

#RIME2021

# How Popular Musicians Teach

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# Questions to ponder...

"To what extent does popular music pedagogy (PMP) reflect how popular music is made?" (Bell, 2016)

How do the learning practices of musicians inform their teaching practices in PMP?

Is Popular Music Pedagogy (PMP) a “thing?”

How can we incorporate learning practices of popular musicians into our teaching practices?



# A loving critique of PMP

What are the foundational characteristics of learning and teaching popular music?

Why are a number of scholarly discussions around popular music foreign to me?

Are we simply creating a simulacrum? (Green, 2006)

The fluid nature of terms associated with PMP



# A loving critique of PMP

“To make PMP sustainable, we need to connect with communities of popular music makers to help us find our flaws and pick apart our pedagogies. At present PMP in schools is not typically facilitated by popular musicians. More than being illogical, this is unjust”  
(Bell, 2016).

PMP needs critical friends

A loving critique (Paris & Alim, 2014)



# The problem of conflation

## *How Popular Musicians Learn; A way ahead for music education*

or, at least, it could be *one* of the ways forward for music education if folks would read past the title, understand why Green delimited the research group, and not generalize the experiences of 14 white rock musicians

## *How Popular Musicians Teach*

if it's even possible to aggregate a group of musicians who have as many convergent points of connections vis-à-vis their lived experiences and learning practices as they do divergent points

# My experiences in music

I prefer not to label myself as a this or that musician

Hybridized learning (Parkinson & Smith, 2015)

Intersections between in-school and out-of-school experiences (Tobias, 2015)



# Identifying intersections

“It is not necessarily the case that just because a person learnt to play by informal means, they will then translate their informal learning practices into their formal teaching practices. It is one thing to experience a way of learning, and another thing to recognize its feasibility as a teaching method” (Green, 2002).



# Connecting learning and teaching experiences

Opfer and Pedder (2011) discuss how a teacher's orientation--that is, their beliefs, perceptions, and preconceived notions with regard to teaching and learning--has a strong influence on how and what they *learn*. I would offer a teacher's orientation has an equal, if not greater, impact on how and what they *teach*, as the totality of our backgrounds-both intramusical and extramusical-have a lasting impact on our approaches towards, and attitudes in, the music classroom.

# Blending oil and water

Formal/  
in-school

Informal/  
out-of-school

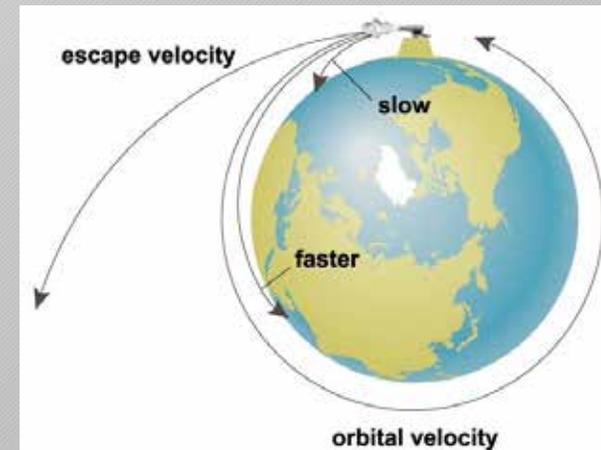


# Incorporating hybrid ways of learning and teaching

Escape velocity

Discounting lived experiences  
(Green, 2001; Robinson, 2010)

Integrating the lived experiences of the collective



## The fear of the unknown...

“Perhaps the greatest obstacle to teaching these skills in schools is that many teachers, with respect to popular styles and vernacular music making, are limited to being passive consumers themselves (and consumers they are, as their personal CD collections often include much more popular music than what they teach on the job). It is not that they reject popular music. They are not philosophically opposed to teaching the performance of popular music, but they fear they wouldn’t know the first thing about actually doing it” (Woody, 2007).

# Inclusivity in teaching practices

“Listening to the locals is wise and it is a start. But, to join them, live amongst them, fellowship with them, thrive with them, become them—that is the artesian well of authentic PMP”

(Bell, 2016).



# Inclusivity in teaching practices

“Popular music education doesn’t necessarily entail any informal learning. And informal learning does not, of course, necessarily entail popular music education”

(Green, 2016).



# Closing thoughts

Interrogating our own lived experiences  
(Karlsen & Vakeva, 2012)

Becoming the “creative pedagogue”  
(Abramo & Reynolds 2015)

Formal and informal aren't really  
oil and water after all



# Questions and comments?

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