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Action for Change in Music Education

Towards an Epistemology of Authenticity in Higher Popular Music Education

Tom Parkinson and Gareth Dylan Smith

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Tom Parkinson and Gareth Dylan Smith
Institute of Contemporary Music Performance, London, UK

Abstract

Popular music education is becoming firmly established as an academic field, in the UK and internationally. In order to help ensure that scholarship and practice within the field develop in reflexive and ethical ways appropriate to particular traditions, musics, people and institutional contexts, the authors advocate a discursive and iterative approach to the question of what it means to be "authentic" across higher popular music education (HPME). With reference to current research, policy and industry documentation, the authors present a discussion framed by theories concerning authenticity in the domains of the vocational and academic, employability, music, gender, and pedagogy. The authors conclude that institutions and individuals working in higher popular music education have a responsibility to place the issue of authenticity at the center of pedagogy, curriculum design, institutional strategy and disciplinary knowledge share, in order for the field to develop in ways that are beneficial to all involved.

Keywords: *popular music, education, employability, gender, pedagogy, curriculum, epistemology*

Authenticity is a complex and ambiguous term. Deriving etymologically from the Greek *authentes*, a term that refers both to "one who acts with authority" and "made by one's own hand" (Bendix 1997, 14), it has been developed conceptually by philosophers in terms of autonomy and freedom from external pressures (e.g. Sartre), and resistance to bourgeois culture and institutions (e.g. Kierkegaard). However, it has undergone substantial semantic drift across almost every sphere of public life, and in everyday usage often corresponds to the belief in "a resilient core of something rooted and genuine" (Dyndahl and Nielsen 2014, 107), and a tacit understanding of what is true or right. Inevitably, that which is authentic is understood in dilemmatic opposition to that which is inauthentic, such

that conceptions of authenticity are constructed across two essentialized and mutually-reinforcing conceptual poles. Because of this reliance on tacit understanding, and the term's accrual of meanings across a range of contexts, explicit definitions of authenticity cannot easily or satisfactorily be applied to social domains in which different understandings of authenticity can intersect. Resent research has grappled with the complexities of authenticity in the music classroom (Kallio et al. 2014) and in Scandinavian higher music education (Dyndahl and Nielsen 2014). Here, we focus on how the quest for authenticity plays out in the context of higher popular music education (hereafter, "HPME") in the United Kingdom, a burgeoning field whose growth trajectory has accompanied substantial changes in the UK higher education landscape. While HPME has been the subject of discussion and critique in the literature, as we explore below, the field has found itself only relatively recently (although increasingly) the subject of scholarly investigation. As Smith (2014) notes,

> There is a tangible sense of excitement and innovation around popular music in higher education . . . We are still trying to figure out exactly what popular music education is (in part because popular music never sits still), what purpose it serves, and what the best pedagogical models are and will be. (33–48)

This paper, then, represents an exploration of what HPME means through the frame of authenticity, and as such we hope it can helpfully contribute to both scholarly discourse and practice in this vibrant and exciting domain.

Authenticity and Popular Music

Adorno, a perennial figure within HPME curricula, presents an understanding of authenticity in music in terms of distance from Fordist economic principles of standardization and mass production (2002). While for Adorno this distinguished popular music from avant-garde "art" music, *within* popular music distinctions separating supposedly "authentic" output, created without regard for commercial gain, and fodder produced with the primary aim of commercial profit, are frequently maintained (Shuker 1997), and form the basis of what Gordon (2005) refers to as a "dilemmatic authenticity" in popular music scenes (25). At the same time, Lilliestam (1995) and Green (2002) identify an "ideology of authenticity" (Green 2002, 99)

among rock musicians for whom authenticity corresponds to "natural" expression, as opposed to that which has been nurtured through formal training or education. Meanwhile, within music subcultures authenticity has tended to be measured according to ideological and aesthetic norms, and the display of subcultural capital (Söderman 2013). Within Hip-Hop and Punk, authenticity has often been cast in opposition to mainstream capitalist society and its institutions (Söderman 2013, O'Hara 1999). Thus while Shuker's (1997) positioning of authenticity as a central gauge of value in popular music is persuasive, it must be regarded as a multivariate and unstable gauge.

These dimensions of authenticity are problematized when popular music is brought into higher education. HE policy in the UK is increasingly characterized by themes of global competitiveness, knowledge to wealth creation, and employability (e.g. DBIS 2009, 2011), measured in terms of paid graduate employment. Popular music programs operating within this policy framework must be seen to address these imperatives, advocating good economic citizenship (Brooks 2012) and inculcating values that align with the government's macroeconomic strategy (the means by which these policy values are enacted are explored later in this paper). As such, notions of authenticity that are conceived in opposition to commercialism are potentially placed at odds with program aims and learning outcomes that are devised in awareness of these policy agendas. Moreover, the establishment of popular music in higher education represents a form of institutionalization through which practices of popular music are presented as skills and knowledge to be taught and learned, which in absolute terms is antithetical to ideologies of authenticity rooted in natural expression. Also, a range of ideological and aesthetic values are encoded in the tastes, practices, and genre affiliations of musically diverse student cohorts. Some of these values may sit in contradiction to those inhering in curricula and pedagogy designed to accommodate popular music as a holistic genre, rather than a vast and internally disparate field. Such contradictions are uniquely constructed within the HPME setting, where notions of authenticity, itself a "socially constructed phenomenon" (Vannini and Williams 2009, 2; cited in Kallio et al. 2014, 3), are brought to bear (albeit often implicitly) on the perceived legitimacy of the curriculum.

In this paper we attempt to navigate the complexity surrounding authenticity in HPME in the UK, where we both hold part-time faculty positions at the Institute of Contemporary Music Performance. We draw upon a primary data set comprising unstructured interviews with five program leaders, historical program literature (including prospectuses and program handbooks) from six popular music degree programs from across the UK, state education policy documentation, and articles in the popular press. Our analyses are informed also by an informal review of program websites, identified through a Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) search conducted in April 2014. All unreferenced generalizations of field-wide characteristics (such as, for example, faculty gender bias) are informed by this primary research phase. Our principal approach is to identify and interrogate various conceptions of authenticity within, or impacting upon, HPME. We wish to emphasize, however, that in drawing out inherent tensions we do not seek to call into question the professional integrity of our colleagues within the field. Rather, we suggest that critical engagement with the conceptual scope, intersectionality, and hybridity of authenticities within the field will promote a multi-vocal (Winter 2009) HPME identity that gives space to difference, and that empowers students to self-actualize and fully realize their identities. While this study is rooted in the UK context, we anticipate that the issues discussed below will be salient in and perhaps beyond HPME internationally.

In the subsequent sections, we discuss notions of authenticity within several salient thematic areas of HPME. These are 1) vocational and academic, 2) employability, 3) music, 4) gender, and 5) pedagogy. These intersecting areas each possess and perpetuate normative practices and beliefs, which we present here as "authenticities." We suggest that the frame of authenticity is helpful for viewing the competing and complementary agendas, practices, assumptions, value systems, and expectations that together comprise the habitus of HPME.

Vocational and Academic Authenticity

Historically, popular music has developed outside of intellectual institutions, and the ideological currency of some subgenres of popular music has arguably resided in living and championing values that exist in counterpoint to institutionalized culture

(Parkinson 2013), and thus to the traditional practice of higher education institutions. However, programs in popular music are increasingly prevalent in higher education, especially at the undergraduate level (Cloonan and Hustedt 2012), and higher popular music education (HPME) has necessarily accommodated to the expectations and norms of the HE context in which it has set up home. For instance, in order to hit subject and level benchmark statements set by the Quality Assurance Agency (hereafter, QAA) that monitors standards in UK higher education (QAA 2008, 24–27), students on popular music performance programs are required to write substantial dissertations. While arguably providing a highly valuable learning opportunity, such a requirement is arguably as authentic to popular music practice as it would be for the "graduate-ness" of a philosophy degree to reside in students demonstrating the ability to write, perform, and record a stylistically accurate progressive rock album.

As a young field that has emerged overwhelmingly within former polytechnics and colleges collectively known in the UK as post-92 institutions[1] (Parkinson 2014), HPME bears a narrative of struggle for recognition alongside more established and historically academic disciplines and fields. This struggle has been played out within the British press for many years (e.g. Beaumont 2010, Michaels 2011, Tysome 2004), with articles calling into question (albeit usually implicitly) the academic legitimacy of new disciplines that jar with normative understandings of authentic academic practice. Perhaps most memorably, Thames Valley University (TVU, formerly the Polytechnic of West London, now University of West London) provoked a minor press frenzy in the late 1990s by offering "colourful" (Judd and Russell 1998, n.p.) applied courses[2] in subjects such as Indian cookery (described as "curry-making") and rock music. Along with the vice-chancellor's earring, these courses were presented implicitly as symptoms of dumbing down within higher education. HPME in particular has been, and still is, subject to this kind of media scepticism (Cloonan 2005). While more recent articles usually display playful suspicion rather than outrage, interviewees are still called upon to defend the academic validity of their now twenty-year-old field ("it's absolutely academic", Michaels 2011), and outright derision can still be found; Beaumont (2010, n.p.) writes, "As if capless tuition fees and crippling student debts won't make it hard enough for graduates leaving higher

education, there's now the possibility they may be lumbered with . . . a qualification gained from taking lessons in Lady Gaga." There are indications then that a residual suspicion exists concerning the academic legitimacy of HPME, which corresponds to a normative understanding of authentic academic practice.

Arguments concerning the academic legitimacy of HPME are inevitably tethered to perceptions of the academic legitimacy of its object of study—popular music. As touched upon briefly in the introduction to this paper, popular music has traditionally been a non-academic cultural form. This is to say that, in contrast with the musics of the Western art music tradition, it has developed largely outside of the intellectual and cultural institutions (academies) that have mediated and promoted artefacts perceived to be of high cultural and aesthetic value (Ford 2010, Tagg 2000). Indeed, in their frequent positioning of themselves in opposition to establishment norms and institutions, popular musics might even be said to be *anti*-academic. This deliberate transgression, in tandem with the academies' edification of "high art" aesthetic and performance values through a quasi-litanical (Tagg 2000) repetition of great works, has contributed to oppositional conceptions of popular and classical music that are "always polemic" (Walser 2003, 25), the former signifying autonomy from and/or rejection of, and the latter embodying, academically-sanctioned values. The drawing of popular music into the academy in the UK can therefore be seen as a twofold breach of polemic delineations, and to have destabilized understandings of what it is to be authentic in both popular music *and* the academy. Providing an international comparison, Tagg suggests that the comparative lack of "high cultural ballast" (1998, 220), and thus of canonical understandings of both aesthetic authenticity and academic legitimacy, in Sweden helped facilitate HPME's development in that country some decades prior to its beginnings in the UK (discussed in detail below).

Within this climate then, HPME program teams are arguably subject to social pressure to design curricula that satisfy normative expectations regarding the authentic nature and purpose of higher education. Furthermore, demands for academic normativity in HPME are expressed explicitly in UK policy; frameworks such as the QAA's subject benchmarks for music (QAA 2008) enshrine academic

standards and practices to which UK music programs must subscribe if they are to be classified as degree-worthy.

There are suggestions however that some HPME academic regard this normative academic authenticity as subordinate to musical or vocational authenticities. For example, Cloonan and Hulsedt's (2012) HEA-commissioned mapping exercise, for which questionnaires were sent to UK popular music degree program leaders and follow-up interviews conducted, suggests that some educators find the term "popular music studies" to be unrepresentative of the reality of what they do, with one questionnaire respondent declaring "we don't teach popular music studies, we teach popular music" (Cloonan and Hulstedt 2012, 20). Although somewhat oblique, this response can perhaps be interpreted as meaning that the respondent's program taught students to "do" popular music—that is, make it or work with it—as opposed to study it in the manner of a humanities subject. This might suggest that traditional norms of liberal scholarship were perceived by the interviewee to be a distraction from an authentic, "rooted and genuine" (Dyndahl and Nielsen 2014, 107) applied core of HPME.

It is important here to consider the nature of HPME's emergence in the UK. The field's origins are commonly located in cultural studies, sociology, ethnomusicology, traditional musicology, and other pre-existing disciplines (e.g. Cloonan 2005, Hesmondhalgh and Negus 2002, Middleton 1992). In particular, the University of Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS), which "from its inception in 1963 legitimised the study of popular culture within UK academe" (Cloonan 2005, 78), is seen as an incubator in which the field germinated in the UK. The legacies of these disciplines are clearly in evidence in the theoretical elements of popular music degree curricula (see Cloonan and Hulstedt's 2012 module Venn diagram, 9). Rarely, however, have the developmental narratives of the applied, vocational strand of higher popular music education been afforded comparable attention. Some of the latter stake a claim to having pioneered higher popular music education in the United Kingdom, yet make no reference to the above disciplines. For example, one such narrative begins[3] in the 1980s in a cluster of private West London colleges (Guitar Institute, Basstech, and Drumtech) offering the

first programs in popular music performance (Cloonan 2005). The aims of these programs were unambiguously vocational:

> [we are] a vocational trade school aimed at providing guitarists with the highest standard of instruction in all styles of modern guitar playing and an awareness of the roles of the guitarist in the music industry (Guitar Institute 1991, 10)

Faculty and students from these colleges went on to develop or teach on programs across the United Kingdom at Post-'92 universities and private colleges, where some still work (e.g. ACM 2014, ICMP 2014, UWL 2014), and where the vocational emphases endure; Smith (2013b, 193) cites a director, shareholder, and program leader at London's Institute of Contemporary Music Performance (formerly the Guitar Institute), referring to a "pedagogy of employability" as the underpinning rationale for teaching and learning on these programs. Thus this model mirrors the traditional conservatoire model, in which student musicians are nurtured to attain professional status (Ford 2010, Perkins 2013, 223), in what Dickson and Duffy (2013, 207) refer to as the "proto-professional environment of the conservatoire."

An alternative narrative begins in the Vice Chancellor's office at the newly established University of Westminster (formerly the Polytechnic of Central London) in early 1993, where a young team of musicians, academics, and entrepreneurs pitched a proposal for the country's first applied Commercial Music program (Cloonan 2005, Parkinson 2014), in response to what they perceived as the lack of commercial music degree provision in the UK:

> At that time if you wanted to do anything with popular music you had to go up to Scotland [for] a certificate course, which was very inconvenient because the record labels are all in London. [So] We said [to Westminster] "do you do any music?" [They said] "Don't do any music at all." [We said] "Do you want to do a pop music degree?" And that's how it started. And so _____ went and gave a presentation to the Vice Chancellor . . . and we were given the permission to get validated and recruit the students within eight months. We started in January 1993 . . . co-wrote the degree between us . . . validated in May. (Former program leader, University of Westminster's BA Commercial Music)

This model also spread across the United Kingdom with faculty migration and resource sharing:

> If you look at the way pop music courses have developed, everybody
> knows everybody else, and has worked with or for somebody else.
> [And] it's a function of the way the structures within Higher Education
> work, because you have . . . benchmark standards, and . . . the QAA
> which are breathing down the back of your neck . . . , so people will look
> at other courses and say, well that seems to work, and pinch copies of
> the courses and find out how it's done, . . . so I think if you were able to
> look at it course by course, . . . then you'd probably find that there's a
> lot that's very common to all of them. (Former program leader,
> University of Westminster's BA Commercial Music)

In the case of Westminster's narrative, an interviewee in Parkinson's (2014) study suggested that the non-applied, liberal-type content was initially included with the express purpose of satisfying external expectations of academic practice, rather than addressing an internally identified need:

> There was no question in my mind that the sociology strand was taken
> somewhat as an essential thing to make it into a degree rather than
> something anyone would have wanted by choice. (Founding program
> team member, University of Westminster BA Commercial Music)

In the case of the West London colleges' model, no such content was included until the programs—hitherto diplomas and certificates—became degree-bearing (Guitar Institute 1991, ICMP 2006, 2009). In short, there are many such concurrent narratives within HPME in the UK, each traceable to different geneses, some liberal and some vocational. Among the current provision however, it is rare to find programs that can be neatly ascribed to one or other side of a liberal/vocational binary. Instead most programs represent a confluence of liberal and vocational models, and notwithstanding clear and often explicit biases, curricula tend to comprise a mixture of practical, critical, and vocational content (Cloonan and Hulstedt 2012).

This confluence of the liberal and the vocational can be considered in the context of two processes: what Elzinga (1985) terms *epistemic drift* in societal demand away from pure knowledge towards utilitarian knowledge, and in the other direction, what Blume (1985, cited in Becher and Trowler 2001) identifies as an *intellectualising shift* in applied disciplines away from their practical foundations and towards more theoretical curricula. Becher and Trowler (2001) suggest that these processes are contingent upon disciplines' "modes of genesis" (171), of which they identify three: internal genesis, where disciplines emerge from specialist

interests in other disciplines; external genesis, where disciplines are created in response to societal demand for certain types of knowledge; and external stimulation, where existing disciplines are reconfigured towards societal demand. Applying this conceptual framework to HPME is helpful in understanding some of the epistemic tensions inhering within the field, and the conceptions of authenticity to which they correspond; we might consider the three narratives presented above within this framework. According to the common PMS narrative, the field has developed from an internal genesis within liberal disciplines (such as cultural studies), and has become more vocational as a result of epistemic drift in UK education policy (see Employability, below). This understanding was suggested in one program leader interviewee's comments relating to curriculum development at their institution over the past decade:

> [There's] this need now to feel that we are preparing students for careers once they graduate, and there wasn't that concession [before]. There are some colleagues who think the university trend these days is to become more of a training ground for future employment, and they're not happy about that because they feel that that's not what the university's job is. (UK popular music degree program leader)

According to vocationally-focussed narratives, however, an external genesis can be seen to have occurred when institutions, such as the aforementioned West London colleges and the University of Westminster, sought to respond to societal demand for vocational popular music education. Subsequently however, subject both to enshrined academic regulations (e.g. QAA 2008) and to normative expectations of academic practice, the discipline has arguably undergone an intellectualizing shift towards incorporating theoretical content absent from earlier curricula (this is suggested through a comparative analysis of Guitar Institute 1991 and ICMP 2006, 2013 curricula). Therefore, from an understanding of current taught provision as a convergence of liberal and vocational narratives, the field as a whole might be seen as caught in the sway of these contrapuntal processes, driven by extrinsic and intrinsic pressures to configure the field towards competing notions of authentic educational purpose. In devising curricula and program aims, program teams must negotiate these pressures and situate their programs in relation to applied-pure (Biglan 1973)

and other continua. The current breadth of contrast in programs' positioning can be observed in program literature. For example:

> Your studies here will benefit from a rich variety of philosophical and aesthetic theories, ranging from disciplines such as psychoanalysis and critical theory to current issues of identity. We do not just aim to teach you 'music history' at Liverpool; we want you to interrogate the historical foundations that others take for granted. (University of Liverpool's BA Popular Music)

And, on the other hand:

> Developed in response to industry, the focus is on a rapidly developing modern music business and the exciting opportunities brought about by new media. The course is structured around key skills and business modules. (University of the West of Scotland's BA Commercial Music)

The first example displays a distinctly liberal emphasis, drawing on established traditions in the humanities and social sciences and, in the manner of soft-pure disciplines, encouraging critical appraisal and dispute over consensus (Becher and Trowler 2001). In contrast, the second is starkly vocational, with an emphasis on utilitarian knowledge ("key skills") gauged in response to industry demand. While these examples illustrate emphatic positions rather than absolute ones (each program features some content that conforms to the other side of the liberal/vocational binary), they can nonetheless be seen to correspond to very different conceptions of academic purpose. As the various interviewee comments above suggest, in keeping with the findings of previous studies (e.g. Kreber 2009, Becher and Trowler 2001), shifts in the balance of these emphases can be provoked by external pressures and epistemic trends, and can lead to feelings of discomfort or suspicion among faculty who feel that the authentic purpose of the field may be in jeopardy.

This brings to the fore the issue of how authenticity is understood in relation to contemporary sociocultural conditions. Kalio et al. (2014) discuss how the proponents of what Small (1998) terms the *authenticity movement* (116) root the authenticity of music education in terms of historically informed performance, in an attempt to provide certainty in an unstable and changing world. They relate this to Bauman's (2000) concept of liquid modernity, which describes the present sociocultural conditions of "flexibility, instability, impermanence [and]

transformation" (Kallio et al. 2014) that in contrast to progressivist modernism have no clear end point, and consider whether "the current sociocultural climate posit[s] new . . . challenges to the fundamental values and goals that have thus far guided the authenticity movement in music education" (2014, 5). Kallio et al. (2014) consider this in terms of multiculturalism and globalization, but do not consider the socio-political climate of neoliberalism as impacting on the authenticity question. We feel this is important. Delanty (2003) suggests that neoliberalism—broadly the entrusting of societal progression to market forces—is symptomatic of a destabilising of the epistemic order and foundational values brought about by postmodernism, which has "given intellectual legitimation to relativism" (74). In a relativist world where foundational values have ceased to hold axiomatic authority, neoliberalism presents a means of restoring order to social life according to a logical schema. Within the neoliberal schema, the concern for authenticity in education can be reconfigured towards preparing students for the "real world" of paid employment. Authenticity, then, can correspond to ideological and practical proximity to the professional context.

Authenticities of Employability

The intersection of traditionally academic and vocational authenticities discussed above is further complicated by differences in interpretations of and approaches to the concept of employability. Notwithstanding the semantic scope of the term, acknowledged in the second edition of the Higher Education Academy's *Pedagogy for Employability paper* (2012, 1), in the last decade employability has become a dominant concept through which the value and purpose of higher education has been rationalized in official discourse in the U.K. At the same time, the value of knowledge has been couched in terms of economic utility; White Papers (DFES 2003, DBIS 2009, 2011) and other official documents (e.g. Browne 2010) commissioned by successive governments have displayed distinctly techno-rational, economy-focussed conceptions of higher educational purpose, rooted in notions of "knowledge to wealth creation" (DFES 2003) and "skilling" the population to compete, on behalf of the nation, in the global marketplace:

> Graduates . . . add to the nation's strength in the global
> knowledge based economy. (Browne 2010)

> [Universities should] look again at how they work with business . . . to promote better teaching, employer sponsorship, innovation and enterprise. (DBIS 2011, 39)

Employability was cemented as an official imperative in 2010 in the UK, with the request, issued in a letter from Alan Langland of the Higher Education Funding Council for England (Langland 2010), for all degree programs in England in receipt of state funding to publish an "employability statement," detailing the professional opportunities that graduates of a program may expect to encounter. This was supplemented in 2012 by the further requirement of a "Key Information Set," a summary of hard statistical data relating to graduate employment and salaries. As such, a presumption that applicants make their decisions regarding university education on the basis of employment prospects and earning potential is now embedded into the applicant-facing literature of every undergraduate degree program in UK higher education. While other dimensions to the value of higher education, such as cultural edification, are argued within policy, these are muted in comparison (and ultimately there are no similar requirements for institutions to assert programs' cultural value on their webpages).

Thus program teams are obliged to subscribe, outwardly at least, to a conception of educational value traceable to a dominant neoliberal meta-policy that totemizes global competition, in which "citizenship is narrowed to the demands of consumerism" (Giroux 2007, 25), where neoliberalism is so pervasive that "it [is] now no more than common sense that the only way to increase the common good [is] by maximizing individual freedom in the market" (Hewison 2014, 3), "leading to the neoliberal utopian notion that paradise amounts to a world of voracity and avarice without restrictions" (Giroux 2014, 13). To decline to do so would be to jeopardize funding. In a softer sense, the prominent employability agenda has exerted a pressure on program teams to focus curricula explicitly towards the acquisition of professional skills. This is not always unwelcome in HPME; one respondent in Parkinson's (2014) study spoke of "valu[ing] the opportunity it present[ed] to be explicit," and as discussed earlier, since the field's emergence in the 1990s much HPME provision has tended towards vocational, applied emphases. Nonetheless, it is arguably something of a "forced hand."

Within the current climate, then, HPME in the UK is presented and justified as a means to gain access to a professional world of sustained employment and income. Indeed, it is possible to view (one of) the role(s) of HPME as analogous to a role formerly undertaken by the now troubled traditional music industry (IFPI 2014), which during its heyday would sign (hopefully) up-and-coming acts, nurturing them through a developmental phase of perhaps several years and albums before they became fully fledged, commercial acts. While such an analogy is not without tensions, a similar role has been played by traditional conservatoires for far longer (Ford 2010, Gulbenkian Foundation 1978, Perkins 2013, 229), and so perhaps affords HPME a modicum of authenticity as a paradigm. While the proto-professional narrative is not necessarily illegitimate in an empirical sense—many programs report high graduate employment figures in the music industry—it arguably jars with ideological understandings of authenticity in some (sub)genres of popular music; lyrics celebrating emancipation from, expressing loathing towards, or cautioning against regular employment abound in popular music. Moreover, formal training towards professional skills is anathema to the "ideology of authenticity" that Green (2002, 99) identifies among rock musicians for whom authenticity corresponds to natural, untrained ability. Furthermore, given that the focus on employability at the micro level of degree programs corresponds (directly through the application of policy) to macro level economic policy, HPME might be seen to have been co-opted into the mechanisms of the state. Such an analysis is perhaps sensationalist, and is certainly crude, but it nonetheless draws into consideration that the characterizing ideologies of many popular music subgenres, such as punk (O'Hara 1999), and indie (Huq 2006, Jones 2013) run counter to structurally-centralized capitalism, and that proponents of these genres frequently position themselves in opposition both to mainstream hegemonies (Negus 1997, O'Hara 1999, Smith 2013b) and to institutional education, perceived as an arm of the former (Söderman 2013).

Kreber (2009) suggests that in seeking to reconcile their conceptions of authentic educational purpose with demands for employability, academics can experience a sense of schism. While this was suggested among some HPME academics in Parkinson's (2014) study, others were committed to a conception of

higher educational purpose that corresponded overwhelmingly to hard skills acquisition. In all cases however, participants stressed the need to be honest with students and applicants regarding the purpose of their programs. For example:

> I think there's a need for authentication [now] people are spending so much money because we can get you a job. When actually that's a falsehood. We'd be lying to the students. Why do they need [a degree]? Just go and do it. [But] if you want to know what it means to be a critical, thinking, adaptive musician . . . because you've had this higher educational experience, then we do that.

[and]

> Every year as admissions tutor I see about twenty . . . applications of people who've started their music degree somewhere else, and often use the phrase, "[I was] sold a pup," or . . . "I feel I was misled about the nature of the course."

In these examples, authenticity arguably corresponds to honesty and openness about academic intentions and curricula emphases. Such advocacy of openness is, we suggest later in this paper, crucial to establishing communities of practice in which multiple authenticities can coexist.

Musical Authenticity

In terms of (sub)genre, in the absence of BA (Hons) Disco, BMus Speed Metal or other such degrees HPME is inevitably somewhat one-size-fits-all. While in practice a bias towards guitar-based ensembles is common across HPME provision in the UK, genre preferences are rarely declared explicitly in program literature, and pluralist curricula are typical. As such, whatever HPME students' individual tastes, performance styles, or genre affiliations are, they are likely to engage as performers, musicologists, and sociologists with a range of genres. Such a pluralistic approach chimes with the ideals of liberal education (arguably more so than canon-oriented classical conservatoire education, Smith 2013a). However, it arguably precludes immersive, lifestyle-based approaches to learning and enculturation, which are central to understandings of authenticity within some cultures of popular music, notably hip-hop (Söderman 2013, Snell and Söderman 2014) and punk (O'Hara 1999). Stockholm's BoomTown Music Experience (BTME) has sought to facilitate such an immersive learning experience, offering bands twenty-four-hour access to a rehearsal room, and supervision selected on the basis of the bands' self-identified

needs. Karlsen (2010) identifies in BoomTown's ostentatiously autonomous, informal pedagogy a concern for authenticity, which at student level is perceived in opposition to a prescriptive alternative that she suggests is imagined, rather than empirically defined. (We understand "informal learning" in the way set out by Green (2008a, 10) to include such characteristics as learning by ear, peer-directed, self-directed, group learning, and learning in "haphazard, idiosyncratic and holistic ways.")

Interpretations of authenticity contingent upon a dualism of formal and informal learning have been problematized elsewhere, such as in the work of Folkestad (2006, 135), who proposes instead a continuum of conceptions of learning, and Smith (2013a, 26), who describes popular musicians' "hybridized learning practices." Dyndahl and Nielsen (2014) suggest that pedagogical strategies based on an understanding of informal learning as an authentic counterpoint to formal learning are, in their absolutes, self-negating, since to argue for autonomous learning is to argue the music college out of existence:

> The question is to what extent one can sacrifice didactic principles on the altar of perceived authenticity and still remain an institution that has obvious interests in ensuring that students choose formal education. (Dyndahl and Nielsen 2014, 113)

Parkinson (2013) suggests that a preoccupation with implementing informal learning in music education risks giving rise to a conservationist discourse, in which supposedly authentic popular music practices are treated as endangered artefacts to be protected from the looming threat of transmissional pedagogy. On the other hand, however, Smith and Shafighian (2013, 257) point to an alternative preservationist discourse, wherein at one London college "the curricula of the BMus (Hons) and its 'feeder' program . . . have at their core the required accurate replication of repertoire from a faculty-devised canon of songs in various popular 'styles,'" and that these are taught in a formal, transmission-style manner. The latter observation is a reminder that the process of curriculum design is necessarily one of inclusion and exclusion (Parkinson 2013); curriculum design teams are charged with evaluating potential content according to pre-determined aims, making comparative judgements and ultimately deciding what is to be taught and what is to be set aside. In the case of performance repertoire, this can lead to the emergence of canons of works or artists

that embody certain musical values, even where the notion of canon is resisted (Parkinson 2013).

This canon-orientated pedagogy is redolent of traditional, classical-focussed higher music education in which "the living and deceased participate" (Nettl 1995, 2) and "great composers rule the society of the Music Building" (Nettl 1995, 12) by representing the aesthetic authority to which all practice corresponds. As such, preservationist, repertoire-focussed modes of HPME can be seen to display a foundational understanding of authenticity that corresponds to aesthetic proximity to an established, exemplary ideal. However, whereas in the Western art music tradition a clear (if not absolute) delineation exists between performer and composer, and the performer's responsibility is typically understood to lie in faithful fulfillment of the composer's intentions, in some popular musics these practices are more commonly integrated and innovation on the performer's part is often expected by audiences (Shuker 1997, identifies the dual performer-composer status as a kitemark of authenticity that distinguishes (authentic) rock musicians from (inauthentic) pop musicians). In rewarding "accurate replication" (Smith and Shafighian 2013, 257) and thus implicitly discouraging transgression, there is a risk that such an approach in HPME inhibits the development and expression of a performer's individual musical voice. As such, foundational musical authenticities are potentially pitted against subjective musical authenticities.

Adorno (1973), meanwhile, rejects understandings of authenticity that rest on the notion of the individual subject's sovereignty, arguing that authority over authenticity is shared across subject and object. It might accordingly be argued that affording absolute authority over authenticity to the creative subject (here, the student musician) contradicts the aim of preparing students for engagement in a wider social, intersubjective world, not to mention problematizing the notion of assessment criteria. It should be stated also that student satisfaction ratings for, and feedback regarding, the aforementioned programs are highly positive,[4] suggesting the achievement of an authenticity of self-actualization among student subjects (Beaumont 2009); as we emphasize below, this is an authenticity to which all in HPME should surely aspire.

Gender and authenticity

According to normative understandings of authenticity, some might argue that to be authentically gendered in popular music is to be masculine. Gould (2007) argues that the female is "invisible" in music education. She is not talking about popular music education, but popular music is surely at least as hetero-normative and even misogynistic as the genres and styles that have occupied the majority of pages in music education literature (see e.g. Green 1997, Whiteley 2000, Abramo 2009, 2011a, 2011b, Björck 2010, Tobias 2014). Gould concerns herself in this instance with the US high school tradition of marching band music, itself of questionable "authenticity," being the product of a need, driven by (men working in) commerce, to sell and to manufacture scale instruments that had faded to obsolescence in everyday US society (Mark and Gary 2007, 306). Suffice to say that masculinity is the norm, and female musicians are therefore gendered in relation and in subservience to masculinity. Pravodelov (2014) discusses "the fact that the force [of masculine domination] is symbolic—cultivated as disposition" (11). Suzuki (2014) explains:

> These gender norms . . . are so naturalized that we often are not aware of them. Yet, we are constantly performing gender based on these norms. When some female instrumentalists say that they never think of gender while playing or composing music, they are still performing gender by staying aloof from assumptions of the gender norms of people, music genre, and instrumentation. (5)

This forms what Bourdieu (2001, 54) terms a "historical unconscious." Institutions of HPME are dominated by male leaders and male teachers. Smith (2015, n.p.) explores one institution through the lens of Bourdieu's (2001) "masculine domination" framework, finding that "one has only to look at the dominating forces across HPMPE and popular music education more generally to see the white male hegemony." Using Bourdieu's analogy (2001, 92), Smith (2015, n.p.) further demonstrates that the masculine "right hand" of leadership and management is predictably male, while the supporting (feminine) "left hand" of administration organizations is female-dominated. Thus the whole system is not only masculinized, but utterly, inescapably, and, even invisibly, masculine—ensuring and institutionalizing female subordination, organizationally, and in the musics (and cultures of the musics) taught and learned.

HPME privileges the masculine and the male as a product of its history in Western civilization, which has routinely subjugated women. McClintock (1997, 6) convincingly argues that "a theory of gender power" is critical to an understanding of imperialism; and while we would not argue that HPME is consciously "imperialistic," it is worth nothing that, in this postcolonial age (Young 2003), "Western societies, while attempting to be ethnically inclusive and pluralistic often perpetuate ethnic musical divisions" (Smith 2013a, 124), which are also inherently gendered. Mahon (2004, 204) has demonstrated that to be a rock musician is to perform male whiteness, which is an appropriated and re-packaged black male authenticity. This raises very serious questions about how women (that is, half of all people) can be "authentic" in popular music. Being authentically gendered in popular music and in HPME means being "othered" (Coates 1997, 61). Gender and its habitus (Bourdieu 2001) are thus obstacles to an authentic music education experience—for women, therefore also for men, and for people whose gender does not conform to the convenient normative binary (Butler 2004, 42).

Popular music and its various styles have often been mythologized as instances and movements of rebellion or revolution (a narrative critiqued by Negus 1997). While problematic, this is a notion supported by the disruptive potential afforded to women in the punk movement of the 1970s (Reddington 2012). Punk performance is perhaps especially difficult to justify for inclusion in an honors degree program, owing to its anti-virtuosic ethos and stance—a problematic pedagogical position, when the music's authenticity lies arguably in its very simplicity (Moore 1998, 19; Wright 2014). Punk is noticeably absent from the prescribed performance curriculum at the authors' institution. While we do not contend that this is part of a deliberate gender conspiracy, it presents challenges to institutionalized masculine norms around popular music, performance, and musical worth. Emphasizing punk in HPME could be enabling, empowering, and authenticating for women.

We have noted (above) that many institutions teach popular music as rock-based (in terms of the instrumentation), with a curriculum and staff that perpetuate gender norms in these styles. Smith (2015, n.p.) notes, for instance, that, at the college where he conducted his research, "of the Institute's 109 teachers, 20 (18%)

are female. Of the 20 female teaching staff, 14 teach singing, four teach songwriting, and two are specialists in non-instrumental-teaching capacities." Thus women are perhaps strongly discouraged from applying for programs of study. Data are not publicly available for student gender representation at this institution, but informal observations by the authors suggest that the staff proportions are roughly replicated in the student body, although there is a more equal gender split on the BA Songwriting [*sic*]. Leadership in HPME also appears to be weighted towards the male (Smith 2015, n.p.), reflecting the popular music sector as a whole (Green 1997, Leonard 2007, Smith 2013a, Whiteley 2000). Women occupying leadership roles in popular music education is thus wholly "inauthentic" to the gendered tradition of popular music and to the HPME sector.

Snell (2007, 72–3) cites Clifton (1976) when explaining how music performers and listeners each "possess" the music that they experience. "Possession" in this sense is akin to the delineated meaning that we find in and through music (Green 2008b), and is thus inseparable from people's realization of their identities (Smith 2013a). Many commercially successful acts in popular music (e.g. David Bowie, Annie Lennox, Jessie J) have challenged what Butler (2004, 42) refers to as gender's misleadingly simplistic "coherent binary." Individuals (or groups) performing outside the traditional boundaries of binary masculinity and femininity are under-represented in the scholarship on HPME, and in curricula at institutions (Smith 2015, n.p.). By perpetuating gender norms in their narrow canon, institutions are not permitting the realization of identities (Smith 2013a) in anything other than the most narrowly prescribed male-female binary forms. Thus, institutions of popular music education can be perceived as inauthentic to the music that they teach. Institutions, however, may thus be perpetuating their own inter-institutional authenticity, free from the shackles of real-world musical authenticity. This is, however, a type of authenticity that we argue has no place in an ethically sound HPME paradigm. It is encouraging that, at the time of writing, NAMHE (the National Association for Music in Higher Education) is conducting research into gender balance in leadership in higher music education in the UK, with a view to rewarding institutions that take steps to address gender equality in the workplace (NAMHE 2014).

Pedagogic authenticity

So far we have discussed some dimensions of authenticity identified in HPME literature and practice. In this section, we come to focus on pedagogy, the domain in which these many dimensions intersect, but which is itself also characterized by potentially divergent conceptions of authenticity. Mantie (2013, 335) reminds us that "the word *pedagogy* generally connotes the existence of an autonomous skill/knowledge domain," widely accepted to be "theory of teaching-and-learning" (Bruner 1996, 65). Thus, it was striking that, at the 2014 Workshop on Popular Music Pedagogy organized by IASPM UK and the Higher Education Academy, there was only one paper that addressed or proposed any such theory (Kirkman 2014). In conducting the research for his recent article, Mantie (2013, 335) noted that "I encountered the actual phrase *popular music pedagogy* only twice in the entire literature review." Mantie's review was limited to a small number of journals, so missed some discussion of the term, for instance in papers by Hebert (2010, 2011). Hebert's commentary tends, however, to be rather general, offering such insights as "popular music pedagogy tends to emphasize . . . that creating original songs can actually be an approachable and empowering activity that everybody can and should learn" (Hebert 2011, 13). Other papers and books published refer explicitly to pedagogy in popular music (e.g. Green 2008a, 2014, Parkinson 2013, Tobias 2014) and in HPME (e.g. Carey and Lebler 2012, Lebler 2007, 2008, Smith 2013b, 2014, Pulman 2009, Tobias 2014), that discuss especially assessment in HPME, but the scarcity of sources uncovered by Mantie seems indicative of a deficit worthy of closer attention.

The relative vacuum in literature on popular music pedagogy, particularly in the higher education context, is perhaps especially striking when compared with the plethora of literature on (and full-time positions available in—especially in the US) piano pedagogy, string pedagogy and woodwind pedagogy (for example). McClary and Walser (1999, 278) observe that "the music of one's own culture often seems completely transparent"—the same is perhaps also a trait of (under-problematized) teaching, learning and assessment in HPME. Pedagogy in popular music requires development, analysis and critique. Following Green (2002, 103–4, 187–8), we argue that an essential component of (and thus an important next step in) that process is a

discussion of authenticity, to help educators and scholars to benefit as fully as possible from the "potential goldmine of approaches to music teaching and learning" (Green 2002, 104). An authentic pedagogy must also take account of other authenticities such as those discussed in this paper, for it is inevitably the product and the institutional (as well as individual) response to the other authenticities around it, and from which it must emerge. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1977, 19) explain:

> In real learning situations . . . recognition of the legitimacy of the act of transmission, that is, of the [pedagogic authority] of the transmitter, conditions the reception of the information and, even more, the accomplishment of the transformative action capable of transforming that information into a mental formation (training).

Effectiveness in teaching, learning and assessment is contingent upon how these activities are viewed and in the contexts in which they occur.

Authentic learning practices in popular music risk being misconstrued, reified, or overstated. An example is Snell's assertion (2007, 168) that "seldom does the end result or performance of a piece of music . . . hold as much worth for popular musicians as does the process of rehearsing/playing and/or composing together in group situations." Such a notion calls into question the entire *raison d'être* of the commercial live music industry, which arguably subsists almost completely on (at least perceived) excellence in performance (of one form or another). Snell's contention also runs counter to the instrumentalism inherent in the employability-focused pedagogies referred to above (Smith 2013b, 193), and which is characteristic of many institutions and programs in HPME. Lucy Green's (2002) celebrated text on *How Popular Musicians Learn* provides a further case in point; despite the clear focus of the book and its title, as Mantie (2013, 347) notes, it has been read as a manifesto for the inclusion of popular music in schools. This in turn has led to, or has at least been paralleled by, a movement for spreading popular music instruments to school populations across the United States, exemplified by the Little Kids Rock and Modern Band (Little Kids Rock 2014). In light of this, a key focus for the field of HPME (as well as popular music education more broadly) is to ensure a clarity of (re) focus on pedagogy.

Students in higher music education are at a critical time in their lives and development as musicians (Bennett 2013, Hallam and Gaunt 2012, Smith 2013c, Weller 2012). As such it seems prudent to consider the strong connections identified between learning and identity—the being and becoming of students (Green 2002, 216), what Bennett (2013) has usefully discussed with reference to the "possible selves" model, developed by Markus and Nurius (1986). Smith (2013a) develops Green's work on learning-identity symbiosis into the model of the Snowball Self and identity "realization" (Smith 2013a, 15–24), that has been proposed as a way forward for thinking about authentic pedagogy in popular music (Pscheidt 2014). We urge teachers and leaders in the field also to proceed with an appreciation of and open-mindedness to the "hybridized" learning model (Smith 2013a, 26). Smith and Shafighian (2013, 264) advocate for "recognition of the need for music educators to be aware of the[se] hybridized learning practices engaged in by popular and contemporary musicians, and the necessary flux (conceptually and in practice) of constructs such as formal, non-formal and informal learning experiences."

As pedagogy develops in HPME, it may be helpful to reflect on a model of creativity proposed by Hickey and Webster (2001, cited in Smith and Shafighian 2013, 260). They frame creativity as possessing four dimensions the ("4 Ps"): person, process, product and place. It may prove equally fruitful to consider these as four central aspects in exploring pedagogy, thus:

> **Person**—Who is doing the teaching, learning and assessment, and what is their enculturated identity? What is, or to whom do they ascribe "pedagogic authority"? (Bourdieu and Passeron 1977, 19)

> **Process**—How does an institution, program, curriculum or lecturer (or student) work to enable and empower students?

> **Product**—What is the end-game? Is this about meeting QAA benchmarks (QAA 2008), certificating graduates, or about self-actualization (Beaumont 2009) and possible selves? (Bennett 2013, Markus and Nurius 1986)

> **Place**—Where does the teaching and learning occur? Are facilities being used as potentially transformative, liminal "spaces"? (Thwaites 2013, Tuan 1977, 179)

These categories allow for, and even require, consideration of (at least) the other authenticities outlined in this paper—the vocational and academic, employment, musical, and gender authenticities. Balancing these four Ps of pedagogy presents a potentially productive way to begin to establish a pedagogy or pedagogies that are authentic to (institutionalized) popular music in higher education. While few established pedagogical models exist, the field of HPME is now at a critical juncture, with little to undo, and uncharted territory to map with an aspiration to authenticity as our guide.

Conclusions: Construing authenticity in HPME

Popular music programs and institutions are arenas in which various authenticities of student, music, institution, teacher etc. do not merely co-exist in a shifting compromise of intentionalities and understandings, but are constructs that require and are comprised of merged, shared, and relentlessly negotiated, hybrid authenticities. As Thwaites (2013) writes, "authenticities of music, institution, history, teacher etc. do not simply exist alongside each other; they are also unified when they meet in the intimacy of their mutuality" (126). Green (2008b, 51) explains that musical authenticity is construed, and that music works in the construction of authenticities, through music's "delineated meaning" (which works alongside and in symbiosis with music's "inherent meaning"). The acceptance of "delineated meaning" at its most basic acknowledges that "music must mean something apart from only itself" (Green 2008b, 41). In terms of HPME, we have argued, this means that musical meaning is contingent on various psychological, cultural, social and ideological factors that collide and coalesce in institutions. Thwaites (2013, 125) helpfully describes the Heidegger-ian notion of "Dasein," in which musicians account for the concept of the conscious self as being present in a given space, a common place of realization—for instance, the music college or department. Thwaites (2013, 125) emphasizes that "it is region and place that give music meaning." In this context, authenticity in HPME is, creates, and nurtures shared, merged authenticities. This synergy creates a new authenticity that is shared across HPME, as well as respective authenticities distinct to each institution and each pedagogical transaction.

Educators and curriculum designers could benefit from viewing creation of authenticity in the way proposed by Thwaites, in order to focus on use of the institution and its works for the benefit of all—a wholly creative process. Smith and Shafighian (2013, 258) recommend "transformation of that place [epistemologically, as well as in practice] through a creative pedagogical approach to music learning, into a more liminal 'space' (Tuan 1977), brimming with creative potential" for emerging authenticities. As they further suggest, "the onus remains on educators and administrators to be creative at institutional and program levels in creating and curating," and celebrating multivariate, shared authenticities in music and music-learning (Smith and Shafighian 2013, 263)—this is what Thwaites (2013, 125) refers to as "renewal through the enactment of the self-worldly Dasein."

We argue further that this advocacy should extend beyond the micro level of programs and institutions and take place also at an inter-institutional, meso level. Open knowledge shared across the field will go some way towards establishing a collegial critical mass, enabling educators, students, institutions, and the field as a whole respond to external pressures, internal anxieties and changing cultures confidently and assertively. Writing of internal value conflicts between academics and academic managers, Winter (2009, 128) suggests "generative conversation" through regular timetabled forums and online discussion groups as "a necessary first step towards promoting a multi-vocal institutional identity [and to] surfac[e] and explor[e] competing *and* unifying values" (Winter 2009, 128, his emphasis). Establishing such forums for generative conversation at micro and meso level in HPME would help to promote multi-vocal institutional and disciplinary identities that give space to multivariate, hybrid authenticities. There are encouraging signs that formalized generative conversation is already taking place (e.g. at conferences held by the Higher Education Academy in 2014, by the Institute of Contemporary Music Performance in 2010 and 2012, and the Suncoast Music Education Research Symposium in 2011), but more is needed. In particular, the lack of a dedicated HPME journal is increasingly conspicuous as the field matures.

Finally, we wish to argue that generative conversation surrounding the concept of authenticity should be facilitated in the classroom to support what Magnola (1999) terms *constructive developmental pedagogy* (CDP) (cited in Kreber

2009, 176), promoting students' "self-authorship" (175). If we believe, as Dewey did, that "education is" [or can be] "the fundamental method of social progress and reform," then it is arguably incumbent on the HPME sector to embrace continued "critical and reflexive engagement with the diverse and changing present" (Smith 2013c, 34). Thus can we more ethically aspire to construe "the school (or college) as an institution that guides students towards increasing agency" (Partti 2012, 88). The HPME community has an opportunity and a responsibility in this moment to move iteratively and mindfully towards an epistemology of authenticity in its institutionalized beliefs and practices.

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Notes

[1] The Further and Higher Education Act 1992 led to the conferring of full university status onto (typically) vocationally-focussed polytechnics and colleges. The terms 'pre-92' and 'post-92' have since been used to distinguish between these institutions and those that held university status prior to 1992.

[2] In the UK, education programs are commonly referred to also as "courses." Courses (in US parlance) within programs are usually called "modules' in the UK context.

[3] That is, the UK chapter of the narrative begins. The colleges' approach was modeled directly on the Guitar Institute of Technology in California where its founders had studied (source: interviews with two founding faculty members).

[4] We are prohibited from publishing these statistical data, so can only summarize.

About the Authors

Tom Parkinson is a Lecturer in Higher Education and Academic Practice at the University of Kent, and a member of faculty at the Institute of Contemporary Music Performance in London. He has previously taught in secondary schools and at universities including the University of Reading, the University of Westminster and Istanbul Kültür Üniversitesi. He has composed music for television and computer games, and has performed across the UK and Asia as a guitarist for a number of bands and ensembles. His doctoral research at the University of Reading's Institute of Education focused on the values underpinning practice on popular music degree programmes in the UK. He has presented his research at conferences in the UK, Poland, Norway and Turkey, and has previously published in the areas of higher music education, instrumental teaching, cultural value and Turkish protest music.

Gareth Dylan Smith has played drums in popular music for over 25 years, in various styles ranging from contemporary jazz through musical theatre, indie rock and pop to progressive rock, metal, hip-hop and Celtic punk. He has learned formally, informally and non-formally, in the hybridized manner characteristic of many in popular music. Gareth has taught from kindergarten to doctoral level, working in higher education since 2009. His teaching areas include sociology, philosophy, and gender in music and music education, research skills, dissertation supervision (undergraduate and graduate), and performance-as-research. Gareth's research interests include popular music education (especially in higher education), music making and leisure, identity, entrepreneurship, work-life-balance, embodiment in performance, authenticity, critical pedagogy, and intersections across music, education, and business. Gareth writes for the blog, Thinking About Music, and is Chair of the International Society for Music Education's Special Interest Group for Popular Music Education.