MEIEA®
MUSIC & ENTERTAINMENT INDUSTRY
EDUCATORS ASSOCIATION

Journal of the Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association

Volume 17, Number 1
(2017)

Bruce Ronkin, Editor
Northeastern University

Paul Linden, Associate Editor
Butler University

Ben O'Hara, Associate Editor (Book Reviews)
Australian College of the Arts

Published with Support
from

MIKE CURB COLLEGE of
ENTERTAINMENT and MUSIC BUSINESS
BELMONT
UNIVERSITY

The *Journal of the Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association* (the *MEIEA Journal*) is published annually by MEIEA in order to increase public awareness of the music and entertainment industry and to foster music and entertainment business research and education.

The *MEIEA Journal* provides a scholarly analysis of technological, legal, historical, educational, and business trends within the music and entertainment industries and is designed as a resource for anyone currently involved or interested in these industries. Topics include issues that affect music and entertainment industry education and the music and entertainment industry such as curriculum design, pedagogy, technological innovation, intellectual property matters, industry-related legislation, arts administration, industry analysis, and historical perspectives.

Ideas and opinions expressed in the *Journal of the Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association* do not necessarily reflect those of MEIEA. MEIEA disclaims responsibility for statements of fact or opinions expressed in individual contributions.

Permission for reprint or reproduction must be obtained in writing and the proper credit line given.

Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association
1900 Belmont Boulevard
Nashville, TN 37212 U.S.A.
www.meiea.org

The *MEIEA Journal* (ISSN: 1559-7334)
© Copyright 2017
Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association
All rights reserved

Editorial Advisory Board

Bruce Ronkin, Editor, *Northeastern University*
Paul Linden, Associate Editor, *Butler University*
Ben O'Hara, Associate Editor, *Australian College of the Arts (Collarts)*

Timothy Channell, *Radford University*
Mark J. Davis, *Entertainment Industry Management & Consulting, buzzgig.com*
Alexander Endreß, *Popakademie Baden-Württemberg*
Brian Gaber, *Florida State University*
Storm Gloor, *University of Colorado Denver*
Keith Hatschek, *University of the Pacific*
Michael Johnson, *Berklee College of Music*
Dwayne O'Brien, *Belmont University*
Patrick Preston, *Cape Cod Community College*
Quint Randle, *Brigham Young University*
Sarita Stewart, *Belmont University*
Joseph Taylor, *James Madison University*
Terry Tompkins, *Hofstra University*
Horace Alexander Young, *Santa Fe University of Art and Design*
Shawn Young, *York College of Pennsylvania*

Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association

The Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association (MEIEA®) is an international organization formed in 1979 to bring together educators with leaders of the music and entertainment industries. The primary goal of MEIEA is to facilitate an exchange of information between educators and practitioners in order to prepare students for careers in the music and entertainment industries.

In order to seek professional practical knowledge and functional strategies in education, MEIEA endeavors to:

- Provide resources for the exchange of information and knowledge about all aspects of the music and entertainment industries;
- Foster scholarly research on the music and entertainment industries as well as on music and entertainment industries education;
- Assist institutions with the development of music and entertainment industries programs and curricula;
- Facilitate interaction between the music and entertainment industries and music and entertainment industries educators and affiliated educational institutions;
- Promote student interests in the music and entertainment industries.

MEIEA is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the advancement of education in the music and entertainment industries. Institutional membership is available to institutions of higher education. In order to be considered for membership, the institution must be recognized, licensed, and/or accredited as a post-secondary educational institution.

Organizations and business entities interested in supporting the mission and activities of MEIEA are encouraged to become sponsors of MEIEA through charitable support. Support of MEIEA activities by companies, institutions, individuals, and organizations that value music and entertainment industry education is greatly appreciated by MEIEA's members. If you or your company would like to contribute to music and entertainment industry education please contact president@meiea.org.

From The Editor

Notice to Contributors

The *Journal of the Music & Entertainment Industry Educators Association* is a peer-reviewed journal devoted to all aspects of the music and entertainment industry and music and entertainment industry education. All feature articles submitted for publication go through a blind peer review by an editorial board consisting of respected scholars, teachers, and industry professionals. Submission of articles in all areas related to the music and entertainment industry and music and entertainment industry education are welcome.

Articles must be submitted in electronic format and should be sent as email attachments, preferably in Microsoft Word format. All submissions should use the normal style of citation, in conformance with the guidelines given in *The Chicago Manual of Style*. All notes should be consecutively numbered and should appear as endnotes at the conclusion of the manuscript text.

In order to facilitate blind review, the author's name must not appear on the submitted manuscript. A cover letter that clearly identifies the manuscript must be included. Complete submission guidelines may be found on the MEIEA web site.

Authors are responsible for obtaining permission for reproduction from the publishers of all copyrighted material used (musical examples, etc.).

Submissions and correspondence should be addressed to:

Bruce Ronkin
Editor, *MEIEA Journal*
journal@meiea.org
110 Churchill Hall
Northeastern University
Boston, MA 02115 U.S.A.

MEIEA Executive Board

Executive Officers

President
Storm Gloor
University of Colorado Denver

Vice President
Armen Shaomian
University of South Carolina

Secretary
Carey Christensen
California State University, Northridge

Treasurer
Clyde Rolston
Belmont University

Director of Membership
Darren Walters
Drexel University

Board Members

Cutler Armstrong
Butler University

Odie Blackmon
Middle Tennessee State University

Courtney Blankenship
Western Illinois University

Jerry Brindisi
Columbia College Chicago

Board Members (continued)

Amy Macy
Middle Tennessee State University

Melissa Wald
Middle Tennessee State University

Kim L. Wangler
Appalachian State University

Executive Directors

MEIEA Journal Editor
Bruce Ronkin
Northeastern University

Communications Director
Sarita Stewart
Belmont University

European Liaison
Henric Lindström
Linnaeus University School of Business and Economics

Australasian Liaison
Ben O'Hara
Australian College of the Arts (Collarts)

Immediate Past President

John Simson
American University

Past Presidents

John Simson (2015-2017)
Serona Elton (2011–2015)
John Kellogg (2009-–2011)
Rey Sanchez (2007–2009)
Rebecca Chappell (2003–2007)
Tim Hays (1999–2003)
Scott Fredrickson (1995–1999)
David Hibbard (1993–1995)
Janet Nepkie (1989–1993)
Michael Fink (1988–1989)
Richard Broderick (1986–1988)
James A. Progris (1984–1986)
David P. Leonard (1982–1984)
Jay Collins (1979–1982)

MEIEA Sponsors

belmont.edu/cemb

musicbiz.org

soundexchange.com

Contents

Reviews

Ben O'Hara, Associate Editor

MEIEA®

Parasocial Engagement for Musicians and Artists: A Systemic Review of Theoretical Foundations with Applications

David Herrera
Belmont University

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.1

Abstract

This study presents a systemic review of evidence-based engagement research and develops a best practices model for the online engagement of musical artists or entertainers. Findings show that online engagement is best maximized for artists and entertainers by creating online postings that contain artist authenticity, intimacy, insider commentary, and a quick response time to posts. An applied model or application is presented as best practices for online engagement, as well as the tools for building a long-term fan community.

Keywords: online engagement, artist engagement, online fan base, parasocial engagement, music industry, social media

Introduction

Social media is playing a fundamental role in creating both disruption and opportunity in the music entertainment industry. For most artists, a growing emphasis is being made to engage fans and build fan communities through online engagement (Evans 2015). The question then arises: what are the foundational variables of online engagement? What elements are shown to be the most effective, or have the best possibilities to build communities of like-minded fans? This systemic review summarizes previous theoretical foundations and derives a broader application for online engagement based on prior research—rather than anecdotal online evidence. The traditional fan-artist relationship has undergone a drastic change though social media. The ability to "engage" from person-to-person has transformed the performer-audience relationship from a static unidirectional relationship to an iterative social online relationship. This transformational change challenges the strategies that previously fueled localized, regional, and national success of an artist through traditional promotion and marketing by record labels. These distinctive competen-

cies of the record company, while still important, are now moving toward shorter life cycles based on online promotion and engagement through what is now called parasocial relationships (Christensen, Anthony, and Ross 2004; Hitt, Keats, and DeMarie 1998).

Parasocial Relationships

Early parasocial behavior was defined as a one-way relationship that consumers of media develop with media personas over time (Horton and Wohl 1956). Parasocial interaction was further defined as imaginary social relationships (Perse 1989) that mirror face-to-face relationships (Rubin and Step 2000, Schramm and Wirth 2010). Essentially, this one-way communication between fans and media personalities replicate social interactions. The relationship is developed through message cues and content that becomes somewhat pseudo-intimate to audience members (Rubin and McHugh 1987, Rubin and Step 2000). This process involves identifying with social cues created by lyrics, onstage banter, or online messaging that cohesively connects the artist with the fan (Auter and Palmgreen 2000, Kassing and Sanderson 2009). Online users relate and identify to those with similar interests, values, and personality constructs as themselves—developing an affinity or identification with the celebrity persona and fan community where the fans believe they "know" the artist or each other in the community (Auter and Palmgreen 2000). Therefore, although communication might be perceived as passive (observational) or active (communicating/participating in the online community), the process is essentially two-sided and does resemble off-line social relationships.

Types of Users

Kozinets (1999) posited that online relationships were based on two non-independent factors: 1) the relationship a person has with a consumption activity (level of interest), and 2) the intensity of relationships with other members of the online community (friends or fans). Kozinets proposed a typology of four online community types: *devotees, insiders, tourists, and minglers. Devotees* are active members (fans) who have a strong interest in the online activity, but have few social ties to other members. *Insiders* have strong personal interest in an artist or activity and have strong social ties to the community members, and *tourists* lack strong ties with the activity, the artist, or online community. Finally, *minglers* have strong social ties with other members, but little interest in the activity/art-

ist being discussed. This then defines *devotees/insiders* as artist-centered, *minglers* as group- or fan base-centered, and *tourists* as not engaged to the artist or group. While this classification serves as more of a labeling typology, it might be studied in the future for communication content that is idealized to serve each grouping.

Social Theory

Cole and Leets (1999) provided an early overview of Berger's (1986) three social development theories in order to provide a framework for online communities. First, *uncertainty reduction theory* links the increase of engagement relationships to the increased certainty of behavior—or uncertainty reduction. As behavioral uncertainty decreases, liking increases, inferring that the predictability of behavior increases likeability. Second, the same *personal construct theory* outlines that we develop this sense of "knowing" by applying our interpersonal construct systems to the parasocial context (e.g., Perse and Rubin 1989). This means our values, likes, or feelings are gleaned through verbal and nonverbal cues that are the expression of our personal values. Third, *social exchange theory*, similar to earlier work by Homan (1961), describes a process whereas the connection between intimacy and relationship importance is linked to a *cost and reward* assessment. The reward (expectation of positive reinforcement) is balanced against the negative value or negative reinforcement/non predictability. Thus, the higher the expected reward, the higher the parasocial engagement. Conversely, high cost, or negative non-reinforcing interactivity generates low parasocial engagement.

Repetition/Time of Engagement

In an early work, Horton and Wohl (1956) defined the "illusion" of face-to-face relationships as a process of *repeated interaction* that developed through exposure to repeated messaging, commentary, observation, and even lyrics. The more this repeated interaction occurs, the more the perception is developed that the celebrity is addressing the fan with private and personal communication—which creates a response between the artist and fan that is both intimate and personal. Following this same repetition of interaction, Kozinets (1999) noted that the more *time* internet users spend online, the more they will gravitate towards online groups, fan bases, or friends of like interest. Kozinets (2002) later wrote that as consumers connect online, they become members of groups that become their pri-

mary source of information and social interaction. Additionally, Bagozzi and Dholakia (2002) wrote that the concept of *groups* results from the individual's enhancement of positive anticipated emotions, desires, community, and social identity. Similarly, Chou and Edge (2012) wrote that this approach of similar emotions, desires, and community creates a social identity that may also affect those who may not actively participate in online communities, but instead simply unobtrusively read without participating—thus modeling a more traditional one-sided parasocial communication direction based on expectations. This demonstrates that Kozinets' (1999) *tourists* can become engaged as passive online readers as well.

Expectations and Predictability

Parasocial relationships are based on fan expectations and the predictability of the artist. Ballantine and Martin (2005) wrote that the behavior of online opinion leaders affects the expectations or influence of followers. They also posited that the predictability of behavior strengthens the security and expectations of the online members by what might be called a safe harbor (Ballantine and Martin 2005). Secondly, they also held that expectations were generated as "consumers form ideas and knowledge of a performer or celebrity by applying their own interpersonal constructs to the parasocial circumstance" (Edward et al. 2017; Ballantine and Martin 2005, 199). These interpersonal constructs are generated from the collection of small behaviors and comments that cumulatively create a personality construct that is represented by generalities such as *nice, thoughtful, cool, honest, friendly,* etc. Casaló (2008) found that trust, derived from response predictability and shared values, fostered increased communication. Trust was the fulfillment of expected interaction, honesty-authenticity, and positive affirming interaction. When trust was established, it encouraged participation, increased relationships and loyalty with the community, and increased the promotion by the community to others (Casaló, Flavián, and Guinalíu 2008).

Intimacy

Earlier, Horton and Wohl (1956) found that repeated interaction creates the illusion of intimacy. Auter (1992) found that both repeated encounters and direct communication with audience members increased engagement intimacy. Bennet (2014) wrote that the breaking of the fourth wall greatly increases intimacy. The "breaking of the fourth wall" occurs

when an artist removes his or her separateness from the audience and allows an audience member to see behind an artist's professional persona or façade as if one is a member of the show or a close friend. This increases the parasociability for three main reasons: 1) breaking the fourth wall increases the awareness of the audience in a more personal way, 2) it lets the audience member know that the person or performance is a fiction and pulls back the curtain for the fan (the fan becomes an insider), and 3) by directly addressing the audience, akin to speaking to the audience in a film or theater, one humanizes oneself to the fans. Bennett (2014) and Masur (2014) furthered this concept by finding that lifting the veil creates an *unfiltered* sense of being spoken to directly—evoking a strong sense of intimacy. For example, this intimacy can be created by sharing life's daily activity, sharing *behind the scene* concerns, talking about how things went wrong, asking for advice, or any other commentary that creates a sense of trust, closeness, or authenticity. Bennett called these *confessional texts* a tool that can create a sense of closeness that removes the gap between the artist and the fan that was created by the older hierarchies of mass media.

Social Comparisons

There is a similarity between parasocial and typical offline social relationships. Perse and Rubin (1989) found that parasocial interactions resemble interpersonal friendships in three ways. First, parasocial relationships (like friendships) are voluntary and contain a personal focus—the more engaged one is personally—the stronger the friendship. Second, both parasocial and offline relationships provide companionship that when mutually reinforcing strengthens the relationship. Finally, mutual social attraction can only exist with mutually shared values and interests. Interestingly, even though online engagement is based on vicarious interaction, online users feel that they somehow know and understand the online persona with the same intimacy as their non-online friends. Perse and Rubin (1989) describe this as a linear progression whereas increased interaction and personal self-disclosure by the online user leads to a reduction of uncertainty, creating a deeper perceived intimacy. This reduction of uncertainty, or predictability of content, helps "individuals gain a sense of identity, predictability and stability; of purpose; and of meaning, belonging, security and self-worth" (Cohen 2004, 679). Online communities therefore provide the platform, or virtual community, where members benefit from the social relationships that build social support and reduce

isolation. Thus, when a safe online harbor is created that allows active participation, the stronger the sense of community. Social media then offers the opportunity to have direct, authentic, and intimate interaction with fans at a level above normal live event interaction or performances. The more artists can generate intimate access to their professional and personal lives, the greater the affinity or relationships a fan will develop towards a performer or online persona.

Recent Models – Engagement

Recent works have further quantified the process of engagement. Taylor and Kent (2014) wrote that, "Engagement is part of a dialogue and through engagement, organizations…can make decisions that create social capital" (384). Johnson (2014) further defined engagement as showing a *commitment* to building a relationship. Labrecque (2014) defined elements most useful to engagement in a study using confirmatory factor analysis with a sample of 185 targeted social media users chosen for their heavy use of social media. The confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a statistical model indicating the degree of correlation between variables and how the data fits a predicted model. It reflects a percent of correlation to the fit of a predicted model. "1" would be a perfect fit (rare) and .70 would mean 70% correlation to the predicted fit. The closer to 1 the higher the fit to the overall model. Labrecque found that fans preferred to *communicate directly* with the artist—not professional middlemen (CFA = .83), and that the *speed of response* by artist (.81) was a strong correlation to engagement by fan. This builds upon Song and Zinkhan (2008), who also found that *speed of response*, as well as *contextual content* (relating posts to prior messages) dramatically heightens engagement. Labrecque (2014) went on to note that *openness in content shared* (.83), or using authenticity and honesty, was also a strong engagement factor as well. Bennett (2014) further defined *intimacy* as posting content as if you were speaking to a close friend—sharing personal and intimate stories. What is striking is that the longer this connectivity is active; a *group loyalty* factor (.92) develops that is the highest correlation of all elements (Labrecque 2014). The *group loyalty* reflects the willingness of members to remain in the group, willingness to defend the group, and willingness to share the group with others outside the group. Tsiotsou (2015) also defined somewhat detailed relational categories, and similarly used confirmatory factor analysis (cor-

relations within a predicted model) applied to a convenience sample of 320 social media users. Her results are seen in Figure 1.

Tsiotsou's results indicate an alignment with a similar study by Chiu (2015). Online members find attraction with members who reflect their own interests and values. Online community members are like-minded and enjoy predictability of other members. Members seem to enjoy positive engagement and love to encourage others to achieve similar like-minded goals (Chiu et al. 2015). Once "attached" to a group, members participate actively and recommend the same group to other like-minded friends. What is surprising is the level of loyalty to the online group (.65-.75) (Tsiotsou 2015). This indicates that as the celebrity and followers build and reinforce the same values and behaviors, the affinity or connectedness increases over time. Although we intuitively know that we identify with those who have the same qualities as ourselves—celebrities/artists should especially be careful to meet the expectations their audience has of the artist. This market segment identification is best achieved by posting information that *reminds fans of themselves* (.73) and posting information that *exhibits the same qualities/lifestyle/values* of their fan base (.65). As well, online commentary should always *express positive encouragement and care* to fan group members (.70) and *affirm member's opinions, attitudes, and goals* (.63) (Tsiotsou 2015). Watkins (2017), using a confirmatory factor analysis within a sample of 271 participants chosen from a convenience sample from a large university, found that high engagement was more predictable when posts were *attentive to what was said (*.87), reflected a *sense of belonging with their fan base (.83),* and reflected values that were *natural and down-to-earth* to the fan base (.88), which cumulatively led fans to feel that their online activity was *like interacting with a friend* (.81).

Application from the Literature

Grouping similar values derives an application based on the literature. While other guides available are somewhat intuitive, this application is rooted in research and behavioral theory and can serve as a foundation for further exploration as an evidence-based model—rather than anecdotal. The model is somewhat distilled for simplicity following the concept of Occam's razor, where the complex is best represented by the simplest answer. This application or conceptualization is certainly open to future study, discussion, or analysis. See Figure 2.

2015 Tsiotsou Factor Analysis

Identification with Social Media Members

- Other members remind me of myself (.73)
- I have the same qualities as other members (.65)
- I have the same problems as other members (.75)
- I can identify with other members (.64)
- I enjoy trying to predict what other members will do (.66)

Interest in Favorite Social Media Members

- I hope the other members accomplish their goals (.63)
- I care what happens to the members (.70)
- I like reading the opinions of the other members (.66)
- I can identify with the attitudes of members (.68)

Problem Solving Ability of Favorite Social Media Members

- I wish I could handle problems as well as the members (.77)
- I like the way the members handle problems (.65)
- I would like to be more like the members (.69)

Social Media Group Identification

- I am very attached to the group (.85)
- The friendships I have with the other members mean a lot to me (.76)
- If members planned something, I'd think of it as something "we" rather than something "they" would do (.75)

Social Media Group Engagement

- I participate in the group because I feel better afterward (.87)
- I participate in the group because I am able to support other members (.89)
- I participate in the group because I am able to reach personal goals (.72)

Social Media Behavioral Intentions

- I never miss an opportunity to recommend activities from the group to others (.85)
- If my friends and family were to look for a group of people, I would definitely recommend this group (.63)
- I intend to actively participate in activities of this group (.86)

Social Media Group Loyalty

- I always follow this group online (.75)
- I follow the group in all of my activities (.70)
- I intend to be a member forever (.65)
- I am loyal to the group (.69)

Figure 1. Tsiotsou Factor Analysis (Tsiotsou 2015).

Herrera Guide to Online Engagement

1) Be Predictable
   a) Postings should reinforce and reflect the core values of your audience.[1]
   b) Postings should reflect and reinforce your fans' personality constructs.[2]
   c) Postings should allow your fans to identify with you—you should mirror their values.[3]
   d) Postings should be predictable—unpredictability causes fans to feel unsafe—be consistent.[4]
   e) Remember that all comments have hidden or implied personality cues. Think about how any comment will be interpreted.[5]

2) Use Positive Affirming Comments
   a) Build up your fans/encourage their goals.[6]
   b) Be thoughtful and friendly to your fans' posts.
   c) Consistent affirmation of fans (over time) will build trust with your community—trust builds interactivity.[7]

3) Be Intimate[8]
   a) Comment as soon as possible to fan comments—speed reflects connection and attention.
   b) Try to be unfiltered—share good and bad—be authentic.
   c) Communicate as if speaking to a close friend—be open.
   d) Allow fans behind the curtain—break the "fourth wall." Let fans become insiders.
   e) Frequently use specific names of fans—address the fan directly. This boosts connectedness and intimacy.
   f) Reference earlier posts—comment in the context of the conversation.
   g) Do not delegate commentary posts—fans do not like perceived middlemen posting.
   h) Remember that the longer fans stay engaged with your group, the stronger their sense of long-term loyalty becomes.

Figure 2. Guide to Online Engagement, by David Herrera, 2017. (Citations are minimized to enhance readability.)

Conclusion

Replicating offline social interaction, active online engagement also creates the impression that one is interacting personally and intimately in real time. This aligns with the viewpoint that interactivity is personal, intimate, authentic, and timely. In traditional live or onscreen artist engagement, devices such as camera angles, establishment of eye contact with

the audience/viewers, and directly addressing the audience are tools used to establish contact with an audience. Instead, online engagement relies on social cues reflected by online commentary. In typical "real life" social encounters, repeated interaction increases mutual awareness through a combination of vocal, visual, and physical cues (how we stand, tone of voice, gestures, etc.) However, online engagement is contingent on an impression that a celebrity creates only within the online narrative or response to online users or fans.

Further Research

The elements of direct online engagement can be considered more nuanced as they are expressed by a fan's response to narrative or written/read message cues, which are vaguely defined. What are these cues and how can they be defined? This is an area for future research. What and how are informal message cues used to create an overall personality type? What are the best practices for message cues? One thought is that cues may simply include references to cultural institutions that are part of the genre or market segment—what may be called *institutional references*. A simplistic example for message cues for a country artist might include references to Nashville, the Ryman, fishing, NASCAR, rural living, etc. *Behavioral message cues* might include traditional work ethics, love for family, trust for friends, hobbies, types of food consumed, etc. But, assuming artists live and reflect the same values of their genre or market segment, these cues are generally maximized by:

- Affirmation of fans and an authenticity of communication that is predictable,
- Intimacy/Trust: revealing information that one would share to a close friend,
- Breaking the fourth wall: commentary that allows the online fan community to become an "insider" and peek behind the activities of the daily life of an artist, and
- Speed of communication: commenting quickly and linking comments to previous content. In general, treat online participants as you would a close friend.

Thoughts on Music and Entertainment Usage of the Guide

While the time needed for this type of activity may seem daunting, the removal of "middlemen" (social media companies, managers, etc.) from direct engagement with fan interaction is sorely needed. Artists should receive training, if needed, in these engagement concepts and thus, managers and labels will need to trust that an artist is capable of directly connecting with fans. In the end, this long-term investment will build a fan base that is loyal, long lasting, and that will share with others online.

But, even with this personal interaction—and despite the main thrust of personal connectedness—there is also some room for a targeted content generator. This might be someone who has more technical prowess to create quick tour and studio videos (use a phone and a laptop for editing). This content should be embedded within the system—part of the content in the food chain of marketing. Imagine being on tour with an artist virtually: how engaging would it be to follow video clips from the bus, loading in, soundcheck, bus breakdowns, or even backstage banter? This is likely making managers' heads explode—but with quick editing, and perhaps minimal approval, most artists would surely build fan relationships and derive career benefits by inserting their own personal commentary. This would go much farther than merely posting performance dates, venues, and "I am looking forward to…" type of postings.

Both artists and artist representatives should make this interactivity systemic—part of the general process. Try to leave online posts to the artist. Managers can have discussions on appropriate content of course, and then partner with a social media content creator (perhaps the road manager, personal assistant, or merchandise manager) who can generate smartphone videos, behind the scene shots, and short ten to thirty second tour or studio interviews that cumulatively create a behind-the-scenes exposure that allows the artist to engage with the fan base. With a systemic content creator in place, the artist will be able to concentrate on creating careful and personal postings that connect with fans. This will increase fan intimacy, reduce any feelings of uncertainty in the fan relationship, and enforce fan social constructs that affirm likeability and connection for online engagement. This will build a long-term relationship that can assist any career. Although there may be some vagaries and questions to be explored, a good foundation will serve as a great base to build long-term online engagement.

Endnotes

1. Paul W. Ballantine and Brett A. S. Martin, "Forming Parasocial Relationships in Online Communities," *Advances in Consumer Research* 32 (2005): 197-201.
2. Richard P. Bagozzi and Utpal M. Dholakia, "Intentional Social Action in Virtual Communities," *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 16, no. 2 (2002): 2-21, https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.10006.
3. Philip J. Auter and Philip Palmgreen, "Development and validation of a parasocial interaction measure: The audience-persona interaction scale," *Communication Research Reports* 17, no. 1 (2000): 79-89, https://doi.org/10.1080/08824090009388753 and Jeffrey W. Kassing and Jimmy Sanderson, "'You're the Kind of Guy That We All Want for a Drinking Buddy': Expressions of Parasocial Interaction on Floydlandis.com." *Western Journal of Communication* 73, no. 2 (2009): 182-203, https://doi.org/10.1080/10570310902856063.
4. George C. Homans, *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961).
5. Elizabeth M. Perse and Rebecca B. Rubin, "Attribution in Social and Parasocial Relationships," *Communication Research* 16, no. 1 (1989): 59-77, https://doi.org/10.1177/009365089016001003.
6. Ballantine and Martin, *Advances in Consumer Research* 32.
7. Chao-Min Chiu, Hsiang-Lan Cheng, Hsin-Yi Huang, and Chieh-Fan Chen, "Exploring Individuals' Subjective Well-being and Loyalty towards Social Network Sites from the Perspective of Network Externalities: The Facebook Case," *International Journal of Information Management* 33, no. 3 (2013): 539-552, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2013.01.007 and Luis V. Casaló, Carlos Flavián, and Miguel Guinalíu, "Promoting consumers participation in virtual brand communities: A new paradigm in branding strategy," *Journal of Marketing Communications* 14, no. 1 (2008): 19-36, https://doi.org/10.1080/13527260701535236.
8. Lauren I. Labrecque, "Fostering Consumer–Brand Relationships in Social Media Environments: The Role of Parasocial Interaction," *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 28, no. 2 (2014): 134-148, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2013.12.003.

References

Auter, Philip J. "TV That Talks Back: An Experimental Validation of a Parasocial Interaction Scale," *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 36, no. 2 (1992): 173-181.

Auter, Philip J., and Philip Palmgreen. "Development and validation of a parasocial interaction measure: The audience-persona interaction scale." *Communication Research Reports* 17, no. 1 (2000): 79-89. https://doi.org/10.1080/08824090009388753.

Bagozzi, Richard P., and Utpal M. Dholakia. "Intentional Social Action in Virtual Communities." *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 16, no. 2 (2002): 2-21. https://doi.org/10.1002/dir.10006.

Ballantine, Paul W., and Brett A. S. Martin. "Forming Parasocial Relationships in Online Communities." *Advances in Consumer Research* 32 (2005): 197-201.

Bennett, Lucy. "'If We Stick Together We Can Do Anything': Lady Gaga Fandom, Philanthropy and Activism Through Social Media." *Celebrity Studies* 5, no. 1-2 (2014): 138-152. https://doi.org/10.1080/19392397.2013.813778.

Berger, Charles R. "Uncertain Outcome Values in Predicted Relationships: Uncertainty Reduction Theory Then and Now." *Human Communication Research* 13, no. 1 (1986): 34-38. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-2958.1986.tb00093.x.

Casaló, Luis V., Carlos Flavián, and Miguel Guinalíu. "Promoting consumers participation in virtual brand communities: A new paradigm in branding strategy." *Journal of Marketing Communications* 14, no. 1 (2008): 19-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/13527260701535236.

Chen, Gina Masullo. "Tweet This: A Uses and Gratifications Perspective on How Active Twitter Use Gratifies a Need to Connect with Others." *Computers in Human Behavior* 27, no. 2 (2011): 755-762. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2010.10.023.

Chiu, Chao-Min, Hsiang-Lan Cheng, Hsin-Yi Huang, and Chieh-Fan Chen. "Exploring Individuals' Subjective Well-being and Loyalty towards Social Network Sites from the Perspective of Network Externalities: The Facebook Case." *International Journal of Information Management* 33, no. 3 (2013): 539-552. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijinfomgt.2013.01.007.

Chou, Hui-Tzu Grace, and Nicholas Edge. "'They Are Happier and Having Better Lives than I Am': The Impact of Using Facebook on Perceptions of Others' Lives." *Cyberpsychology, Behavior and Social Networking* 15, no. 2 (2012): 117-121. https://doi.org/10.1089/cyber.2011.0324.

Christensen, Clayton M., Scott D. Anthony, and Erik A. Roth. *Seeing What's Next: Using the Theories of Innovation to Predict Industry Change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press, 2004.

Cohen, Sheldon. "Social Relationships and Health." *American Psychologist* 59, no. 8 (2004): 676-684. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.59.8.676.

Cole, Tim, and Laura Leets. "Attachment Styles and Intimate Television Viewing: Insecurely Forming Relationships in a Parasocial Way." *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* 16, no. 4 (1999): 495-511. https://doi.org/10.1177/0265407599164005.

Cooks, Leda, Mari Castañeda Paredes, and Erica Scharrer. "'There's 'O place Like Home': Searching for Community on Oprah.com." In *Women & Everyday Uses of the Internet: Agency &* Identity, edited by Mia Consalvo and Susanna Paasonen, 139-167. New York: Peter Lang, 2002.

Daugherty, Terry, Matthew S. Eastin, and Laura Bright. "Exploring Consumer Motivations for Creating User-Generated Content." *Journal of Interactive Advertising* 8, no. 2 (2008): 16-25. https://doi.org/10.1080/15252019.2008.10722139.

Edwards, Autumn, Chad Edwards, Shawn T. Wahl, and Scott A. Myers. *The Communication Age: Connecting and Engaging*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2012.

Evans, Zachary. "How Social Media and Mobile Technology Has Changed Music Forever." *Social Media Week*. August 24, 2015. https://socialmediaweek.org/blog/2015/08/social-mobile-changed-music/.

Hartmann, Tilo, and Charlotte Goldhoorn. "Horton and Wohl Revisited: Exploring Viewers' Experience of Parasocial Interaction." *Journal of Communication* 61, no. 6 (2011): 1104-1121. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1460-2466.2011.01595.x.

Hitt, Michael A., Barbara W. Keats, and Samuel M. DeMarie. "Navigating in the New Competitive Landscape: Building Strategic Flexibil-

ity and Competitive Advantage in the 21st Century. *The Academy of Management Executive* 12, no. 4 (1998): 22-42.

Homans, George C. *Social Behavior: Its Elementary Forms.* New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1961.

Horton, Donald, and R. Richard Wohl. "Mass Communication and Para-Social Interaction: Observations on Intimacy at a Distance." *Psychiatry* 19, no. 3 (1956): 215-229. https://doi.org/10.1080/00332747.1956.11023049.

Johnston, Kim A. "Public Relations and Engagement: Theoretical Imperatives of a Multidimensional Concept." *Journal of Public Relations Research* 26, no. 5 (2014): 381-83. https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2014.959863.

Kassing, Jeffrey W., and Jimmy Sanderson. "'You're the Kind of Guy That We All Want for a Drinking Buddy': Expressions of Parasocial Interaction on Floydlandis.com." *Western Journal of Communication* 73, no. 2 (2009): 182-203. https://doi.org/10.1080/10570310902856063.

Kozinets, Robert V. "E-tribalized Marketing?: The Strategic Implications of Virtual Communities of Consumption." *European Management Journal* 17, no. 3 (1999): 252-264. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0263-2373(99)00004-3.

Kozinets, Robert V. "The Field behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities." *Journal of Marketing Research* 39, no. 1 (2002): 61-72. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkr.39.1.61.18935.

Labrecque, Lauren I. "Fostering Consumer–Brand Relationships in Social Media Environments: The Role of Parasocial Interaction." *Journal of Interactive Marketing* 28, no. 2 (2014): 134-148. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.intmar.2013.12.003.

Lewis, Seth C. "Reciprocity as a Key Concept for Social Media and Society." *Social Media + Society* 1, no. 1 (2015): 1-2. https://doi.org/10.1177/2056305115580339.

Masur, Philipp K., Leonard Reinecke, Marc Ziegele, and Oliver Quiring. "The Interplay of Intrinsic Need Satisfaction and Facebook Specific Motives in Explaining Addictive Behavior on Facebook." *Computers in Human Behavior* 39 (2014): 376-386. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2014.05.047.

Paine, Katie Delahaye. "Are We Engaged Yet? Social Media Measurement. Engagement in Social Media: Web Stats, Visitor Behavior, and Relationship Theory." *The Measurement Standard* (blog). March 25, 2008. http://kdpaine.blogs.com/themeasurementstandard/2008/03/are-we-engaged.html.

Paine, Katie Delahaye. *Measure what matters: Online tools for understanding customers, social media, engagement, and key relationships*. Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

Perse, Elizabeth M., and Rebecca B. Rubin. "Attribution in Social and Parasocial Relationships." *Communication Research* 16, no. 1 (1989): 59-77. https://doi.org/10.1177/009365089016001003.

Phelps, Christine E. "Parasocial Relationships and Social Media Usage." Master's thesis, The Rochester Institute of Technology, 2011.

Rubin, Alan M., and Mary M. Step. "Impact of Motivation, Attraction, and Parasocial Interaction on Talk Radio Listening." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 44, no. 4 (2000): 635-654. https://doi.org/10.1207/s15506878jobem4404_7.

Rubin, Rebecca B., and Michael P. McHugh. "Development of Parasocial Interaction Relationships." *Journal of Broadcasting & Electronic Media* 31, no. 3 (1987): 279-292. https://doi.org/10.1080/08838158709386664.

Schramm, Holger, and Werner Wirth. "Testing a Universal Tool for Measuring Parasocial Interactions Across Different Situations and Media: Findings from Three Studies." *Journal of Media Psychology* 22, no. 1 (2010): 26-36. https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-1105/a000004.

Song, Ji Hee, and George M. Zinkhan. "Determinants of Perceived Web Site Interactivity." *Journal of Marketing* 72, no. 2 (2008): 99-113. https://doi.org/10.1509/jmkg.72.2.99.

Stern, Barbara B., Cristel Antonia Russell, and Dale W. Russell. "Hidden Persuasions in Soap Operas: Damaged Heroines and Negative Consumer Effects." *International Journal of Advertising* 26, no. 1 (2007): 9-36. https://doi.org/10.1080/02650487.2007.11072994.

Taylor, Maureen, and Michael L. Kent. "Dialogic Engagement: Clarifying Foundational Concepts." *Journal of Public Relations Research* 26, no. 5 (2014): 384-98. https://doi.org/10.1080/1062726X.2014.956106.

Tsiotsou, Rodoula H. "The Role of Social and Parasocial Relationships on Social Networking Sites Loyalty." *Computers in Human Behavior* 48 (2015): 401-414. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2015.01.064.

Turner, John. "Interpersonal and Psychological Predictors of Parasocial Interaction with Different Television Performers." *Communication Quarterly* 41, no. 4 (1993): 443-453. https://doi.org/10.1080/01463379309369904.

Watkins, Brandi. "Experimenting with Dialogue on Twitter: An Examination of the Influence of the Dialogic Principles on Engagement, Interaction, and Attitude." *Public Relations Review* 43, no. 1 (2017): 163-71. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.pubrev.2016.07.002.

Wu, Yu-Lung, Yu-Hui Tao, Ching-Pu Li, Sheng-Yuan Wang, and Chi-Yuan Chiu. "User-switching Behavior in Social Network Sites: A Model Perspective with Drill-down Analyses." *Computers in Human Behavior* 33 (2014): 92-103. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chb.2013.12.030.

Zhu, Xiumei, Sang Woo, Caitlin Porter, and Michael Brzezinski. "Pathways to Happiness: From Personality to Social Networks and Perceived Support." *Social Networks* 35, no. 3 (2013): 382-393. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socnet.2013.04.005.

David Herrera is an Assistant Professor at the Mike Curb College of Music Business and Entertainment at Belmont University. He has earned a B.B.A. at Belmont University, a M.B.A. at the Massey School, and a Ph.D. in management and organization at Capella University. Dr. Herrera was a full-time musician for over fifteen years before returning to university studies. He has worked professionally in the concert business, has directed Acklen Records and developed indiebandhub.com, a online student-centered label in Nashville. Herrera enthusiastically pursues experiential courses for both Record Company Operations and Concert Promotions. He has developed online engagement modules for his classes and is interested in the behavioral motivators for online engagement.

A "Chance" of Success: The Influence of Subcultural Capital on the Commercial Success of Chance The Rapper

Cassidy Best, Katie Braile, Emily Falvey, Samantha Ross, Julia Rotunno, and David Schreiber
Belmont University

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.2

Abstract

This case study builds on Sarah Thornton's (1996) theory of subcultural capital as well as Bourdieu's theories of capital (1986) by providing a rich description of Chance the Rapper's path to success. Findings demonstrate that his accumulation of subcultural capital within both the Christian and hip-hop subcultures, as well as his use of economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital to build a following, were necessary for his commercial success. Using information derived from interviews, textual analyses, and streaming data, this study provides evidence affirming that his subcultural capital is directly related to four key factors: his employment of the free music model to release music, his independent artist identity, his musical style that transcends genres, and his authentic and consistent social media involvement. Finally, applications of the findings to the broader music community are offered, specifically addressing the implications of this study for independent artists.

Keywords: subcultural capital, recording industry, music industry, Chance the Rapper, free music model, independent music, independent artists, social media, case study

Introduction

The recent prominence of online music streaming has caused noticeable changes in how music is discovered and how artists reach their fans (IFPI 2016). Streaming platforms such as Spotify, Apple Music, SoundCloud, and Pandora have substantially increased the accessibility of music with little to no distribution costs to artists and record labels (TuneCore 2017). Furthermore, the internet, paired with recent technological innovations, allows for anyone to create, record, and distribute music online without the need for labels or professional studios (Jensen 2013, 8). Therefore,

independent or "do-it-yourself" (DIY) artists are more prominent than ever (Jensen 2013, 13). A significant example of this notion is Chance the Rapper, an independent hip-hop artist from Chicago. Known for achieving unprecedented success without the support of a record label or significant radio promotion, Chance the Rapper's story boasts an unorthodox journey to fame and success that has nonetheless resulted in a devoted fan base. His decision to release music not only for free but exclusively on digital streaming platforms caused a notable disruption in the traditional music industry distribution model.

In this digital age, there is an infinite amount of music at the consumer's disposal (Caves 2000). In order to cut through the "noise," an artist must cultivate a unique identity that personally connects to an audience (Elliott and Davies 2006). More recently, this has been accomplished by "going against the grain" and opposing the natural characteristics of genres and artist typecasts of the past (Robinson 2016). Music is a shared experience, and smaller groups of fans develop based on shared tastes, preferences, ideals, and habits (Bourdieu 1979). These groups become "subcultures," or bodies of individuals within larger cultures that often share social traits, beliefs, and values that distinguish them from broader society (Thornton 1996). Music listeners who belong to these subcultures not only acquire the culture of the group, they also create a shared group identity (Horsfall 2013, 51-52). As a result, artists can appeal to these subcultures by displaying musical authenticity, which offers feelings of community and establishes a trust for fans who crave validity and truth (Thornton 1996, 26).

"Subcultural capital," a term coined by sociologist Sarah Thornton (1996, 163), describes the measures taken by individuals to accumulate status within a social domain, often by differentiating from the mainstream. In music, a high level of subcultural capital can be gained through establishing a distinct artistic style, defying genre lines, and appealing to a variety of audiences while simultaneously captivating small music subcultures. Chance the Rapper does this with ease; while the foundation of his music is hip-hop, he has cultivated a multi-faceted musical identity that resonates with multiple audiences and opposes what one would typically expect of a rap artist. He unapologetically proclaims his independence from a record label, further distinguishing himself from the traditional music industry. Chance the Rapper has acquired high levels of subcultural capital because he is perceived as relevant and relatable within multiple

subcultures. The purpose of this research is to explore how these subcultures, and his subsequent accumulation of capital within them, have influenced the career of Chance the Rapper, ultimately catapulting him into commercial success.

What Is Subcultural Capital?

The concept of a "subculture" is applied very differently today than it was when the term initially emerged in the early twentieth century. Beginning in the 1940s, sociologists developed subcultural theory, which organized specific demographic groups into subcultures based on a number of shared social traits (Williams 2011, 7). This theory transformed into a social phenomenon of nonconformity in the subsequent decade. Criminologist Albert Cohen conducted a landmark study entitled *Delinquent Boys* (1955) in which he observed how "young, working-class males chose to solve problems through abnormal, that is, deviant or delinquent, means," establishing a subculture in and of themselves (Williams 2011, 7). In the 1960s, sociologist Howard Becker formed a theory of subculture while studying jazz musicians; the theory "emphasized that collective deviant behavior was most likely to become subcultural when members of a group consciously identified themselves in contrast to the broader mainstream society" (Williams 2011, 7-8). Becker's perspective on the formation of subcultures is most closely synonymous with the way subcultural theory is used today. Sociologist J. Patrick Williams (2011, 8) claims that a "subculture" represents groups of individuals who form a community through shared characteristics which leads them to "identify themselves as different from—usually in some form of antagonistic relationship with—normal, 'square' society." Therefore, since their inception, these subcultures have developed into communities of choice rather than groupings into which individuals are placed (Williams 2011, 6).

This study supports the claim that subcultures are defined first and foremost by their relation to the mainstream, described often as resistant, yet inevitably involved segments of the larger culture (Brooker 2003, 240). Although subcultures are subsections of larger cultures, their "identities are constructed through, not outside, difference" (Hall and du Gay 1996, 4). Thus, rejection of the mainstream is not merely a consequence of the creation of a subculture but an integral part of its identity. Subcultures are established as a result of their ability to label themselves as outsiders (Hall and du Gay 1995, 5). These subcultures cultivate community,

which, in turn, grants someone the opportunity to establish a reputation and status within that community. For example, when the hip-hop subculture emerged in the mid-1970s, pioneer Afrika Bambaataa coined various elements of the hip-hop subculture: graffiti art, breakdancing, rapping, and deejaying (Kitwana 2002, xiii). Today, when one speaks of hip-hop, this is a reference not only to the musical sound, but also to the "hip-hop specific language, body language, fashion, style, sensibility and worldview" surrounding the genre (Kitwana 2002, xiii). As a result, the culture is influential to listeners because fans identify with more than the music: they connect with the community and the values they share.

As a community forms, its members customarily come to an agreement as to what is ideally representative of the group's culture, which grants the opportunity for its members to establish status within that community (Williams 2011, 133-134). Status equates to capital, which can take many forms. Pierre Bourdieu (1986, 1977) asserted that monetary wealth, or economic capital, is not the only display of status. Rather, status can be acquired by other means. One example is social capital: the real or potential resources that are derived from a network of relationships, such as belonging to a family or university. On the other hand, one can acquire cultural capital, which is earned by the possession of knowledge, accomplishments, and qualifications. Having both forms of capital can lead to opportunities that an individual would not otherwise have.

In the context of subcultures, status is measured based on the relative value of "hipness" defined by a group's beliefs and values (Thornton 1996, 11). Through a "mode" of style, being "hip" helps to establish the identity of the subculture while defining the group and its individuals against each other or the mainstream (Ford 2002). Being "hip" is a level of "coolness" or trendiness that is often perceived by and within the subculture itself. Thornton therefore recognized that "hipness" can become an asset or capital by which the individual can use to leverage. Similar to Bourdieu's ideas on forms of cultural capital (Bourdieu 1986), Thornton also claims that her idea of subcultural capital can be objectified or embodied. Just as books and paintings display cultural capital in the family home, subcultural capital can be objectified in the form of fashionable haircuts and well-assembled record collections (Thornton 1996). Although the manifestation of subcultural capital is not as tangible as other forms of capital, it is nonetheless significant.

The expression of subcultural capital lends itself to the establishment of hierarchies dependent on the individual's demonstration of the subculture's ideals and values. In contrast to mainstream culture, which creates hierarchies to alienate individuals, hierarchies within subcultures exist to validate its position in society (Jensen 2013, 8). Through the acquisition of values and traits representative of the subculture, one's status within the group is boosted: "Those who express subcultural ideals best will very likely enjoy the most status" (Williams 2011, 133-134). Essentially, the more one immerses his or herself in the subculture and the more traits typical of that subculture he or she adopts, the greater his or her subcultural capital will be.

Though subcultures can be formed as a result of communal interests or characteristics, many are formed through a shared feeling of "otherness" from the mainstream (Anderson 2009, 171). These subcultures provide individuals, particularly those who often feel marginalized by society, a sense of identity through shared styles, interests, and tastes. Thus, individuals within subcultures form an identity for themselves by "adopting innovative non-mainstream styles whilst forming an identity made up of subcultural capital" (Shuker 2005, 64). Being "different" from the mainstream is not only celebrated, it is valued and contributes to the purpose of a subculture. These shared differences cannot be fabricated, as a subculture without authenticity is void. As Thornton (1996, 3-4) states, subcultures are recognized as the "authentic versus the phony, the 'hip' versus the 'mainstream,' and the 'underground' versus 'the media.'" Authenticity is not only an idea valued by the group as a whole, it must be demonstrated in individual identities as well. One gains subcultural capital by engaging in shared interests identifiable of the group. The challenge then becomes obtaining subcultural capital without mimicking others within the subculture because, "Nothing depletes capital more than the sight of someone trying too hard" (Thornton 1996, 12). This balance can be reached by staying true to one's authentic personality, which naturally aligns with the subculture's ideals.

Although subcultural capital can explain the status and influence one can attain within a subculture, Thornton's theory has been criticized in several ways. Some believe that Thornton denies the importance of class within subcultures, yet the concept of subcultural capital serves as a currency that constitutes unequal statuses (Jensen 2006, 8). The existence of subcultural capital inherently creates its own set of classes. It has also been

argued that the typical "analysis of subcultural style is an oversimplification of actual young people's cultural practices" (Laughey 2006, 52). According to Dan Laughey, author of *Music and Youth Culture* (2006, 52), this is especially apparent in ethnographic studies of youth music cultures. He claims that subcultural capital theory is "largely premised on unhelpful dichotomies between effects and resistance, dominance and opposition," forming potentially inaccurate presumptions about the habits of young listeners (Laughey 2006, 52). Consequently, many feel that subcultures are romanticized as sources of resistance (Edgar and Sedgwick 2008, 342). As with any theory, skepticism continues to develop as awareness of subcultural capital continues to grow. However, this study investigates and challenges those assertions by providing a rich description of the success of artists within the music industry using the strengths of Thornton's theory of subcultural capital.

Subcultural capital has been examined for two decades, analyzing topics that range from subjects like nightclubs and raves to goth and hardcore punk. Yet, this study applies the theory in a new way by analyzing its application to artists in the music industry, specifically, Chance the Rapper. Subcultural capital can be used in analyzing the status of individuals within any creative business. As Thornton (1996, 12) explains, subcultural capital does not convert into economic wealth with as much ease as cultural capital; however, those in certain professions, such as musicians or clothing designers, make a living from their subcultural capital. Music is a prime example: author and sociologist David Hesmondhalgh (2008, 2) claims that music not only plays an important role in people's lives, but also connects the private self to a more public community through shared emotions and experiences. As a result, music inevitably fosters an environment in which individuals follow the hierarchy the community has created: "Out of all other forms of creative culture, music has the strongest power to act as a measurement of status differentiation" (Hesmondhalgh 2008, 10). Subcultural capital is acquired based on values derived from the community behind the music. Music listeners measure artists' performances and stories by making judgments based on their own feelings and beliefs (Hall and du Gay 1996, 121). Because identity in music is so largely dependent on the culture to which an individual belongs, subcultural capital plays a vital role in the interaction between artists and fans. Rather than inhibiting the creative process, subcultural capital exists "to establish the subculture's position in society, its distinction from the mainstream,

and its authenticity in separating itself from it" (Jensen 2013, 8). Artists can and do transform subcultural capital into economic capital, but the difficulty in doing so is worthy of further exploration. Therefore, this research seeks to uncover how Chance the Rapper has been able to transcend these boundaries and transform his subcultural capital into mainstream economic, social, and cultural success.

Data Collection Methods

In order to better understand and explain Chance the Rapper's quick and unconventional commercial success through the lens of subcultural capital, twenty music industry professionals familiar with Chance the Rapper's success were interviewed. These interviews were conducted over a two-month period and each lasted between thirty and ninety minutes. They were conducted to gain context and perspective on how, and what types of strategies are used to launch and support artists' careers. Participants included independent musicians as well as music industry professionals involved in the promotion, branding, or representation of songwriters and recording artists (see Appendix A). Pseudonyms are used to preserve anonymity.

In addition to interviews, textual analysis of industry trade journals and other relevant news, blogs, and social media sites served as evidence contributing to the findings presented in this study. Furthermore, data specific to Chance the Rapper's career were derived from reports generated on Buzz Angle, a platform that provides data on music consumption. An artist history report was generated to analyze both streaming activity and radio airplay from December 30, 2013 to June 23, 2017 to identify the time periods in which Chance the Rapper's streaming and spin numbers spiked. Using the context of those dates, the authors were then able to further explore specific events that may have contributed to increases in music consumption throughout his career.

Chance's Path to Independent Success

Chance the Rapper's connection with numerous subcultures can be attributed to a few notable factors: his employment of the free music model, his status as an independent artist, his inclusion of Christian faith and connection to the Christian community, and his authentic relationship and communication with fans through social media. Long before the name "Chance the Rapper" was coined, Chancelor Bennett was an amateur rap-

per from Chicago. As a senior in high school, he was suspended from school for ten days for marijuana possession. In that time, he recorded and produced his first mixtape, appropriately titled *10 Day*. When he began working on *10 Day* in 2011, Chance the Rapper had free access to a recording studio through the YOUmedia library facility in Chicago and was able to produce the content of his first mixtape at minimal cost. Mary Johns, a prominent artist manager in the hip-hop genre, observes that:

> He paid a one-time fee for music to use in the background of his songs to avoid paying royalties down the line. (Interview 2017)

This allowed him to release his music free of cost on the mixtape sharing website, DatPiff (Biography.com Editors 2017), which provided access to a key market at a low cost. The term "mixtape," which Chance the Rapper has continued to use for each of his projects, describes an "original or semi-original batch of songs that is released by musicians to the public at no cost" (Payne 2016). This practice is indicative of Chance the Rapper's musical identity and commitment to the free music model.

Even after gaining popularity and receiving offers from multiple record labels, Chance the Rapper chose to continue distributing his work via streaming platforms like SoundCloud and DatPiff, offering fans the privilege of consuming music at no cost (Robinson 2017). "I don't agree with the way labels are set up," Chance the Rapper admitted in a *Beats 1* interview with Zane Lowe (Payne 2016). While this digital-only, free music model has yet to become widely adopted, Chance the Rapper's initiative served as a catalyst for an amendment to the eligibility requirements for The Recording Academy's consideration for GRAMMY Awards, which now includes digital-only and streaming-only releases (Rys 2016). Subsequently, this rule change allowed him to win three GRAMMYs in 2017 (one of them "Best New Artist"), which is a notable and groundbreaking development for past, present, and future independent artists. Chance the Rapper so firmly believes in the free music model that he goes so far as to reference it in his songs: "I don't release my music for free, I release it for freedom." Sarah Phillips, the senior editor of a prominent music industry publication stated:

> The moment he realized he didn't need anyone else was when *Surf* came out. He went to the table with Apple and said he wanted to put it in the iTunes store for free (this was before Apple Music). That was the first time Apple had any free thing sell, and I think that really bolstered his confidence. (Interview 2017)

Much like other young artists attempting to pave a path to success, Marissa Daniels, an independent artist based in Nashville, felt she needed to provide her music for free as well. "Although payment is now required to download my music," Daniels made it clear, "offering music free of charge helped [me] accumulate fans." It was after she developed a loyal following that she began to charge for, and profit from, her music (Interview 2017). Blake Hudson, a manager for an independent band, further added, "You need to be giving your music away to get fans, instead of thinking, 'I need to make money right now'" (Interview 2017). This creates a long-term vision for the artist. Maximizing exposure and minimizing consumers' risk to "try out the music" before purchase is key. This was clearly a strategy that Chance the Rapper also pursued, enabling potential fans an opportunity to begin listening to his music "risk free" without a financial commitment.

Furthermore, a mixtape gives an artist complete freedom over what songs are recorded, collected, and distributed—this provides the ability to exercise creative vision without concern from third party interests (see Figure 1). High quality mixtapes have a profound effect on the artist-fan relationship by providing credibility to an artist that cannot be found by commercial means (Payne 2016). As was established earlier, "hipness" and relevance are crucial to obtaining and maintaining subcultural capital, which explains why Chance the Rapper's mixtapes on SoundCloud and DatPiff resonated with so many of his early fans. By releasing mixtapes and challenging mainstream music industry standards, Chance the Rapper was able to accumulate subcultural capital and a level of status that set him apart from the saturated pool of talented artists within his genre.

As an independent artist, Chance the Rapper has the privilege to decide for himself how he will distribute his music and run his career. The independent music subculture fosters a shared sense of dissatisfaction for the way in which the larger corporate music culture operates. As a result, the independent music community runs under its own structure, language,

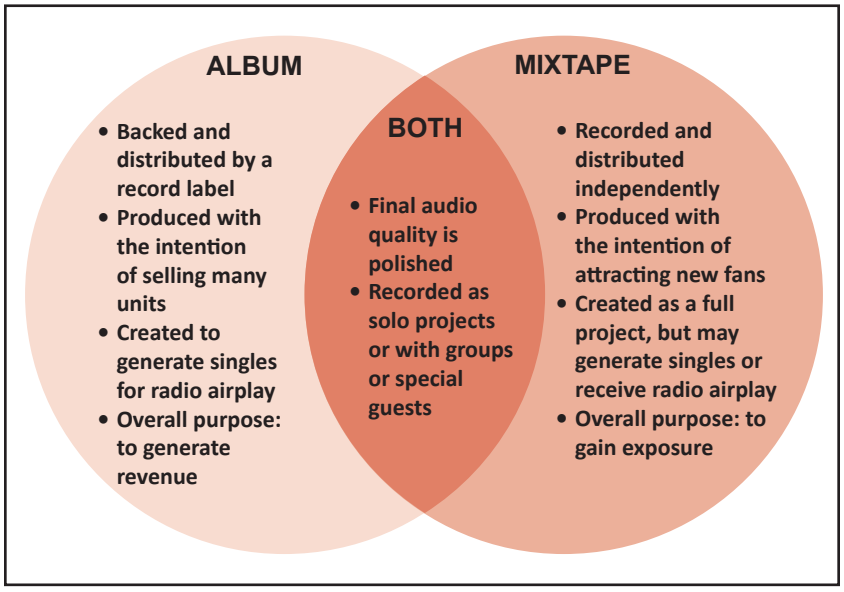


Figure 1. Comparison between albums and mixtapes.

and ultimately, culture, which invites those uninterested in the mainstream music world to join a distinct movement (Jensen 2013, 4). Jensen references author Tammy Anderson (2013, 46) in explaining, "Anderson suggests fans of particular genres, as well as the general public, are provided a cultural resource in the determination of 'alternative' or 'underground' identity and its distinction from the 'mainstream.'" The "cultural resource" being provided here is subcultural capital. Although there are social forces that typically determine music tastes and products for a larger, common society, these subcultures praise separation from it. As a result, "music becomes more valuable aesthetically the more independent it is of the social forces that organize it" (Hall and du Gay 1996, 120). The further from this controlling force artists appear, the more subcultural capital they acquire.

Chance the Rapper's devout independence as an artist awards him a high level of subcultural capital as it provides him a status defined by his opposition to mainstream music methodologies and is intricately tied to the independent (and, thus, "hip") method of marketing oneself as an artist. In commenting on Chance the Rapper's identity as an independent artist, Phillips further commented:

> Early on, it was a badge of honor and a lot of kids respected him a lot more 'cause he was "sticking it to the man." This act of "sticking it to the man" (that is, record labels) and being fiercely independent appealed greatly to early listeners of Chance the Rapper's music. (Interview 2017)

It was also recognized that, "Chance disrupted the flow of the normal industry standard. He said, 'No, I'm going to give my music away'" (Phillips, interview 2017). As a result of his resistance to the mainstream music industry, Chance the Rapper cultivated a "cool factor" that is often necessary in order to gain subcultural capital (Thornton 1996, 11).

One must consider the role of mainstream media in the existence of subcultural capital to properly evaluate the concept's power and significance. Mainstream media and subcultural capital are not, in fact, mutually exclusive. Mark Jancovich studied cultural distinctions and expanded on Thornton's ideas (2002, 10): "[Thornton] argues that despite their oppositional ideology, these subcultures are not the products of an authentic self-generation which is later threatened with incorporation by the media, but rather that the media is central to both their formation and maintenance." In other words, subcultures are not to be isolated from the mainstream. Rather, the mainstream media helps form and maintain one's subcultural capital. Chance the Rapper's distinct musical identity is made known by comparing his distinguishing characteristics to commercial standards, thus his subcultural capital exists because he is opposing the mainstream. Phillips noted this opposition in saying,

> What happens to a lot of kids right around that time is they would get signed to major labels and majors would release their mixtape on iTunes and it would become a retail project but what Chance did was resist all of that. (Interview 2017)

With nothing to oppose, there can be no subcultural capital. While Chance the Rapper's career is rooted in opposition to it, the mainstream media plays an important role in his widespread popularity and his status as a household name. Therefore, the mainstream media, while not directly involved in the development of his early career, indirectly contributed to Chance the Rapper's subcultural capital, the source of his success.

Fan Engagement and the Necessity for Authenticity

Chance the Rapper's musical identity cannot be compartmentalized into clear-cut genres or a predictable artistic persona. His audience reach is considered "enormous"—meaning it is above the 98th percentile when compared to all other artists (Next Big Sound 2017). Moreover, his audience engagement falls between the 85th and 98th percentile of artists, making his engagement "strong" (Figures 2 and 3).

Stephanie Sinns, an account manager for a marketing agency, claims that, "The advent of streaming has caused an increasing level of genre fluidity, which allows artists to break out of genre molds" (Interview 2017).

METRIC	THIS WEEK ▼ Jul 22–28	LAST WEEK Jul 15–21	% CHANGE	TOTAL	PERCENTILE Jul 22–28
Vevo Video Views	33,048,348	21,203,580	+55.9%	877,941,572	100th
YouTube Video Views	1,894,122	2,007,087	-5.6%	213,263,305	99th
Instagram Likes	319,816	561,905	-43.1%	57,565,639	98th
Twitter Mentions	130,700	85,800	+52.3%	-	100th
Last.fm Plays	54,300	50,629	+7.3%	11,770,846	99th
Twitter Retweets	48,400	230,400	-79%	-	100th
Facebook Talking About This	32,891	87,654	-62.5%	-	91st
YouTube Likes	12,830	13,123	-2.2%	1,641,350	99th
Instagram Comments	2,006	3,951	-49.2%	952,252	97th
Last.fm Listeners	1,475	1,425	+3.5%	254,144	99th
Tumblr Notes on Posts	-1	23	-104.3%	156,549	-

Figure 2. Chance the Rapper audience engagement (Next Big Sound 2017).

METRIC	THIS WEEK ▼ Jul 23–29	LAST WEEK Jul 16–22	% CHANGE	TOTAL	PERCENTILE Jul 23–29
Twitter Followers	95,696	128,492	-25.5%	5,020,115	100th
Instagram Followers	81,151	80,354	+1%	6,164,311	100th
YouTube Subscribers	7,184	7,132	+0.7%	884,933	99th
Facebook Page Likes	5,885	6,474	-9.1%	1,815,118	99th
Songkick Followers	3,871	3,450	+12.2%	385,639	100th

Figure 3. Chance the Rapper audience reach (Next Big Sound 2017).

Chance the Rapper's immense success in audience engagement stems from his connection to multiple subcultures despite the difficulty in pinpointing the genre to which he belongs. His musical style is one that the media has struggled to define: a dynamic mixture of several subcultures' characteristics. Chance the Rapper's large following and fan engagement numbers are a result of his appeal across subcultural lines and his accessibility to fans of different demographics. Phillips further adds:

> It is not what you would associate with street rap where it is harder and your mom wants you to turn it off. There is that gospel element and that soul element and a lot of kids gravitate to that even if they aren't listening to hip-hop all the time. (Interview 2017)

He has created a style of music that combines two seemingly contrasting ideals—gospel/contemporary Christian music and hip-hop—and thus, defies what the public would expect from either category. Still, Chance the Rapper is not a Christian hip-hop artist either; he does not fit into any particular musical category. Touching further on the notion of Chance the Rapper's audience:

> I think it is not necessarily the type of kids you would expect to be listening to hip-hop. It is really kind of broad because his music reaches across different genre lines which broadens who pays attention to him. (Phillips, interview 2017)

Chance the Rapper has acquired capital in both of these subcultures by winning over fans from both Christian and hip-hop circles while simultaneously opposing and exceeding the expectations of the audiences of both genres. Chance the Rapper's third mixtape, *Coloring Book*, best displays his popularity among multiple subcultures. A 2017 *Teen Vogue* interview with *Get Out* writer-director Jordan Peele digests *Coloring Book*'s multiple layers and the impact it has had on Chance the Rapper's career (Figure 4).

Peele (2017) describes Chance the Rapper not only as an artist, but a cultural leader who is pushing boundaries in his music. According to Peele, Chance the Rapper is "going against the bad-boy swagger of work-

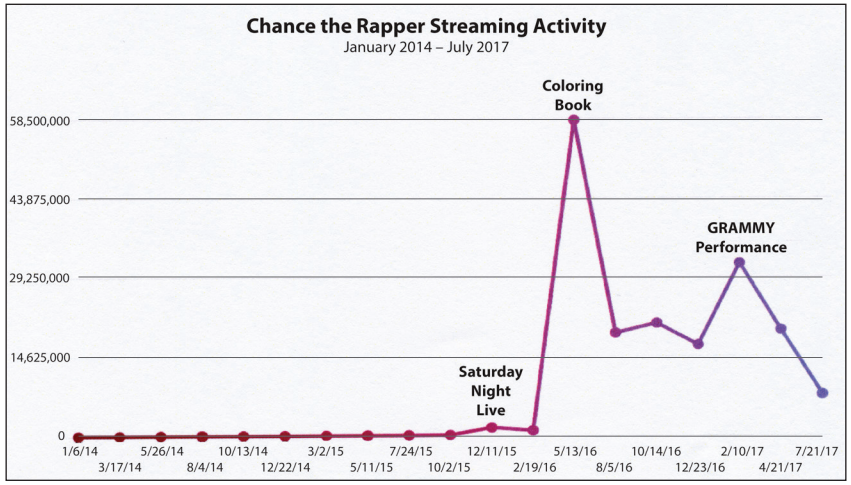


Figure 4. Chance the Rapper streaming activity, January 2014-July 2017 (Border City Media - BuzzAngle 2017).

ing in hip-hop" by incorporating elements of Christian faith into his rapper image. In the interview, Chance the Rapper recognizes his dynamic musical identity: "One of my biggest fears with *Coloring Book* was that it would be labeled. I hate labels. I never sought out for people to recognize it as a gospel album. I don't make Christian rap, but I am a Christian rapper" (Peele and Welteroth 2017). This statement gets to the heart of his multifaceted musical identity. For someone who calls himself a rapper, he is too religious. For someone who calls himself a Christian, he is too profane. Chance the Rapper recalls the success of *Coloring Book*, saying, "People were very accepting of it. Whether they say, 'I'm an atheist, but I love *Coloring Book*' or they say, 'I'm so glad I was able to get closer to God through this project'" (Peele and Welteroth 2017). By daring to combine these two cultural ideals, he resists the stereotypes of both genres and mainstream music as a whole. At this intersection, he acquires subcultural capital, which pushes his success further by heightening his status and distinguishing him as an artist.

By mixing religion with profanity to consider doubt and faith together, Chance the Rapper reveals authenticity, a crucial element in the acquisition of subcultural capital (Nibokun 2017). Additionally, he substantiates his aforementioned reputation of authenticity, thus reinforcing his subcultural capital with fans and followers, with his transparency on social media. Sarah Thornton asserts that "authenticity is arguably the most im-

portant value ascribed to popular music" (1996, 26). When controversy struck regarding Chance the Rapper's exclusive deal with Apple Music for the initial two weeks of *Coloring Book*'s release—going against his commitment to free music, in some fans' opinions—Chance the Rapper took to Twitter to explain his reasoning and communicated honestly with fans about the situation and why he engaged in the deal (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Chance the Rapper, tweet regarding Apple Music deal (Twitter 2017).

In his book *Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts*, J. Patrick Williams explains, "In subcultural theory, authenticity was initially used in a realist sense, as an antonym for inauthentic, mass consumer culture" (2011, 140). Since Chance the Rapper has maintained control of his musical career and social influence as a wholly independent artist, he is able to make his own judgments about what and when to post, and how much

information to share with his fans. Chance the Rapper is not under the compulsion to comply with anyone else's social norms or privacy restrictions, and consequently, has made strides toward an unprecedented level of openness and authenticity with fans. As previously mentioned, Chance the Rapper's music is authentic, which contributes to his credibility within this subculture. However, his authenticity outside of his music and the values he represents further establishes himself within the peer group, as Jensen quotes Anderson (2013, 12) in explaining, "'Authenticity cannot be derived from music alone; it must have the accompanying lifestyle and traits that make the culture authentic in the first place.'"

Independent artists Karen Bailey and Marissa Daniels have also effectively employed these strategies in the process of developing fan bases of their own. On the subject of social media, Karen Bailey emphasized the importance of "trying to show up with your actual personality" (Interview 2017). According to Bailey, artists should avoid relying on a third party to monitor and support fan interactions on social media platforms. Furthermore, Bailey asserted that artists should leverage the platforms they feel most comfortable using. For Bailey, it is Instagram, but for independent pop artist Marissa Daniels, it is YouTube. Because these artists feel comfortable on these platforms, they are able to be completely authentic when using them to interact with fans. Daniels affirmed this notion in saying, "You have to give yourself permission to be who you are. A lot of being an artist is giving yourself permission to be who you are. And this is on a whole different level when you're posting things" (Interview 2017). Chance the Rapper's authenticity in both music and lifestyle further raises his status and differentiates him as an artist. This leads to his accumulation of subcultural capital within multiple subcultures, musical and otherwise.

Conclusion

This research seeks to explain Chance the Rapper's success through the lens of subcultural capital. The findings suggest that in order for artists to maximize their opportunities, they must be perceived as genuine and relevant to audiences within the subculture from which the artist identifies. Chance the Rapper, relating and speaking to the values within multiple subcultures, has acquired subcultural capital in those various groups, leading to increased opportunity for commercial success. Reaching across subcultural identifications has allowed him to leverage this capital in ways not often seen in the modern commercial music industry. Chance the Rap-

per's strategies in acquiring subcultural capital can be emulated and applied to one's own artistic career in order to improve chances for success, but cannot easily be done alone without the aid of other forms of social, economic, or embodied cultural capital. Using these assets to seek a free music model, maintain the perception of being an "independent artist," create a sound that challenges genre norms, and maintain authenticity on social media have all contributed to the acquisition of subcultural capital and ultimately his commercial success.

As previously mentioned, Chance uses mixtapes as a strategy to promote and grow his fan base. This is of particular importance within the subculture of hip-hop since releasing mixtapes is a popular and widely accepted practice (Rys 2017). By distributing his music under the title of a "mixtape," Chance the Rapper appeals specifically to the hip-hop subculture, gaining subcultural capital by his chosen method of music distribution, a form of access and consumption that is of particular importance within the confines of this subculture. Furthermore, by making his music available for free, Chance the Rapper was able to establish credibility within the hip-hop subculture while also reaching a broader audience. Because Chance the Rapper didn't charge money for his music, he was able to further his reach without risk to his consumers, who may have initially been reluctant to purchase his music. This was evidenced by his slow but steady streaming growth from January 2014 to July 2017 (see Figure 4 above). Establishing his credibility through these means and accumulating subcultural capital among multiple audiences and regions over time enabled a slow and steady exposure while laying the groundwork for an eventual recognition within a commercial mass audience.

As an independent artist, Chance the Rapper rose to a level of fame and success that has been undoubtedly difficult to attain without the support of a record label. Maintaining his independence as an artist is a large part of Chance the Rapper's identity. Although he received offers from numerous record labels, he chose to prioritize independence. This perceived resistance to the mainstream music industry bolstered his credibility among his audience. Opposing the mainstream is an appealing trait when accumulating subcultural capital, as it plays an important role in gaining position, power, and status among the group (Thornton 1996, 163). The entire story of Chance the Rapper's career is one founded in resisting common industry standards, a decision highly respected by the hip-hop and independent subcultures, thereby awarding Chance the Rapper high lev-

els of subcultural capital. Therefore, despite patterns previously exhibited throughout the history of the music industry, it is now important for artists to consider remaining independent as a means of developing a reputation and, ultimately, increasing their odds of success.

Chance the Rapper does not neatly fit into any single genre subculture, appealing to audiences outside the hip-hop fan base. Because he has developed a style of music that transcends traditional genre lines, he has been able to transcend the natural boundaries that may exist within strong and identifiable subcultures. Not only does Chance the Rapper reach passionate hip-hop fans, he is also able to reach a strong subculture of Christians who identify with his message. However, he was not able to do this himself; it was only possible through the aid and transformation of social and cultural capital in the form of a well-connected and experienced agent and manager. By combining characteristics of genres, Chance was able to appeal to a pluralism of genre cultures, thereby accumulating capital within the hip-hop, as well as within the Christian subcultures. Chance the Rapper does not isolate himself to one specific demographic; rather he provides a message so compelling that it resonates with fans of various social statuses, backgrounds, and beliefs. This results in high levels of relational capital in various communities (Khavandkar, Theodorakopoulos, Hart, and Preston 2016). An up-and-coming artist can attract fans across genres in order to acquire subcultural capital within many subcultures. This acquisition of subcultural capital from various audiences will help lead to a success that is not entirely dependent on the support of any one genre culture or fan base.

As previously explained, authenticity is the force that drives subcultures. A shared feeling of "otherness" and mutual disapproval of the mainstream binds subcultures together (Anderson 2009, 171). As an artist, Chance the Rapper utilizes social media to portray his personality to his fan base. He engages fans in political discussions on Twitter and posts pictures of his daughter on Instagram. Chance the Rapper appears reachable, often retweeting fans on Twitter and returning comments on Facebook and Instagram. It is these interactions and displays of transparency that create an image of authenticity while simultaneously increasing his stature and reputation. Therefore, in order for aspiring artists to follow a similar path, they too should consider using social media as a platform to display transparency and authenticity.

Although Chance the Rapper's accomplishments can be largely attributed to his methods of distribution, his musical independence, his connection to different communities, and his powerful authenticity, there are a number of other factors which may have played a role in his success, particularly allowing him to transcend into the "mainstream" from the subcultures in which he originated. These include opportunities that arose through his important relationships and access to financial resources. First and foremost, Chance the Rapper's father was directly involved with Barack Obama's congressional and presidential campaigns. This created a significant lasting relationship with an influential public figure and provided Chance the Rapper access to social capital that many up-and-coming artists do not have. Additionally, his manager, Pat Corcoran, served and continues to serve as a source of economic and social capital for Chance's activities. Corcoran invested millions of dollars into Chance the Rapper's career at the onset, which is a level of economic capital most young artists do not have access to. Corcoran's status as an influential manager, along with support from Cara Lewis, a notable agent with Creative Artists Agency, no doubt impacted Chance the Rapper's opportunities for success. Playing at Lollapalooza or headlining a tour are not typical opportunities that independent artists in their first few years are able to access. Ultimately, Chance the Rapper's rise to fame may have been influenced by these resources alongside his subcultural status.

Limitations and Future Research

Although this research was able to highlight some of the influences that can be attributed to Chance the Rapper's success, the case was limited to interviews from those not directly affiliated with Chance's team. Multiple attempts to gain access directly to him, his manager, attorney, or agent were unsuccessful. A perspective from a professional directly involved in Chance the Rapper's daily career would have produced a richer data set. Likewise, the authors were unable to access any of Chance the Rapper's financial information, which could have also led to a deeper understanding of his circumstances. The decisions surrounding the investments made in Chance the Rapper's career could provide a better explanation for his success that may not be apparent in the findings presented here.

Because this study focused on Chance the Rapper's career and his primary genre of hip-hop, future research could aim to examine subcultural capital and its influences on other artists or genre cultures. What is

valued within the hip-hop subculture will no doubt vary for artists striving for commercial success in the country, dance, or Latin genres. Furthermore, future research could also look into the influences of the broader culture on the subculture from which the capital is influenced and generated. What constitutes "anti-mainstream" and the plurality of subcultures in the United Kingdom, Germany, or other markets could lead to a deeper understanding of how subcultural capital can influence the mainstream commercial success of an artist.

Chance the Rapper has experienced an unparalleled level of success as an independent artist without the backing of a "record label." By focusing on the influences of subcultural capital on his career, a rich description of the factors and values that took shape across multiple communities has been provided. By relating to these values, Chance was able to further leverage his access to social, economic and cultural capital to catapult him into the mainstream. Not only is the accumulation of subcultural capital essential to Chance the Rapper, it is essential to any artist's success. By obtaining and having access to this valuable resource, artists can connect with their fans in a relatable and meaningful manner. From the Beatles to Lady Gaga, history consistently substantiates the idea that artists who "go against the grain" and take a stance about what they truly believe are more likely to resonate with their audiences.

Chance the Rapper is an excellent example of authentic expression, because of his willingness to express his Christian faith openly, while also speaking candidly (and sometimes profanely) about his upbringing. Musical artists of the present and future should take note of Chance the Rapper's attainment of subcultural capital and consider how being mindful of its influence can be applied to their own careers. By staying faithful to one's authentic identity, utilizing social media as a platform to connect with one's fan base, releasing music in a manner that disrupts the content overload of the digital age, and recognizing one's influence as a societal figure, an artist enhances his or her credibility within subcultures and builds equity with fans. All in all, there is no secret formula to fame, fortune, or mainstream success within the music industry—but being true to oneself is a great place to start down this elusive path.

Appendix A – Interviewees

Pseudonyms are Used to Maintain Anonymity

1. Jenna Anderson - Data analyst at an independent record label
2. Max Friedel - Data analyst at an independent record label
3. Sam Sloth - Fan engagement strategist at a major record label
4. Sydney Stith - Digital strategy director at an independent management company
5. Sampson Tidle - Song plugger at a major publishing company
6. Mary Johns - Artist manager at a prominent management company
7. John Smith - Business partner for a major Christian artist
8. Phillip Madden - Director of strategy at a marketing agency
9. Rich Believe - Strategy manager at a marketing agency
10. Sarah Emanual - Operations coordinator at an independent record label
11. Kate Allan - Music industry representative for a politician
12. Stephanie Sinns - Account manager for a marketing agency
13. Michael Alexandar - Founder of an independent video production company
14. Marissa Daniels - Independent pop artist
15. Jack Jones - President and general manager of a virtual reality company
16. Karen Bailey - Independent country artist
17. Shelly Jewel - Manager for an independent pop artist
18. Borris John - Brand partnership specialist at a major record label
19. Sarah Phillips - Senior editor for a prominent music industry publication
20. Meredith Henry - Manager for independent alternative band

References

Biography.com Editors. "Chance the Rapper Biography.com." *Biography.com*. Last modified May 30, 2017. https://www.biography.com/people/chance-the-rapper-5152017.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste.* Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1984.

Bourdieu, Pierre. "The Forms of Capital" (1986). In *Cultural Theory: An Anthology*, edited by Imre Szeman and Timothy Kaposy, 81-93. West Sussex, U.K., 2011.

Bourdieu, Pierre. *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge Studies in Social Anthropology Volume 16). Translated by Richard Nice. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.

Brooker, Peter. *A Glossary of Cultural Theory*. New York: Arnold Publishers, 2002.

BuzzAngle. "Chance the Rapper." *BuzzAngleMusic.*com. Accessed 2017. http://www.buzzanglemusic.com.

Caves, Richard E. *Creative Industries: Contracts Between Art and Commerce.* Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2000.

Edgar, Andrew, and Peter Sedgwick. *Cultural Theory: The Key Concepts.* New York: Routledge, 2008.

Elliott, Richard, and Andrea Davies. "Symbolic Brands and Authenticity of Identity Performance." In *Brand Culture*, edited by Jonathan E. Schroeder and Miriam Salzer-Mörling, 155-170. New York: Routledge, 2006.

Ford, Philip. "Somewhere/Nowhere: Hipness as an Aesthetic." *The Musical Quarterly* 86, no. 1 (2002): 49-81. https://doi.org/10.1093/musqtl/gdg002.

Fortune Brainstorm Tech. "Music Executives Explain the Problem with Spotify's Business Model." *YouTube.com* (video). July 14, 2015. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q6brnKNXYX4.

Hall, Stuart, and Paul du Gay. *Questions of Cultural Identity*. London: Sage Publications, 1996.

Hesmondhalgh, David. "Towards a Critical Understanding of Music, Emotion and Self-identity." *Consumption Markets & Culture* 11, no. 4 (2008): 329-343. https://doi.org/10.1080/10253860802391334.

Horsfall, Sara Towe. “Music as Ritual: A Hotline to the Collective Conscious.” In *Music Sociology: Examining the Role of Music in Social Life*, edited by Sara Towe Horsfall, Jan-Martijn Meij, and Meghan D. Probstfield, 51-59. Boulder, Colo.: Paradigm Publishers, 2013.

IFPI. *IFPI Global Music Report 2017: Annual State of the Industry*. IFPI, 2017. http://www.ifpi.org/downloads/GMR2017.pdf.

IFPI. *Music Consumer Insight Report 2016*. IFPI, 2016. http://www.ifpi.org/downloads/Music-Consumer-Insight-Report-2016.pdf.

Jensen, Patrick Dylan. (2013). “A Virtual and Actual Subculture: The Independent Music Scene in the Digital Age.” B.A. thesis, Swarthmore College, 2013. https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/handle/10066/11536.

Khavandkar, Ehsan, Nick Theodorakopoulos, Mark Hart, and Jude Preston. “Leading the Diffusion of Intellectual Capital Management Practices in Science Parks.” In *Human Resource Management, Innovation and Performance*, edited by Helen Shipton, Pawan Budhwar, Paul Sparrow, and Alan Brown, 213-231. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016.

Kitwana, Bakari. *Why White Kids Love Hip Hop: Wankstas, Wiggers, Wannabes, and the New Reality of Race in America*. New York: Civitas Books, 2005.

Laughey, Dan. *Music and Youth Culture*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006.

Next Big Sound. “Chance the Rapper.” *NextBigSound*.com. Accessed 2017. https://www.nextbigsound.com.

Nibokun, Imade. “Christian Hip-Hop Still Isn’t Quite Sure What to Make of Chance the Rapper.” *LAweekly.com*. March 7, 2017. http://www.laweekly.com/music/christian-hip-hop-still-isnt-quite-sure-what-to-make-of-chance-the-rapper-7999957.

Payne, Ogden. “Three Marketing Takeaways From Chance The Rapper’s ‘Coloring Book’ Roll-Out.” *Forbes.com*. May 30 2016. https://www.forbes.com/sites/ogdenpayne/2016/05/30/three-marketing-takeaways-from-chance-the-rappers-coloring-book-roll-out/#1ee603dbe5e1.

Peele, Jordan, and Elaine Welteroth (ed.). “Chance the Rapper Opens Up About What It’s Like to Challenge Kanye West.” *Teenvogue.com*. May 16, 2017. https://www.teenvogue.com/story/chance-the-rapper-jordan-peele-cover-interview-music-issue-creativity.

Robinson, Lisa. “Why Chance the Rapper Makes Music for Free (and How He Actually Makes Money). *VanityFair.com*. February 9, 2017. https://www.vanityfair.com/hollywood/2017/02/why-chance-the-rapper-music-is-free-and-how-he-makes-money.

Robinson, Peter. “Pop, Rock, Rap, Whatever: Who Killed the Music Genre?” *The Guardian.com*. March 17, 2016. https://www.theguardian.com/music/2016/mar/17/pop-rock-rap-whatever-who-killed-the-music-genre.

Rys, Dan. “Mixtapes & Money: Inside the Mainstreaming of Hip-Hop’s Shadow Economy.” *Billboard.com*. January 26, 2017. http://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/hip-hop/7669109/mixtapes-money-hip-hop-shadow-economy-mainstream.

Shuker, Roy. *Popular Music: The Key Concepts* (Routledge Key Guides). New York: Routledge, 2005.

Thornton, Sarah. *Club Cultures: Music, Media and Subcultural Capital*. Middletown, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1996.

TuneCore. “TuneCore Pricing”. *TuneCore.com*. Accessed 2017. http://www.tunecore.com/pricing.

Twitter. “Chance the Rapper.” *Twitter.com*. Accessed 2017. https://twitter.com/search?q=chance%20the%20rapper&src=typd.

Williams, J. Patrick. *Subcultural Theory: Traditions and Concepts*. Malden Mass.: Polity Press, 2011.

Cassidy Best, originally from Murfreesboro, Tennessee, always dreamed of becoming a singer/songwriter. In 2015 she moved to Nashville to get an education at Belmont University. Currently in her junior year, she is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Songwriting in the Curb College at Belmont University. With hopes still high of being a professional musician, Best has become heavily involved in the music industry and within multiple on campus organizations. She currently serves as the vice president of her sorority, Phi Mu (Theta chapter), and is an active member of the Belmont University Songwriter's Association. Additionally, she has explored many avenues of the music industry through her former internship at Aether, an artist management and develop company, her current internship in radio promotion at Big Machine Label Group, and of course, her role as a market research analyst as part of the Pipeline Project 7.0. Passionate about music, Best hopes to further explore all areas of the music industry, and ultimately, make music that makes people feel known.

Originally from Long Island, New York, **Katie Braile** relocated to Nashville to study Music Business and Marketing at Belmont University.

Now in her junior year, Braile is the president of Bear House Writer Management, a student-run organization that serves to provide exposure opportunities for songwriters and artists attending the university. Additionally, she is an ambassador for the networking organization and online community, Young Entertainment Professionals. Having recently participated in the Pipeline Project at Belmont University, Braile devoted ten weeks to open dialogue, market research, and analysis of music industry issues. She is currently interning with

the A&R department at Big Machine Label Group, the largest independent label in the world. Driven by a strong desire to advocate for talent, Braile is actively pursuing a career in artist management and development.

Emily Falvey is a senior, double-majoring in Songwriting (B.A.) and Music Business (B.B.A) in the Curb College at Belmont University. Falvey is a member of Alpha Chi and Beta Gamma Sigma, as well as being awarded the Emerging Leader Award and the Exemplary First-Year Resident Assistant Award from Belmont's Office of Student Affairs. She has gotten heavily involved in the music industry throughout her undergraduate years at Belmont, and currently works as a copyright consultant at the Nashville office of Warner/Chappell Music while finishing her degrees. Additionally, Falvey has completed internships with The Recording Academy/GRAMMYs, BMI Catalog Cast, SMACKSongs (a music publishing company owned by the acclaimed Shane McAnally), Warner/Chappell, as well as Belmont University's Pipeline Project 7.0.

Samantha Ross, a Cincinnati, Ohio native, is a junior at Belmont University pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration in Music Business. She is a member of the student council for the Honors Program at Belmont and is an officer for Belmont's chapter of Best Buddies Tennessee. Additionally, she was a student-athlete for Belmont Women's Basketball and a market research analyst for the Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business' Pipeline Project 7.0.

Julia Rotunno grew up outside of Chicago, Illinois but always dreamt of moving to Nashville. Now a junior at Belmont University, she is pursuing a Bachelor of Business Administration in Music Business and engaging in the university's various industry related organizations, including GrammyU, the educational arm of The Recording Academy. Additionally, she served as a market research analyst for the university's music business program, the Pipeline Project. Since being at Belmont, Rotunno has been awarded the Brad Paisley Endowed Scholarship for her contributions to the Mike Curb College of Entertainment and Music Business. As the marketing director for Belmont University Songwriter's Association and the marketing intern for *American Songwriter* magazine, Rotunno is passionate about country music songwriters and aspires to work alongside them to develop their craft and creativity.

David Schreiber is an Assistant Professor and Chair of the Entertainment Industry Studies program at Belmont University in Nashville, Tennessee. His research interests include the influences upon strategic decision-making practices within music industry micro-enterprises and the role of strategic sexual performance as it is used in creative and cultural industry organizations. He is also working on two textbooks: *Managing Organizations in the Creative Economy: Organizational Behaviour for the Cultural Sector* through Routledge Publishing in the U.K. and *Principles and Practice of the Global Music Business* through Kendall Hunt Publishing. Furthermore, Schreiber is a member of the Academy of Manage-

ment (AOM), European Group of Organization Studies (EGOS), and the Music and Entertainment Industry Educators Association (MEIEA). Prior to his time in academia, Schreiber began his career as an independent musician and teacher before moving into a Regional Sales Manager position at Schmitt Music. He later held positions as a Marketing and Business Development Manager for Shiny Penny Productions, in the licensing and royalty department of Miami Records, as Business Development Manager at Pivot Entertainment, and managed artist Dean Fields.

The authors would like to recognize and thank MV2 Entertainment and assistant researchers Luke Evans, Jeanette Porcello, Andrew Weaver, and Jacob Wunderlich for their contributing efforts in making this project a success. Thank You!

Practical Production Analysis: Helping Students Produce Competitive Songs

Misty Jones
Middle Tennessee State University

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.3

Abstract

A common goal among music production educators is that upon completion of their studies, students will be able to produce songs that are competitive in today's market. The challenge is that we cannot begin to cover all the genres and subgenres in which students express interest. This paper introduces a simple production analysis method that not only helps students achieve the aforementioned goal, but also empowers them to modify the curriculum to fit their genre of choice. This method can also be used with students who have varying levels of skill. This paper addresses four core areas of proficiency (form, instrumentation, texture variation, and audio/production techniques), the classroom method, analysis process, and the benefits and challenges that were discovered.

Keywords: music production, songwriting, production analysis, music industry, student success

Introduction

When a song is produced solely using a computer, the producer often assumes the roles of both composer and producer, engaging both creative and technical skills. Developing a curriculum that can cover both creative and technical skill sets can be a daunting task. Quite often, music production students who have completed a large portion of an academic program still seem to struggle with producing work that could survive in the marketplace. While many production programs focus on mastery of skills and software, teaching students to translate and apply that knowledge in their genres of interest is sometimes overlooked in the curriculum. The goal of the production analysis method discussed in this paper is to help students apply their findings, producing a song that is commercially competitive in their respective genres.

Four Core Areas

In this method, students focus their analysis on four core areas: form, instrumentation, texture variation, and audio/production techniques. Developing genre-specific proficiencies in these areas is crucial in order to produce a song that can compete with others in similar marketplaces.

Form

When producing in a specific genre or format, students must be aware of the appropriate musical form for that genre. Students who want to produce pop music for the radio must realize that their songs cannot be seven minutes long. Conversely, for students who want to produce progressive rock, time is not always of importance. It is essential for producers to study the form of the genre of music with which they are trying to compete. Conventional verse and chorus structures are paramount in pop music. Capturing the attention of your listener within the first ten seconds is of equal importance. These rules are clearly laid out in the music itself, but change depending on the genre and format. Studying the form of current works in students' various genres is vital if they want to be successful producers.

Some students may be able to identify the different sections of a song easily, while some might have difficulty. In pop music constructs, verses, introductions, and "outros" can usually be easily identified. However, some students struggle with identifying a pre-chorus, and as a result sometimes have trouble distinguishing where a chorus begins. If students can identify at least the first lines of a verse and main "hook" of the chorus, they can be directed to look in between those two points to see if they can identify a smaller section that sounds different. Helping students to identify differences between the "bookends" of a verse and chorus seems to help them pinpoint the pre-chorus. The same approach can be used to locate the bridge of a song, which also sometimes proves challenging for some to detect. In order to establish the bridge, students are encouraged to look for a section that sounds different than any other section, usually located in the last quarter of the song.

When studying songs that do not fit traditional formulaic molds, students are encouraged to listen for significant changes in melodies, harmonies, instrumentation, and textures and label those sections as they see fit. In some cases where simple ternary ABA form might not even apply, labeling sections alphabetically may still be appropriate. In these atypical

situations, students are encouraged to find a labeling system that works for their own analysis purposes. For the purposes of the method described in this paper, determining if the student's analysis is "accurate" is not as important as how the student uses the analysis to assist in his or her own production.

Instrumentation

Choosing the appropriate instrumentation for a song is also of great importance. Instrumentation trends are similar to fashion trends, and are genre specific. Learning how to move and evolve with current instrumentation trends is a discipline that a producer must develop if he or she wants to be successful. Trends aside, every genre has certain staples when it comes to instrumentation. Knowing these genre hallmarks and trends for instrumentation gives students a place to start when choosing sounds for a song. The instrumentation of some genres tends to be generally stable with some exceptions. For example, Figure 1 shows an instrumentation analysis of the top ten songs in the pop genre on iTunes for September 2, 2017.

By examining the analysis, we see that electronic drums are used in all ten songs, and synth basses and synths are used in eight out of the ten. One could easily argue that the use of these three types of instruments has been stable in pop music for the past several years. While the use of guitars might not be surprising, the somewhat stable use of piano, claps, and white noise effects are noteworthy. We are currently still seeing a "marimba-like" synth trend in pop music, while a couple of years ago it would have been vocal sample-based synths. A look at the top ten songs on iTunes in the rock genre reveals a somewhat different analysis (Figure 2).

While the pop chart reflects what is currently "popular" by definition, the rock chart includes both recent releases, and some songs that are considered to be back catalog songs that have remained popular over the years. The release year has been included in this analysis in order to examine trends. By examining the rock chart, we can see that the mainstays of rock instrumentation continue to be acoustic drums, bass guitar, and electric guitar. However, it is interesting to note that releases after the year 2000 have started to incorporate elements usually found in pop music, while still sticking to the core basics. Piano is also somewhat prevalent, and electric guitars are only missing in ballads. It is important to note that some sub-genres, particularly in electronic music, have even more distinct hallmarks. A song in the EDM (electronic dance music) genre might have

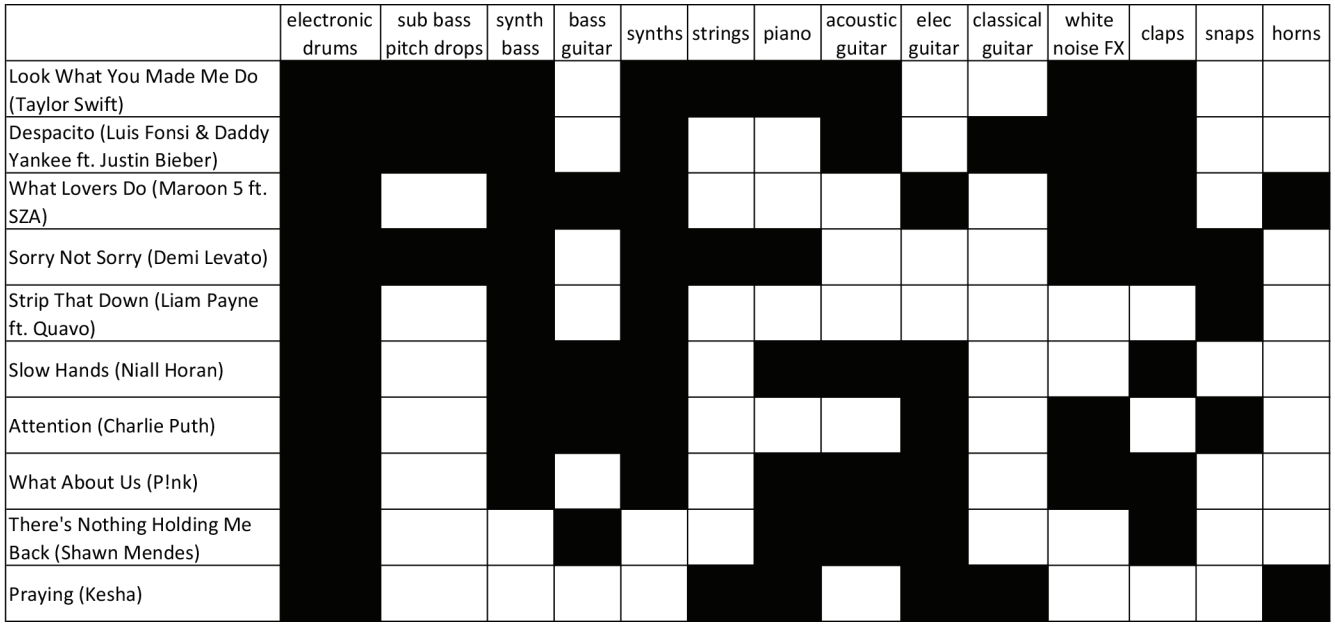


Figure 1. Instrumentation for iTunes top ten for September 2, 2017, pop genre.

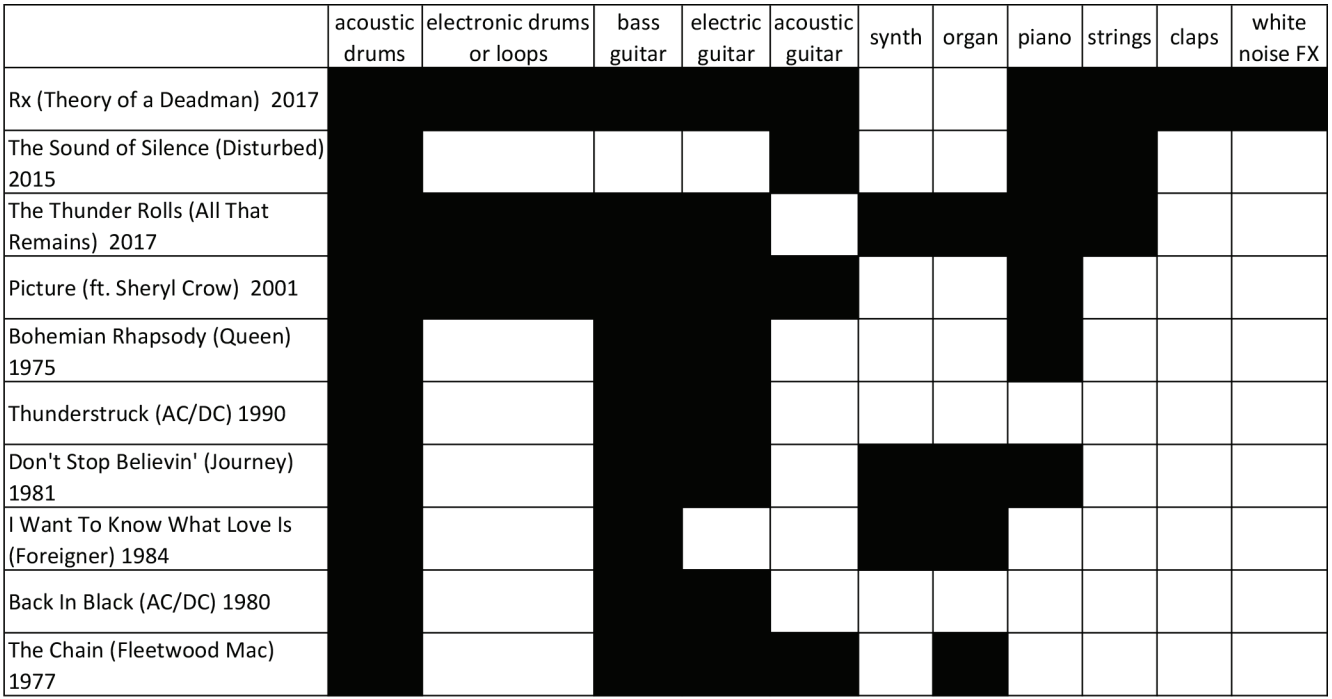


Figure 2. Instrumentation for iTunes top ten for September 2, 2017, rock genre.

multiple layers of synths, forcing the analyst to categorize by type or tone. Learning to study these varying trademarks and trends is a valuable practice that will give students a frame of reference when choosing instrumentation for their songs.

Texture Variation

Very often when an inexperienced student producer plays one of his or her songs, it is as if the song is a large mass of unformed clay, without intentional shape. The student often uses every single instrument quickly without reserving any voices for a later introduction. Learning how to vary instrumental textures and sculpt songs is an important skill to develop as a producer. After listening and studying competitive songs, one can understand the effectiveness of certain texture variations, such as delaying a bass line entrance, or stripping down instruments after a thick introduction. Figure 3 shows the intentional texture variation of the Taylor Swift song "Bad Blood."

The above analysis is an example of texture variation, structured in an intentional way that gradually builds to the end. Chorus.1 is always stripped down until the end of the song. The verses and pre-choruses are never the same twice, with new elements being brought in to avoid exact repetition. Layers are also gradually added to Chorus.2 every time it is repeated. The last chorus block is the "thickest" part of the song. The song ends the way it starts, with just the main drum loop. This analysis indicates a methodical layering of textures to avoid stagnation, and to build to a climax. Figure 4 shows a different method of texture variation in the song "Hotline Bling" by Drake.

In Drake's songs, textures are more block-like with intentional breaks. In "Hotline Bling," choruses are stripped down. The bridge is hollowed out, introducing a completely new set of instruments. The song begins and ends in a minimalistic fashion. By studying texture variation, students can see that it is not enough to simply decide which instruments to use; one also has to decide when to use them. That decision can ultimately help carry the emotional arc of the song, no matter the trajectory.

Audio/Production Techniques

In addition to composing and producing their songs, many students are mixing their own productions. That means it is crucial for them to understand how to work with frequencies, dynamics, and amplitude. If

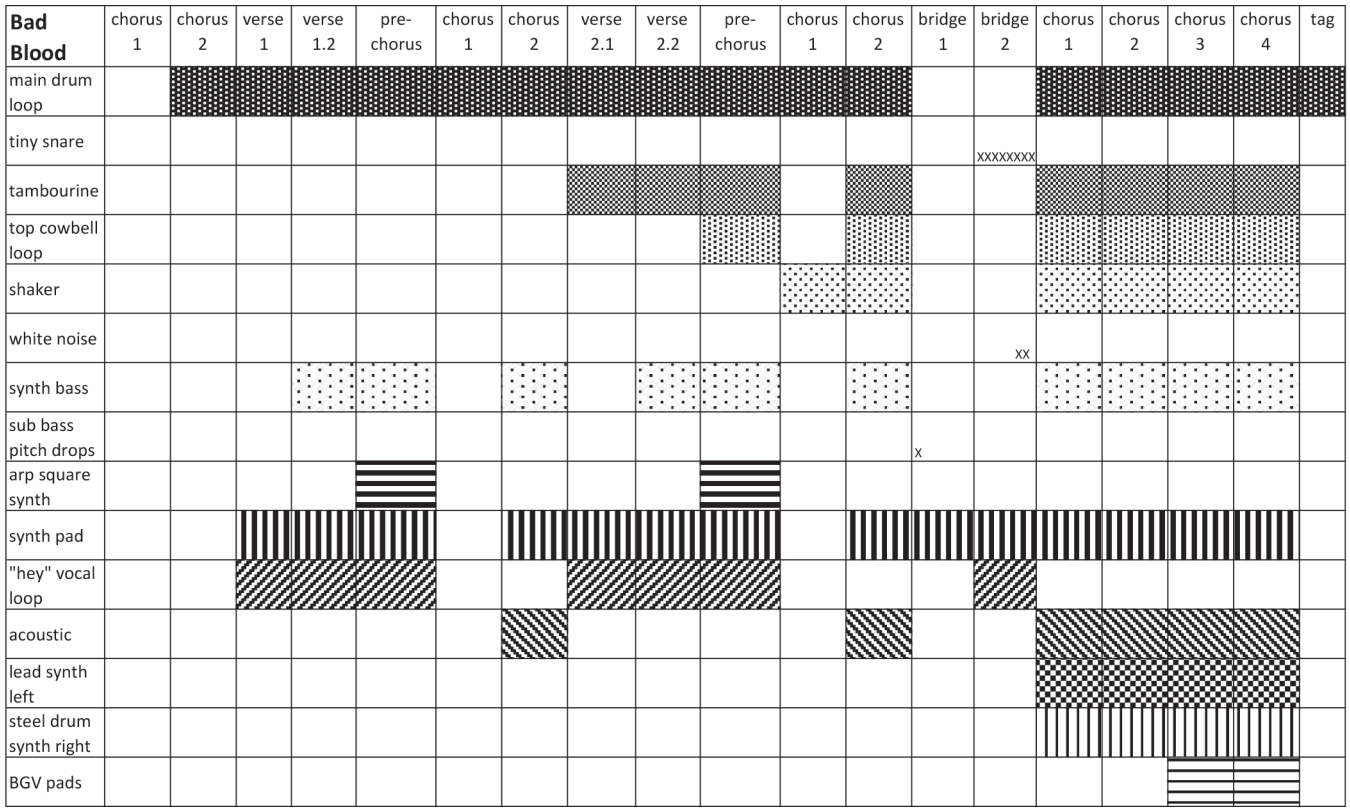


Figure 3. “Bad Blood” by Taylor Swift.

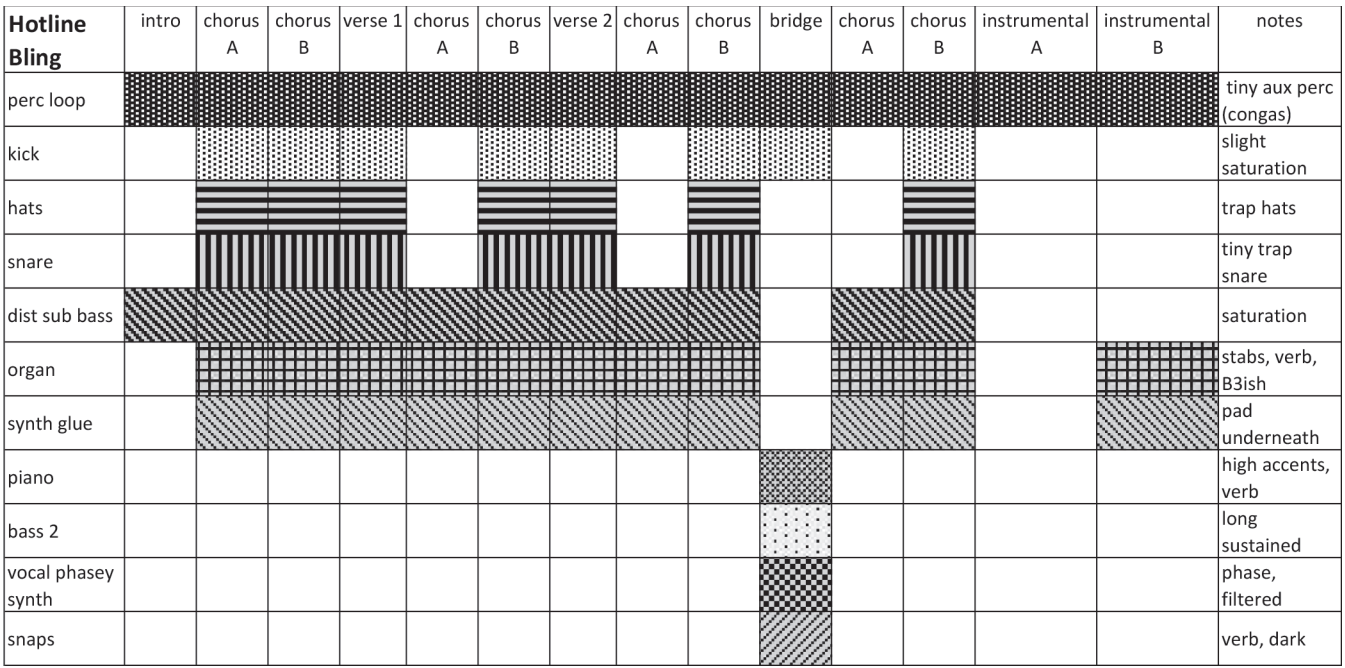


Figure 4. “Hotline Bling” by Drake.

students do not understand these mixing competencies, it becomes quickly apparent when comparing their work to the marketplace. If a song cannot hold its own sonically against another, then it will have a hard time competing. In addition to audio and mixing techniques, there are creative production techniques as well that are important to learn. These creative techniques are also subject to genre trademarks and trends, and can include everything from knowing how to use effects, to clever uses of compression. For example, the current trend in rap and hip-hop is to use distorted sub-basses. Seen in Figure 5, eight out of ten songs on iTunes' top ten hip-hop/rap chart all have distorted sub-basses. These songs are indicated in bold.

Chart Position	Title
1	1-800-273-8255 (Logic ft. Alessia Cara)
2	**Bodak Yellow (Cardi B)**
3	**Congratulations (Post Malone ft. Quavo)**
4	**Wild Thoughts (DJ Khaled ft. Rihanna)**
5	**Bank Account (21 Savage)**
6	**Rake It Up (Yo Gotti ft. Nicki Minaj)**
7	Unforgettable (French Montana ft. Swae Lee)
8	**HUMBLE. (Kendrick Lamar)**
9	**DNA (Kendrick Lamar)**
10	**XO TOUR Llif3 (Lil Uzi Vert)**

Figure 5. iTunes top ten hip-hop rap chart on September 2, 2017. Bold type indicates use of distorted sub-basses.

Another example of a current production technique specific to a certain genre is the use of low-pass filters on vocals in pop music. This effect cuts out high frequencies, giving the vocal a muffled sound. Seen below in Figure 6, five out of ten songs on iTunes' top ten pop chart all have low-pass filtered vocals. These songs are indicated in bold. Since creative production techniques seem to trend for sometimes a year or more, it is important for producers to stay informed of changes to their corresponding genres.

Chart Position	Title
1	**Look What You Made Me Do (Taylor Swift)**
2	Despacito (Luis Fonsi & Daddy Yankee ft. Justin Bieber)
3	**What Lovers Do (Maroon 5 ft. SZA)**
4	**Sorry Not Sorry (Demi Levato)**
5	Strip That Down (Liam Payne ft. Quavo)
6	Slow Hands (Niall Horan)
7	**Attention (Charlie Puth)**
8	**What About Us (P!nk)**
9	There's Nothing Holding Me Back (Shawn Mendes)
10	Praying (Kesha)

Figure 6. iTunes top ten for September 2, 2017, pop genre. Bold type indicates low-pass filters on vocals.

Methodology

In Austin Kleon's book *Steal Like an Artist*, he encourages artists to study other great artists with the intention of allowing that study to influence their work (Kleon 2012, 52). The method set forth in this paper was created with this idea in mind, directing students to study work by an artist deemed "successful" with the intention of emulating that work. For this method, we define a "successful" song as something that has either sold a large number of copies, or has had a large number of plays. The method of analysis presented in this paper was developed so that it could be incorporated into an existing course. Ideally, this method would be expanded to include the study of more than one artist in a production analysis course.

First, each student picks an artist he or she wants to emulate. The selected artist must have a song that has charted on either *Billboard* or *Beatport*. After students have chosen their artists, they choose three successful songs by that artist. Students are instructed to choose songs from the same album or era if possible. The student then analyzes the three songs using a demonstrated method, with the intention of producing an original song influenced directly by the analysis. The goal is to produce something commercially competitive, using the selected songs as the barometer.

Musical analysis often takes the form of a text document. Findings are discussed in a paper, often along with examples stated in the form of

a musical score excerpt. For this particular method, students incorporate visuals as a representation of the analysis, similar to the examples used in Figures 1 through 4. In a study conducted by Richard Mayer, adding visuals to words improved learning by 23% (Mayer 2001). By utilizing a method that is more visual, students are more easily able to see patterns and commonalities when comparing songs. An example of this visual analysis is provided for students to use as a guide (Figure 7). For the purposes of this publication, grayscale patterns are used.

First, each student listens to a song and writes out the form along the top columns of a spreadsheet. Completing this task first is important, because it will provide structure and an outline for the visual analysis. Keep in mind that students will repeat the process for each of the three songs. After comparing the form of each song, patterns and commonalities should emerge. For example, a student who has never created a bridge for a song might find that the selected artist uses them consistently, and be prompted to make that change in his or her own songs. Or a student might find that the artist consistently has a breakdown section before the last chorus, and that might be something he or she has overlooked in their personal productions. Again, the hope is that students will see intentional patterns in the form and attempt to apply those same patterns in their own songs.

After writing out the form, students list every instrument used in as detailed a manner as possible. This requires some critical listening. Even if students are unable to identify the instrument, they should at least try to describe the sound. Students are instructed to be specific beyond general groups. For example, instead of just listing "drums," students are encouraged to list the individual pieces of the drum kit. This becomes challenging when dealing with songs that may have several different types of synths or effect elements. Students are encouraged to devise their own descriptive words for each sound, which helps when they later must create that sound. Challenging the students to be as comprehensive as possible with the instrumentation list will allow them to have a more detailed look at texture variation next.

After finishing the instrumentation list, students use the spreadsheet color-fill process to fill in each cell in which the instrument is present, using the form of the song listed above. A different color is assigned to each instrument. For example, the kick might only be present in the choruses, so we would fill only the chorus cells on the "kick" row. This might require several listens, depending on how many instruments are listed. Some

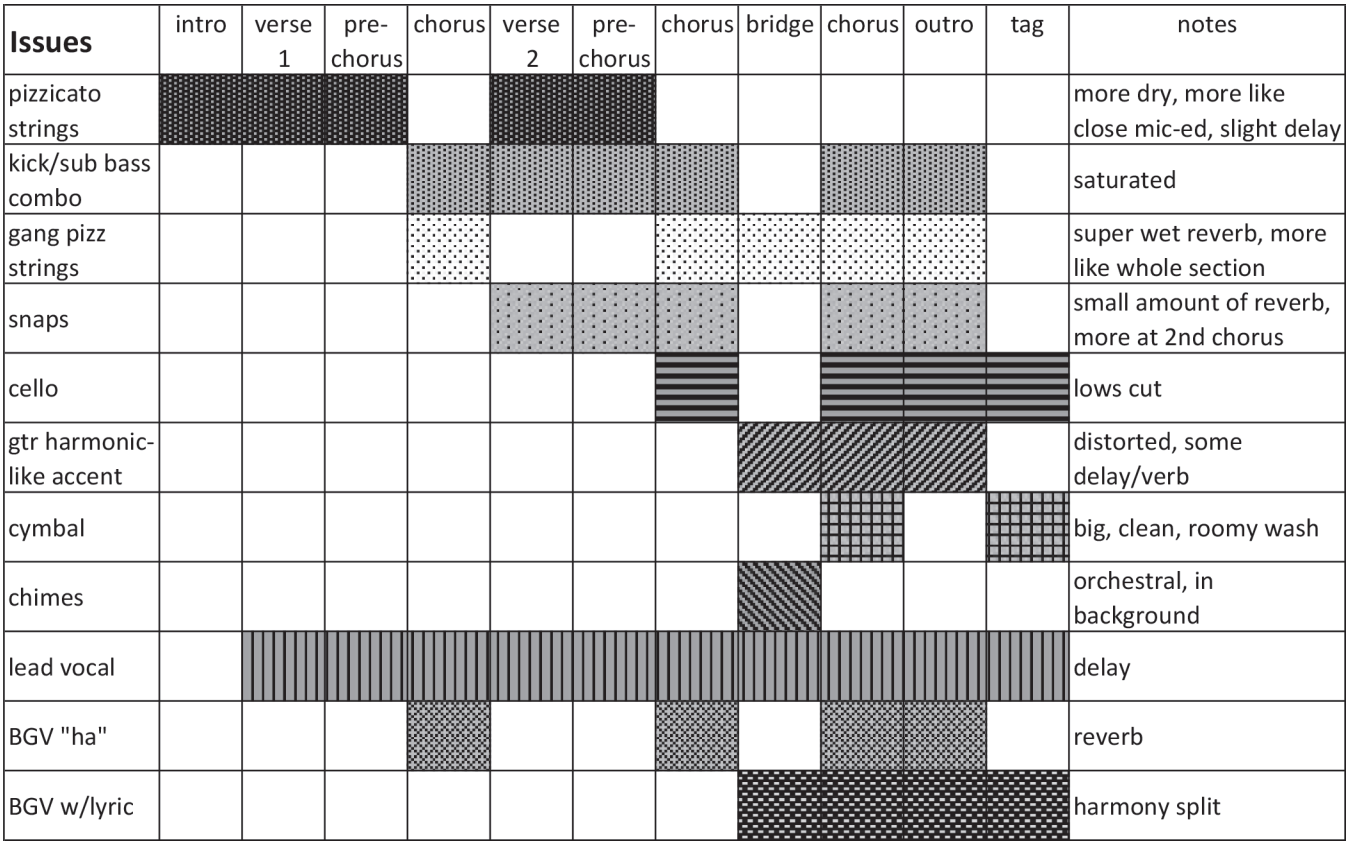


Figure 7. “Issues” by Julia Michaels.

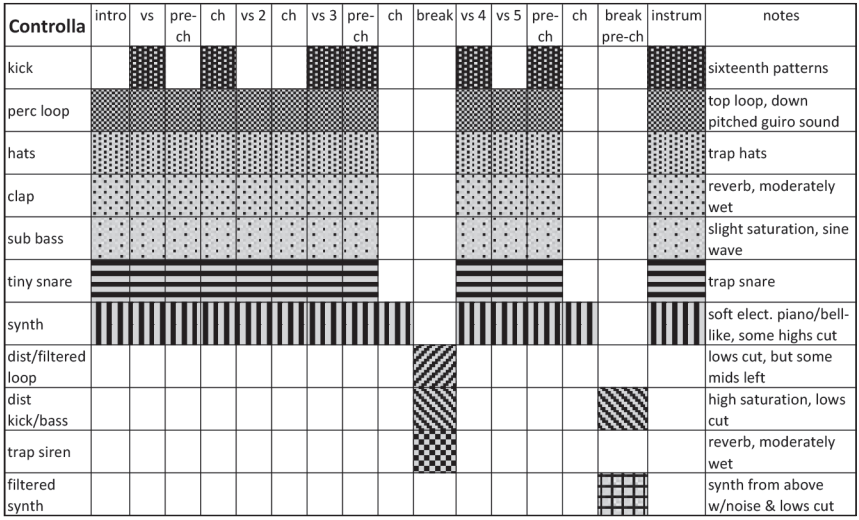
students may be capable of focusing on only one instrument at a time. After the appropriate cells are filled, we are left with a vivid representation of the variation of textures in the song. Students can see how the composition is sculpted and developed. Students who are interested are encouraged to analyze the texture of one of their own songs as well and compare it to their artist's song. For many students, it is a rude awakening of sorts when they can "see" that their song is simply a large block of sound compared to the work of the artist they have studied.

Finally, students make detailed audio/production notes next to each instrument. The notes will be extremely helpful when trying to emulate sounds in production later on. These notes could include details regarding delay, reverb, filtering techniques, or other effects. Students are encouraged to be as descriptive as possible with these notes. Some students may be able to describe effects with technical accuracy, while some may not. For example, one student might be able to describe a vocal effect as having a "low pass filter applied, cutting highs around 400Hz," where another student might only be able to describe the effect as "underwater."

After analyzing all three songs, each on a separate spreadsheet, students take screen snapshots of each sheet and then arrange all three on one screen. The alternative would be to print out all three in color. Now students can compare and contrast all three songs, looking for commonalties and patterns. Students are encouraged to search for things that might be considered "signature" techniques for that artist. This is where the visual becomes helpful (see Figure 8). When students can "see" that all three songs have a breakdown that always introduces new instruments, they become motivated to try the same technique. When they can "see" cascading instruments gradually being introduced consistently in all three songs, they realize they should pay more attention to how they introduce new voices in their own songs.

After comparing all three songs, students make a list of any commonalities they find. Then students develop a list of things they are going to try in their own productions as a result of their analysis. For example, after completing the Drake analysis, one might be persuaded to try the following:

- Hip-hop kits, slightly saturated kick drums, trap hats and tiny snares
- Distorted sub bass



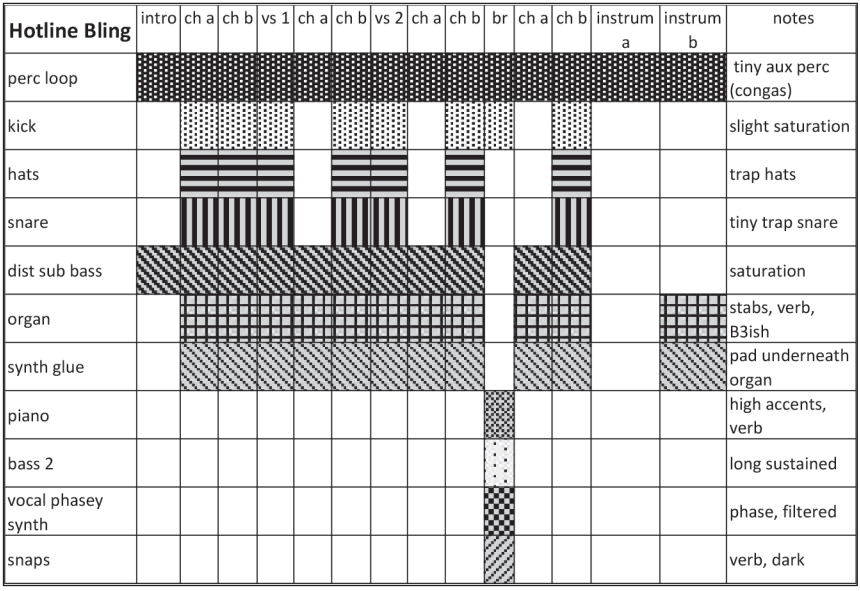


Figure 8. A comparison of “Controlla,” “Hotline Bling,” and “One Dance” by Drake.

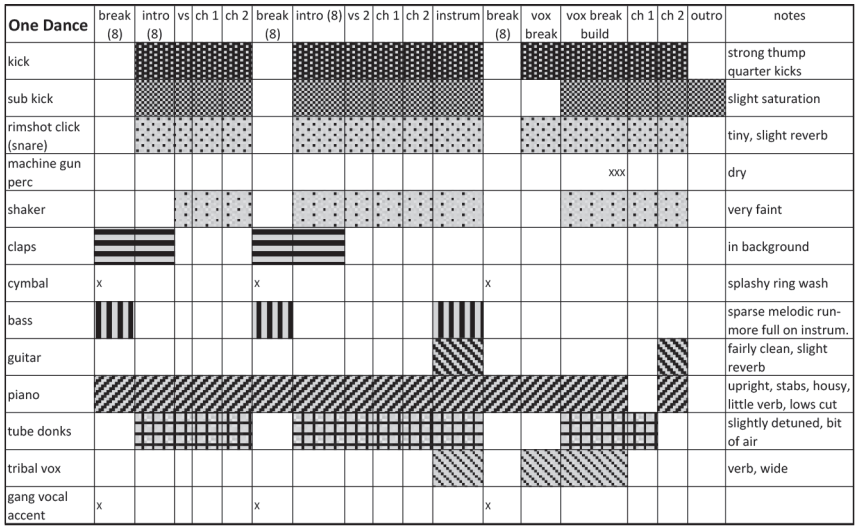


Figure 8. A comparison of "Controlla," "Hotline Bling," and "One Dance" by Drake (cont.).

- Organ or piano has constant riff
- Filtered synths
- Hollowed out choruses and breaks
- Tribal vox/perc loop/distorted and filtered breakdown
- Full instrumentals

Each student then produces a song. Subsequently, each student presents research findings to the class, playing excerpts of the songs he or she studied, concluding with the presentation of his or her own song. This creates a bit of positive peer pressure for students, knowing their works will be compared to the excerpts they play.

The Benefits

One of the benefits of using this method is that a wide variety of genres can be covered without the instructor having to bear the weight of the work. The students' presentations cover the details of their research, and as a byproduct, students learn characteristics and trends of certain genres. A second benefit from this method is that the curriculum is now tailored to the individual student's goals and interests. Students are more

motivated to study music they enjoy. By allowing them to analyze music of their choosing, students are often driven by the opportunity to figure out what could potentially be of great help to their success.

A third benefit from utilizing this method is that it can be used by students of varying levels of competence. Students often have contrasting capabilities when it comes to analysis. One student might be able to pick apart every single percussive element in a song, while another student might be able to pick out only the basics. One student might be able to hear the exact timing of a digital delay, while another might be able to hear only that delay is being used. This analysis method allows students to respond with varying levels of detail in their analysis, depending on their capabilities.

The Challenges

One of the challenges of using this method is deciding how to grade the analysis. Listening to each song the student analyzed and checking to see if the analysis is accurate takes an investment of time. A suggested solution would be to invest time in the first assignment, listening to the first song and going through their analysis in detail, as opposed to listening to all three. From that first analysis, the instructor can usually determine the student's level of comprehension and determine a baseline for depth and detail. When the second and third song analyses are submitted, the instructor can generally look over them with the student's baseline in mind, making sure the analysis is consistent with the bar already set. Grading in this manner also creates more time to review the work of the student who might be struggling with a certain area of analysis. In this particular situation, grading students based on individual capabilities is appropriate.

Another challenge is that some students persist in trying to copy the artist exactly. We must constantly remind the students that we are merely trying to emulate certain traits of the work and not trying to replicate the work. The goal is to learn from the artist and apply that knowledge to produce work of a similar quality, not to copy the artist. We must also remind the students that we are not suggesting success can be easily achieved by trying to boil an artist down to a simple formula. We simply want to try and give the student a jumping-off point that leads in the right direction.

A third challenge is motivating creatives who do not like to work within parameters. Many students who are computer-based producers tend to do little planning. If the entire studio and workflow consists of just the

student and a computer, the temptation is to sit down and simply start creating, going with the ebb and flow of creativity to see where it leads. Getting students to consciously aim for certain parameters, goals, and techniques while in the creative zone is a concept that isn't always well received by students. Showing them the value of working within some boundaries, with a goal of success in mind, has the potential to change their workflow to reflect more professional practices, yielding more competitive results.

Directions for Future Research

Aside from feedback which indicates that students seem to be motivated by the process, the effectiveness of this method lacks verification by empirical data. While positive change can be observed when comparing students' work to the artists they've chosen to emulate, there is no way to ultimately determine how successfully competitive the work can be without observing the song's survival in a real marketplace. Presently, evaluation includes a focus on the items that the student attempted to emulate and comparing those items to the artist's recording. This more objective evaluation attempts to keep the goals of the assignment in mind, measuring what is quantifiable. An alternative assessment method would be to have students analyze their final productions in the same manner in which they analyzed their artists, and then comparing their work on paper.

Students who embraced this method and presented detailed analyses, indicating strong critical listening skills, subsequently produced songs that are more commercially competitive. Students who provided less-detailed analyses produced results that could be considered less competitive. Further research would investigate the reason for this outcome by posing the following questions: were students successful at producing a competitive song because they had excellent critical listening skills, plus the technical skills required to achieve the emulation? Furthermore, if a student is lacking in critical listening skills, yet has the required technical skills, is he or she at a disadvantage? One could argue that being a successful producer requires both excellent critical listening expertise, plus technical proficiency. This argument poses further questions: what systems do we have in place to help students who struggle with critical listening skills? Can a student who has difficulty with critical listening still be a successful producer? How much of critical listening is based in natural ability, and how much of it can be taught, considering that some recordings require

critical listening at an advanced level? Further research would examine these queries.

Conclusion

By allowing students to study great artists within a chosen genre, students develop a personally-tailored, motivating curriculum, which inspires them to apply new skills, thus providing growth as a producer. The other "win" is changing the student mindset, helping each one to understand that with some study and discipline, creative goals are attainable. By helping our students work within parameters, we give them healthy limitations that hopefully contribute to helping them achieve their desired career goals. When employing a new method, the instructor must determine what the "win" will be. Ultimately, if a student's song sounds closer to being commercially competitive after this process, if even slightly, that is a win. We cannot have every single student ready for the market within one semester. However, if we can get their songs one step closer to being able to carry their weight in commercial markets, that is a success.

References

Kleon, Austin. *Steal Like an Artist: 10 Things Nobody Told You About Being Creative.* New York: Workman Publishing Company, 2012.

Mayer, Richard E. *Multimedia Learning*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Misty Jones is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Recording Industry at Middle Tennessee State University in Murfreesboro, Tennessee (MTSU). She received her bachelor's degree in Music Education from Baylor University and studied Music Technology Innovation at Berklee Valencia in Spain, where she received the Outstanding Scholar award and earned a Master of Music degree. Specializing in MIDI programming, Ableton Live, and pop/electronic music, Jones teaches synthesis and music production at MTSU. She has presented and performed at various festivals and conferences including MEIEA, MIT's EmTech España, Madrid Music Days, and the King of Spain's Impulsa Music Forum. She presented her thesis work at Sonar Music Festival in Barcelona, which was mentioned by *Billboard* magazine, and included in the textbook entitled *The Impact of Technology*, published by Capstone. In 2017, Jones won an award in Prism's International B-Side Remix competition, mentioned by *Sound on Sound* magazine. She works alongside Grammy nominated artist Kim Hill and producer/songwriter Paulette Wooten, founders of the Nashville Treehouse and the nonprofit Water The Tree, which helps develop female artists.

An Analysis of Common Songwriting and Production Practices in 2014-2015 Billboard Hot 100 Songs

David T. Tough
Belmont University

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.4

Abstract

Over the past two decades, there have been multiple studies and analyses conducted to separate and identify the components of a hit song in popular music. Some of the research has focused on a body of work (corpus studies) while others have honed in on individual songs. This paper is a multi-factor analysis of popular music recordings that attained ranking on the Billboard Hot 100 charts over the period 2014 to 2015. The purpose of this research study is to define current practices used in modern songwriting and music production. It is the author's view that in today's commercial music market both songwriting and song production techniques share a good deal of overlap. Production and engineering techniques are becoming a much more important part of the composition in today's market, branching out from their historical role of simply reinforcing good tone or adding ear candy. Many modern hit songwriters are also producers and vice versa.

By applying statistical analysis to a number of metrics, including tempo, form, introduction length, song length, archetypes, subject matter, and repetition of title, common trends of songwriting and music production were garnered. Items such as number of weeks on the Hot 100 and the song's peak position and number of songwriters and the song's peak position showed statistically significant relationships.

Common practices identified in modern production and songwriting included, but were not limited to: 1) Writing songs about love and using the "Lover" archetype, 2) Using the song's title as the hook and repeating it multiple times, 3) Co-writing, 4) Experimenting with new song forms, and 5) Using different textures in the song's production that draw in listeners from different genres.

Keywords: music production, popular music research, songwriting analysis, Billboard Hot 100 chart, hit song techniques, music industry

Introduction

Over the past two decades, there have been multiple studies and analyses conducted to separate and identify the components of hit songs in popular music. Some of the research has focused on a body of work (corpus studies) while others have honed in on individual songs. Song components such as harmonic progressions have been analyzed by hand (De Clercq and Temperly 2011) and by computer program (Burgoyne, Fujinaga, and Wild 2011). Non-musical research areas related to the popular song, such as lyrics, have also been pursued (Bhaukaurally, Feenaz, Haydar, Didorally, and Pudaruth 2012; Dhanaraj and Logan, 2005).

This paper is a multi-factor analysis of popular music recordings that attained ranking on the Billboard Hot 100 chart over the period 2014 to 2015. The purpose of this research study was to define current practices used in modern songwriting and music production. It is the author's view that in today's commercial music market both songwriting and song production techniques share a good deal of overlap. Many songwriters are also producers and vice versa.

While no direct access such as interviews with producers or songwriters/producers took place, observing and quantifying patterns in the songs allowed for the collection of indirect evidence. Every song compiled from the modern Billboard Hot 100 chart had some underlying organization and methodology. Song tempo, form, introduction length, song length, archetypes, subject matter, and repetition of title were some of the primary elements analyzed against the Billboard chart. These metrics were particularly chosen as they could be objectively analyzed. Elements such as overall marketing efforts, song textures or vocal delivery would be more difficult to quantify.

All songs appearing on the Billboard Hot 100 chart for the period of January 2014 through December 2015 were included. The hope of the author is that these results are applied in professional practice and disseminated to students of songwriting and production as well. Just as traditional music theory details commonly used techniques by classical composers, the statistical trends and conclusions laid down by this paper should not be used as hard and fast rules, but rather as guidelines.

Working music producers and songwriters hoping to improve or update their craft may also find the results of this research useful. Unsigned bands and artists might use the information to mold and choose songs that have a greater chance of commercial success. Additionally, artist manag-

ers, A&R (artists and repertoire), and radio might use the results of the analysis to determine the viability of their artists' existing songs as hits in the current market. The purpose of the study is to answer the research questions:

1. What common practices in songwriting and production did current hit songs exhibit for the years 2014-2015?
2. Were any related to the song's success on the charts?
3. How were these practices similar or different from those in the past?

Review of Literature

Background

Numerous texts on the craft of songwriting are available. However, many aspects of songcraft are in prose form and harder to quantify. The focus of the following literature review is on the most relevant studies and writings that identified multiple elements of hit songs through some type of statistical analysis, computer-based or otherwise.

The challenge faced by the author lies in the analysis of common factors in the current music industry. Many studies are dated with respect to the most current songwriting and music production techniques. A student hoping to craft a modern popular music hit must study today's contemporary charting music, which is a moving target. Songwriting and production trends change so quickly that something relevant five years ago may not be relevant on the hit song charts today. A good example would be the rise of electronic dance music (EDM) styles in the Billboard Hot 100 over the last five years. The review of literature below is condensed for journal publication. The reader is invited to view the full review of literature at www.davetough.com/songwritingproductionmeiea2018.pdf.

General Studies of Hit Songs in Popular Music

Economist David Giles (2007) analyzed the total time spent in the number-one position for songs on the Billboard Hot 100 from 1955-2003 from a longevity perspective. Giles found the life at the top of a number-one hit was enhanced significantly if it was recorded by a female solo artist, if it was an instrumental piece, or if it was able to bounce back for a second round. The average duration for an instrumental Hot 100 chart-topper was 3.13 weeks, compared with 2.76 weeks for other types of number-

one recordings. Hong (2012) continued the research of Giles, correcting previous errors, updating the dataset to 2008, and adding categories. Hong found that a number-one hit's life at the top was enhanced significantly by the inclusion of an African American performer.

In 2008, François Pachet and Pierre Roy of Sony Computer Science Laboratories published the study, "Hit Song Science is Not Yet a Science." The researchers argued that sustained claims made in the Music Information Retrieval (MIR) community and in the media about the existence of Hit Song Science could not be validated. The researchers analyzed 32,000 songs mined from the HiFind Database using sixteen identifiers that included style, genre, and musical setup; as well as main instruments, variant, dynamics, tempo, era/epoch, metric, country, situation, mood, character, language, rhythm, and popularity. Pachet and Roy concluded that existing features, including tempo used in the study of "Hit Song Science" had no significant statistical relationship with song popularity.

Jay Frank (2009), in *FutureHit.DNA*, provided fifteen factors such as creating shorter intros, creating longer songs, increasing chord changes, manipulating songs with false or incomplete endings, appealing to more than one genre, and hook repetition that spoke to adapting contemporary music productions to interface with modern standards and business models.

Dr. Yizhao Ni, project leader and a senior lecturer in artificial intelligence at the University of Bristol in England, led a team that gathered fifty years of hit song data from the top forty charts in Britain (Ni, McVicar, Santos-Rodríguez, and DeBie 2011). Using the data, they created an equation to rank a song's hit potential. The researchers broke the characteristics of a hit song into twenty-three differentiating factors including tempo, length, harmonic simplicity, mode, relative loudness, inherent energy, danceability, and stability of the song's beat (ScoreAHit 2013). The researchers also used a time-shifting algorithm that learned optimum features of the songs in the dataset through time using release date.

Some of the conclusions reached by the study seemed apparent to students of popular music history, yet became validated by the program's output. The study results included:

- Pop music hits from the 1950s through the early 1970s tended to be harmonically simpler than non-hits

- From the end of the 1970s through the early 1980s, danceability became an important factor in determining a hit song
- From the late 1980s forward, songs at the top of the charts became more harmonically complex than songs at the bottom
- Since the late 1980s, simple binary rhythms have been more successful than complex rhythms
- Slow songs such as ballads were popular in the 1980s and 1990s, while listeners in the new millennium prefer fast songs
- The loudness war is real and can be measured. The dynamic range of music has decreased every decade, resulting in progressively louder songs (Ni et al. 2011)

In 2012, Dr. Alisun Pawley and psychologist, Dr. Daniel Müllensiefen conducted a study on the most popular "singalong" songs. Their research showed songs of this type included long and detailed musical phrases, multi-pitch changes in a song's hook, male vocalists, and vocalists straining to sing at the top of their registers compelled crowds to sing along. Topping their list of songs that stirred listeners was the classic hit "We Are the Champions" by the band Queen (Pawley and Müllensiefen 2012).

Herremans et al. (2014) analyzed 139 factors including duration of the track in seconds, tempo, time signature, modality, key, loudness, danceability, timbre, and the time difference between subsequent beats. The team found that between 1985 and 2013, a dance song's average duration had decreased from 300 seconds to 260 seconds, average tempo had increased from 118 beats per minute (bpm) to 121 bpm, average loudness had increased by 4dB, complexity in timbre had increased, song energy had remained the same, and danceability (as calculated by Echonest) had decreased.

The researchers compared the hit dance songs with non-hit material and found that their algorithm could indeed predict with above-average accuracy. Herremans, one of the researchers from the initial study, ran the data again for *Billboard's* "2015 Hot Dance/Electronic Songs" (M. Neal 2015) and found that the algorithm predicted a 65% or higher probability

of a hit for all of the top ten, and over 70% probability for six out of ten songs.

Ticketbis, a popular online ticket reseller based in the United Kingdom, analyzed eleven years of number-one singles on the U.K. charts from July 3, 2004, to June 6, 2015, to detail common characteristics of the songs (Smith 2015). Of the 330 number-one singles selected for study, 138 songs were performed by a solo artist, 115 songs were performed as a collaboration between two artists, and 75 songs were by bands. The researchers found male artists, or all-male bands or collaborations accounted for 53% of the number-one hits. Female artists, or all-female bands or collaborations accounted for 23% of the number-one hits and 17% of the number-one songs were performed by collaborations that were male-led, such as "Somebody That I Used to Know" by Gotye, featuring Kimbra. Finally, 7% of the number-ones featured a female lead vocal in the context of bands or collaborations, as in the case of "Umbrella" by Rihanna, featuring Jay-Z.

Smith (2015) detailed the trend favoring male artists on the charts. Consumer gender was correlated with Spotify data. The findings showed that male subscribers spent 94% of their time listening to male artists while female subscribers spent 55% of their time listening to male artists and 31% listening to female artists. Conclusions were that music fans preferred the male vocal, an observation supported by the fact that men sang the five longest-running #1 hits of all time. Women were most successful in the area of collaboration. The research team found that male and female solo artists combined lasted an average of 1.77 weeks at number-one and bands lasted an average of 1.53 weeks. Female solo artists averaged 1.96 weeks at number-one and female collaborations such as "Run the World (Girls)" topped the U.K. charts for an average of 2.26 weeks (Smith 2015).

Studies on Song Form

Summach (2011) traced "The Structure, Function, and Genesis of the Pre-chorus" in his formal study of popular music. Summach analyzed a sample group of 700 songs from *Billboard's* top twenty songs for each year from 1955 to 1989. The songs were analyzed and coded according to harmonic, structural, and lyric attributes. Summach detailed how the pre-chorus began to appear in song form in the early 1960s and became standard fare for most popular songs. He stated,

> The momentum-building devices deployed in pre-choruses vary widely from song to song. Changes in groove, lyric phrasing, and the length of formal units, as well as dynamic level, register, instrumentation, timbre, harmonic progression, and harmonic rhythm all have the potential to increase forward formal urgency. (Summach 2011, para. 3)

Summach (2012) also examined the overall "Form in Top-20 Rock Music, 1955-89" in his doctoral dissertation at Yale University using the same dataset mentioned above. Although Summach included the use of "rock" in the study's title, it actually analyzes all genres of popular songs within the top twenty for that given year.

Summach pointed out the evolution of the twentieth-century popular song from the AABA form, to the Strophic and Verse Chorus forms, and then to the modern Verse, Pre-chorus, Chorus forms. More modern developments Summach analyzed included the multi-stage pre-chorus (found in the song "Ballroom Blitz"), post-chorus (found in songs such as "I Just Wanna Be Your Everything" and "Sir Duke"), and the expanded chorus (found in songs such as ELO's "Telephone Line"). His findings showed how rock songs actually got longer from 1955 to 1989, in contrast to Herremans' 2014 study referenced earlier. Summach additionally detailed how about ten percent of the songs in his dataset had no intro or a short pickup into the song. He detailed the decline of blues-based form in popular music over the forty-year period. Figure 1 illustrates a summary of Summach's 2012 research.

Other scholars in the field of popular song form included John Covach, Christopher Endrinal, Walter Everett, and Jocelyn Neal (2007, 2015). Over thirty dissertations, articles, and chapters had been devoted to song form in popular music, including a special 2011 issue of *Music Theory Online* (vol. 17, no. 3).

Studies on Song Length

The Whitburn Project is an online group of record collectors who manage an online spreadsheet of 37,000 songs. This spreadsheet details several factors about every popular song since the 1890s. Andy Baio (2008) analyzed the data in the spreadsheet and found that the mode of

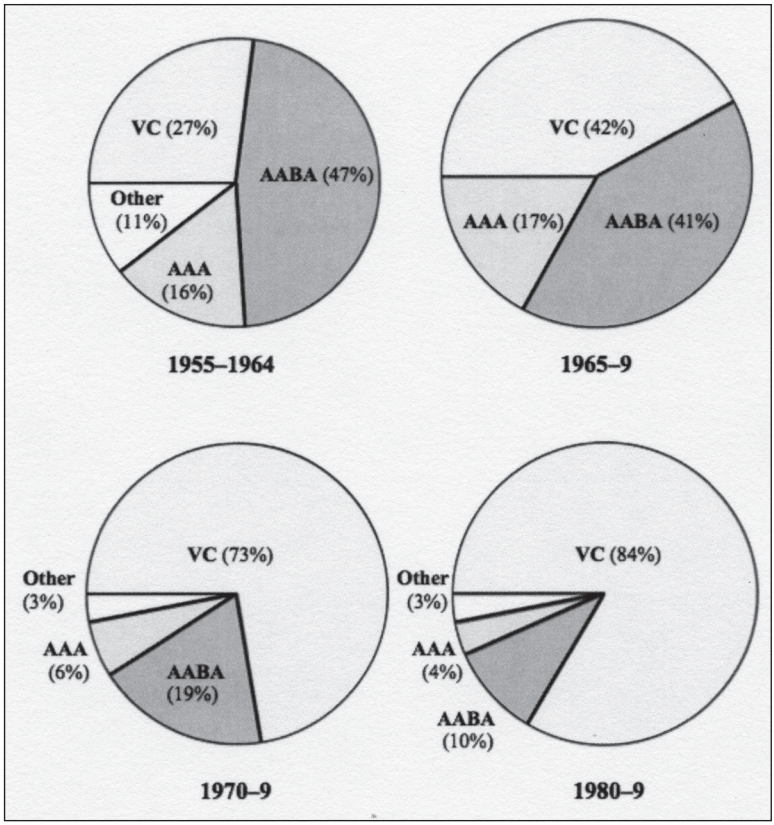


Figure 1. Composition of the *Billboard* annual top-20 charts by song type in four time periods. Adapted from *Form in Top-20 Rock Music, 1955-89,* by Jason Summach (Doctoral dissertation), 2012.

song length for songs in each decade of popular music since 1950, in general, were getting longer (see Figure 2 and Table 1).

Studies on Song Lyrics

Not all attempts at dissecting the makeup of popular song focused on harmonic or audio characteristics. Dhanaraj and Logan's results (2005) indicated that lyric-based analysis along with audio analysis was somewhat more effective than audio-based analysis alone at determining the success of songs.

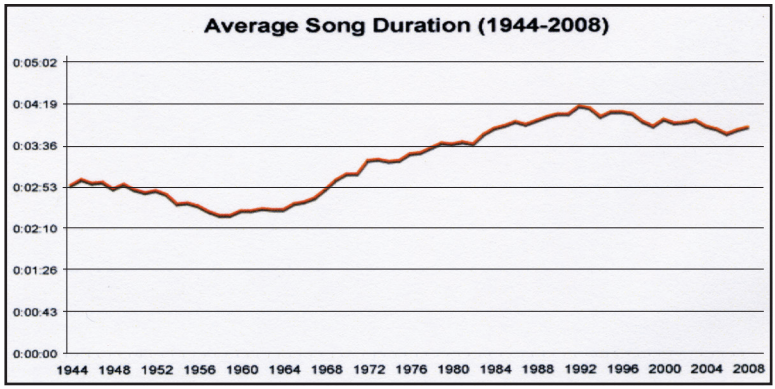


Figure 2. Average song duration, 1944-2008. Adapted from *The Whitburn Project: 120 Years of Music Chart History,* by Andy Baio, 2008. http://waxy.org/2008/05/the_whitburn_project/.

Decade	Song Length Mode Minutes:Seconds
1950s	2:30
1960s	2:30
1970s	3:30
1980s	3:59
1990s	4:00
2000s	3:50

Table 1. Mode of song length by decade. Note: adapted from *The Whitburn Project: 120 Years of Music Chart History*, by Andy Baio, 2008. http://waxy.org/2008/05/the_whitburn_project/.

An archetype is a universally understood pattern of behavior or a prototype from which others are copied, patterned, or emulated. Archetypes are used in myths and storytelling in all cultures. Marc Kuchner, a NASA scientist and songwriter, studied over one hundred country songs, identifying some common lyric and storyline archetypes in country music. Kuchner (2009) maintained that twelve stock characters continued to reappear in country song lyrics. These archetypes include the Innocent (innocent child), the Outlaw (the rebel), the Sage (giver of wisdom), the

Hero/Warrior, the Lover, the Everyman (regular guy or gal on the street), the Joker, the Explorer (adventurer), the Caregiver, the Wizard (magician), the Creator (Einstein), and the Ruler (the CEO). Examples of these in contemporary film culture are *Star Wars* characters, with Luke Skywalker as the Innocent (naïve and dressed in white), grey-bearded Obi-Wan Kenobi as the Sage, Han Solo as the Outlaw, and Darth Vader as the Ruler. Kuchner was also able to apply these archetypes to music. For example, Tim McGraw's song "Nothin' to Die For" features the narrator as a Sage who gives his wisdom to a drunk driver. In Sugarland's "It Happens," the narrator takes the role of an Innocent in her attitude toward life.

Country music scholar Jimmie N. Rogers (1989) cataloged the dominant themes in the lyrics of country music and found that the overwhelming majority of songs were written with respect to some type of romantic love ("hurtin' love," "cheatin' love," "happy love"). Jocelyn Neal (2007) added to this concept, mentioning that the time shift strategy found in songs (such as the Dixie Chicks' "Long Time Gone,") is a common lyric device found in country songs.

Andrew Powell-Morse (2015) researched song lyrics that had spent more than three weeks at number-one on the *Billboard* charts for Pop, Country, Rock, and R&B/Hip-Hop. Songs from 2004 through 2015 were specifically chosen. Study results indicated that artists in the 2005 era were producing lyrics of a third-grade (Year 4) reading level, while in 2014, the reading level had dropped to second grade (Year 3). Country music came out on top as the most intelligent genre, scoring a 3.3, with pop (2.9), rock (2.9), and hip-hop (2.6) following behind.

Studies on Song Tempo

Eric Strom, a popular music theory blogger, scanned the Billboard Hot 100 to determine tempo. Strom (2016) found the slowest song tempo on the 2015 Billboard Hot 100 was 70 bpm (beats per minute) and the fastest was 206 bpm. He found that 120 bpm, which he called the "middle C" of tempos, was both the mode and the median for the dataset. Additionally, the mean was 120.55 bpm.

Strom (2016) determined that the average song length of songs on the Billboard Hot 100 during 2015 was 3:40. 66% of songs fell between 3:00 and 3:59, 10% of songs were between 2:00 and 2:59, 24% of songs were between 4:00 and 4:59, and 2% of songs were between 5:00 and 5:59. He then tested the song tempo with chart position and found no cor-

relation. He did find a positive correlation between song length and chart dominance. Strom said that three-minute songs were most likely to earn a number-one spot. He stated,

> There is a very clear pattern that emerges when comparing song tempo and a song's "Danceability" score given to us by Echo Nest. The data shows us—without doubt—that the most danceable songs are between 95 and 140 bpm. It is undeniable. When analyzing the top 100 songs from 2015, I found that there was a significant correlation between a song's danceability score and its popularity score. Are these songs, which are more danceable, also more popular? The answer is a resounding yes. (Strom 2016, sec. 6)

Dean Olivet (2013) sampled *Rolling Stone*'s "500 Greatest Songs of All Time" list accompanied by fifty-three randomized modern pop songs. All tempos were rounded up or down to whole numbers. Songs with two separate tempos were split into two separate songs. Tempo fluctuations within a song were averaged together, such as in the case of the Beatles' "Can't Buy Me Love." Olivet charted each tempo and graphically illustrated that the largest number of songs in the dataset (3.6%) exhibited a tempo of 112 bpm. The next two close contenders were 100 bpm (3.3%) and 120 bpm (3.3%). However, no average or median data was provided.

Schellenberg and von Scheve (2012) found that when analyzing the top 40 Billboard Hot 100 chart recordings for the period 1965-2009, tempos actually slowed down (Table 2). Through correlations of several factors such as major versus minor mode and tempo, the researchers stated:

> Our findings confirm that popular recordings became sadder sounding and more emotionally ambiguous since the 1960s. These findings have striking parallels to the evolution of classical music from 1600 to 1900. Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, cues to emotion based on mode and tempo tended to be consistent, with fast-tempo pieces in major mode and slow-tempo pieces in minor mode (Post and Huron 2009), such that pieces tended to sound unambiguously happy or sad. By the 1800s and the

middle of the Romantic era, tempo and mode cues were more likely to conflict, such that the emotional status of the pieces became more ambiguous. Popular music from 1965 to 2009 shows the same developmental trend over a much shorter time-scale. (Schellenberg and von Scheve 2012, 200)

Years	% Major	Mean Tempo	Mean Duration	% Male
1965-1969	58.0	116.4	176.9	79.0
1975-1979	75.1	103.0	225.3	66.2
1985-1989	78.0	104.2	256.8	63.0
1995-1999	62.7	89.4	248.2	55.5
2005-2009	42.5	99.9	230.2	61.7

Table 2. Song mode, tempo, duration, and gender by decade. Adapted from "Emotional Cues in American Popular Music: Five Decades of the Top 40," by E. G. Schellenberg and C. von Scheve, 2012, *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 6, no. 3: 200.

Studies on Other Related Factors

Music Production

In 1987, Gary Burns provided one of the first frameworks of categories in which popular music hooks fall (lyrical, melodic, instrumental, etc.). Within each category (rhythm, melody, harmony, lyrics, instrumentation, tempo, dynamics, improvisation and accident, sound effects, editing, mix, channel balance, and signal distortion), Burns gave examples of popular songs from the 1950s to the 1980s that used each of these hook techniques.

Production Trends

Eric Strom (2014, 2015) detailed reoccurring production trends in the Billboard Hot 100 pop songs that he noticed during the years of 2014 and 2015. These included the following for 2014:

- Rapid pitch jumps in vocals using pitching/shifting programs such as Autotune or Melodyne ("vocal pitch whipping") as found in Maroon 5's "Maps."
- Sparse and spacious drum beats like those found in Rae Sremmurd's "No Type."
- Sidechaining kick to music track: a pop technique directly taken from the EDM genre, where the kick drum brings down the volume of the music track or another instrument when it hits. An example is Ariana Grande's "Love Me Harder."
- Lack of snare drum in songs such as in Pitbull's "Fireball."
- A background vocal "whoop" or "yelp" on the fourth beat of a measure (or the "and" of the 4) as in Nicki Minaj's "Anaconda."
- Pitch shifted vocals, either up or down, taken from the "chopped and screwed" technique of hip-hop, now entering pop music.
- Extremely/unnaturally in-tune vocals using pitching-shifting programs such as Autotune or Melodyne, such as in Florida Georgia Line's "This Is How We Roll."
- Reintroduction of saxophone back into popular music as evidenced by songs such as Taylor Swift's "Shake It Off" and Ariana Grande's "Problem" ft. Iggy Azalea.

Strom (2015) also constructed a "production trends" list for 2015. His observations follow.

- Repeating/chopped vocal samples such as in Justin Bieber's song "Where Are You Now" and Major Lazer's "Lean On."
- Repeating saxophone riff such as the one found in "Worth It," Fifth Harmony ft. Kid Ink.
- Pitch shifted vocals: either up or down
- 808 style snare as found in songs such as Taylor Swift's "Blank Space."
- Intentionally sloppy autotuning.
- Overabundance of sampled claps in songs.

- Minimalist drum beats or no drums in a song.
- Bad songwriting. (On original list, no definition provided.)

Repetition of Hook and Harmony

Concerning repetition in popular music, Richard Middleton (1983) posed the question, "Why do listeners find interest and pleasure in hearing the same things over again?" Middleton proposed that music had endless possibilities for repetition in the lyrical content as well as in the melodic, harmonic, and textural/temporal contexts. The author posited that when one element (melody, harmony, lyric hook, etc.) in a song repeats, another might not. This technique creates a new combination of elements at any given time. Examples might include a melodic sequence with the same rhythm but varying notes, or a constant melodic phrase repeated over a twelve-bar blues (changing chords). Middleton detailed two main types of repetition: a) musematic, the repetition of short units such as a riff or call and response pattern found in African-based music and later in blues and rock music, and b) discursive repetition, the repetition of longer units such as an entire phrase. Musematic repetition is more likely to be prolonged and unvaried. Discursive repetition can be mixed with contrasting units of various types, such as the AABA structure.

Methodology

Background

Billboard is one of the oldest publications in the world devoted to music and the music industry. The Billboard Hot 100 remains the best tool to draw general conclusions about the production and songwriting attributes found in popular commercial songs. The Billboard Hot 100 represents all popular genres and takes popularity rankings from multiple data points. Using data gathered from chart performance also helps researchers keep personal musical experience and preferences in check (Giles 2007). The chart remained a primary foundation in the majority of previous scholarly studies that attempted to draw statistical conclusions about the behavior of popular singles over time (DeWall, Pond, Campbell, and Twenge 2011; Giles 2007; Pettijohn and Sacco 2009; Zullow 1991).

Data Collection

The sample for this study was limited to all songs found on Billboard Hot 100 charts over a two-year period, January 4, 2014, through December 26, 2015. This dataset included just under 1,000 songs: 458 songs that appeared on the Hot 100 in 2014 and 500 songs that appeared on the Hot 100 in 2015. The list of 2015 songs was larger than 2014 as it contained "carry over" songs from 2014. All data were gathered by the author and verified by the research assistant. The research assistant was blind to the study's primary questions and worked independently. In cases where disagreement emerged, the author and research assistant discussed and came to an agreed-upon conclusion. As with any analysis of artistic material, some factors in this study included a measurable amount of subjectivity. For example, when codifying archetype, the researchers had to rely on their personal interpretations of the song's meaning. Data collection steps were as follows:

Billboard Hot 100 charts found online at billboard.com and songdatabase.com were used and cross-verified to input "Artist" and "Song" for each song on the Billboard Hot 100 each week. Information for "Chart Debut," "Peak Date," "Peak Position," "Weeks on Chart," "Features Another Artist" and "Male/Female" was also gathered from these sources. For songs that had multiple equal peaks, the author and research assistant opted to use the first peak date in the spreadsheet. If a song's time on the Billboard Hot 100 chart began before January 4, 2014, the data was tracked back to the week that the song first appeared on the chart. This means the total number of weeks on the chart for each song is inclusive of all dates the song appeared.

However, on the 2014 data spreadsheet, all calculations ended with the final 2014 chart date, meaning that for songs that continued to appear into 2015, the final calculation of number of weeks on the chart is found in the 2015 sheet. Additionally, some songs reappear on the charts due to unique events, such as Mariah Carey's "All I Want for Christmas Is You," reappearing every year as a Christmas single. The gender of the performing artist was coded as "male" in cases of a male solo performer (e.g., Fetty Wap) or an all-male band (e.g., Twenty One Pilots). If the lead singer of a band was female but other band members male (e.g., No Doubt, Paramore), the song was coded "female." If the song was a male/female duet or a male artist featuring a female artist, the song was coded as "both."

"Length," and "Length (num)" were found using iTunes search. In some cases, multiple song lengths are listed for a single song. This was usually a difference between the "album" version of a song and the "single" version of the song. In most cases, the Hot 100 charts identified and ranked as "single" version was used because it was the version of the song on the radio and otherwise widely available to the public. A one-second discrepancy in song length occasionally exists between original and clean versions of songs, usually hip-hop. This is generally an arbitrary difference caused by the mix-down of a certain version of a song containing a tiny bit of extra empty space. The shorter length of the two versions was used unless an actual, audible change in length could be detected.

Using songbpm.com and audiokeychain.com as references, the "bpm" for each song was calculated. If tempo information between the two sites conflicted, the song was located on Spotify and a bpm tapper was used to manually tap out the beats per minute. If a song sped up in tempo during its duration, the average tempo between song extremes was calculated. If the tempo was strange or varied significantly, it was noted in "Tempo-Other." A good example of this was Drake's "0 to 100/The Catch Up;" two seemingly separate songs are contained in one recording.

Genius.com and Google Play Lyrics were used to search for song lyrics. These sources were used to calculate "Number of Times Title Appears in Song" and "Song Hook in Title," and to analyze "Song Structure." Some songs started with an alteration of the primary chorus, which could be considered both intro and chorus. In these instances, these were identified as a chorus in the assessment of intro lengths. "Harlem Shake" was the only fully instrumental song to appear on the Hot 100 during this period, so it was excluded from lyrical analysis.

BMI, ASCAP, and SESAC repertory searches were used to fill in the "Songwriters" and "# of Songwriters" columns. The crediting of songwriters was based on official PRO registrations. While the author and research assistant devoted significant time to mark the use of samples, in some instances, sampled artists were both credited and un-credited as co-writers of derivative material, a conflict based on individual arrangements made in the clearing of samples.

YouTube was used to find "Song Link" for the official song version of each song. "Intro Length," "Synopsis" "Rap Integrated?" and "Archetype" were also gathered from the YouTube source. The archetype field used Kuchner's (2009) twelve prime archetypes of Innocent, Outlaw,

Sage, Warrior/Hero, Lover, Everyman, Joker, Explorer, Caregiver, Wizard, Creator, and Ruler. The author added a final archetype of "Partier" because so many current popular songs rely on this character role.

WhoSampled.com was used as a primary resource and cross-referenced with PRO registrations to note whether any songs had "Samples Used." In some instances, artists had sampled their own previous material. This included material from simple vocal lines to full musical selections. The former is true in the case of Juicy J's song "Bandz a Make Her Dance," sampling a vocal call from his group Three 6 Mafia's "Mafia N****z." The author and research assistant still consider them as samples, even though clearance might not have been necessary.

Yet another qualifier for songs that included a sample were songs produced by certain artists or producers containing sampled "tags" that announced an artist or producer as being involved on the track. A clear example of this was producer DJ Mustard placing a vocal sample, originally spoken by artist YG, saying "Mustard on the beat" in several songs. Again, we considered this a true sample and marked its use as such.

While WhoSampled.com identifies the rerecording of lyrics from another song as a sample, in the present study, this is classified as a cover or musical/lyrical reference (interpolation). A sample must be a recorded sound of some kind being repurposed in a song. We went so far as to listen to and compare each alleged sample to make this judgment personally. WhoSampled.com is the best resource available at this time to find samples within records but cannot be considered comprehensive. If there were other interesting qualities about the song, including common trends, they were included in the "Comments" column of the specific song.

Category Definitions

Please see the full study at *www.davetough.com/songwritingproductionmeiea2018.pdf* for a full list of definitions and song structure terminology.

Results and Discussion

The study results sorted by category appear in this section. Tabulation, descriptive statistics, and correlation analysis were used to obtain the results.

Introduction Length

The average length of the song introductions for all songs found on the Billboard Hot 100 chart during 2014 and 2015 was 12.29 seconds, with a median of 12 seconds (see Figure 3). Forty-three percent of the song introductions lasted 0 to 10 seconds and 13.2% of the songs had no introductions. These songs generally opened with either the full song (including vocals) or with a cappella vocals followed by the song's full instrumentation entering shortly after.

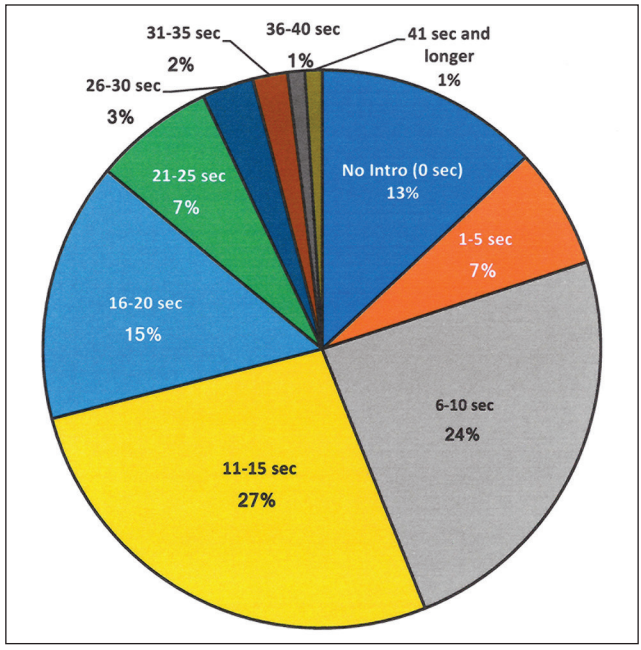


Figure 3. Introduction length of all songs on the Billboard Hot 100 chart, 2014-2015.

Jay Frank (2009) argued that the commercial purpose for a song intro in the past was to give radio DJs talk-over time. With portable and digital technologies, skipping a non-engaging intro is easy for the listener. In today's market, the consumer's attention span is shorter than ever, resulting in the need for the producer and songwriter to employ tight, engaging introductions or sometimes no introductions at all (Frank 2009). A recent study by Edison Research (2016) stated the average American user of AM/FM radio switched the station 22 times during a commute, while those using other platforms switched an average of 9.3 times per commute.

Of the 958 songs in this dataset, 126 (13%) began either with a chorus or a hook. Frank believed that after the first listen, the introduction of a modern song should trigger something unique about it in the first four seconds. If this does not happen, the listeners will not be able to identify the song from their first listen and therefore not be able to purchase it immediately on iTunes (Frank 2009). Murphy (2011) asserted that the producer/songwriter must get the listener involved within the first sixty seconds, or the listener will turn off the song. Songs in the digital streaming format need a minimum of sixty seconds of listening time to count as a play and thus generate royalty income (Frank 2009).

A correlation was calculated to index the strength and direction of the relationship between success, as measured by peak position, and intro length. The correlation indicated a weak positive relationship, $r = .074$.

Song Length

The average length for all songs found on the Billboard Hot 100 during the years 2014 and 2015 was 3:44 (3 minutes and 44 seconds), with a median length of 3:39. The majority (68%) of the 958 songs were 3:00-3:59 (see Figure 4). Twenty-four percent were four minutes or longer. One

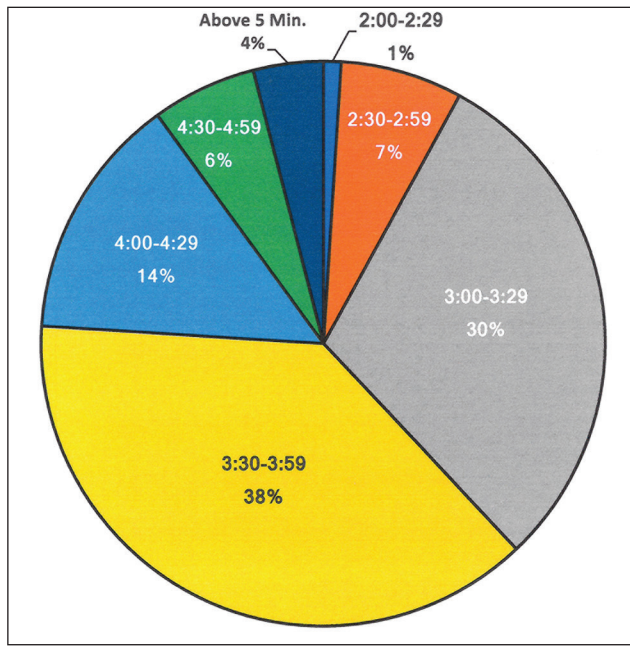


Figure 4. Length of all songs on Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

factor for the increase in average length of a current song from the past standard of the radio hits of the 1960s through 1990s, which was closer to 2:30-3:30, could be the inclusion of "other" data sources into the Billboard Hot 100 (YouTube**,** streaming sites, etc.) that did not rely on song length as much as traditional radio did.

Song Tempo

Swaminathan Schellenberg (2015) stated,

> Fast-tempo music is considered to sound happier than slow-tempo music, just as major and minor modes are happy and sad sounding, respectively. In general, adult listeners give higher liking, pleasantness, or preference ratings to happy over sad sounding music. (192)

Since the end of the 1970s, danceability has become an important factor in determining a hit song. The Echo Nest dataset defined danceability as, "The ease with which a person could dance to a song, over the course of the whole song." The focus on a song's danceability was evidenced by the fact that the average tempo for all songs found on the Billboard Hot 100 during the years 2014 and 2015 was 116.65 bpm and the median tempo was 118 bpm. The mode of all tempos was 120 bpm, aligning with Strom's 2016 findings presented earlier.

Another interesting trend was the sheer amount of faster songs in the Hot 100. Forty-eight percent of the 958 songs in the dataset were 120 bpm or faster and 22% of the songs were 140 bpm or faster (see Figures 5 and 6). The correlation coefficient ($r = .269$) provided evidence for a moderately strong positive relationship between beats per minute and the number of weeks in the Hot 100.

Genre

Pop was the most prevalent genre for all songs found on the Billboard Hot 100 during the years 2014 and 2015. Table 3 shows genre distribution over the two-year period. If *Billboard* categorized a song as belonging to multiple genres (e.g., hip-hop/rock), it was counted once in each category. Note that genres that included only one song among the 958 total songs (folk, holiday, retro) were not included in the table.

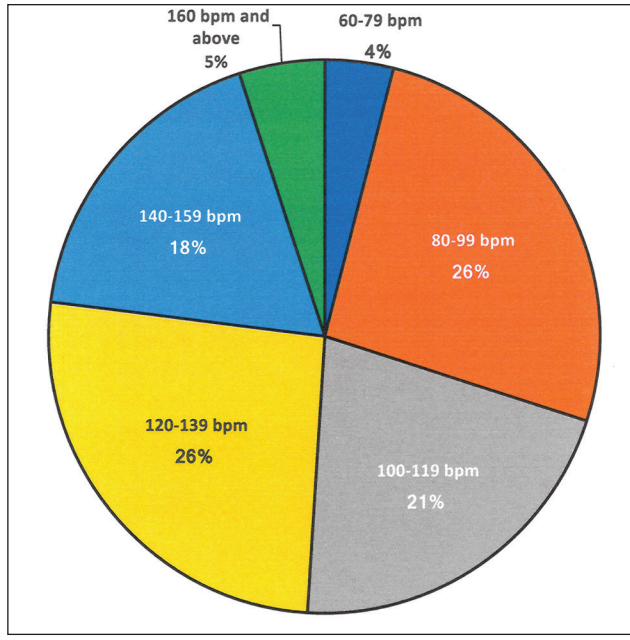


Figure 5. Song tempo of all songs on Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

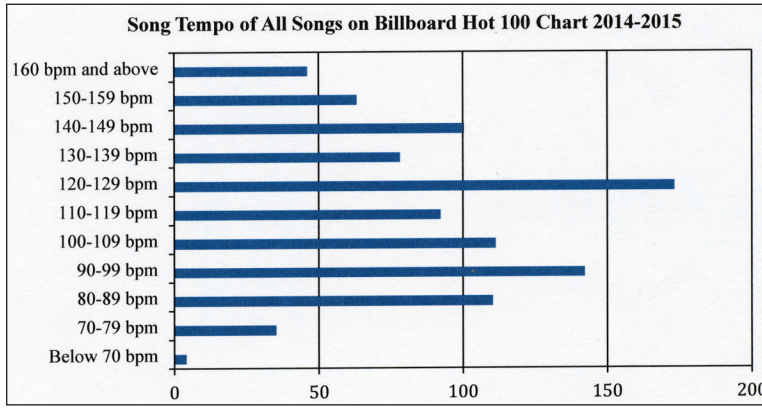


Figure 6. Song tempo of all songs on Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Genre	*f*	%
Country	194	20
Hip-Hop	243	25
Latin	5	1
Pop	358	37
R&B	82	9
Religious	5	1
Rock	67	7

Table 3. Genre prevalence of Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Number-One Charting Songs

Of the 958 songs in the Billboard Hot 100 spreadsheet, only 27 achieved the number-one spot on the Billboard Hot 100 chart. The breakdown by major genre is found in Table 4. Pop holds the top spot by a large margin. This is due in part to the nature of pop music being "popular" music as well as the genre's large span, ranging from pure pop artists like Katy Perry to more indie rock or indie pop artists like Fun and Echosmith. Both rock and country genres failed to achieve a number-one song on the Billboard Hot 100 charts for the years studied. The highest position a country song has held was fourth place, which was held by Florida Georgia Line's "Cruise." The highest charting rock song was Maroon 5's "Sugar," although some believe that Maroon 5 straddles the line between rock and pop.

Genre	*f*	%
Pop	19	70
Hip-Hop	4	15
R&B	4	15
Rock	0	0
Country	0	0

Table 4. Genre of number-one songs on Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Song Archetypes/Subject Matter

A good song, just like an effective brand, typically evokes a familiarity, embodied character role, or archetype. When listeners hear a song that

contains an authentic archetype, the song brings meaning to their lives (Kuchner 2009). The Lover archetype was by far the favored narrator role/stock character found in the Billboard Hot 100 during the years 2014 and 2015, appearing in 62% of the songs (see Figure 7 and Table 5). The Lover, as defined by Kuchner, is a character that focuses on matters of the heart. Two other popular character roles for the narrator during the years 2014 and 2015 were Warrior, the hero character that takes responsibility and faces challenges such as in the song "Roar" by Katy Perry, and the Ruler, being the boss, the president, or the CEO, as found in Fifth Harmony's

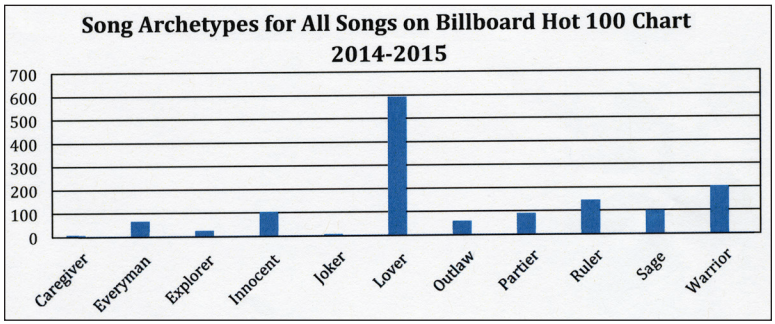


Figure 7. Song archetype of all songs on Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Archetype/ Stock Character	*f*	%
Caregiver	7	1
Everyman	66	7
Explorer	25	3
Innocent	104	11
Joker	7	1
Lover	592	62
Outlaw	59	6
Partier	89	9
Ruler	144	15
Sage	100	10
Warrior/Hero	202	21

Table 5. Archetype prevalence of Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

song "Bo$$." As mentioned in the methodology section, the archetype of Partier was added to Kuchner's original 2009 list to accommodate the growing number of today's commercial songs using that character role. If the author categorized a song as comprising multiple archetypes (see Table 6), the song was counted once in each category.

Archetype	*f*	%	Overall Combined Message
Warrior/Ruler	94	10	Character is leader/boss and overcomes the odds
Partier/Innocent	63	7	Character or subject is enjoying life and having fun, typically from a young perspective
Lover/Outlaw	25	3	Character rebels against authority for love

Table 6. Archetype combinations in Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Use of Title in Song

Jay Frank (2009) believed a song's title should provide the public instant accessibility for purchase. The more often the title is repeated, the more memorable the song is for purchase. However, too many iterations of the title could be cumbersome. De Clercq (2008) advocated the balance of "variety versus unity" to maintain interest in the song. Sometimes the song's title is not the hook itself. In the present study, iterations of the title appearing in the lyric sheet were counted. Thirty-five of the 958 songs (4%) found on the Billboard Hot 100 during the years 2014 and 2015 did not include the song title in the song lyrics. Some examples of this are "Cecilia And The Satellite," "100 Grandkids," and "The Christmas Song." On the opposite end of the spectrum, in "My Ni**a" by YG, the song's title/hook appears 86 times, while in PSY's "Hangover" the song's title/hook appears 150 times, counting both the sung repetitions and artificially created repetitions (i.e., delays).

The average number of times the title appeared within a song on the Billboard Hot 100 during the years 2014 and 2015 was 11.75 (12) times, the median was 9 appearances, and the mode was 6 appearances. A correlation was calculated to index the strength and direction of the relationship between success, as measured by peak position, and number of times the title appears in the song. The correlation indicated a weak negative non-

significant relationship, $r = -.086$. A similar correlation was calculated to measure the relationship between success, as measured by weeks on the Hot 100, and number of times the title appears in the song. The correlation indicated a weak non-significant relationship, $r = .054$. A third correlation was calculated to test the strength and direction of the relationship between genre and number of times the title appears in the song. The correlation indicated a weak non-significant relationship, $r = .078$.

Song Form

Recalling the AABA song form, and the get-to-the–chorus-quick mentality, 127 (13%) of the songs started on the chorus/hook with no musical intro and 88 songs (9%) had a brief musical intro but went straight to the chorus. In other words, 21% of the songs started with a chorus, not a verse. When divided by major genre (omitting genres with only a few songs present on the Billboard Hot 100 chart including folk, Latin, holiday, and religious), what might be the most interesting piece of information is that all genres predominately start with a verse except for hip-hop. Hip-hop songs on the Hot 100 start with a chorus at a roughly 2:1 ratio (see Table 7).

Genre	Songs Starting With a Verse	Songs Starting With Something Other Than a Verse (Chorus, Bridge, etc.)
Country	190	4
Hip-Hop	76	165
Rock	308	51
R&B	57	25
Rock	55	12

Table 7. Song starts by genre, Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Song forms varied widely but two of the most popular were:

- Intro, Verse, Pre-Chorus, Chorus, Verse, Pre-Chorus, Chorus, Bridge, Chorus
- Intro, Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus, Bridge, Chorus

Two examples of interesting and inventive song forms were Dillon Francis and DJ Snake's "Get Low" (Hook-8x, Hook 2-28x, Chorus, Hook-8x, Hook 2-28x, Chorus), a song based solely on hooks with no storytelling, and Jennifer Lopez's "I Luh Ya Papi" (Bridge 1, Verse, Bridge 2, Chorus, Bridge 1, Verse, Bridge 2, Chorus, Verse, Verse, Chorus), a song that relied on the heavy presence of a repeated bridge section.

Disappearing Third Verse/Appearance of Post-Chorus

An interesting piece of data to arise from this study was the range of song structures that now exist in modern music. Traditionally a Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus, Verse, Chorus structure was standard (with the third verse potentially replaced by a bridge). Currently, especially in the genres of hip-hop and country, structure seems to be changing. In country, a third verse or bridge is still standard, but is no longer a given in every song: look at Eric Church's "Cold One." In hip-hop, unique song structures are more common. Examples include Kanye West's lack of a chorus in "Blood on the Leaves" and the combination of two noticeably separate songs mixed into one track, as in Drake's "Pound Cake/Paris Morton Music 2."

The rise of the post-chorus, detailed by Summach (2012), provides a secondary earworm typically containing the hook added to the end of the traditional chorus. Examples are in Sam Hunt's "House Party" and One Direction's "Steal My Girl." This technique appeared in 40 of the 958 songs (4%) on the Billboard Hot 100 charts during the years 2014 and 2015.

Number of Songwriters Versus Genre

During the period of 2014-2015 country music averaged the least number of songwriters, with fewer than three per song. Both rock and pop averaged slightly less than four songwriters per song, while hip-hop and R&B both averaged just over five. This is interesting for a number of reasons, including the issue of royalty distribution by genre and songwriting/production opportunities for writers of each genre. Co-writer differentials with respect to genre remained steady through both years in review (see Figure 8 and Table 8).

Just 53 of the 958 songs (5.5%) on the Billboard Hot 100 charts during the years 2014 and 2015 were written by a sole writer. The mode for number of co-writers for songs appearing on the Billboard Hot 100 charts

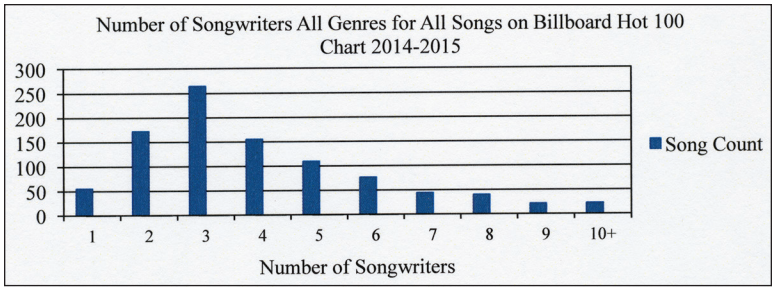


Figure 8. Number of songwriters for all songs on Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Genre	2014 Writers per Song	2015 Writers per Song
Country	2.88	2.88
Hip-Hop	5.38	5.00
Pop	3.53	4.08
Rock	3.97	3.80
R&B	5.09	5.14

Table 8. Writers per song by genre, Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

during the years 2014 and 2015 in all genres was 3.00 and the average was 4.07 writers per song. Co-writers may have one primary expertise (lyrics or melody) and rely on their counterparts for the other element to draw out each other's creative strengths. Writing with the producer allows both parties to have creative input into the product and financial incentives in its outcome.

A correlation was calculated to index the strength and direction of the relationship between success, as measured by peak position, and writers per song. The correlation indicated a weak negative non-significant relationship, $r = -.10$. A similar correlation was calculated to measure the relationship between success, as measured by weeks on the Hot 100, and writers per song. The correlation indicated a very weak non-significant relationship, $r = .06$.

Artist Collaborations

Of the 958 songs in the dataset, 317 (33%) featured collaborations between artists, such as Missy Elliott featuring Pharrell Williams in the song "WTF." The most common type of collaboration was a typical pop song with a rap verse injected into the form. This type of collaboration appeared in 295 (31%) of all songs appearing on the Billboard Hot 100 charts during the years 2014 and 2015.

The analysis showed that choosing two types of artists, especially those from two different genres, to perform on a song widened the song's appeal and chances for commercial success. A musical reason might also exist for the effectiveness of featuring an artist from another genre. Jay Frank (2009) wrote that to be commercially successful in today's market, a song cannot rely on a monotonous, sampled groove to be hit-worthy. It must have several textures and style changes. A listener typically hits the boredom mark with a song at around two minutes of play. If something interesting like a fast rap or a developed instrumental section can be inserted into the song, it will keep the listener's interest. Frank used the Gorillaz' "Feel Good Inc." as an example of the constant shift in styles contributing to a song's popularity (Frank 2009).

Male vocals dominated the charts. Of the songs, 643 (67%) featured a male lead singer, whereas female lead vocals were featured in 213 songs (22%). Only 11% featured both genders singing the lead vocal (i.e., duet performances). See Figure 9.

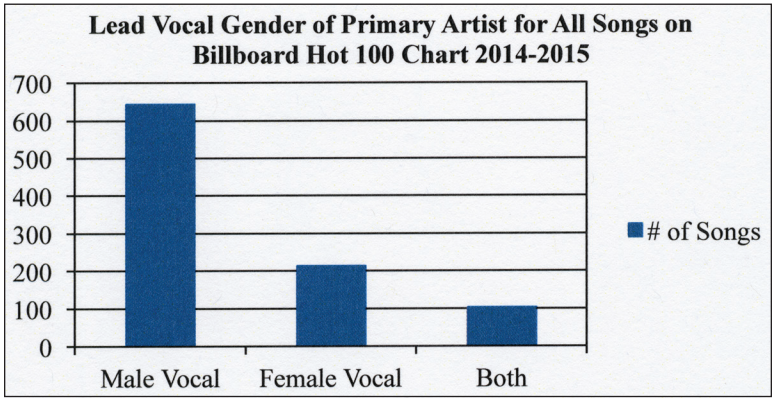


Figure 9. Lead vocal gender of primary artist for all songs on Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Presence of Hip-Hop/Rap

Hip-Hop/Rap started the process of becoming a commercially viable genre in the 1980s. The prevalence of the genre in modern music grew through the 1990s and 2000s and reached a point where the genre and its influence bled into multiple genres, including pop, rock, and even country. Of the 958 songs in the spreadsheet, 295 of the songs (31%) had a rap integrated somewhere in the song (verse, bridge, or throughout). Most of the time, the rap feature was performed by another artist, as referenced above, but not always. Additionally, the 31% did not include songs that have rap influence in their structure or flow, but rather songs that had at least one actual rap verse. This meant that nearly one third of all songs on the Billboard Hot 100 Chart featured a rapper in some capacity.

Production Trends

Referencing some of the 2014-2015 hit production trends detailed by Strom (2014, 2015, 2016), the author and research assistant analyzed the 500 songs appearing on the Billboard Hot 100 charts during 2015 (Table 9). Using Strom's results and comparing them to our spreadsheet, we found validity in many of Strom's observations.

Production Trend	Number of Songs in 2015	Song Example
Repeating/chopped vocal samples	21	Justin Bieber "We Are"
Repeating saxophone riff	6	Fifth Harmony "Worth It"
Pitch-shifted vocals—either up or down	19	Bryson Tiller "Don't"
808 style snare/trap drum influence	63	Ciara "I Bet"
Intentionally sloppy auto-tuning	31	Big Sean "All Your Fault"
Overabundance of sampled claps	148	Kevin Gates "I Don't Get Tired"

Table 9. Production trend and song example, Billboard Hot 100, 2015.

Other Data Analysis

A Pearson correlation analysis for the combined 2014 and 2015 charts was calculated for any variable that could be analyzed numerically. Additionally a two tailed t-test was performed $df = 854$, $p = .000$. Variables

such as song form could not be quantified for correlation. Correlations were taken as a whole for all genres on the 2014-2015 charts, as well as disaggregated for songs in the country, hip-hop, pop, R&B, and rock genres because the number of songs was sufficient. Highlights of any variables that showed a moderate to strong relationship, either positive or negative, appear in Table 10. A comparison of all the findings from the present study with findings from previous studies appears in Appendix A and full correlation analysis appears in Appendix C of the long version of the study found at www.davetough.com/songwritingproductionmeiea2018.pdf.

Variable	R	Relationship
Number of weeks on the Hot 100 and the peak position	(0.732)	Strong negative
Number of writers and the peak position	(0.129)	Moderately weak negative
Number of times the title appeared in the song and the peak position	(0.086)	Weak negative
Length of the introduction and the peak position	0.074	Weak positive
Number of writers and the number of weeks on the Hot 100 for country songs	0.179	Moderately weak positive
Number of writers and peak position for hip-hop songs	(0.213)	Moderately weak negative
Number times the title appeared in the song and peak position for pop songs	(0.128)	Moderately weak negative
Length of the introduction and peak position for R&B songs	0.31	Moderately strong positive
Number of writers and peak position for rock songs	(0.42)	Moderately strong negative

Table 10. Statistically significant correlations, Billboard Hot 100, 2014-2015.

Conclusion

A hit is a moving target. Even though a set formula for a hit song might never exist, evolving trends can be useful in production and songwriting to help guide students and the music creators to make the most commercial product possible, if that is indeed the goal of their songwrit-

ing and production practice. Students of songwriting need to be aware that the public's taste shifts over time and formulas are constantly changing. The study presented here concentrated on finding common threads among songs that were already deemed current hits by *Billboard*.

The information in this study should serve as general observations of common factors among the Billboard Hot 100 rather than songwriting gospel. Because this study primarily provided averages across all genres, due to the nature of the Billboard Hot 100, the average values may not represent the qualities of a hit song in one genre. Non-hits were not analyzed in this study, so knowing whether a statistically significant difference exists between hits and non-hits regarding certain factors is difficult. This area would be a good place to start with future research.

As evidenced above, the results showed some significant correlations between the variables in two years' worth of *Billboard* charts. However, one could make the argument that variables not analyzed such as marketing budget or financial support, or radio play, could also be a contributing cause towards success.

A description of successful songs does not necessarily provide a formula for creating new successful songs. To claim that composing a song with certain characteristics would cause that song to be a hit, some manipulation of the factors analyzed through a controlled experiment would have to be tested to establish causality. However, each era of songwriting and music production has common threads including song form, production techniques, common chord progressions, and subject matter. If someone had asked Gershwin what song form to use in the jazz age, his answer would have most likely been AABA! The best use of the information discovered in this study might be to enlighten the reader to techniques used by other hit writers and producers and to provide guidelines for what modern songwriters and producers could use.

We can now return to the original research questions: What common practices in songwriting and production did current hit songs exhibit for the years 2014-2015? Were any related to the song's success on the charts? How were these practices similar or different from those in the past?

The first part of the research question asks, what common practices in songwriting and production did current hit songs exhibit for the years 2014-2015? Based on the data analysis, common practices from the current popular music marketplace could lead to the following hit song prescriptions:

- Do not worry too much about song length, as long as it is less than four minutes.
- Make your intro fifteen seconds or less: 71% of songs on the Billboard Hot 100 did that in 2014 and 2015.
- If writing in the pop genre, or in a genre that combines itself with pop, set your song at a danceable tempo (120 bpm would be a good starting point).
- Write about love and have your song narrator play the "Lover" archetype.
- Use the song's title as the hook and repeat it multiple times. More than ten times throughout the song would be a good number to shoot for and would increase the chance of the audience remembering it.
- Co-write your song, especially if you are in the pop, R&B, or hip-hop genres.
- Experiment with song form. Hits have no set technique anymore as long as some pattern is present. Experiment with the disappearing third verse, half verse, and post-chorus.
- Feature a male vocal. Don't be afraid to feature more than one artist on your track, it will most likely help your song's success.
- Use different textures in the song's production that draw in listeners from different genres. An example would be using trap beats, claps, and pitched samples in country music.

The second part of the research question, were any variables related to the song's success on the charts, can be answered with a soft, yes, moderate correlations were found between variables (see Table 10 for significant correlations and Appendix C at www.davetough.com/songwritingproductionmeiea2018.pdf for complete data). The third part of the research question, how were these practices similar or different from those in the past, can be answered using the Review of Literature and Appendix A.

Additional Research

Since the correlations were only moderate, additional follow-up studies should include a multivariate analysis and comparison of the test-

ed factors alongside the data presented in the current study to see how external factors such as marketing and radio promotion versus song formula contribute to making a song a hit. Please see the full study at www.davetough.com/songwritingproductionmeiea2018.pdf for a full list of additional research recommendations and appendices.

Appendix A

Comparisons of Past and Current Research		
Study	**Findings**	**Similarities to this Research**
Pachet and Roy (2008)	Concluded that style, genre, and musical setup; and main instruments, variant, dynamics, tempo, era/epoch, metric, country, situation, mood, character, language, rhythm and popularity have no significant statistical relationship with song charting.	No, although the current study did not analyze all of the factors indicated in the 2008 study, it showed there was some statistical correlation between several of these factors including genre, tempo, and popularity.
Frank (2009)	1. Impact the listener in first seven seconds. 2. Lengthen the songs. 3. Use of hook repetition.	1. No. 258 (27%) of the songs had introductions of 7 seconds or less. So only ¼ of the songs in this study are applying this technique. 2. Yes. In a general sense, the mode of all song lengths in this study was 3:51, one second higher than the mode proposed by Baio (2008) for songs in the 2000s. However, when compared to historical data, modern hit songs are indeed longer than those in past decades. 3. Yes, hooks were stated an average of 12 times among all 958 songs.
Summach (2011)	The pre-chorus is now standard in a majority of popular songs.	No. This study found the pre-chorus in a large number of songs, but not a majority. 34% of the songs in this research had defined pre-choruses.
Pawley and Müllensiefen (2012)	Music fans prefer the male vocal.	Yes, 67% of songs in this study's dataset featured male lead vocals.
Schellenberg and von Scheve (2012)	Between 1965-2009, tempos actually slowed down from mean tempo of 116 bpm in 1965 to 99 bpm in 2009.	Not the same dataset. However, it is interesting to note that average tempo has risen again. The average tempo for all songs found on Billboard Hot 100 during the years 2014 and 2015 was 116.65 bpm.
Schellenberg and von Scheve (2012)	Male voices have dominated the chart from 79% in 1965 to 62% in 2009.	Yes, 67% of songs in the current dataset featured male lead vocals.
Summach (2012)	Approximately 10% in his dataset had no intro or a short pickup into the song.	Yes. 13.2% of the songs in this study had no introductions.

Comparisons of Past and Current Research		
Study	**Findings**	**Similarities to this Research**
Summach (2012)	The post-chorus is now appearing in popular music.	Yes, 4% of the songs in this study had a well-defined post-chorus section.
Ticketbis (2015)	Music fans prefer the male vocal.	Yes, 67% of songs in this dataset featured male lead vocals.
Ticketbis (2015)	Pop genre has the most staying power as well as the highest volume.	Yes regarding volume. Songs in the pop genre accounted for 37% of the charts. No, with regards to the pop genre having the most staying power on the Hot 100 charts.
Strom (2016)	Analyzed the top 100 songs of the Billboard Hot 100 dataset and found that 120 bpm was both the mode *and* the median tempo.	No and yes. This study's 2015 dataset was all 500 songs that charted on the Billboard Hot 100 charts in the year of 2015 as opposed to the top 100. For 2015 the author found that average tempo was 117 bpm, median tempo was 114 bpm, and mode tempo was 100 bpm. However taking into account both years of 2014 and 2015 the mode of all tempos was 120 bpm, aligning with Strom's findings.
Strom (2016)	Analyzed the top 100 songs of the Billboard Hot 100 dataset and found that the average song length was 3:40.	Yes. Even though the current data sample was all 500 songs that charted on the Billboard Hot 100 charts in the year of 2015, the author found that the average song length was 3:41.
Strom (2016)	He did however find a positive correlation between song length and chart dominance. Strom says that three-minute songs are most likely to earn a number one spot.	No. This research showed no positive linear relationship between song length and number of weeks on Billboard Hot 100 charts.

References

Adorno, Theodor W., and George Simpson. "On Popular Music." *Zeitschrift Für Sozialforschung* 9, no. 1 (1941): 17-48. https://doi.org/10.5840/zfs1941913.

Baio, Andy. "The Whitburn Project: 120 Years of Music Chart History." *Waxy.org*. May 15, 2008. http://waxy.org/2008/05/the_whitburn_project/.

Berns, Gregory S., C. Monica Capra, Sara Moore, and Charles Noussair. "Neural Mechanisms of the Influence of Popularity on Adolescent Ratings of Music." *Neuroimage* 49, no. 3 (2010): 2687-2696. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuroimage.2009.10.070.

Billboard. (2016). http://www.billboard.com.

Billboard Staff. "Billboard to Alter Chart Tracking Week for Global Release Date." *Billboard*, June 24, 2015. http://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/chart-beat/6605842/billboard-alter-chart-tracking-week-global-release-date.

Burgoyne, John Ashley, Jonathan Wild, and Ichiro Fujinaga. "An Expert Ground-truth Set for Audio Chord Recognition and Music Analysis." *Proceedings of the 12th International Society for Music Information Retrieval Conference* (2011): 633-638. http://ismir2011.ismir.net/papers/OS8-1.pdf.

Burns, Gary. "A Typology of 'Hooks' in Popular Records." *Popular Music* 6, no. 1 (1987): 1-20. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143000006577.

de Clercq, Trevor. "The Effects of Repetition on Preferences." *Trevor de Clercq: The Science of Songwriting* (blog). June 10, 2008. http://www.midside.com/2008/06/10/the-effects-of-repetition-on-preferences/.

de Clercq, Trevor, and David Temperley. "A Corpus Analysis of Rock Harmony." *Popular Music* 30, no. 1 (2011): 47-70. https://doi.org/10.1017/S026114301000067X.

DeWall, C. Nathan, Richard S. Pond Jr., W. Keith Campbell, and Jean M. Twenge. "Tuning in to Psychological Change: Linguistic Markers of Psychological Traits and Emotions over Time in Popular U.S. Song Lyrics." *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 5, no. 3 (2011): 200-207. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0023195.

Dhanaraj, Ruth, and Beth Logan. "Automatic prediction of hit songs." Presentation at the International Conference on Music Information Retrieval, London, September 11-15, 2005. http://www.hpl.hp.com/techreports/2005/HPL-2005-149.pdf.

Doll, Christopher. "Rockin' Out: Expressive Modulation in Verse-Chorus Form." *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 3 (2011). http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.11.17.3/mto.11.17.3.doll.html.

Echonest, The. (2017). http://the.echonest.com/.

"Edison research hacks the commuter code." *Edison Research.com*. April 7, 2016. http://www.edisonresearch.com/edison-research-hacks-commuter-code-amfm-listeners-switch-22-times-per-commute/.

Elberse, Anita, Jehoshua Eliashberg, and Julian Villaneuva. "Polyphonic HMI: Mixing Music and Math." HBS no. 506-009. Boston: Harvard Business School Publishing, August 2005 (Revised September 2006). Available at https://hbr.org/product/polyphonic-hmi-mixing-music-and-math/an/506009-PDF-ENG.

Frank, Jay. *FutureHit.DNA: How The Digital Revolution Is Changing Top 10 Songs*. Nashville: Futurehit, Inc., 2009. http://www.future-hitdna.com/.

Giles, David. "Survival of the Hippest: Life at the Top of the Hot 100." *Applied Economics* 39, no. 15 (2007): 1877-1887. https://doi.org/10.1080/00036840600707159.

Herremans, Dorien, David Martens, and Kenneth Sorensen. "Dance Hit Song Prediction." *Journal of New Music Research* 43, no. 3 (2014): 291-302. https://doi.org/10.1080/09298215.2014.881888.

Hong, Seo Bin. "A Comment on Survival of the Hippest: Life at the Top of the Hot 100." *Applied Economics Letters* 19, no. 11 (2012): 1101-1105. https://doi.org/10.1080/13504851.2011.615722.

"Hot 100: How it Works, The." *Billboard.com*. Accessed 2016. http://www.billboard.com/charts/hot-100.

Jameson, Frederic. *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as Socially Symbolic Act.* Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1981.

Kuchner, Marc. "Archetypes in Country Music." *Music Row Magazine*, August 2009. http://www.musicrow.com/2009/08/.

Luboff, Pat, and Pete Luboff. *88 Songwriting Wrongs & How To Right Them: Concrete Ways To Improve Your Songwriting And Make Your Songs More Marketable*. Cincinnati: Writer's Digest Books, 1992.

Mauch, Matthias, Robert M. Maccallum, Mark Levy, and Armand M. Leroi. "The Evolution of Popular Music: USA 1960-2010." *Royal Society Open Science* 2, no. 5 (2015): 150081. https://doi.org/10.1098/rsos.150081.

McCready, Mike. "Can You Predict A Hit? The 21st Century A&R Answer." *Music Xray* (blog). October 11, 2011. http://blog.musicxray.com/tag/hit-song-science/.

McVicar, Matt. "Results: Performance Overview." *Score A Hit*. November 18, 2011. http://www.scoreahit.com/Results.

Middleton, Richard. "'Play It Again Sam': Some Notes on the Productivity of Repetition in Popular Music." *Popular Music* 3, no. 1 (1983): 235-270. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143000001641.

Moore, Allan. "Patterns of Harmony." *Popular Music* 11, no. 1 (1992): 73-106. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143000004852.

Moore, Allan. "The So-Called 'Flattened Seventh' in Rock." *Popular Music* 14, no. 2 (1995): 185-201. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143000007431.

Moorefield, Virgil. *The Producer as Composer: Shaping the Sounds of Popular Music.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2010.

Morelle, Rebecca. "Pop music marked by three revolutions in 50 years." *BBC News*. May 6, 2015. http://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-32599916.

Murphy, Ralph. *Murphy's Laws of Songwriting*: *The Book*. Nashville, Tennessee: Murphy Music Consulting, 2011.

Neal, Jocelyn R. "Narrative Paradigms, Musical Signifiers, and Form as Function in Country Music." *Music Theory Spectrum* 29, no. 1 (2007): 41-72. https://doi.org/10.1525/mts.2007.29.1.41.

Neal, Meghan. "A machine successfully predicted the hit dance songs of 2015." *Motherboard*. December 17, 2015. http://motherboard.vice.com/en_ca/read/a-machine-successfully-predicted-the-hit-dance-songs-of-2015.

Ni, Yizhao, Raúl Santos-Rodríguez, Matt McVicar, and Tijl De Bie. "Hit Song Science Once Again a Science? Presentation at the 4th International Workshop on Machine Learning and Music, Sierra Nevada, Spain, 2011.

Olivet, Dean. "BPMs musicians use most." *YouTube*. October 24, 2013. https://www.Youtube.com/watch?v=5gzMYI1bMpo.

Owsinski, Bobby. *Deconstructed Hits: Modern Pop & Hip-Hop: Uncover the stories & techniques behind 20 iconic songs.* Van Nuys, California: Alfred Music, 2013.

Pachet, François. "Chapter 10: Hit Song Science." In *Music Data Mining*, edited by Tao Li, Mitsunori Ogihara, and George Tzanetakis, 305-326. Boca Raton, Florida: CRC Press, 2012. https://www.csl.sony.fr/downloads/papers/2011/pachet-11a.pdf.

Pachet, François, and Pierre Roy. "Hit Song Science Is Not Yet a Science. In *Proceedings of the 9th International Conference on Music Information Retrieval*, 355-360. Philadelphia, September 2008.

Parker, Will. "MRI Scans Predict Pop Music Success." *Sci GoGo*. June 13, 2011. http://www.scienceagogo.com/news/20110513021039data_trunc_sys.shtml.

Pawley, Alisun, and Daniel Müllensiefen. "The Science of Singing Along: A Quantitative Field Study on Sing-along Behavior in the North of England." *Music Perception* 30, no. 2 (2012): 129-146. https://doi.org/10.1525/mp.2012.30.2.129.

Pettijohn, Terry F., and Donald F. Sacco. "Tough Times, Meaningful Music, Mature Performers: Popular Billboard Songs and Performer Preferences across Social and Economic Conditions in the USA." *Psychology of Music* 37, no. 2 (2009): 155-179. https://doi.org/10.1177/0305735608094512.

Powell-Morse, Andrew. "Lyric Intelligence in Popular Music: A Ten Year Analysis." *SeatSmart* (blog). May 18, 2015. http://seatsmart.com/blog/lyric-intelligence/.

Pudaruth, Sameerchand, Bibi Feenaz Bhaukaurally, and Mohammad Haydar Ally Didorally. "A Semi-Automated Lyrics Generation Tool for Mauritian Sega." *IAES International Journal of Artificial Intelligence* 1, no. 4 (2012): 201-213. https://doi.org/10.11591/ij-ai.v1i4.801.

Rogers, Jimmie N. *The Country Music Message: Revisited.* Fayetteville, Arkansas: University of Arkansas Press, 1989.

Schellenberg, E. Glenn, and Christian von Scheve. "Emotional Cues in American Popular Music: Five Decades of the Top 40." *Psychology of Aesthetics, Creativity, and the Arts* 6, no. 3 (2012): 196-203. https://doi.org/10.1037/a0028024.

"Score a Hit." Accessed May 18, 2013. http://www.scoreahit.com/.

Smith, T. “By-the-numbers guide to a perfect number one (Part 1)”. *Ticketbis* (blog). November 10, 2015. http://blog.ticketbis.net/numbers-guide-perfect-number-one/.

Spicer, Mark. “(Ac)cumulative Form in Pop-Rock Music.” *Twentieth-Century Music* 1, no. 1 (2004): 29-64. https://doi.org/10.1017/s1478572204000052.

Strom, Eric. “Music theory trends in pop music for 2014.” *Popmusic theory.com* (blog). November 14, 2014. https://popmusictheory.com/8-trends-pop-music-2014/.

Strom, Eric. “Music theory trends in pop music for 2015.” *Popmusic theory.com* (blog). December 27, 2015. https://popmusictheory.com/8-music-theory-trends-pop-2015/.

Strom, Eric. “I analyzed the tempo of the top 100 songs of 2015 [Anatomy of a hit song: Tempo].” *Popmusic theory.com* (blog). March 13, 2016. https://popmusictheory.com/song-tempo/.

Summach, Jason. “Form in Top-20 Rock Music, 1955–89.” Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 2012. http://search.proquest.com/docview/1038005330.

Summach, Jay. “The Structure, Function, and Genesis of the Prechorus. *Music Theory Online* 17, no. 3 (2011). http://www.mtosmt.org/issues/mto.11.17.3/mto.11.17.3.summach.html.

Swaminathan, Swathi, and E. Glenn Schellenberg. “Current Emotion Research in Music Psychology.” *Emotion Review* 7, no. 2 (2015): 189-97. https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073914558282.

Temperley, David. “The melodic-harmonic ‘divorce’ in rock.” *Popular Music* 26, no. 2 (2007): 323-342. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0261143007001249.

Temperley, David, Trevor de Clercq, and Adam Waller. “Changes in Rock Melody, 1954-2009.” Presentation at the Society for Music Perception and Cognition Conference, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, August 4, 2015. http://www.midside.com/academics/presentations/.

Trust, Gary. “Ask Billboard: How Does The Hot 100 Work?” *Billboard.com*. September 29, 2013. http://www.billboard.com/articles/columns/ask-billboard/5740625/ask-billboard-how-does-the-hot-100-work.

Zullow, Harold. “Pessimistic Rumination in Popular Songs and Newsmagazines Predict Economic Recession via Decreased Consumer

Optimism and Spending." *Journal of Economic Psychology* 12, no. 3 (1991): 501-526. https://doi.org/10.1016/0167-4870(91)90029-S.

David Tough serves as Associate Professor of Audio Engineering Technology at Belmont University in Nashville. As a songwriter and producer he has over 300 film television placements in shows including *Glee*, *Empire*, *Nashville*, and *American Crime*. Dr. Tough won the Grand Prize in the John Lennon Songwriting contest in both 2013 and 2009. He has won two GMA awards for production and engineering. Tough's research interests lie in the fields of music production, education, songwriting, audio engineering, and creativity. His website is www.davetough.com

The author wishes to thank his primary research assistant, Rowland Folensbee, and editor, Linda Manley, for their help in gathering data and editing this study. The author further wishes to thank Margaret (Peg) Waterman for her help with statistical analysis of the dataset.

Business Sense Arrow Straight: An Examination of Brand Community and Philanthropy Bordering on Social Entrepreneurship as Primary Reasons for the Success of Vans Warped Tour

Joe Bogdan
Columbia College Chicago

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.5

Abstract

Vans Warped Tour ("Warped") is the largest and longest-running touring music festival in the United States. Held in non-traditional venues such as fairgrounds, parking lots, and fields—and sponsored by shoe manufacturer Vans since the tour's inception in 1995—it has been known as "Vans Warped Tour" since 1996. This article discusses the interplay of brand communities and philanthropy bordering on social entrepreneurship as underpinnings of the philosophy of Warped's founder, Kevin Lyman. It identifies both Lyman and those factors as the primary reasons for the longevity and other successes of Warped, both as a music festival and an entrepreneurial venture.

Keywords: entrepreneurship, leadership, brand communities, marketing, music festivals, entertainment, music business

Methodology and Research Design

The methodology and research design for this case study were threefold. First, the author reviewed more than ten years of Warped and Kevin Lyman-related journalism for the purpose of learning the history, reported successes, and failures of the entity. Second, the author researched scholarly journal discussion of music festivals, brand communities, and entrepreneurship for the purpose of putting in place a framework comprising factors that influence whether music festivals and entrepreneurs succeed or fail. Third, the author reviewed a series of educational videos produced by Lyman and then interviewed Lyman for the purposes of 1) validating and complementing the research of journalistic reporting; and 2) compar-

ing Lyman's statements to the set of factors identified by scholars as influencing whether music festivals and entrepreneurs succeed or fail.

Photo ©2014 4Fini, Inc., by Josh Hauling.

Introduction

Warped is the largest and longest-running touring music festival in the United States (Ticketmaster 2015). Held in non-traditional venues such as fairgrounds, parking lots, and fields, it has been known as "Vans Warped Tour" since 1996. Though it began as a showcase for alternative and punk rock music, over time, Warped has evolved to feature diverse genres including hip-hop and ska.

Warped's longevity appears resultant of smaller accomplishments, such as having built an extensive brand community and a long-standing and unwavering commitment to philanthropy bordering on social entrepreneurship. While Warped has not been without the occasional misstep, those are typically quickly learned from and counterbalanced by the entrepreneurial philosophy and skill of Lyman, who, over time, has developed a ten-point list of advice for budding entrepreneurs.

Warped—which counts 2017 as its twenty-second year—shows no signs of slowing. The ultimate measure of success, however, may not be so much in the future of the fest itself, but rather in the future shows, festi-

vals, businesses, and brands that will launch, and have their own separate successes, inspired by Warped.

History

Kevin Lyman, founder of Warped, started his live events career producing college parties in the 1980s using fraternities as venues and local bands as talent (Patton 2012). Following college, Lyman became a fixture in the Los Angeles club scene, after a time, becoming the stage manager for the short-lived but legendary Long Beach, California punk rock club *Fenders Ballroom,* a job he says he landed because, "I could read tech riders" (Lyman 2015). In 1991, having never previously been on the road, he was asked by Perry Farrell of Jane's Addiction, whom Lyman knew from those very same L.A. clubs, to stage-manage the first *Lollapalooza* (Lyman 2015).

Lyman ultimately graduated to producing his own events, initially extreme sports events including *Board Aid*, *The Swatch Impact Tour*, and *Vision Skate Escape*, where snowboarding and skateboarding headlined to the backdrop of music (Patton 2012). It was those events that, when thematically turned on their heads to emphasize the music over the extreme sports, ultimately became Warped.

Warped has consistently played between forty to fifty cities and sold around half a million tickets each year since its inception more than twenty years ago (Sculley 2005, 2014; Lyman 2015). The average fan of Warped is 17.7 years of age (Waddell 2011). The traveling entourage that is Warped comprises over eight hundred people (including over one hundred bands) traveling on nearly two hundred vehicles, about forty of which are buses (Waddell 2006, Gasperini 2008).

The impact and importance of Warped have been recognized by the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame and Museum through an exhibit titled "Warped: 12 Years of Music, Mayhem and More." That exhibit ran for nine months in 2007 and told "the story of America's longest-running touring festival and its impact on the music world." After it closed, the exhibit was placed into a time capsule to be opened at a special event in 2031 (Rock & Roll Hall of Fame 2007).

Brand Community as a Leading Factor in the Success of Warped

As the largest and longest-running touring music festival in the United States, Warped demonstrates success by a variety of measures. One factor that has led to its overall success is its brand community. However, that factor does not stand alone, but rather is supported by unusual sponsor longevity and multi-genre curatorial prowess.

Brand Community

Brand community is a concept that can be described, in short, as a consumer's sense of belonging to a common group as related to a brand, through which members of the community buy more, remain loyal, and reduce marketing costs through their grassroots evangelism (Fournier and Lee 2009). The concept of brand community aligns with the concept of "relationship marketing," in which commitment, trust, and shared values between brand and consumer play important roles in the establishment of long-lasting patron relationships (Collin-Lachaud and Duyck 2002). As Collin-Lachaud and Duyck observe, where festivals, in particular, are concerned, "Festival organizers would be wise to develop any and every means of creating a bond [with patrons] and increasing the value of their relationships" (68). Brand community has also been described as the loyalty enjoyed by a business when customers actually feel more "like a family" than like customers (Gainer 1999, 84-85). Gainer, in her profile of baroque orchestra Tafelmusik, lists "community building" as the first on a list of important factors to that organization's success (87).

Warped is the beneficiary of an extensive brand community; this is a major differentiator of Warped from many other festivals. The brand community facet of the festival fits Paul Sweetman's (2004) observation that the most important aspect of a group that exhibits common loyalty (to him, a "neo-tribal society") is not an abstract, idealized goal, but rather feelings of togetherness engendered by direct involvement in the group (Sweetman 2004, 85). On Warped, the emphasis on atmosphere and positive vibes isn't only for the fans, but also for the performers, sponsors, and crew (Waddell 2006). Expanding the "positive vibes" feeling beyond the consumers to those who supply the product itself has, in the case of Warped, served to take the brand community to its extreme. Says the director of one venue at which Warped has played, "The event's a lifestyle

event, it's not just a music concert. It's important as a cultural festival" (Beasley 2012, para. 3).

Another key aspect contributing to Warped's brand community is affordable ticket prices. Ascertaining what constitutes "affordable" in the context of the value proposition offered is a decision made by Warped considering many variables. While one historic, scholarly view of pricing is that live and performing arts products are relatively insensitive to price (Colbert, Beauregard and Vallée 1998), a different view was put forth by Philippe Ravanas who observed in his analysis of the Chicago Symphony Orchestra that, "Matching price and value has always been difficult, particularly for arts organizations" (Ravanas 2008, 71). Nonetheless, it is generally accepted that price elasticity decreases as the perceived quality of the arts' product rises (Colbert, Beauregard, and Vallée 1998). Colbert (2003) added that consumers often view price itself as an indicator of quality (36).

A general admission ticket to Warped (an all general admission tour) costs around US$40. This price range has remained steady over a period of many years. Says Lyman, "It's [usually] about $42 for a nine-hour festival, so it's very affordable" (Greenberg 2014, para. 7). The components of brand community and affordable price have engendered an extremely loyal (and apparently self-replenishing) fan base that keeps Warped consistent and successful year after year.

Sponsor Longevity

Warped's brand community has also led to an extraordinary track record with sponsors. Joanne Cummings (2008) argues that the success of a festival sponsor depends on whether it is able to add to the "experience enhancement" of the festival scene in which it is participating. Warped helps its sponsor brands to meet this goal by working with each to formulate a unique way of participating in the festival and connecting with the Warped audience ("Vans Warped Tour Brings…" 2014). For example, music-industry manufacturing firm Ernie Ball hosted a tent full of carnival style games, and Band Happy offered live music lessons from tour performers (Beasley 2012). This innovative approach to sponsorships and the success it generates seems to be one reason why so many sponsors repeat for multiple years. Take auto manufacturer Kia for example, which joined the tour in 2008 and remained a sponsor through 2014 (*Billboard* staff 2012). Kia took to handing out coupons fans could use for automobile purchases.

In the first year, it was able to directly attribute to those coupons sales of more than eighty vehicles (Tso 2014).

As Bordeau, De Coster, and Paradis describe in their analysis of music festivals, "Organizers of a cultural enterprise must offer an intangible, hedonistic experience…that includes not only the basic service but peripheral services as well (Eiglier and Langeard 1987). The basic service is the principal reason for attending. In the case of a music festival, it is the content of the event—the live shows. Peripheral services are those surrounding the event" (Bordeau, De Coster, and Paradis 2001, 40-41). By incorporating unique sponsorship activities into the day's events, Warped has implemented a double-win strategy that makes both sponsors *and* fans happy.

It can be said that Dowd, Liddle, and Nelson (2004) criticized Warped, contending that having a single, primary sponsor for the festival (shoe manufacturer Vans) intensified tensions within, and threatened the core values of, the skateboarding scene that Warped targets as its core audience. However, that critique minimizes that there is, in fact, a multitude of sponsors (both for-profit and not-for-profit) readily identified with Warped—according to them, "twenty to thirty"—when they wrote their article. Moreover, in 2015 there were sixty-eight such sponsors, three of which (including Vans) were "featured sponsors" (2015 featured sponsors). Indeed, Lyman says that Warped isn't only about launching tomorrow's hottest bands but also about creating long-term connections that help associate all of the festival's sponsors, bands, and not-for-profits with a very positive experience ("Vans Warped Tour Brings…" 2014). "It's our goal to leave a lasting impression in each city we visit and affect…lives…in many positive ways," says Lyman (Tso 2014). Vans' Vice President of Events and Promotions, Steve Van Doren, adds that, "It's a great way to connect with…consumers…alongside the music they love" ("Vans Warped Tour Brings…" 2014, para. 5).

Warped not only strives to keep existing sponsors happy and returning year after year but also makes a strong and concerted effort to reach out to new brands (*Billboard* staff 2012). Its pitch? Not bland, blah, rote spreadsheets showing return on investment figures but rather an impassioned explanation of the long-term effects that come from an association with Warped. Says Lyman, "I don't have ROIs on this tour…you can't put a brand on Warped Tour and then…look the next day and see if there's a

spike in sales…It's a build, it's a 'cred' factor" (*Billboard* staff, 2012 para. 6). This perspective fits with the brand-community concept.

Indeed, Vans itself has matured from an $88 million per year brand into a nearly $2 billion per year brand since its affiliation with Warped began ("Vans, Inc. History" n.d.; "VF Corporation 2013 Annual Report" 2014). While it is impossible to quantify the amount of that growth directly attributable to Warped, the immensely positive effect that Warped has had on the Vans brand (and, consequently, on its revenues) would be hard to deny.

Curatorial Prowess

As mentioned above, Warped has moved beyond punk and evolved to include, and even sometimes feature, other musical genres. Despite that diversity, Warped maintains consistent fan demographics and attendance numbers year after year. It does this primarily through a strategy of locking in a key core of bands (the exact number in Lyman's book is seventeen). This strategy maintains Warped's credibility and brings in seventy percent of Warped's core fans. Warped then diversifies the genres for the other sixty-five or so bands, both to broaden the core fans' horizons *and* bring in the other thirty percent of the fans needed to sell consistent numbers (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). While Lyman's adoption of the aforementioned strategy was instinctive, it closely mirrors the "balanced portfolio" strategy described by Gainer in her profile of Canada's baroque orchestra, Tafelmusik (Gainer 1999, 83-84). As Gainer described, a live and performing arts venture adopting a strategy like Lyman's "is able to cross-subsidize its activities in the short term in order to ensure long-term…stability" (84). The description offered by Gainer was echoed by Collin-Lachaud and Duyck in their analysis of marketing management focused on the Francofolies of La Rochelle (Collin-Lachaud and Duyck 2002, 67-68).

Brindisi, Sinkovich, and Ravanas (2013) contend that the most important facet for some entertainment brands is credibility. By this measure, where programming is concerned, Warped scores highly. Its well-established "lock in the core bands" strategy has accustomed its core fans to expecting a consistent lineup of at least *some* talent they will want to see.

Fournier and Lee (2009) contend that 1) brand communities fostering strong sales cycles are strongest when all members have roles in the community, and 2) conversely, many companies mismanage their brand

communities by, for example, tightly controlling them. Warped scores points by this measure as well, since curating its primary product—the talent that performs on the Warped stages—isn't a dictatorial affair. Rather, while all final talent buying decisions sit clearly and squarely with Lyman, a tremendous amount of input is sought from a variety of sources both inside and outside the organization. For example, the process of lining up one tour's artist roster included the fans. They were surveyed to provide feedback on artists from a recently concluded Warped tour. This information was used in developing the next lineup (Waddell 2011). In doing so, Lyman incorporated a tactic that Bordeau, De Coster, and Paradis identified as one of the two primary methodologies for determining customer satisfaction (i.e., asking customers to evaluate a product or service after the consumption experience) (2001, 43). This style of seeking input while retaining the final decision-making authority is reminiscent of another arts programmer, Zarin Mehta, a veteran of the Montreal Symphony Orchestra, Ravinia Festival, and New York Philharmonic (Cardinal and Lapierre 1999).

Further to the point, Warped's curated artist portfolio isn't a mere collection designed to take up "X" number of "Y"-minute time slots. Instead, Warped takes care to promote and further the careers of the artists who perform on its stages. In 2011, the tour implemented a strategy of releasing the names of five artists each week during the on-sale period so fans would spend time learning about *all* of the acts that would play, rather than only the headliners (Maloy 2011). That's brand community for, and among, bands (i.e., the product).

As for Lyman's leadership role in the talent selection, he is able to sense which diverse acts might resonate with Warped's fans, despite his background in, and solid love for, the punk genre. He points out that Warped has always featured more than punk. "Even the first year, we had a sprinkling of ska, surf/reggae, hard core, and indie" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). Beyond that, he attributes his curatorial ability to his exposure to many kinds of music early in his career when he just wanted to work and earn, and therefore took whatever shows were available—whether they were punk or "Iranian music on Thanksgiving, [jobs I got] because no one else would work on Thanksgiving" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015).

Warped's programming credibility, skill, and success are also evidenced by the fact that it has helped launch the careers of several notable

artists, some of whom might seem surprising given Warped's reputation as a "punk" festival. Perhaps the most unlikely is Katy Perry, who was booked by Lyman to appear in the 2008 version of Warped based on the strength of a single song he had heard, before her first major-label record was even recorded, let alone released. Lyman is clearly, but modestly, proud of having had a hand in the career launch of Perry, now a top-tier artist. "When this is all over, I'm gonna be really proud of hearing one song of Katy…and I went 'I want her on Warped tour'…she came out there and learned how to be a live performer. I'm gonna be very proud that I was part of that start for her in some small way" (Baltin 2012, para. 6).

The inclusive approach of Warped toward its fans, and the far-reaching platform that it offers, contribute to its popularity as a brand community for artists. More than one thousand bands formally submit for participation each year, and countless others use more informal methods, such as pestering Lyman on site to try and get a coveted stage slot (Waddell 2006). Lyman's philosophy of using the platform to expose developing bands and brands to a large audience, showcasing eighty bands each day, at a fair price, around the country, to over half a million fans each year, is a big reason why there are always far more acts interested in playing the fest than there are time slots to fill (Sculley 2005; Tso 2014).

But, Success is Usually Accompanied by Some Failure

Typically, success does not come without some failure, and Lyman and his festival are not immune from this phenomenon. "We still have failures," said Lyman, in one published interview (Cooper 2008, para. 13).

One misstep for Warped that Lyman notes is a return visit to Australia in 2014. Lyman thought this was a good idea because the inaugural visit the previous year had not only been commercially successful, it had also been another industry first (and a lot of fun) because the entire tour camped across the continent for all its dates. But, says Lyman, "The [Australian] market was saturated with festivals, and we went in with an older punk lineup than we had in the U.S., so cross-marketing was hard" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015).

Another self-acknowledged stumble for Warped was the attempt to expand its domestic footprint to include a fourth Florida stop in as many days in 2015 (the stop was Ft. Lauderdale; St. Petersburg, West Palm Beach, and Orlando were the other three). Tickets for the fourth stop didn't sell well, and the lessons learned from that mistake were 1) four shows

in Florida is, for Warped, "just too much," and 2) scheduling festivals during Independence Day week can be perilous (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). Despite the occasional blooper, the Warped organization has a practiced philosophy of learning from its mistakes and adapting accordingly. This has helped ensure the continuity and well-being of the festival.

Behind the Curtain: Kevin Lyman

Kevin Lyman's explanation for the success of Warped and its related ventures is outlined in ten bullet points of advice he offers to young entrepreneurs. While the five most pivotal of those ten are discussed here, it is the last—philanthropy bordering on social entrepreneurship—that is perhaps the most important.

Photo © 2015 4Fini, Inc.

Living and Dying with Your Decisions

A linchpin of Lyman's entrepreneurial style is a commitment to make decisions and stand by them. One example of this is Lyman's decision a few years back to offer parents free admission to the festival grounds and a "Parent Day Care" center. Industry pundits and confidants alike might have suggested that a large number of free tickets was bad business, but Lyman stayed his course, predicting that this tweak would not only make parents comfortable about where their children were spending the day, but also *increase* revenue. One could see this as adding parents to a brand community that already included fans and artists. Lyman was right, and the parents joined the community.

Another example of a positive and successful tweak implemented despite resistance stemmed from a survey, the results of which showed that the number one criticism of Warped by its attending fans was high prices for food and beverages (Waddell 2011). In response, Lyman struggled with promoters and venues to lower the cost of bottled water from $4.50 to $3.00. The tour also introduced a prepaid food package, sold with tickets, that included a cheeseburger, fries, and soda for an extra $8.50 (Waddell 2011). The ticket/food package assured parents that their kids

would be fed. It also served to reduce the incidence of kids seeking additional parent-provided food money (Beasley 2012). Initial opposition from industry players, who preferred the status quo, ultimately gave way to admiring recognition and then the adoption of the tactic by other promoters, shows, and fests.

Lyman not only lives, but also sometimes dies, by the decisions he makes. Perhaps a historical overview of the timeline of Lyman-related events tells this story the best. Lyman's earliest events featured extreme sports at the forefront with music only as a backdrop, or even an afterthought (Patton 2012). Clearly, the emphasis was something Lyman had started to die by, as it turned out actually to be counter to the ultimate emphasis that led to Warped's long-term success (i.e., featuring the music under the patina of extreme sports).

Most decisions about Warped are made by Lyman, and the buck stops with him. "I have great people with me, but ultimately, the decision is mine. I make wrong decisions. But I make 'em. I think we're paralyzed, our whole world, if you look at it from the top down. You look at Congress. They don't make decisions! They talk…too long. Make the decision and move…right or wrong. I'll make decisions every day and live up to those decisions" (*Billboard* staff 2012, para. 10).

Going with Your Gut

One unique characteristic of Warped, and its founder Kevin Lyman, is a willingness to trust instinct as much as (and often more than) empirical data and quantifiable business strategy. The Parent Day Care, the prepaid food package, and the affordable bottled water—each of which had critics prior to implementation—are all examples of Lyman's "gut" that he trusted, and which led to a successful end. Indeed, according to Lyman, a good gut is essential. "If this was purely driven by economics, there would be a lot of Warpeds…but if I laid it all out for you economically, no one could figure out how it works…because it's not really always based on finances" (Waddell 2006, 24). This is not to say that no decisions about Warped are based on economics—some clearly are. For example, Warped does its own catering as opposed to using the venue-offered options, because, "if you based it on a normal deal when you go into an arena…most people couldn't handle [the economic consequences]" (Waddell 2006, 24).

Learning from Your Failures

Another Lyman cornerstone, though certainly not one unique to him among entrepreneurs, is learning from failure.

When asked about this, Lyman mentions his recent involvement in the *Great American Nightmare* haunted house franchise, which is linked to musician Rob Zombie (Lyman 2015). Always eager to try new things, and anticipating great financial success, Lyman was initially excited about the project. In the end, the version of the haunt that included Lyman failed because, "We tried to do too much by mashing up concerts with the haunted house, and the fans wanted either one or the other; very few people came for both" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). True to form, Lyman took from this failure some lessons he could use on other projects: 1) don't do something just for the money, and 2) know your audience (who, in this case, were young millennials "living in a Groupon culture" and "wanting 'boo-scared,' not 'disturbed scared'") (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015).

An earlier failure was his Country Throwdown Tour. The tour was conceptualized by Lyman, who was early to recognize—nearly ten years before the established country music industry—that the internet would someday launch country artists more powerfully than radio and CD sales (just as it had been doing for artists of other genres for some time) (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). Despite the fact that Country Throwdown can claim a role in the early success of some, now, top-tier artists (e.g., Florida Georgia Line), it ultimately didn't work well and was shuttered. Again, though, Lyman learned from his failure. The lessons this time? First, know your partners (and Lyman says those in the country business at the time were resistant to the change he foresaw and which now has, in fact, taken place in that genre). Second, "know when they don't want you there" (Lyman says the Nashville crowd—at least at that time—didn't want outsiders in either their world or their business).

Being Confident, not Cocky

Many people believe confidence is a prerequisite to business success, and Lyman includes this characteristic on his list as well. Lyman, though, is careful to distinguish between confident and cocky. He says that the "cockiness" of the Nashville folks with whom he dealt on the Country Throwdown Tour is one of the reasons that the tour ultimately did not succeed (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015).

It may be that Kevin Lyman's confidence (not cockiness) was the first spark that ignited the Warped fire back in 1995. Lyman had the idea for a punk and extreme-lifestyle festival using bands he knew from the Los Angeles club scene when, coincidentally, he was called for a meeting with Walter Schoenfeld who was then CEO of Vans, Inc. From Schoenfeld's perspective, the meeting's purpose was to interview Lyman for the job of running a one-time skate-fest under the Vans name. Lyman confidently treated the meeting as an opportunity to pitch his newly-hatched idea for a music-centered fest…and Warped was not only born, but also had its first sponsor (Lyman 2015). Lyman recognizes that confidence is necessary to, as they say, "win friends and influence people." However, despite his success, he steers clear of allowing confident to balloon into cocky.

Remembering Philanthropy

Muñiz and O'Guinn (2001) point out that the "brand community" concept manifests itself in shared consciousness, ritual, tradition, and a sense of moral responsibility. On this front, and notwithstanding the other factors in Lyman's stew of success, perhaps the one that has been the most influential, and almost certainly the one that sets him the most apart from other successful entertainment industry entrepreneurs, is remembering philanthropy. This Lyman does to the point of using the festival as a vehicle to impact society's most pressing social problems. From the very first year of Warped, when it was not yet even profitable, the tour has donated twenty-five cents of the price of each paid ticket to Unite the United, a charitable foundation founded by Lyman. The mission of the foundation is to encourage work toward positive change by supporting local charities and participating in community volunteerism (Lyman 2015; Lyman, interview April 17, 2015; "Unite the United" 2015).

Lyman attributes his philanthropic core to his upbringing in Claremont, California, a college town he says is sometimes referred to as "Berkeley South" due to its similar philosophical, political, and activist leanings (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). Says Lyman, "Maybe I didn't fully understand it back then, but it was like all that grass roots activity [that I saw and participated in during my youth] made me think, 'how do you make change every day in your life?'" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). Indeed, when Lyman was asked in a 2013 interview to identify the defining moments of his career, two of his three choices were related to philanthropic accomplishments: 1) receiving the 2009 *Billboard* Touring

Awards Humanitarian of the Year Award, and 2) being named the 2011 MusiCares MAP Fund honoree (Haftel 2012).

Not only has Lyman become inextricably immersed in philanthropy as a part of his life and business model, he has also dedicated a large share of his entrepreneurial efforts to aiding in the success of the fifteen to twenty not-for-profits he invites to participate on-site in Warped each year ("Participating Non-Profit Organizations" 2015). For example, MusiCares has received more than $400,000 in donations since beginning its partnership with Warped, and the Music Saves Lives Tour Blood Drive draws nearly half a million pints of blood from Warped fans annually. Some of the other not-for-profit endeavors that have taken up a summer home on Warped include Action for Animals, Keep a Breast Foundation, and Art Feeds. In 2012, music met anti-smoking when the "truth truck" rolled onto the event grounds ("Vans Warped Tour Brings…" 2014).

One might think that adding not-for-profits to the tour is only a feel-good measure with a low probability of producing results. After all, why would young, music-focused fans take time out of an already busy day of festival experiences to learn about new philanthropic causes? To buttress fans' attention to the not-for-profits, Warped introduced a "passport" system through which fans collect stamps from the participating organizations and, after filling their passports, enter to win a variety of prizes ("Vans Warped Tour Brings…" 2014).

Lyman says he is quite proud of the fact that people whose lives are touched by Warped seem to come away from it with raised awareness. For example, the first year of the Alternative Press Music Awards included an Artist Philanthropic Award, and the nominees "were all bands that broke out on the Warped Tour" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). That a "philanthropy-first" mentality is a cornerstone of commercial success is perhaps the biggest differentiator of Lyman from other successful entertainment industry entrepreneurs. Warped is a for-profit venture, no doubt. However, its focus on philanthropy is so strong that one might credibly argue its primary mission is perhaps one of social entrepreneurship.

A View of the Future

Lyman says it is unlikely he will either sell Warped or turn over its operation to a national promoter or producer (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015; Waddell 2006). He loves the fest dearly and still very much enjoys

traveling to every date along with it. "I realized that this is what I do really well… [and anyway,] I find that I'm terminally unemployable [elsewhere]," he says (Waddell 2006, 25). While the veracity of the first part of this quote is as undoubtedly true as is the falsity of the second, it's clear that Warped isn't on the market, at least not currently. This is because Lyman believes Warped will probably die with him (or by him) because it can't be run in the same way as other festivals, "because ninety percent of the things [it does] are not financially driven, [and] it's kind of an unmanageable project" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015).

Lyman is also modest about his ability to keep the festival—already the longest continuously-running, traveling festival anywhere near its size—going indefinitely. He states, without anxiety, that "Warped Tour could go out of business this year if my instincts [in selecting talent] are wrong, or kids just don't want to hang out anymore." He is also constantly aware of all the "behind-the-scenes battles [like with Ticketmaster] that I have to fight, trying to keep this thing going" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). Rather than selling the Warped festival or brand, Lyman seems content to let it run its course and then, ultimately, die with or by him. His real hope for the future appears to lie more in seeing fruit borne of the brand community and philanthropic inspiration that he and Warped provide for the fans, the bands, and the brands. "I don't know about the future of Warped, but there are a lot of kids out there that I think could be inspired maybe to start a new type of Warped Tour" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015).

As for Lyman himself, his "try something new" philosophy is pivotal to the future. "You stay in the game longer if you have some distractions and things that allow you to use your knowledge for something new" (Lyman, interview April 17, 2015). In short, one could guess it will be a long while before exhausting the list of places one might see Kevin Lyman pop up next.

Implications for Management

This case study of Vans Warped Tour and its founder Kevin Lyman reinforces lessons often learned elsewhere but just as often forgotten. Among those lessons are that:

Success is likely fostered by:

- building a brand community around one's product, success in which causes consumers to buy more and remain loyal, thereby reducing marketing costs
- formulating unique ways for sponsors to participate and connect with the consuming audience, success in which leads to sponsor longevity
- embracing commonly accepted entrepreneurial characteristics, such as being decisive, going with one's "gut," learning from one's failures, and being confident
- embracing unique entrepreneurial characteristics that can build consumers' passion for the product, such as a philanthropic mindset

Success is likely hindered by:

- entering a saturated market
- building a product line that doesn't lend itself to cross-marketing
- (particularly where music festivals are concerned), scheduling head-to-head with formidable competition (which may be something other than a competing product, such as Independence Day in the United States)

Managers are well advised to regularly revisit the basics of what does, and does not, make for success.

Conclusion

Vans Warped Tour's success can be emulated by businesses of many types, especially festivals and those that are otherwise related to music and/or millennials. Its longevity and other successes arise out of a mosaic of smaller triumphs, chief among them brand community and philanthropy bordering on social entrepreneurship. While Warped has experienced the occasional misstep, Lyman, guided by his entrepreneurial philosophy and skill, has learned from those failures. Warped shows no signs of slowing. As it continues to grow, it also demonstrates an increasing influence on festival practices. It will be interesting to watch other shows, festivals, businesses, and brands adopt and adapt Warped's and Lyman's approaches in pursuit of their own success.

References

Baltin, Steve. "Warped Tour Returns To Its Roots." *Rolling Stone*, March 31, 2012. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://www.rollingstone.com/music/news/warped-tour-returns-to-its-roots-20120331.

Beasley, Dana. "Warped Tour: More Than Music at the 2012 Vans Warped Tour." *Las Cruces Sun News*, June 28, 2012. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/13FB5BDEB1961398?p=NewsBank.

Billboard Staff. "Kevin Lyman, Warped Tour 'Family' Members on How the Tour Keeps Rolling." *Billboard.biz*, April 6, 2012. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://www.billboard.com/biz/articles/news/touring/1098071/kevin-lyman-warped-tour-family-members-on-how-the-tour-keeps.

Bourdeau, Laurent, Louis De Coster, and Sylvie Paradis. "Measuring Satisfaction Among Festivalgoers: Differences Between Tourists and Residents as Visitors to a Music Festival in an Urban Environment." *International Journal of Arts Management* 3, no. 2 (2001): 40-50.

Cardinal, Jacqueline, and Laurent Lapierre. "Company Profile: The Ravinia Festival Under the Direction of Zarin Mehta." *International Journal of Arts Management* 1, no. 3 (1999): 70-82.

Colbert, François. "Entrepreneurship and Leadership in Marketing the Arts." *International Journal of Arts Management* 6, no. 1 (2003): 30-39.

Colbert, François, Caroline Beauregard, and Luc Vallée. "The Importance of Ticket Prices for Theatre Patrons." *International Journal of Arts Management* 1, no. 1 (1998): 8-15.

Collin-Lachaud, Isabelle, and Jean-Yves Duyck. "Relationship Marketing as a Paradigm for Festivals: A Case Study of the Francofolies of La Rochelle, France." *International Journal of Arts Management* 4, no. 3 (2002): 56-70.

Cooper, Ryan. "An Interview with Kevin Lyman: A Few Minutes with the Man Behind the Warped Tour." *About.com,* 2008. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://punkmusic.about.com/od/interviews/a/kevinlyman.htm.

Cummings, Joanne. "Selling the Indie Scene: Music Festivals, Neo-Tribes and Brand Communities." *The Australian Sociological As-*

sociation (2008). Accessed December 28, 2015. https://www.tasa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2008/12/372.pdf.
Dowd, Timothy J., Kathleen Liddle, and Jenna Nelson. "Music Festivals as Scenes: Examples from Serious Music, Womyn's Music, and SkatePunk." In *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal and Virtual,* edited by Andy Bennett and Richard A. Peterson, 149-167. Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 2004.
Eiglier, Pierre, and Eric Langeard. *Servuction: le marketing des services*. France: McGraw-Hill, 1987.
Fournier, Susan, and Lara Lee. "Getting Brand Communities Right." *Harvard Business Review* 87, no. 4 (2009): 105.
Gainer, Brenda. "Achieving Stability and Success in Crowded Markets: The Case of Tafelmusik." *International Journal of Arts Management* 2, no. 1 (1999): 77-87.
Gasperini, Kathleen. "Vans Warped Tour Kicks Off to Sold-out Capacity; Producer Kevin Lyman Hints at What to Expect from America's Largest Running Tour." *Label Networks*, September 24, 2008. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://www.labelnetworks.com/vans-warped-tour-kicks-off-to-sold-out-capacity-producer-kevin-lyman-hints-at-what-to-expect-from-americas-largest-running-tour/.
Greenberg, Karl. "Vans Warped Tour Connects Fans, Bands with Brands." *Media Post: Marketing Daily*, May 28, 2014. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://www.mediapost.com/publications/article/226780/vans-warped-tour-connects-fans-bands-with-brands.html.
Haftel, Eric. "Interview with Warped Tour Founder, Kevin Lyman." *TAPinto*, January 26, 2012. Accessed December 28, 2015. https://www.tapinto.net/articles/interview-with-warped-tour-founder-kevin-lyman.
Lyman, Kevin. "Being an Entrepreneur." *CreativeLive* (video file), 2015. https://www.creativelive.com/courses/new-music-biz-bands-brands-managers-tours-kevin-lyman.
Lyman, Kevin. "Kevin Lyman's Career Story." *CreativeLive* (video file), 2015. https://www.creativelive.com/courses/new-music-biz-bands-brands-managers-tours-kevin-lyman.
Lyman, Kevin (CEO, 4Fini, Inc). Telephone interview by author. April 17, 2015.

Lyman, Kevin (CEO, 4Fini, Inc). Telephone interview by author. July 13, 2015.

Maloy, Sarah. "Warped Tour Founder Kevin Lyman Talks Surprise Acts, Tour Changes." *Billboard*, June 21, 2011. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://www.billboard.com/articles/photos/live/470204/warped-tour-founder-kevin-lyman-talks-surprise-acts-tour-changes.

Muñiz, Jr., Albert M., and Thomas C. O'Guinn. "Brand Community." *Journal of Consumer Research* 27, no. 4 (2001): 412-32. https://doi.org/10.1086/319618.

Patton, Parris. *No Room for Rock Stars* (DVD insert), 2012: 4-5.

Ravanas, Philippe. "Hitting a High Note: The Chicago Symphony Orchestra Reverses a Decade of Decline with New Programs, New Services and New Prices." *International Journal of Arts Management* 10, no. 2 (2008): 68-78.

Sculley, Alan. "At 20, Warped Tour Holds Fast to Original Spirit." *The Sun Chronicle* (Attleboro, Mass.), July 3, 2014. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/14ED4D9140BEF6B8?p=NewsBank; http://www.thesunchronicle.com/go/at-warped-tour-holds-fast-to-original-spirit/article_6439e86c-fe13-5358-8513-43a329938e18.html.

Sculley, Alan. "Vans Warped Tour Rocks for 11th Year." *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, July 28, 2005. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://infoweb.newsbank.com/resources/doc/nb/news/10BA6AEC12819C20?p=NewsBank&drefer=news/14ED4D9140BEF6B8; http://triblive.com/x/pittsburghtrib/ae/music/s_357645.html.

Sinkovich, Justin, Philippe Ravanas, and Jerry Brindisi. "Pitchfork: Birth of an Indie Music Mega-brand." *International Journal of Arts Management* 15, no. 2 (2013): 73-81.

Sweetman, Paul. "Tourists and Travellers? 'Subcultures', reflexive identities and neo-tribal sociality." In *After Subculture: Critical Studies in Contemporary Youth Culture*, edited by Andy Bennett and Keith Kahn-Harris, 79-93. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

"10 Things You May Not Know About Vans Warped Tour." *Ticketmaster Insider* (blog), April 29, 2015. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://blog.ticketmaster.com/vans-warped-tour-music-festival/.

Tso, Richard. L. "Vans Warped Tour Rocks Sponsor Content, Social Media, Streaming Video." *Adotas*. June 16, 2014. Accessed December

28, 2015. http://www.adotas.com/2014/06/vans-warped-tour-rocks-sponsor-content-social-media-and-streaming-video/.
"2015 Featured Sponsors." *Vans Warped Tour*. Accessed 2015. http://vanswarpedtour.com/sponsors.
"2015 Participating Non-Profit Organizations." *Vans Warped Tour*. Accessed 2015. http://vanswarpedtour.com/nonprofits/.
"Unite the United." *Unite the United*. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://www.unitetheunited.com/.
"Vans, Inc. History." *Funding Universe*, (Source: *International Directory of Company Histories, Vol. 47*. St. James Press, 2002). Accessed December 28, 2015. http://www.fundinguniverse.com/company-histories/vans-inc-history.
"Vans Warped Tour Brings Along Another Robust Line of Brand and Non-Profit Partners for 20th Anniversary Tour." *Indian Retail News: Insights, Job Listings, Events, and B2B Directory*, June 9, 2014. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://bi.galegroup.com/essentials/article/GALE|A370897004/5d106c424c2dbd6e77d8067210a251d7?u=uiuc_columbia.
"VF Corporation 2013 Annual Report." *VF Corporation*. 2014. Accessed December 28, 2015. http://reporting.vfc.com/2013/vans/index.html.
Waddell, Ray. "Edge of Seventeen: Armed with Fan Feedback, Kevin Lyman Readies 2011 Vans Warped Tour." *Billboard*, April 9, 2011. Accessed December 28, 2015. https://books.google.com/books?id=ScqFpB4lJg4C&pg=RA1-PA11&lpg=RA1-PA11&dq=edge+of+17+kevin+lyman&source=bl&ots=O7nic3vqhm&sig=1PIbsTASoQeiXb1E3cTOcwwTDKA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CB8Q6AEwAGoVChMIs9uL5-ihxwIVVn-SCh2j1QAd#v=onepage&q=edge%20of%2017%20kevin%20lyman&f=false.
Waddell, Ray. "Why Warped Works: Kevin Lyman Keeps It Simple and the Fans and Bands Keep Coming Back for More." *Billboard*, August 5, 2006. Accessed December 28, 2015. https://books.google.com/books?id=jA0EAAAAMBAJ&pg=PA3&lpg=PA3&dq=%E2%97%8F+Why+Warped+works:+Kevin+Lyman+keeps+it+simple+and+the+fans+and+bands+keep+coming+back+for+more&source=bl&ots=2N5TWmeif1&sig=Kbrz7ccnR5KM6EHHRSs2S9q8jUk&hl=en&sa=X&ved=0CB8Q6AEwAGoVChMIzbSV0eqhxwIVBBmSCh0T1gF-#v=onepage&q=%E2%97%8F%20Why%20

Warped%20works%3A%20Kevin%20Lyman%20keeps%20it%20simple%20and%20the%20fans%20and%20bands%20keep%20coming%20back%20for%20more&f=false.

"Warped: 12 Years of Music, Mayhem and More." *Rock and Roll Hall of Fame*, 2007. Accessed December 28, 2015. https://rockhall.com/exhibits/warped---12-years-of-music--mayhem-and-more/.

Joe Bogdan is an Associate Professor and Coordinator of the Live & Performing Arts Management Major in the Business and Entrepreneurship Department of Columbia College Chicago. He began his career as an intellectual property attorney in private practice focusing on the leveraged exploitation of entertainment content through new media platforms. He is the past Sr. Vice President of Business and Legal Affairs for World Wrestling Entertainment, where he held primary responsibility for running the day-to-day operation of the business affairs of the company. He is also a partner in the law firm of Culhane Meadows, where he practices media, entertainment, and intellectual property law.

The author would like to acknowledge and thank his graduate research assistants Shifra Whiteman, Deepa Prasad, and Chelsea Dvorchak for their invaluable assistance with research for this article.

Reviews

Larry Wacholtz. *Monetizing Entertainment: An Insider's Handbook for Careers in the Entertainment & Music Industry.* Beverly Schneller (editor). New York: Routledge, 2017. www.routledge.com

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.6

Monetizing Entertainment: An Insider's Handbook for Careers in the Entertainment & Music Industry is a complete text suitable for any overview of the music and entertainment industry class. The book is 600 pages including appendices and was edited by Beverly Schneller. Most institutions involved with such programs organize their curricula around an overview class of this type serving as the beginning point of a journey leading to more in-depth study as the student progresses. The book is thorough, which is one of its strengths, and begins with a fairly lengthy chapter dealing with the history of the last twenty years in the entertainment industry, explaining and commenting on how the digital revolution changed the game. Understanding that piece gives important context to moving forward, particularly as it pertains to the monetization of assets, or even the identification of monetizable assets. Because of its overarching thoroughness, it is a good fit for these types of classes.

The section on copyright law, chapter three, *The Rules of the Game,* is particularly informative and useful to the novice or layperson regarding the matter of copyright law. There are a number of helpful graphs and charts that students may find enlightening while sorting out some of the complexities.

Wacholtz provides a wealth of information on the business of recording and recording studios in chapter seven, *Recording Lightning in a Bottle*. For the beginner, with no previous knowledge of how recordings are made, what the actual cost is, and the unions and other organizations involved, this is an outstanding foundation to understanding the process.

The book does bridge the music business with larger entertainment interests such as film and other media, and discussion of those industries is included across several chapters. Special attention is given to marketing, as one would expect given the theme of monetization and converting the consumption of entertainment to currency.

Wacholtz also does a good job giving background and context on the label business in chapter nine entitled *Odds of the Game*, condensing the history of how six majors became three. This background is important to understanding monetization in a future world. Recordings and the label business have always been the platform for an artist's career, and still are. Otherwise, how else would one hear of new artists without a recording of some kind? However, the ability to monetize recordings has been severely reduced in a streaming world. Indies are given adequate mention in this chapter as well.

It is worth noting that the book is written in the first person which makes it a little unusual for a textbook of this sort. This is neither a strength nor a weakness in my opinion. Some will like the casual approach and personal stories and references. Others may not.

The large book has a number of strengths, and the first is its broad scope and number of topics covered. However, the table of contents is not always helpful in finding topically what one is looking for. Some of the chapters have clever names such as *The Perfect Storm, The Significance of Narration*, and *The Rules of the Game*, to name a few, which do not on the surface, speak to what one would find there. That said, within the chapters, topics are organized well with headers making finding information easier once one is in the appropriate chapter. The appendix section of the text is eighty pages long. It contains numerous sample contracts and agreements and is quite good. This is really helpful and can be a great classroom resource. The book contains a large number of graphs and charts, and most are helpful and easily understood. There were a few that were perhaps a little arcane for an overview book of this sort. There is one in the introduction section which is quite extensive. But, it is perhaps better to have too much than not enough.

The book is an alternative for any music and entertainment industry educator looking for a survey text other than the standard two or three that are widely available and used extensively. It may be particularly appropriate for those schools that organize their curricula around a series of overview classes.

Robert Garfrerick

Robert Garfrerick is Professor and Eminent Scholar in Entertainment Industry at the University of North Alabama. Dr. Garfrerick teaches music business and songwriting classes. In addition to his teaching duties he is the Chair of the Department of Entertainment Industry. He has written songs recorded by Crystal Gayle, T. G. Sheppard, Marie Osmond, Johnny Lee, Gus Hardin, David Slater, and others. Dr. Garfrerick has a bachelor of music degree from the University of Alabama, a master of arts in music from Middle Tennessee State University, and a doctorate in education from Tennessee State University. His research interest is in the area of creativity, songwriting, and curriculum development. He presents and publishes this research regularly. Additionally, Dr. Garfrerick has been a speaker, presenter, performer, or clinician for groups including The Songwriter's Guild of America (SGA), The Balsam Mountain Songwriter's Camp, Nashville Songwriters Association International (NSAI), and the Music and Entertainment Industry Educators Association (MEIEA). He is a voting member of the National Academy of Recording Arts & Sciences (NARAS), a member of The American Society of Composers, Authors, and Publishers (ASCAP), the Muscle Shoals Music Association (MSMA), and MEIEA.

Sarah Kate Gillespie. *The Early American Daguerreotype: Cross-Currents in Art and Technology*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The MIT Press, 2016. mitpress.mit.edu

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.7

The early history of photography is a byzantine labyrinth of artistic, entrepreneurial, and technological innovations across multiple continents during the first half of the nineteenth century. Sarah Kate Gillespie's *The Early American Daguerreotype* represents years of study into the American origins of photography, and it makes important contributions to the literature on this complex historical phenomenon. Familiar names such as Samuel F. B. Morse, Mathew B. Brady, and John Adams Whipple appear in the book alongside lesser known figures like John William Draper, Alexander Wolcott, James Chilton, Henry Fitz Jr., and Robert Cornelius. However, Gillespie's conceptualization of the daguerreotype as an intersection of "'fine art,' 'science,' and 'technology'" (p. 3) ultimately yields a more thorough analysis than previous work that has focused on individual achievement and memorable images.

Chapter 1 explores how art, science, and technology were intertwined in the life and career of Samuel Morse. Most remembered today for his invention of telegraphy and the code it used to communicate, Morse actually made his living as one of the most talented portrait painters in early America. While in France promoting his telegraph in 1839, he witnessed first-hand Louis Daguerre's success in permanently affixing an image to a glass plate treated with light sensitive chemicals. He brought this process back to America and continued to perfect it along with collaborators such as Alexander Wolcott and John William Draper. His artist's eye for composition and inventor's approach to improving photographic technology advanced both the aesthetic and technical aspects of daguerreotypy. Yet, such rapid innovation was difficult for the disparate communities Morse was a part of to digest. As Gillespie notes, "The art world was frustrated by Morse's turn to technology and science, and because of his past as an artist the scientific community was mistrustful of his abilities" (p. 52).

Chapter 2 continues exploring the intersection of daguerreotypy and art by conceiving of the daguerreotype as "a new visual medium entering a realm of existing visual media" (p. 57). Gillespie notes that an existing market for fine art prints paved the way for the rapid adoption of daguerreotype portraiture in the 1840s. The profitability of the daguerreotype market was further extended to those operators that could demonstrate the

aesthetic sensibilities of portrait painting. The fine detail produced by the daguerreotype process could render exquisitely clear images, and the most adept daguerreotypists such as Jeremiah Gurney and Mathew Brady were able to command a premium for their images of the American elite.

Chapter 3 asks the question, "In view of the daguerreotype's extraordinary capabilities and potential, why did American men of science shy away from using it to answer experimental questions?" (p. 111). The answer lies in a lack of systematic, federally subsidized scientific research in Jacksonian America. This often resulted in areas of disciplinary specialization being isolated from advances in other fields. An illustrative exception to this rule, Gillespie suggests, can be found in the career of John William Draper. An early collaborator with Morse, Draper pushed the boundaries of early daguerreotype technology by capturing astronomical images of the moon and solar system. He also made important studies of the chemical processes involved in producing daguerreotype images that greatly improved their quality. This chapter helps to recover the importance of Draper's contributions to scientific photography that have been overshadowed somewhat by the more well-known work of John Adams Whipple.

Chapter 4 characterizes the evolution of daguerreotype technology as "indicative of nineteenth-century American exceptionalism" (p. 136). Despite the daguerreotype's clear French origin, American artists and inventors rapidly appropriated the technology. Period trade publications and journalism show deliberate attempts to recast early photography as a quintessentially American innovation. In this way, daguerreotypy became an essential part of an emerging American national identity, and helped to set the stage for the coming mass communication boom at the turn of the twentieth century.

Gillespie's skill as an art historian is on display in the beautifully curated images that illustrate this book. Her flair for storytelling and economy of language make it an enjoyable read, an admirable achievement for a work on such complex subject matter. Yet, its most important contribution is in advancing the historiography of photography by skillfully weaving elements of social, cultural, and intellectual history into a cohesive narrative that can substantially revise current understandings. Its innovative use of theory can inform a broad spectrum of work in histories of art, science, and mass communication. This book will become a foundational text on the history of early photography, and it should be required reading for courses in art, film, photojournalism, and media history.

Jason Lee Guthrie

JoAnne O'Connell. *The Life and Songs of Stephen Foster: A Revealing Portrait of the Forgotten Man behind "Swanee River," "Beautiful Dreamer," and "My Old Kentucky Home."* Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield, 2016. www.rowman.com

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.8

JoAnne O'Connell's new book on Stephen Foster is the latest biographical contribution to the literature on one of the most important composers in popular music history. Foster's birth on July 4th, 1826, as cannon fire and military bands heralded the fiftieth anniversary of the nation, has been an irresistible point of departure for all his previous biographers, and interest in his life and music has continued unabated since his death on January 13, 1864 at just 37 years of age. The book's intended contribution to the literature is at once broad, to recover the man whose songs once "swirled around in the recesses of the [American] mind like cultural DNA" (p. xxv), and specific, to revise an understanding of his later career as he "moved out of the antebellum mold and ventured into new and exciting musical styles in the last years of his life" (p. xxxi). In its final chapters, the book has delved more deeply into Foster's later years than previous work. In doing so it has drawn some thought-provoking, if arguable, conclusions from the scant source material available during this period.

Like his previous biographers, O'Connell's efforts are complicated by a relative lack of primary sources in the composer's own hand. Foster's closest family relation, his brother Morrison, burned much of his correspondence soon after his death. Only a handful of Foster's letters have survived. Aside from the news articles commemorating his passing, Morrison became his brother's first biographer when he published a short sketch of his life with a collection of songs in 1896. Morrison's daughter Evelyn Morneweck published a substantial two-volume history of the Foster family in 1944 that reprinted much of the relevant correspondence and journalism. These sources, along with Foster's musical sketchbook, his account ledger, and his songs form the primary basis of Foster scholarship. Other biographers of note include Harold Vincent Milligan (1920), John Tasker Howard (1934 and 1953), William W. Austin (1975 and 1987), and Ken Emerson (1997).

Foster's papers are housed in The Center for American Music at the University of Pittsburgh. The Center is directed by Deane L. Root, who served on O'Connell's doctoral committee as she completed the disserta-

tion that later became this book. Root has long called for a sympathetic revision to the historical memory of Stephen Foster, a memory deeply tainted by the racist content of his most popular songs. O'Connell's book seems to be driven by a similar motive.

However, revising historical memory is difficult to do without evidence. O'Connell herself suggests as much, writing in her introduction, "With Foster, it is best to deal with intentions, rather than with external communications, because he left no formal record of his true feelings on politics" (p. xxvii). The violent and dehumanizing racism against African Americans that is evident in his early songs was not denied. Instead, the book emphasized a seven-year hiatus from the minstrel song genre (known at the time as Ethiopian or plantation melodies), and a return to it only out of financial necessity as evidence of a lack of racist intent. Nuance is emphasized as well, as O'Connell conceded that the lyrics to the second verse of "Oh! Susannah" were "senselessly callous and cruel," but at least "Foster's [African American] protagonist comes across as a human being with feelings" (p. 111). As Foster's supposed evolution was traced further, the author goes so far as to claim, "That Stephen was antislavery in his heart, there is no doubt, but as with many men in 1856, the threat of fraternal bloodshed and national dissolution was perhaps too high a price to pay for the slave's freedom" (p. 213).

Such a statement reveals a contestable theorization about the kind of claims that historical scholarship can make. If Stephen Foster left no record of his deepest thoughts on slavery and race relations, then we simply cannot know what was "in his heart." Certainly, we can trace recorded thoughts in personal correspondence, direct action in business decisions, and consider the context of the period. In some instances, unorthodox source material may present itself.

Foster's final years from 1860-1864 were spent living in poverty near Five Points in lower Manhattan. The only biographical sources from this period come from a handful of acquaintances, some of whom recorded their recollections decades later. To fill in her narrative of Foster's triumphant conversion from a racist past, O'Connell employed the only other evidence available, the songs he wrote during this time. In her own words, "If Stephen's Civil War songs, like his plantation songs, contained messages that accurately reflected his thoughts, they reveal that he became a staunch supporter of the Union and the president once the war began" (p. 255). While it is true that if one is to take Foster's racist lyrics as eviden-

tial one must consider his pro-Union lyrics as well, O'Connell's argument here assumes that song lyrics can be considered as direct evidence of their author's worldview, an assumption that deserves further scrutiny.

Even though the American popular music industry was in its infancy, and indeed Stephen Foster was a key figure in its early growth, popular song in mid-nineteenth-century America was still produced with an economic motivation in mind. There is an apparent contradiction between claiming that Foster composed his war songs "in response to the changing tastes of the people and probably the demands of his publishers…" and asserting later in the same paragraph that "If we accept these [war] songs as an expression of Stephen's wartime loyalties, they provide a key to understanding a politically circumspect man" (p. 251). Certainly, songwriters might write lyrics that both expressed their worldview and appealed to the public's taste, but there is simply not enough evidence available to show that this was true in Stephen Foster's case. If anything, his earlier songs, written before he was aware of their economic value, are arguably more evidential of what was "in his heart" than songs written near the end of his life while he was a transient alcoholic desperate to sell anything his publishers would buy.

The Life and Songs of Stephen Foster has comprehensively presented what evidence there is of Foster's racial conversion, but it ultimately fails to persuade because it does not answer the critique of hypercanonization in Foster scholarship that Jennie Lightweis-Goff has delineated. Indeed, this book is likely to perpetuate that problem. Still, it has shined light on a little understood period of Foster's life. An illumination of his early interest in musical theatre (p. 163-167) paired with a geography of the Bowery theatre scene during the Civil War (p. 270-271; 279-282) are particularly helpful passages. The revision to the importance of Foster's late career songs, considered trivial by nearly all his previous biographers, is an original contribution not only to scholarship on Stephen Foster, but to the history of American music during the Civil War. Yet, as we brace for the glut of scholarship sure to accompany the bicentennial of Foster's birth in 2026 we are still awaiting a book that succeeds in communicating his importance without whitewashing his failures, and that explores how the racism in his most popular songs helped to set a precedent of inequality in American popular culture. If we are to truly understand American music in all its complexity and contradiction, we must not explain away the racism and cultural appropriation inherent in it from its beginnings.

Jason Lee Guthrie

Jason Lee Guthrie is a PhD Candidate in Mass Communication at The University of Georgia. His research explores media history, copyright law, and the music business. He teaches all types of media production and enjoys co-creating with his students. He has toured with several bands, he managed a national concert tour in 2007, and in 2011 he released *Cities*, an album of original folk material. He received a bachelor's in Mass Communication from University of North Carolina-Wilmington in 2009 and a master's in Educational Media from Appalachian State University in 2011. He is a member of MEIEA, the Appalachian Studies Association, and the American Journalism Historian's Association.

Shep Gordon. *They Call Me Supermensch: A Backstage Pass To The Amazing Worlds Of Film, Food, And Rock 'N' Roll*. New York: HarperCollins, 2016. www.harpercollins.com.

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.9

Mike Myers, known for his characters as varied as Austin Powers, Shrek, Wayne Campbell of *Wayne's World*, and, most recently, Tommy Maitland, host of a revamped *Gong Show* on ABC, released a must-see film for music business educators in 2013 titled *Supermensch: The Legend of Shep Gordon*. In 2016, Gordon followed up on his own with an autobiography playing off the film's title, focusing on that unique term, Supermensch.

What is a supermensch? As described in the book, a supermensch is "someone with honor" (p. 270). Honor and character are big themes in Gordon's story, going all the way back to his days managing Alice Cooper (which started as a band fronted by Vince Furnier, who in later years adopted the band's name to be his own). In those earlier days, when rock

'n' roll was just hitting puberty, a manager served every supporting role for his (almost every manager back then was male) artists, from booking shows to handling publicity, to coaching artists on their appearance and stage presence. This should sound familiar to any current day DIY artist/manager. In an early tour with Alice Cooper, the group couldn't afford to pay for their hotel rooms. They would sneak out and not pay. But Gordon kept track of the hotels they had stiffed and later, when the band was making money, wrote checks to each hotel for the lost fees. That is how to be a mensch, and this mensch, Shep Gordon, teaches many lessons in his book. Here are some of the key takeaways.

The Art of the Coupon

The common understanding of coupons is based upon the discounts we see in Sunday circulars or an email offer we receive from Groupon. Shep Gordon looked at the human side of the coupon.

There was a short period when Gordon was managing Groucho Marx. Groucho, in his eighties and in need of twenty-four-hour care, couldn't afford the expense. Alice Cooper had befriended Groucho and asked Gordon to look into the Marx brother's financial affairs. "He had to be wealthy, but nobody seemed to know where the money was" (89). Gordon "weeded out" some people who were getting paid for no purpose and then focused on developing income sources. One successful strategy was to license Groucho's image for a high-end men's shop in London. Another one that worked was getting Groucho's old TV show *You Bet Your Life* back on the air. That took a fair amount of research, planning, and negotiation. It worked.

The third source of revenue came from A&M Records. A live Groucho album had been released and Gordon went to Jerry Moss (the "M" of A&M) to personally ask for an advance to pay for the nursing care Groucho needed. Moss not only agreed, but he wrote "a personal check for a significant amount" on the spot (91). Gordon explains that, due to the generosity of Moss, "Jerry has a coupon with me that goes all the way back to that day. I will gladly pay it back for the rest of my life. I will do anything I can do for him at any time. That's what a coupon is" (91).

Guilt By Association

Shep Gordon uses his self-dubbed Guilt By Association strategy with true mastery throughout the book. The best example was when he

took on managing Anne Murray. You couldn't find a more white bread, vanilla artist in the 1970s but Gordon loved her music and used Guilt By Association to make her seem cool.

> I'd learned two things with Alice: stars aren't born, they're made; and if you put someone with people who are acknowledged to be cool, they become cool by association. (126)

Gordon's plan was to get a picture of Anne Murray with the Hollywood Vampires—a group of rock stars who had formed their own drinking club. Members included Alice Cooper, Keith Moon of the Who, Micky Dolenz of the Monkees, Harry Nilsson, and John Lennon. Gordon spoke to Cooper, who allowed the manager to pitch the club. On his knees, Gordon begged the stars to show up at Murray's next gig and take one picture with her. They said yes.

The impact of the image was powerful. Murray was interviewed in *Rolling Stone*, *People*, and *Time*. She graced the covers of several magazines (remember, this is pre-internet when magazines still held sway over music fans). Ultimately, the strategy got Murray to appear on the television show that had been her personal goal, NBC's *Midnight Special*. When Murray's single, "Danny's Song," was released the next month, it reached the top ten. Gordon writes:

> The experiment had worked. The same principles of management I had used for Alice worked for Anne Murray. Let the games begin! After this, I went on to manage dozens of great artists in a wide array of musical genres—from George Clinton and Parliament-Funkadelic to the Manhattan Transfer, to King Sunny Adé, to Rick James, and on and on. Lucky me! (128-129)

A Manager's Work—Whatever That Is—Is Never Done

Gordon offers some great textbook, and non-textbook, anecdotes about the work an artist manager needs to perform in order to be successful. He describes the obvious tasks. Turn to pages 104 and 105 and you'll see an excellent description of what a manager is supposed to do, especial-

ly in the early days of a band. Gordon and a partner would drive the truck, load and unload the equipment, and also collect the money due the band. He dealt with the record company, worked with producers and agents and publicity personnel. "It was constant, all-consuming work," Gordon writes. However hard the band worked, "I worked ten times harder" (104).

Gordon tells stories about the psychology of a manager. He writes about dealing with city councils that were afraid to have Alice Cooper play in their towns. He writes about his efforts to sway the original Alice Cooper band members not to break up, and he explains how he dealt with egocentric stars like Luther Vandross and Teddy Pendergrass. The Pendergrass section is especially important to absorb (pages 183-203). Readers discover how Gordon dealt with a man at the top of his game, the paralyzing accident that almost killed Pendergrass, and the artist's triumphant return at Live Aid.

> It all starts with the end, the goal. I always tell my clients the real value in me is that I can get a year ahead of you, see where there's a pothole in our road, and figure out how you don't fall into it. That's what I do. (98)

Gordon also writes about the not-so-obvious tasks of a manager. In 1975, Gordon set up Alice Cooper to perform a show at Lake Tahoe. This type of venue wasn't normal for a theatrical rock performer at the time, so Gordon arranged for a group of celebrities to fly out and see the show. One of the celebrities was a German Shepherd named Won Ton Ton (the dog had been in a recent film). Gordon reserved a front row table for the dog, including a water bowl. However, security reached out before the show to complain. Gordon explained that he'd cleared the dog's presence with the hotel management. Security explained that the dog was all right, but the canine's trainer was completely sloshed and throwing up in the lobby. "I had to get the hotel to find two dogsitters to be with Won Ton Ton during the show. Add to my manager's resume: Obtains dogsitters" (141).

There's also dealing with the problems many artists go through. In the late-1970s, Alice Cooper was arguably one of the biggest stars in the world. "But there was still one dark cloud. All through this period, Alice's drinking got worse and worse" (143). Gordon staged an intervention with Cooper's wife, which led Cooper to a clinic where he stayed for two months. "He came out clean and sober," writes Gordon, "and stayed that

way for a couple of years before falling again as hard and far as before" (143). Gordon would have to wait for Cooper to hit rock bottom before finally getting his client truly sober.

Don't Get Mad. Accomplish Your Goal

Often, Shep Gordon writes about setting goals in *They Call Me Supermensch*. "I had always grown by setting myself new challenges. Stretching is how you grow. That's always been my method. If you can see the goal, no matter how distant it might seem at the start, it makes it easier to start creating the path to it" (249).

> I know my strengths and weaknesses. I'm not a great organizational guy. I don't have a great attention span. I'm a very poor administrator, and I'm a horrible executive. But I'm fantastic at launching the rocket ship. It's what I do best. I sit and smoke a joint and think, wouldn't it be amazing if…And then I start figuring out how to pull it off. (270)

That's exactly how Gordon was able to work out the arrangements for the vinyl of Alice Cooper's 1972 album, *School's Out*, to come wrapped in women's panties. Cooper's label, Warner Bros., had said no to the panties idea. It was too expensive. Undeterred, Gordon negotiated directly with a production company that created album jackets and was looking for an in with the label but had been blocked by one particular Warner executive. Gordon blackmailed the Warner Music exec, who was renting a house from a rival production company (a conflict of interest), into agreeing for the less expensive company to manufacture the LPs wrapped in panties. Then, Gordon worked with a press contact to create a false story that the panties were flammable, thus infuriating parents—and giving kids more reasons to buy Cooper's recordings. Gordon considered this work his modus operandi: "creating history instead of waiting for it to happen" (97). He tops off the story stating:

> Once I had a path to my goal, I didn't let anything or anyone deter me from following it…Because it's not like you just snap your fingers and things happen. It's hours of work. It's waking up earlier…not allowing distractions to

> deter you, and then working your ass off to reach the goal you set yourself. (97)

Supermensch

By the time Gordon manages the careers of celebrity chefs, like Emeril Lagasse, he has not only proven over and over again that he's a supermensch, but he's chosen to work with others who reflect his own attitude. When Lagasse is pushed by the William Morris Agency to drop his handshake agreement with Gordon, the chef asks what he should do. Gordon says, "We shook hands. We're fifty-fifty partners. You do what you want to do. You want to cut me out, cut me out. I'm not going to sue you. You do what you gotta do. You gotta live with yourself" (270). Lagasse thinks it over and eventually tells WMA to forget it. Shep is his partner. Gordon clearly appreciates this. "That's a supermensch. That's someone with honor" (270).

It is highly recommended that music business educators assign both the Supermensch movie and book to their classes (in that order). While students may find some of the artists dated (Cooper, Pendergrass), the lessons are still current today.

Ten Shep Gordon Lessons To Share With Classes

- Coupons
- What a manager does
- Guilt by association
- Don't get mad, accomplish your goal
- Get the money
- Build a massive network—it's all about connections!
- An artist WILL cancel a show—and you have to fix that
- Contracts vs. handshakes
- The value of creativity
- Transferring skills from one industry (music) to another (celebrity chefs)

David Philp

David Philp, Assistant Professor of Music & Entertainment Industries and Popular Music Studies at William Paterson University (WPU), sports over twenty-five years of experience in the entertainment world. He has worked for PolyGram Records, the Universal Music Group, New Video (home video distributor of the A&E Network, History Channel, and Biography Channel content), *The Edge With Jake Sasseville* (independent television show), and Greater Media Broadcasting (WDHA and WMTR radio). A BM graduate of WPU, with an emphasis in Music Management, Philp earned his MBA in Marketing Management from Pace University.

He runs the *Music Biz 101* website for the WPU Music & Entertainment Industries program and co-hosts with Dr. Stephen Marcone *Music Biz 101 & More*, a weekly radio show on WP 88.7: Brave New Radio. Philp and Marcone are also co-authors of *Managing Your Band – 6th Edition*. Philp teaches about music royalty streams, social media, and entrepreneurship at WPU. He is also the music director at the Wayne United Methodist Church and Chief Organizer Guy of YouChoose Music, a live music events production company that raises oodles of big dollars for great non-profits. He has one wife and two children, all of whom are left-handed.

Mary E. Donnelly (with Moira McCormick). *Boys Don't Lie: A History of Shoes*. Vestal, New York: Pure Pop Press, 2013.

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.10

The mere fact that a pair of authors dedicated substantial time and effort to pen the definitive biography of a power-pop rock band—whose albums and singles never attained massive popularity, and whose name is relatively unknown to the vast majority of current rock music audiences after forty-plus years in the business—is impressive enough. However, what makes *Boys Don't Lie: A History of Shoes* doubly impressive is that authors Mary E. Donnelly and Moira McCormick actually penned nearly five hundred pages of acute detail, colorful recollection, and deep, if not occasionally idiosyncratic insights on the Zion, Illinois-based quartet Shoes, who were consistently critically lauded, but ultimately not considered a major-label sales success. Simply put, it is an incredibly thorough and exhaustive review of a music career spanning over four decades, of a rock band whose grasp at widespread national fame was seemingly one elusive step away.

A true, do-it-yourself, independently operated outfit from the start, Shoes entered the music industry in the mid-1970s the only way they knew how—by learning on the job and making their fair share of mistakes along the way. Their unsophisticated Midwestern ways afforded them a certain charm and innocence, while simultaneously shielding them from the showy, big city music business trappings of Los Angeles, New York, or even close-by Chicago. The core songwriters of the outfit, brothers John and Jeff Murphy plus Gary Klebe, didn't initially have access to (or the funds for) recording studios or professional equipment. Instead, entire albums were tracked in diminutive, converted garages, guitars were plugged straight into recording consoles, and the band took to the task of self-engineering (and self-releasing) many of their releases. All their perseverance and patience eventually paid off, after Shoes landed its record deal with Elektra, which netted them substantial budgets and instant access to high-quality studios, top-name producers, live performance opportunities, equipment upgrades, and that desirable possibility of musical celebrity.

However, the story twists into a somewhat familiar tale of bands that don't "make it," for various reasons, and Shoes, despite the major label promises and payments, do not take hold as a household name, and the aforementioned opportunities for lasting popularity eventually diminish.

Album after album is recorded with well-regarded personnel at the helm in professional facilities—all via Elektra's funding—and each time, it is done with the hopes of finally breaking through as a major label commercial success. Shoes' videos even received airtime on a then-fledgling cable television network, MTV, whose name had not yet had the market penetration to define an entire generation of music fans.

But, the book reveals the many holes in the support system of each attempt at becoming the "next big thing," from missed opportunities, to misleading advice, to bad timing (especially paralleling the downturn in popularity of similar-sounding, yet far more popular power-pop artists of the era). After an uneven career ride throughout the early 1980s, Shoes eventually exited the big leagues not just intact, but wiser, opting to re-establish a comfortable niche in the independent music scene by building their own studio and managing their own record label, Black Vinyl Records. (To this day, Shoes still maintains its label's catalog and occasionally performs live.)

What makes *Boys Don't Lie: A History of Shoes* remarkably interesting is the sheer breadth of the story it tells. Donnelly and McCormick set the stage with background on Zion, gingerly strolling through the lives of the Murphys and Klebe (and, eventually, drummer Skip Meyer, whose tenure included Shoes' major label stint). And once Shoes is formed and tracking its debut release, no story is ostensibly left unmentioned, personal or professional. Even distinctive technical aspects of recording sessions are provided; model numbers of analog tape machines used on sessions are mentioned, unconventional methods of tracking are revealed, and types of guitar cabinets used are not missed. Plus, the conversations with various record label personnel are recalled, often with clarity and robust verbal imagery (including Shoes' interactions with Kiss bassist Gene Simmons, who had apparently taken an interest in the band for his imprint, Simmons Records; Shoes did not eventually sign to his label).

Boys Don't Lie: A History of Shoes is not merely a story about a rock band from Illinois that could've been. In fact, one could excise many of the direct Shoes references from the text and still find that it's a fascinating expository account on how the music industry operated (and still operates to this day, to some extent), how the do-it-yourself spirit that permeates contemporary artists' bedroom tracking sessions on laptops has a direct lineage to the reel-to-reel recordings made in living rooms decades ago, and how challenging it is for a musical artist to succeed on a grand, com-

mercial scale, despite the well-intentioned guidance and finances of a major label. While there are many points in the narrative where one would likely want to listen to a song or album presently under discussion for closer reference—thus making the book a true page-turner for the devoted Shoes fan, whose access to the band's entire seventeen-album discography is within arm's reach—*Boys Don't Lie: A History of Shoes* is nonetheless an absorbing read on a rock band's history and journey of the rollercoaster ride that is oftentimes known as the music industry.

Waleed Rashidi

Waleed Rashidi is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Communications at California State University, Fullerton (CSUF), and also serves as advisor to the Entertainment and Tourism Club. His research interests include examining communications program development and investigating music as a form of mass communication. Dr. Rashidi was an editor at *Mean Street* magazine and the *Inland Empire Weekly*. He hosts a jazz radio show at KSPC 88.7 FM, and has freelanced for the *Los Angeles Times-Brand X*, *Alternative Press*, *Orange County Register*, *Modern Drummer*, *E! Online*, and *OC Weekly*. Rashidi has contributed to five books, including *Punkademics* and *The Drummer: 100 Years of Rhythmic Power and Invention*. He teaches several courses at CSUF including Introduction to Entertainment and Tourism Studies, Event Planning and Management, and Music Entertainment Industry Studies. Rashidi earned his doctorate in Education from the University of La Verne, an MA in Communications from CSUF, and a BS in Communication-Journalism from Cal Poly Pomona.

Amber Nicole Shavers. *The Little Book of Music Law*. Chicago: American Bar Association, 2013. https://shop.americanbar.org/ebus/Store.aspx.

https://doi.org/10.25101/17.11

The Little Book of Music Law is part of the American Bar Association's (ABA) "collection of absurd, hilarious, and sometimes instructive cases on the pastimes and passions of lawyers. Each [Little Book] focuses on a separate topic…" As of this review, there are twenty topics covered by the various Little Book's, including *The Little Book of Movie Law* and *The Little Book of Elvis Law*. In general, the ABA's Little Books do not specifically target lawyers as their primary audience. According to the ABA website, *The Little Book of Music Law*, "is for anyone interested in working in the music business, having a better understanding of it, or just enjoying an intriguing glimpse of it. It is for the casual observer as well as the industry insider." As author Amber Nicole Shavers further states in the introduction, "[This text] is written as an entertaining approach to music law. Although it is fact based, it is not a textbook…Rather, its purpose is to provide insight into music law along with a glimpse into the stories behind the music" (p. xi). Music industry educators will find *The Little Book of Music Law* beneficial because Shavers recounts many landmark cases that profoundly affected the business of music by writing accessible prose that avoids legalese and jargon.

Organized into five parts, each section of the book covers an approximately twenty-year span. At the center of most chapters, which Shavers refers to as "tracks," is a case related to the music industry. Cases such as White-Smith Music Publishing Co. v. Apollo Co. (1908), Bright Tunes Music v. Harrisongs Music (1976), Campbell v. Acuff-Rose Music (1994), and others are likely well-known to the readers of this journal. The author also chronicles less publicly well-known cases such as Baron v. Leo Feist, Inc. (1949) that involved copyright claims over the popular calypso song "Rum and Coca-Cola," and Kirby v. Sega of America, Inc. (2006) that claimed the video game manufacturer misappropriated the identity of Lady Miss Kier (Kierin Kirby) of the group Deee-Lite. There are eight interludes such as "The Emergence of the Teen Idol" and "The Rise and Fall of a Boy-Band Impresario" woven between the twenty-one total "tracks." Although the coverage is broad in terms of subject matter, the cases ad-

dressed mostly deal with rock 'n' roll, R&B, or rap/hip-hop; the book does not include any cases directly related to classical or country music.

The text also includes an Introduction, Prelude, Finale (the last two terms, as the author mentions, are borrowed from "large musical works"), a brief Glossary, and endnotes. *The Little Book of Music Law* also includes "playlists" that "should provide a flavor of the variety of popular music over the decades" (333). Including playlists is a novel idea as they offer a starting point for readers unfamiliar with the music of a particular era. Shavers compiles the lists alphabetically (by act) to correspond with the sections of the book: 1900s-1930s, 1940s-1950s, etc., but she unfortunately does not include release dates for (or the importance of) any of the selected tracks. So "School's Out" (1972) by Alice Cooper is first, while "My Girl" (1964) by The Temptations is last on the 1960s-1970s list.

The Little Book of Music Law contains several standout chapters. One such chapter chronicles the life and inventions of Edwin H. Armstrong—"the man who is considered by some to be to radio what Thomas Edison was to the light bulb [but who] remains largely unknown" (52). Armstrong is the person primarily responsible for developing the regeneration circuit, the technology that made FM radio possible. Although this chapter is not related to any specific court case, Shavers recounts how the dissemination of this technology was "frustrated by the bruised egos of [Armstrong's] competitors, [the] betrayal of a former close friend and ally, long-lasting legal battles, and ultimately Armstrong's tragic death" (52). The telling of Armstrong's story by Shavers is cinematic. FM radio is now ubiquitous, and the spreading of the AOR format across the airwaves during the late 1960s and early 70s would not have been possible without Armstrong's inventions and his dogged determination.

"What Monopoly? Radio Music Licensing Battles and the ASCAP 'Boycott' of 1941," Track 5, chronicles the power struggles and legal fights that ultimately gave rise to BMI and the consent decrees entered into with the U.S. Government by both PROs. This chapter, paired with a previous "track" that describes ASCAP's origins and its early legal battles, would make a good addition to any course unit on publishing or licensing.

Track 8 narrates the music industry's long history of engaging in payola, concluding with the downfall of its most famous participant, Alan Freed. Although the term payola is modern, the practice of "pay to play" was well established by the late nineteenth century, and it became rampant in the 1950s (110). Hearings conducted in 1958 by the Subcommittee

on Legislative Oversight of the U.S. House of Representatives into the *$64,000 Question* scandal opened the doors to investigate "other questionable practices within the broadcast industry" (114). Freed, who "never explicitly stated that he engaged in payola," eventually "pleaded guilty to two of the ninety-nine counts of commercial bribery and was assessed a fine" (115-116). Shavers reflects on the double-edged nature of this common mid-1950s practice by remarking that on one hand payola provided wealthy labels an advantage over smaller labels, but on the other hand, "rock 'n' roll may never have received the wide exposure it did without payola" (115).

Track 11, "When the Manager Takes All," provides a cautionary tale by reminding all bands that even the Rolling Stones were susceptible to shady business deals. This chapter describes Allen Klein's, let's just say, "unique" business dealings with the Stones. It is likely most fans are unaware that the pre-1971 music catalog of "the world's greatest rock 'n' roll band" is owned by ABKCO, a company owned by Klein. In his autobiography, Keith Richards summed up the band's experience with their former manager stating, "Allen Klein made us and screwed us at the same time" (Shavers, 159).

Current U.S. Copyright law does not recognize moral rights for musicians. In her "Interlude: Reimagining Copyright—A Moral Rights Opportunity," Shavers argues that, "The availability of moral rights in the United States could be a positive step for the rights of musicians. It would provide a level of protection for their work even if they did not retain the copyright" (208). Considering the increasing "unauthorized" uses of music by political campaigns, for example, moral rights "would provide a means for the artist, [particularly someone who assigned copyright in exchange for a record deal], to continue to have approval rights over the use of his or her music" (207).

Track 19, "Does Protecting the Band Mean Protecting the Brand? The Doors in the Twenty-First Century," offers insights into the wrangling for control of a band's legacy long after the music is over. The popularity of the Doors has far surpassed their relatively short career. Much of their music remains a radio staple, and images of Jim Morrison, the band's iconic singer who died in 1971, are still reproduced on posters and t-shirts. The original four members of the band entered into and amended various partnerships during the 1960s that included the use of the name the Doors. The three remaining members entered into a new partnership after Morrison's

death. (Morrison's and his girlfriend's family controlled the singer's estate.) Over the succeeding years, major corporations had sought the Doors' music for their advertising campaigns, but the "remaining members had seemingly been able to manage their catalog successfully and protect the integrity of [their] brand" (266). The feeling of "brotherhood" dissipated during the early 2000s after a sanctioned one-off concert led to a tour that used the Doors name by two of the three remaining members. Multiple lawsuits ensued. What began in the mid-1960s as a "band of brothers," ended in drawn-out court battles during the 2000s. "The battle over the Doors' name," Shavers concludes, "illustrates the high creative and commercial value of a band's name."

The Finale brings into focus a few of the topics covered in the book regarding the dilemmas facing the twenty-first century music industry—copyright extension, declining physical media sales, digital distribution, digital rights and PROs, to name a few. "Now that the popular music industry has had over a century to grow into itself," Shavers observes, "it appears that its continual challenge lies in its ability and willingness to adapt, evolve, and innovate" (305).

There are several moments that highlight Shavers' lack of attention to historical rigor, particularly when she writes about music history. In the introduction, Shavers recounts how she initially learned about pop music via her parents who, "would always tell me the history and story behind an artist or a song" (ix). Many people grew up learning music "history" from their parents, siblings, or friends. Shavers relies on this type of amateur (music) historian approach, which is unfortunate, even for a source that claims to not be a textbook. Some of the Interludes barely skim the historical surface (of course, this is *not* a history book). For example, the "Prelude: Setting the Scene" describes the pre-1900 conditions that helped to establish the modern music industry. Painting with very broad strokes, Shavers cycles through events that include the Industrial Revolution, urban migration, westward expansion, minstrelsy, the growth of sheet music sales, vaudeville, song pluggers, and the rise of Tin Pan Alley. There is no mention of Stephen Foster, which is odd considering he was one of the most popular songwriters of his era, and his music provides a tangible connection to many of the ideas Shavers presents. The most egregious lack of historical accuracy appears in the section "Ragtime, Blues, and Jazz: The Birth of Modern Popular Music." W.C. Handy's name does not appear in the blues history section. This omission is peculiar since Handy, like Fos-

ter before him, provides a link between vernacular musical traditions like the blues and the business of music. Handy, known as the "Father of the Blues," published the first commercially successful blues, *The Memphis Blues*, in 1912.

While Shavers correctly states, "the evolution of the blues began with the solitary singing and self-accompaniment of the 'country bluesman'" (34), the organization of this section suggests that musicians such as Robert Johnson, Charlie Patton, and Blind Lemon Jefferson came before Mamie Smith and Bessie Smith, which is not true. The ragtime and jazz history section is simply a mess. It would be a challenge, admittedly, for any author to condense such a rich history into two or three pages, as Shavers attempts. While it might be too much to expect nuance from *The Little Book of Music Law* when discussing music history, a "fact based" book should correctly present the facts. Similar to the confused blues history timeline, Shavers leads the reader to believe that Jelly Roll Morton was a pioneer in the development of ragtime, and that Scott Joplin, "was [just] another great and well-known ragtime player" (37). When Joplin published *The Maple Leaf Rag* in 1899, a composition that helped usher in the ragtime era, Morton was only nine-years old. Responsible teachers will either supplement these histories presented by Shavers, or simply skip them in favor of more accurate sources.

In her endeavor to condense portions of American music history into only a few pages, Shavers appropriately draws attention to the "musical concoction of foreign influences," particularly the European and African sources, that gave birth to popular music. Discussing the complex roots of white America's fascination with "black music," Shavers rightly points out that, "An uncomfortable dichotomy within white slave-holding society toward…black musical traditions existed. Fascination about the culture went hand in hand with blatant disgust and disregard for the culture as being inferior" (33). This attention, even if only a few paragraphs, given to the entangled racial origins of American popular music is refreshing considering that some well-known music history textbooks steer clear of this topic entirely. The fascination and disregard for black (music) culture reemerges in Track 13 during a discussion about music censorship in the 1980s and 1990s.

"The book is by no means an exhaustive write-up of music law or music history," writes Shavers in the introduction, "but a distillation of some noteworthy moments in pop culture and music law" (xiii). While

critical of the Shavers' version of music history, I found the historical information in the remaining chapters much more credible. Each chapter presents the necessary historical background to properly situate the reader. The legal and cultural history surrounding each case was tightly concentrated in terms of time spans, often only covering a few years, and relatively free from personal speculation because Shavers, a lawyer, relied on primary sources such as court documents and newspaper accounts to narrate the events.

The Little Book of Music Law has potential value both to the music industry educator, and as a classroom resource for students. Read in its entirety, it presents a concise overview written in lay terms that allows the reader to trace a chronological development of entertainment law as related to the music industry. Depending on the readers' familiarity with the multiple subjects covered throughout the text (copyright, licensing, management, contracts, etc.), each chapter serves as either a succinct primer or a brief refresher. In terms of classroom use, *The Little Book of Music Law* will probably work best as a supplement rather than as a standalone text. Each chapter is about ten pages long, therefore not overly burdensome in regards to additional or required reading. The chapters offer an accessible option to present or introduce particular music industry topics to students because Shavers has a way of humanizing the subject matter. She brings insights and raises enough questions throughout the twenty-one tracks and interludes of this Little Book to stimulate further thought, regardless if music law is your pastime or passion.

Christopher M. Reali

Christopher M. Reali is an Assistant Professor of Music (Music Industry) at Ramapo College of New Jersey. He holds a Ph.D. in musicology, and studies popular music by examining the relationships between local music scenes and the national music industry. His current research centers on the Muscle Shoals, Alabama music industry. This work fills gaps within the larger narrative of popular music studies by assessing salient musical characteristics and interpreting the long-lasting cultural effects of this Alabama community. Reali has presented at numerous conferences including the American Musicological Society, the Society for American Music, the Society for Ethnomusicology, and the U.S. conference of the International Association for the Study of Popular Music. His published work appears in *Southern Cultures*, *The New Grove Dictionary of American Music*, and *The New Encyclopedia of Southern Culture*. An article by Dr. Reali about the Allman Brothers Band is forthcoming from the journal *Rock Music Studies*. Dr. Reali has also toured the United States, Canada, and Western Europe as a guitar technician and tour manager for Chris Whitley, and as a guitar, bass, and drum tech for David Gray.