budget slashes. (Educator)

Classical music influences and parental influences. One topic that seemed virtually absent from the Bornstein article was the notion that classical music could also provide influential and impacting opportunities for students studying music. Respondents' comments surrounding classical music influences also brought out a second topic that they felt was missing in the Bornstein article. This was the idea that parental influences on the music a child consumes has great impact on that child's overall acceptance level and eventual preference for different types of music.

One point missing from the article, an appreciation and love for classical music starts at home, because mom, dad, brother or sister, listen to it. I grew up with opera, piano albums, string quartets, all of it played all the time because my father loved it so. I used to run around the house madly conducting symphonies when I was little, just jumping wildly from chair to chair. I still love all kinds of classical music. (Knowledgable Consumer)

As a child growing up in the early sixties, my friends and I watched cartoons which paired Bugs Bunny and Elmer Fudd with Rossini's Overture to the Barber of Seville and the Poet & Peasant Overture by Von Suppé. When my mother was asked at the time why she allowed me to watch cartoons, her answer was simple: "Are you kidding! She's learning classical music!" By the time I reached the fourth grade, I was happy to learn the violin in order to play songs which were long familiar to me. (Former Student)

My point is this: by all means, encourage children with programs such as Little Kids Rock, but expose them to music outside of their everyday experience as well. When presented in a way that relates to them, there is no limit to what children can learn - and enjoy! (Former Student)

Although to expound upon issues surrounding parental influence is far beyond the reach of this study. The influence parents have on their children and their child's relationship with music are an extremely exciting topic, and one that should be focused on with much more scrutiny in forthcoming research in this area of music and music education.

Popular artists training. Comments in this category aligned with the concepts of formal and informal learning (Green, 2006), and highlighted the success of musicians who received both formal and informal training.

Now, for a list of people in the pop world that got started in the "stifling" music classroom. Phil Lesh, former bassist of the Grateful Dead (started on violin and trumpet). Lady Gaga (studied piano and went to college to to hone her skills). (Educator)

When George Harrison joined the band [The Beatles], John Lennon and Paul McCartney were impressed because he knew how to tune a guitar. Harrison had had lessons. John and Paul had had some after-high school art classes, but their learning of guitar or music-making was through trial-and-error, peer tutoring, and listening to records that they bought with their pocket money. They each went on to become international icons and incredibly rich financially. In most ways, they epitomize the dream of every garage-band, rock star wannabe. They played music. (Knowledgeable Consumer)

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

This qualitative study examined the motivations, perspectives, and issues surrounding the debate of popular music and popular music programs in systemic public music education classrooms. Public commentary to an online *New York Times* article describing the *Little Kids Rock* music program were coded and examined for emergent themes and trending nodes. The top three emergent primary themes were general beliefs about music, fully support article, and commentary on classical music. The top three secondary emergent themes were need for formal study, language arts comparison, and questions about the implementation of LKR. Commentators were primarily music educators, students, parents, professional/freelance musicians, classically trained musicians, and former music students. They were motivated by their personal beliefs, relationship to article content, relationship to musical content, and relationship to the education system. Respondents referenced their personal and professional experiences and perspectives gained as participants or observers of the music education system, as well as outside musical experiences, such as private lessons and personal study, when sharing their views about the content of the article. Thematic relationships between trending secondary themes and the broad issues surrounding the general purpose of music education, as well as popular music use and sustainability in the public school music classroom were examined with themes falling along a continuum of arguments dealing with these broad concerns.

Examination of these arguments showed a split in the belief that popular music should be used in music education. Advocates for its use noted that popular music could possibly attract a broader audience by gaining student interest, and that the informal study of music, mainly popular, could also lead to higher levels of music achievement and appreciation. Opponents felt that student interest should not be of concern in the music classroom, and that the best avenue for high level achievement came from classical music and formal study. The middle ground in this argument was provided by commentators who agreed that popular music and informal process were of value to students, but that to achieve the highest level of musicianship classical forms and formal study must be required. All other arguments concerning popular musics sustainability and the general purpose of music education stemmed from respondents beliefs concerning the general use of popular music. Those that agreed with popular music general use, as well as those in the middle ground, also generally agreed that it could possibly be a sustainable feature in music classrooms, and that the purpose of music education was to enlighten students to all types of music and the musical experience. These respondents chose a stance of acceptance toward all music and its various genres. Their counter parts chose to take an exclusionary stance towards popular musics use, sustainability, and the general purpose of music education. Theirs was one in which only traditional formal study could lead to advanced musicianship for the purpose of an aesthetically superior product, and all other genres and ways of study should be excluded from the music classroom. The commentators choice of acceptance or exclusion of popular music ultimately determined how they responded to the article and it's author.

Observations Concerning the Commentators

As it has been previously stated, many of the respondents had a direct relationship with music and music education. Obviously there were varying levels of involvement amongst respondents which accounted for the vastly different opinions and ideas expressed by many in their comments. In this way each comment and group of comments relating to a singular question or idea had to be examined for first its individuality amongst the group and then for how it fit into the larger arguments at hand. In the same light each commentator took part in representing a very specific singular belief system (their own), as well as holistic a belief system (the group) concerning music education. All of which was inherently developed from their experiences and beliefs.

Article comments dealing with the author. In many ways the article was written to incite debate between supporters of informal and formal learning programs. Bornstein's analysis of public school music education programs was indeed harsh, especially to many teachers who spend countless hours in pursuit of the minimal amount of recognition from the general public. For example, the high school band director planning for poorly attended public concerts and annual assessment activities. Whether intentional or not, the author seemed cast in the role of protagonist. One commentator even expressed surprise at the argumentative commentary, "My own reaction to the comments: Wow. Who could have guessed that there would be such virulent antagonism toward learning three chords? (Unanimous)."

First commentator set the response tone. Debate following the initial posting of the article began with a frustrated parent who shared Bornstein's views about music education.

Brilliant and inspiring! I wish all schools would adopt this view. My musical sons found no outlet whatsoever for their passion at school because school band was

just too rote and boring for them. They all play at least two instruments because they were available and encouraged at home. Their love of music will enrich their adult lives, as it does for so many of my friends. But their love of music owes absolutely no thanks to the lame school music programs on offer. (Parent)

Commentator discussion. Respondents provided thoroughly textured accounts of their own experiences with popular music, classical music, the music education system, formal methods, and informal methods when responding. They also interacted with the article's audience while they wrestled with the ideas presented by Bornstein. Take this example of a mother who experienced first hand her son's loss of interest in music after beginning formal lessons.

I am relating this story for the benefit of other parents who may find themselves in a similar situation, and feel conflicted about how to proceed. My advice is to approach lessons cautiously, and consider dropping the whole idea at the first sign of frustration. Many students may benefit from traditional instruction, but if your child is like our son, follow your instincts. You may find a non-traditional teacher who understands how to work with such kids, or you might be better off letting your child just enjoy playing without formal instruction, at least for now. Only you know and understand your child. (Parent)

Informed and observant. In general commentators seemed to display a keen insight into the points raised in the article. For example, the previous comment suggests a discrimination that popular music's sustainability in music education lies not in the music itself, but how that music is taught, a thoughtful and nuanced point. Other commentators noted that music concepts were universal and exist in all genres. However the pedagogical processes of teaching music ignited the familiar formal vs. informal methods of music instruction and participation debate, often discussed in the music education community.

Green (2006) examined research involving the informal and formal process used in popular music production and the delineated messages students form from practice in each. The

lack of informal learning process and lack of teacher education of informal processes in the music education system to date were a key note provided by the researcher. Green reviewed concerns regarding autonomy and authenticity presented by teachers, and equated these to the education system's construct that the product of the music class is more important than the processes involved in making and learning musical concepts. Researcher notes this would lead to inherent delineations in formal process that are non-existent in informal ones. Therefore, by incorporating informal processes in music education through the use of popular musics, the student would be allowed to make his own personal delineations, making the experience more personal and meaningful.

Respondents also made comparisons of music to language within the context of informal and formal learning processes and settings that were similar to observations by music psychologists, sociologists, and philosophers.

First and foremost I must point out that music is a language! You teach a child how to speak there native tongue before they learn how to read or write. Thus you teach a child how to play an instrument and or sing before teaching them to read, and compose music. (Educator)

To argue that a child learning to play pop music first would discourage their interest in more difficult genres later is laughable, and indeed it would contrary to how the human brain actually learns. Teaching complex music theory with overly structured and soulless lessons to children in order to cultivate a love and interest in the arts is as ridiculous as trying to teach a child how to speak a foreign language with textbooks and written tests - oh wait, we do that too. Just like you teach a toddler to speak before you teach him to read and write, we teach kids to "speak" and "understand" music that is relevant to them before they start reading and writing music. (Knowledgable Consumer)

Green (2006, 2008) closely studied the learning and rehearsal processes used by popular musicians and made comparisons to the pedagogical content surrounding what students are

“actually doing” in their music classes and how they are “engaged in the musical moment.” It was intriguing to see the ideas expressed in the article in the form of formal and informal processes used in traditional music classes with emphasis on product over process.

The solution to give kids access to music they would want to listen to is, in an education sense, quite ridiculous. Let's take this same idea and transfer it to a contemporary english class, 1900-Present. Students today are just coming down off of Twilight series, and about 5 years ago we were finishing up the seventh book of the Harry Potter series. These are the books that students were reading, but they did not hold a place in the realms of academic study. The same holds true for music classes. Most popular music that students listen to is redundant and simplistic. It does not force the listener to really dig in. Sit down with a recording of a Mahler or Shostakovich symphony and, if you really listen, it could change the way you view the world. (Educator)

Additional Questions and Topics Raised During the Debate

School music versus home music. Music is ever expanding and encompassing in society, weather it be music used at home, work, and school or for leisure activities and entertainment, music is a part of our life. So why must there be a divide in the music used for study ad the music used in everyday life? Fifty four years ago at the Tanglewood Symposium (Isbell, 2007) a call was made by leading musicians and music educators to better relate the music of the general public and music used in the school music programs. Specifically how students experienced music at home and at school was called into question, with the recommendation student's home and school music experiences be examined with inclusion and acceptance for all types of music used in both settings, thereby expanding music education on a general sociological level to all students who have an interest in any form of music. “Rather than limiting a person to the shackles of one kind of music, children should be made aware of the many sounds, possibilities, and messages that music carry and their lives will be much more enriched because of it” (Knowledgeable Consumer Comment).

Popular music in music education. A range of opinions and ideas about popular musics sustainability and purposes in the music education system were shown through the respondents comments in the aforementioned trending secondary themes and their corresponding reference comments. While many teachers experiences with using popular music and informal methods in their classrooms have seen positive outcomes, some will argue that the overuse of popular music can lead to negative outcomes in the overall direction and focus of the program. Popular music is obviously being used in the music education programs, the *LKR* program, and others like it, along with countless teachers, several of which responded to the article and can attest to this.

For many questioning how popular music can be used to expand music education's reach to a larger audience of students and investors, the heart of the matter lies in what music is being used, how that music relates to the users life, and how the focus of the music program and its music relate to the the users personal beliefs about music. Although these users may be developing students, their opinions about music and their music taste have been developing for many years though involvement with music outside of the school environment (i.e. home, church, peer groups, media outlets, and personal consumption). Resolving such questions regarding the purposefulness, functions, and use of popular music and its relation to students personal lives will inevitably have a direct impact on the teaching and learning processes chosen in the music classroom. The choice between formal and informal process of music learning are dependent on the future intent of the music being learned, as determined by the classroom teacher, having a direct impact on students attitudes toward music in the school setting and outside of school.

Why the Present State May Exist

The debate(s) incited by the article and engaged in by the commentators can be speculated as the result of hundreds of years of formal music education in American schools. Given the “folk” music traditions of the country and individualistic nature of American society, it is interesting to find that the music education training programs examined by Wang and Humphreys (2009) research focused almost exclusively on traditional teaching techniques or formal music and the techniques used in traditional music teaching. One reasonable speculation is that, to date, these formal techniques, grounded in the teaching of music concepts and formal reading skills, has produced excellent results as demonstrated by the multitude of successful music programs found throughout America (NAMM Foundation Survey, 2010), albeit for a minority of students (Elpus & Abril 2011). On the opposite end of this spectrum, programs may have very little success by traditional measures, although they are of the same make up as successful traditional programs. Often these programs opt for the rote teaching of music. Programs in this state not only alienate students who would not conform to the program’s focuses, but also the lack of success could begin to produce devastating results for the entire music program. These program’s need formal training concepts to perform at a successful level. I speculate that inadequacies within the program could be due to either a lack of interest in curricular techniques used to teach basic concepts on the student’s part, a lack of teaching fundamentals all together on the teacher’s part, or a combination of the two.

I am of the perspective that many music programs, especially at the grade school level, operate with a delicate balance between the two opposite ends of the formal vs. informal continuum. Formal concepts are taught at varying degrees, (i.e. scales, chord structure, form,

tonal and atonal relationships, etc.) and informal methods are often employed only when needed, many times manifesting in the “rote” teaching. Indeed the concept of sound before sight and rote teaching are used extensively in beginning band/music programs to establish sound to sight relationships to great effect. However, I believe that in many cases rote teaching in advanced programs (middle/high school) is often employed with little relation to formal concepts, whose knowledge is required to repeat the action of making music without an instructor’s assistance. I speculate that this is done to achieve perceived success through formal evaluations. The music performed must be at an adequate performance level for the performing group to be considered successful in their musical ventures leading to the performance evaluation. However, the issue here is that there is no concern in the evaluation for how the music was prepared and if such success could be replicated with different music and time constraints.

Recommendations and Limitations

Respondents were, in general, a select group holding online subscriptions to the *New York Times website* and sufficient leisure time to post a response to the content on the website. While the *New York Times* is a widely consumed newspaper, its readership may not represent the views of all music teachers, parents, and consumers. Obviously, a different method of capturing the views of parents, teachers, and other stakeholders through a survey could help garner the opinions of a more representative sample of American society. At the same time, article respondents seemed to have a vested interest in the topic, perhaps motivating their desire to respond, and therefore may be particularly interested in the content of the article.

Another limitation to the present study concerns the narrative nature of the raw data and its influence on the subjectivity inherent to the coding processes used in the study. Future research

could include an interview process with the researcher prompting and guiding the dialogue. This could permit equal opportunities for the voice of each participant to be heard across the themes and trends. The content of readers' responses was based on their area of interest and motivation to freely respond, therefore, collecting identical information across respondents was not possible.

Conclusion

The perspectives, issues, and beliefs expressed by the respondents to the *New York Times* article represent the varying aspects presented in a complex debate concerning the constructs of music learning, aptitude and eventual mastery. What makes their interaction important is two fold. First, while respondents represent a subgroup of the population who read the *NYT*, the group also consisted of primarily individuals who are or have been involved in the music education process. Second is the very nature of the media publication itself and the ability of respondents to discuss such issues from their private own locations. Manoseviten and Walker (2009) noted that online comments to opinion journalism can represent an area of public deliberation through which social issues may be discussed and debated, so that the many parties having stake in the argument have equal opportunity to express their beliefs on the issue at hand. Bornstein article publicly illustrated the debate surrounding popular music and music education and clearly the many parties with a stake in the argument expressed themselves.

The purpose of this study has been to study issues concerning the use of popular music genres in music education and develop a more thorough understanding of the population of respondents to the *New York Times* article. In the end, many more questions and concerns have been raised regarding not only popular music, but the very nature of the music education system and its purpose and focus. The only definitive information that can be drawn is that a majority of

respondents to the article were involved with music in some capacity, and they represented a very wide range of ideas relating to popular music and public school music education. These are very clear, all else is an intertwined mass of argument, opinion, debate, realization, and personal conclusion.

Inevitably, many more questions will come to follow, and the debate will rage on amongst the musical population. However, I believe it is how we, as musicians, music students, music teachers, music researchers, and the like adapt to current demands of the general education system and needs of the greater majority of students that will ultimately determine what a music classroom will look like in the future. How far will we progress with relating school music and home life music in the next 54 years? Only time will tell.

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APPENDIX A

FULL SECONDARY NODE LIST BY PRIMARY CATEGORY

Primary and Secondary Category	Reference Comments
Commentary on Classical Music	29
Classical (jazz) music is not the enemy	1
Classical arts offer unlimited possibilities	2
Classical music and popular music share elements	1
Classical music is nothing special	2
Classical music is superior to popular music	2
Classical music should be removed	1
Classical musicians have bad ears	1
Comparison of classical and popular music	1
Dislike for classical or jazz music	1
Jazz music is built off improvisation	1
Love for classical music	2
Love for classical music comes from a need	1
Need for early exposure	2
Personal exploration of classical music	2
Reason for disliking classical music	2
Regarding teaching classical music	2
Repetition in classical music	1
Rock (popular) artists trained in classical music forms	2
Simplicity in classical music	1
The image that classical music needs to be improve	1
Why is classical music practice considered	1
Commentary on K-12 Students	1
Students take the path of least resistance	1
Commentary on Popular Music	24
Can not grow with popular music	1
Dislike for popular music	1

Electronic sampler	1
Example of popular music success	1
Exposure to classical music	4
If it sounds good, it is good	1
Kids should be exposed to popular music	1
Learning through exploration example of successes	1
Limitations with popular music	2
Popular artist training	4
Simplicity in popular music	4
Teaching music using popular genres, if limiting	1
The interweaving of popular and classical music	2
Commentary on the Article Purpose and Position	18
Article attacks basic music appreciation	1
LKR as an alternative to music education will	1
Questions about the implementation of LKR	12
Cost of program	1
How long will students be interested	1
How many would participate	1
Teacher training questions and instruction	1
What about copyright issues	1
What about logistical issues of size	1
What is the goal	1
What will concerts be like	2
Will students be taught and perform only	1
Would music sound like what student intend	1
Start with engaging music and continue studies from there	1
Suggests students can decide what is best for themselves	1
There should be an easy, widely accessible	1
What is the difference between these groups	1
Commentator Expressed Intentions	1
Commentator Resources	1
Comments About Music Learning	1
Comments About or to the Author	1
Comments Regarding Music Education in America	26
Creativity	1
Education needs to be revitalized	2
Elementary school vocal music oriented	1

Example of LKR in school district	1
Issues with administration and hiring of teachers	1
Lack of money	5
Limited educational environment	1
Music education culled most from the instantly brilliant in music	2
National standards	1
No band in inner city schools	1
Personal perspective of music education as detrimental	1
Private music alive and well	1
Problem with the way music is taught	4
Rigorous training in music	1
School band rote and boring	1
Students original work in other classes	1
There are already programs for young students	1
Comments to Respondent Groups	13
Commentators missing the point	2
Easy concepts first	1
High-quality music is not limited to classical	1
Kids are already exposed to pop culture	1
LKR as supplemental program	1
Message from one music teacher to many	1
Message to staunch opposers of article	1
Notion that popular music fans would not happy	1
Question of later life preference	2
Surprised by reaction to article	1
Want for a combined effort	1
Comparisons and Transfers	34
Classical music comparison	1
Comparison to drawing/painting	1
Comparison of music seen as simple	1
Comparison to eating habits	1
Comparison to movie character	1
Language arts comparison	12
Math comparison	2
Music as a communicator	1
Organized activity comparison	1
Parental influence	1
Perspective on what past classical composer intended for their music	1
Questioning what is classical music	1
Similar program comparison	2
Sports comparison	5

Transfer to a high tolerance for tedious repetition	1
Transfer to real life situations	2
Non-Support Article	19
Author is uninformed	1
Current description of program leads to incomplete musicians	1
Disagree with the lack of formal music education	1
Discipline is the issue	1
Dislike authors derogatory attitude toward classical music	1
Dumbing down	2
Equating LKR and similar programs	1
Feels article attacks music education program	2
Insult to music teachers and music education	3
Kids can learn to play guitar without any intervention from the education system	1
Kids should be introduced to real music, not classical music	1
Kids should not have input as to what music they are taught	1
Lack of music programs and funding for them	1
Perceived issues with the program	1
Professionals needed to make traditional	1
Reasons for program not working	1
The problem is the programs simplistic approach	1
Thought that programs like this will kill classic	1
What kids want is not always best	1
Educator	25
Art teacher	1
Band teacher	1
College teacher	1
Educators' Teaching Methods-Ideas	4
Elementary school teacher	1
Impoverished teacher	1
LKR mentor	7
Music education teacher	1
Private teacher	2
Public school teacher	2
Teacher combining nontraditional and traditional	1
Teacher support success of LKR in public schools	1
Urban teacher	1
Fully Support Article	35
Accessing music without cumbersome pedagogy	1
All schools should adopt the program's philosophy	1

Budget issues in schools	1
Commentator wish for program when they were young	1
Denying musical enjoyment because of lack sophistication	2
Encouragement	2
Hands on approach	1
Idea that students can still become accomplished	2
Music education needs to be revitalized	1
Need for parental support if student wants to expand music concepts	1
Need for study of popular music	1
Need for support of music programs of any kind	1
New music programs being started	1
Program (article) descriptors	8
Programs' value to under privileged	2
Providing student access to the process of music making	1
Purpose and objectives of music instruction	2
Reasons for success of program	1
Step in the right direction	1
Students should be aware of many sounds	1
Support for program ideals	1
Teacher support	1
General Belief About Music	62
Allowing for expanded exploration	3
Better to have some music than no music	1
Building a shared music experience regardless	1
By limiting popular music, music educators	1
Cautiousness with formal study	1
Classical music is most sophisticated	1
Classical music is not the only meaningful music	1
Classical music must be introduced	1
Classical music stands the test of time	1
Defining popular music	1
Easy art is not lasting	1
Enjoyment should be focus	1
Exposure to any music is positive	9
Kids can relate to classical music if presented the right way	1
Kids should be exposed to popular music	1
Kids should have input	2
Letting kids access music they like is bad	2
Music is more than formal study	1
Need for formal study	14
Not everyone can be a musician	1

Not everyone needs to be a classical musician	1
Parental influence	2
Pop music is not real music	1
Popular music not welcome	1
Required practice is disliked by all	1
Room for both popular and classical	2
Start simple	1
Students should be exposed to musical instruction	1
Success builds confidence	1
The arts humanize us	1
The commercialism should not be used in school	1
The well-educated should be familiar with classical music	2
Why force formal study	2
Loss of Interest in Music	6
Loss of interest due to formal studies	5
Loss of interest perspective	1
Musical Influences	14
Classical music influence	4
European education influences	2
Kids should have the opportunity to use any music	2
Using music they can identify with	1
Popular music influences	2
Teacher using popular music perspective	1
Willingness to use many genres of music	2
Musical Involvement	36
Classically trained musician	1
Early music participant who quite lessons	1
Grade school music participant	1
LKR mentor story	7
Music education charity	1
Music education major	1
Parental influence	1
Parents perspective on child's loss of interest	3
Performance attendance	1
Private piano teacher perspective	1
Professional musician	2
Public school perspective	1
Public school teacher guitar and art	1
Traditional learner perspective	1
Holistic music consumer perspective	2

Non-Traditional Study Position	5
Guitars help in quick achievement	1
Incorporation of non traditional program focuses	1
There is more to music than formal studies	1
Support for nontraditional study of music basics	1
Using music students knew lead to increased exploration	1
Other Comments	18
Advice to “Wall Street” people	1
Article video observations	1
Comments about Bornstein	1
Commentary on successful people	1
Comments about the state of America	1
Corporations	2
Creativity limited by 21st Century skill	1
Dislike the name LKR	1
Drugs and music	1
Happy about the response to the article	1
Kids can learn to play guitar without public school	1
Lip-syncing comments	1
LKR video story	1
Perspective of perceived lower musicianship	1
Previously developed system	1
Would like to have had the LKR program as a student	1
Parents	11
Parental influences	9
Parents perspective on lose of interest in music	2
Partial Support for Article	10
Disagreement with thrashing classical music	1
Example of overcoming the varying tastes in music	1
Expression of relating to the article	1
Method could lead to further advanced exploration	1
Support for the program	1
Support the incorporation of more genres	1
Support with the addition of advanced studies	3

APPENDIX B

PRIMARY RESPONSE CATEGORY AND SECONDARY TRENDING NODES

Primary Response Category and Secondary Trending Nodes	References (<i>n</i>)
General Beliefs about Music	62
Need for Formal Study of Music	14
Exposure to any music is positive	9
Allowing for Expanded Exploration	3
Fully Support Article	35
Program Descriptors	8
Commentary on Classical Music	34
Comments Regarding the Teaching of Classical Music.	3
Comparisons and Transfers	34
Language Arts Comparison	12
Sports Comparison	5
Musical Involvement	33
LKR Mentor Story	7
Comments Regarding Music Ed. in America	26
Lack of Money	5
Problem with Music Teaching	4
Educator	25
LKR Mentor	7
Example of Teaching	4
Private Teachers	3
Commentary on Popular Music	23
Prior Exposure to Popular Music	4
Simplicity in Popular Music	4
Popular Artists Training	3
Do Not Support Article	23
Insult to Music, Music Education and Music Teachers	3
Other Comments	18

Comments about Corporations		
Musical Influences	14	
Classical Music Influences	4	
Comments to Respondent Group	13	
Commentary on Articles Purpose and Position	13	
Questions about Implementation of LKR	12	
Partial Support of Article	11	
Support with Addition of Advanced Studies	3	
Comments from/about Parents		
Parental Influences	9	
Comments about the Author	9	
Loss of Interest in Music	6	
Loss of Interest Due to Formal Study	5	
Comments about Music Learning	4	
Commentator Resources	2	
Expressed Intentions	1	
Commentary on K-12 Students	1	

APPENDIX C

RANK ORDER OF MUSIC INVOLVEMENT OF THE RESPONDENT GROUP

Rank	Musical Involvement	Crossover	Respondents
1	Educators		18
	LKR Teachers	8	
	Performing Musicians	2	
	Classically Trained Musicians	1	
	Private Teacher	1	
2	Former Music Students		9
	Current Student	1	
3	Parents		3
4	Performing Musicians		3
	Classically Trained Musicians	1	
	Educators	2	
5	Classically Trained Musicians		3
	Performing Musicians	2	
	Educators	1	
6	Current Music Students		2
	Former Students	1	
7	Music Advocate		1
